

FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM REPORT

Held on October 25, 26 & 27 in Mashteuiatsh

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Note to the readers

It is important to note that the goals and priorities presented in this document do not reflect the totality of the action plans developed by the various commissions and organisations associated with the AFNQL. They only reflect a part of it. Priorities herein presented are included in the ongoing process that the organisations are working on for the long term

For each of the themes addressed in this document, specific issues related to Youth, women and First Nations members living in urban areas have been globally addressed within each theme. These issues are not addressed separately and are included in the content of each section.

For each theme of the document, all questions related to youth, native women, and members of the First Nations living in urban communities were discussed from a transversal point of view, which means they were merged into the discussions on the main themes. However, the reader will find a new section compared that was not in the initial working document, in which are regrouped the commitments dealing with the Youth theme, which were entitled to separate discussions at the end of the Mashteuiatsh Forum.

PART 1

Summary of the Forum

1. Introduction

1.1 Presentation

The Mashteuiatsh Forum, held last October 25, 26 and 27, which was an inaugural event for the First Nations, was an opportunity for meetings and discussions, among stakeholders from all sectors – First Nations, Inuit, representatives of civil society, and representatives from the governments of Quebec and Canada – united around the same table. The purpose of the Forum was to bring together all parties who are concerned or who have interests in the socioeconomic development of the First Nations of Quebec. It was also organized to clarify the issues at stake in relation to the improvement of the social and economic conditions of First Nations in Quebec. Lastly, it aimed at facilitating the effective implementation of the commitments and actions promised, while maintaining harmonious and respectful relations.

1.2 Orchestrating Structural Changes

In fact, the purpose of the Forum was to provide a tool to orchestrate change, based on the commitments for the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the First Nations.

1.3 Forum Organization

The real consultation began as early as October, 2005, at which point began the task of taking stock of all the needs of First Nations in Quebec.

The Forum Secretariat created a working table consisting of the representatives of all the AFNQL Commissions and regional organizations, the Native Friendship Centres (RCCAQ), the Native Women of Quebec (NWQ), with whom the AFNQL had signed relationship agreements. The vast consultation process was organized by the Forum secretariat as all First Nation communities of Quebec were consulted. The consultation dealt with the needs of First Nations in four major areas: economy and employment; education and culture, health and social services; infrastructure and sustainable community development.

In order to reach concrete commitments, the support and involvement of all concerned parties was planned. Proceeding through a series of meetings, various First Nation organizations and regional commissions launched preparatory discussions with the representatives of federal and provincial governments as well as with the representatives of civil society.

1.4 AFNQL: First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Political Authority

It must be remembered that the supreme political authority of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador is the Assembly of Chiefs. The Assembly decides on strategies and orientations to be adopted on common or regional issues, particularly on social, economic, political and cultural questions as well as on questions that have an impact on self-government, international relations, and national relations with the governments. It was the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador that entrusted Regional Chief Ghislain Picard with the mandate to organize the Socioeconomic Forum and that approved the Forum venue, Mashteuiatsh.

2. Forum

2.1 Participants

The Forum brought together initially, 250 participants, including Quebec delegations of the First Nations and Inuit, members of civil society, representatives of the governments of Quebec and Canada, and elected members of the House of Commons and the National Assembly; to this official contingent were added 450 observers, over one hundred media representatives and more than 200 visitors.

The Exhibitors Display brought together about fifty artists, craftsmen and exhibitors, who organized their display under a larger heated tent that ran concurrently with the Forum. In total, more than 1,100 people attended the Forum.

The Forum also included a major environmental dimension that was supported by the Heritage, Culture and Territory Council of the Montagnais of Lac Saint-Jean, in partnership with the Chicoutimi Environment Committee and the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Institute of Sustainable Development: the goal was to organize an event that would produce zero waste

Regional Chief Ghislain Picard, Chief Gilbert Dominique from Mashteuiatsh, the President of the Makivik Corporation, Pita Aatami, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Federal spokesperson for Métis and non-registered Indians, Jim Prentice, and Quebec Premier Jean Charest, acted as co-chairs of the Forum. Please find appended to this document their opening and closing remarks and speeches.

