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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
CHIEFS COUNCIL
JUNE 1ST- JUNE 2ND, 2011
VANCOUVER, B.C.

Resolution no. 2011-20

RE: Further work on INAC's Policy on Rent and Personal Mortgage Payments

WHEREAS Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Pacific Region continues to implement Income Assistance Shelter Policy 5.4 ("the Policy") which sets out that due to departmental assistance for housing, the provision of rental allowances to persons on reserve is subject to specific conditions. If a house was built through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Commission Section 95 housing program and the mortgages have been paid, INAC will not pay rent costs for people on Income Assistance because this is viewed as duplication of funds. If a home is "privately owned" as defined by INAC, rent will be considered;

WHEREAS the UBCIC Chiefs Council passed Resolution 2010-66 which recognizes the undue hardship the Policy is having on First Nations and calls for a replacement policy that won't limit housing options available for Income Assistance (IA) recipients;

WHEREAS the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* states:

> **Article 21:**
> 1. Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
> 2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities;
>
> **Article 22:**
> 1. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this Declaration.
> 2. States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous

women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

Article 23: Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions;

WHEREAS on May 27, 2011, the UBCIC Executive raised the following key points with INAC Pacific Region:

- The Policy is currently inequitable and discriminatory for First Nations living on reserve, and INAC must work with First Nations and take measures to make the Policy equitable and non-discriminatory.
- This issue is not going away and Bands continue to bring it forward to UBCIC and INAC.
- INAC-Pacific Region must ensure comparability of region with respective provincial policy.
- INAC should cease implementing the Policy until amended, including cessation of recaptures.
- UBCIC requests an ongoing update on federal activity to review and address this issue;

WHEREAS INAC has acknowledged that the Policy is problematic and has indicated a willingness to work with First Nations on amending the Policy, particularly with significant political pressure from First Nations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council unanimously recognizes that INAC Pacific Region's Income Assistance Shelter Policy 5.4 ("the Policy") is inequitable in comparison with off reserve policy, and is causing undue financial hardship on First Nations in BC;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to seek funding from INAC for a Joint First Nations-INAC Working Group with established and short timelines to address First Nations concerns on the Policy's impacts through development of a replacement policy that will not limit housing options available for Income Assistance Recipients;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that contingent on funding, the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to seek experienced technicians and political leadership for participation in a Joint First Nations-INAC Working Group.

Moved: **Chief Judy Wilson, Neskonlith Indian Band**
Seconded: **Chief Janet Webster, Lytton First Nation**
Disposition: **Carried**
Date: **June 2nd, 2011**