2.2 Organization of Working Sessions

The Forum opened on the evening of Wednesday, October 25, with traditional ceremonies that were presided over by the Elders from all communities. The opening speeches set the tone of the debates to follow on the issues and challenges for the First Nations socioeconomic development. The speeches were immediately followed by the first working session on economy and employment/income security.

October 26 was devoted to the working sessions on education and culture, health / social services and early childhood services: the morning of October 27 began with the working sessions on infrastructure and housing; the final working session on sustainable community development was not fully completed as planned, but was modified upon request from several of the Chiefs.

An authentic political dialogue was held on the fundamental issues affecting the socioeconomic development of the First Nations, including access to land and resources, co-management, and the need for upstream consultation prior to all decisions that affect First Nations communities in Quebec.

The issues affecting youth, women and First Nations members living in urban centres were discussed throughout the Forum as transverse discussion points that were introduced by the official representatives of the organizations involved, including the youth council, the President of Native Women of Quebec and the President of the Native Friendship Centres.

Over the course of all three days, the participants were invited to comment on all of the themes, to present their observations, and to make proposals with respect to the desired commitments. The Chief spokespersons each spoke for one portfolio under the four major

themes: they presented the theme by a summary of the situation and then described the priority actions for the proposed commitments under discussion.

The Forum was concluded with a Summary Report of the results and the proposal for a Forum follow-up mechanism that was introduced by Premier Charest.

2.3 The Objective to meet and discuss

All parties present at the Forum were given the opportunity to present their position on each of the major themes discussed and to outline the commitments they hoped to endorse.

Through the main portfolio spokesperson, who were supported by the prior work of the AFNQL regional commissions and organizations, the First Nations of Quebec were able to transmit the urgency of their message to the assembled stakeholders, particularly with regards to the importance of the economy as an engine of change for the improvement of Aboriginal social conditions and for the creation of jobs to meet the aspirations of youth. They also emphasized the fact that the current education and cultural system no longer meets the needs of Aboriginal youth (66% of Aboriginal students abandon their studies) or respects their values and traditions.

The First Nations also pointed out the recurring problems they face in the area of health and social services, such as suicide and obesity, and child placements, which is all the more flagrant because there are more than 6,000 Aboriginal children under the age of 6. They concluded with their comments on sustainable development and land and resources, which are closely linked to Aboriginal identity.

2.4 Forum Highlights

Chief Gilbert Dominique from Mashteuiatsh, Mr. Pita Aatami, President of the Makivik Corporation and Mr. Ghislain Picard, AFNQL Regional Chief opened the Forum and outlined the major issues.

Host Chief, Mr. Gilbert Dominique, expressed his hope that the Forum, as the very image of Mashteuiatsh, "traditional meeting place of the Innu" would "allow all of us to search for and identify concrete solutions for the well-being of the First Nations, (...), because "just as when we have to paddle through rapids (...) it is everyone's advantage that we paddle in the same direction".

These comments were followed by remarks from Mr. Pita Aatami, President of the Makivik Corporation, who reminded the delegates that "Aboriginal societies as a whole, and Inuit societies in particular have different dynamics than the dynamics of white societies" because "they are much younger" and are directly "affected" by "global warming".

The next comments came from AFNQL Regional Chief, Mr. Ghislain Picard, who outlined the actions that First Nations desired to see implemented for the purpose of socioeconomic development: "this meeting is without precedent, but it will only become a historical meeting if the actions committed and the ensuing results assume historic proportions (...)".

He repeated the objective that called for the creation of 10,000 jobs over 10 years and for the return to school of more than 10,000 drop-outs over the next five years; the construction of 10,000 housing units for Quebec First Nations. "If the Forum does not give us the chance to succeed in our mission for 10,000 new possibilities, it will be a failure (...). For things to truly change, there must be a political will, which has not always been very much in evidence (...). If

we fail to tackle political problems head on, we will never win the battle against the many scourges that beset our peoples(...)".

In response to the opening remarks of the First Nations, the representatives of both levels of government responded. The Honourable Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Jim Prentice, emphasized the importance of "uniting all together to find the means needed in the communities". Quebec Premier Jean Charest stated "that all successful social transformations are born from the common desire for peaceful cohabitation." Cohabitation requires the ability to dialogue and listen. We must unite our forces and go into action (...) We are here to get to know each other and to understand each other better. (...) We are here to ensure that all of Quebec will come out stronger. (...) We are here because we share the same territory and we seek to develop a new solidarity."

On Wednesday evening and on Thursday, participants discussed the economy, employment and income security, education and culture, health and social services, and early childhood services. Friday was reserved for discussions on infrastructure, housing and sustainable community development.

At the beginning of each working session, especially the session on housing, the presentations focused on the large extent of unfulfilled needs in all First Nations: "85% of the construction needs are unmet" stated Chief Lance Haymond. This situation causes a great deal of exacerbation on all other social issues: violence, abuse, addictions etc. The federal government is the main stakeholder responsible for Aboriginal housing, recognized this gap, but offered no new contributions or solutions.

Quebec Premier Jean Charest emphasized the same question: "if we had to focus on one issue, I think it should be housing...because it has a direct link to youth in difficulty... to overcrowding. It is at the heart of many other issues. (...) Housing will be our first priority for the future."

The deplorable situation in the community of Kitcisakik, as presented by Chief Edmond Brazeau, was particularly revealing. As the community refused to waive its land rights, it was reduced to living in conditions of extreme poverty, similar to the conditions in a "refugee camp". "For the people from Kitcisakik, all the noble speeches (...) all the fine promises (...) pronounced at this Forum ring hollow, because these people are hungry. They are hungry for a home they can call their own and that they can build in their own image and through their own efforts."

The First Nations partners (both federal and provincial governments, civil society) did in fact make some commitments to women, youth and off-reserve members, that corresponded to First Nation expectations, such as the support for social economy, training, extended educational infrastructure and support for shelters.

To consult the details of the various commitments, please refer to Part 2 of this document, which outlines all the commitments announced during the three days of the Forum.

The second half of the Friday morning working session was devoted to sustainable community development. The discussion opened up in a different direction as several chiefs expressed their disappointment over the Forum results and their potential impact on the communities.

Such hesitations induced very Chiefs to invite Quebec Premier Jean Charest to make a commitment to the First Nations to "renew the division of land wealth in Quebec, which is first and foremost the land of our ancestors." (Chief Gilbert Dominique). Another pointed out that

the “federal government did not answer much” (Chief Daniel Pien) and still another that there was “grave disappointment over the federal government and this is most regrettable.” (Chief Harry McDougall)

It was during these discussions that Premier Jean Charest a Forum follow-up mechanism: a tripartite table to be chaired by the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, that would bring together representatives of the First Nations, Inuit, and the federal and provincial governments. It was proposed that the Table should meet within 6 months.

Such a table, both the creation and operating conditions of which remain to be defined, will ensure follow-up to Forum commitments and future discussions on subjects chosen by the stakeholders at the table.

AFNQL Regional Chief, Ghislain Picard, warmly thanked all the participants, reminding them all that the core of First Nations aspirations in terms of social and economic development is access to lands and resources: “it is clear to us that socioeconomic development must proceed by way of access to lands and resources. Our goal is co-management (...)”. He expressed very warm thanks to the government of Quebec, yet reminded the Quebec government, that it holds the “keys to land and resource access, which is the only viable solution for our peoples.”

2.5 Forum Follow-up

The Forum is not the end point of the exercise, but rather a catalyst and the point of departure. The Forum follow-up mechanism will be discussed by the Assembly of Chiefs of the First Nations. The discussions will focus on the implementation of structural mechanisms needed to meet the follow-up and evaluation goals, following the Forum.

3. Follow-up mechanism

3.1 Proposal

This proposal was tabled at the Forum by Premier Jean Charest.

Creation of a Quebec – Federal – First Nations Table

Chaired (or co chaired) by Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs (federal representation to be determined). Quebec Premier will attend. First meeting within six months of the Forum, no later than April 2007

Mandates to be entrusted to Table:

- follow-up on implementation of First Nations Socioeconomic Forum commitments
- Agreement on subjects for discussion by members of Table

Composition:

For the government of Quebec

- Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, as Chair
- Premier of Quebec
- A predetermined number of ministers responsible for subjects discussed at Forum as core members of the Table

- Any other minister required for subjects to be discussed on the agenda at the meeting

For the First Nations

- AFNQL Regional Chief
- A predetermined number of Chiefs, equal to the number of Ministers at the Table, and identified by AFNQL
- Any other Chief required for subjects to be discussed on the agenda at the meeting
- President of Makivik Corporation and President of Kativik Regional Administration Any other Inuit representative required for subjects to be discussed on the agenda at the meeting

For federal government (TBD)

Schedule of Meetings for Table:

- Initial Meeting in 6 months (April 2007)
- One annual meeting (minimum)

Technical Committee

- Creation of Technical Committee to ensure follow-up of Forum commitments and prepare annual meeting of Table
- The Technical Committee will consist of representatives of the Executive Council, the SAA, the AFNQL, (of Makivik and KRA), of the ministries represented at the Table, of representatives of the federal government, and if necessary any other representative from civil society or from another ministry
- The Technical Committee will meet as required to prepare Forum follow-up and annual meeting of Table

Operating Terms

The Table's operating terms will be determined at the first meeting, based on a proposal from the Technical Committee.

PART 2

Summary and Forum action

4. ECONOMY Portfolio

4.1 SUMMARY OF EXISTING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

- Little access to job markets for members of the First Nations, most notably for women, on and off communities.
- Regulations that are a source of conflict with lumber companies.
- Few job cooperatives in other economic sectors.
- Lack of information on and access to financial tools.
- No relations between business people, compared to those that exist in civilian society.
- Little or no taking into account the facts, challenges and socioeconomic stakes of the First Nations communities (on and off communities) in the development of economic strategies by governments, for example in the lumber sector.
- Considerable loss of cumulative interests on non-capitalization of collected amounts.
- Restrictive and confining Indian Act and fiscal rules in reference to economic development for the First Nations.
- Erosion of the Tax exemption found in section 87 of the Indian Act.

4.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN ECONOMY

The economic development has to come through the struggle against poverty and lead to job creation. It must not be restricted to a survival economy. This development is based on access to worldwide, national and regional markets and on the creation of specific markets for the First Nations. It is based on diversified social, cooperative and conventional economies. It counts on access to natural resources and requires: entrepreneurial capabilities, technological innovations, financial means and training. This process occurs on the basis of taking steps towards autonomy and taking charge while respecting the sustainable development principles of the First Nations.

4.3 ULTIMATE GOALS IN ECONOMY

- Diversification of economic sectors
- Development of markets for the First Nations
- Development of entrepreneurial projects
- Job creation specifically targeted to women and youths.

4.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS IN ECONOMY

- Access to natural resources and territories, while taking into account preservation of traditional activities.
- Taking into account the First Nations when making economic decisions, especially as far as the lumber industry goes.
- Financial tools adapted to the specific needs of members of the First Nations, including a loans and guarantees program for entrepreneurs, to counteract the restrictive and confining elements of the Indian Act.

- Counselling services specific to entrepreneurial projects, especially regarding start-up, technological innovation and market research.
- Facilitating business partnerships.
- Creating intercommunity markets based on the Fair Trade model where First Nations entrepreneurs and craftsmen can trade their goods.
- Establishing rules and regulations regarding access to trade associations and mobility for First Nations workers.
- Rules of taxation in favour of individuals and businesses participating in the economic development.

4.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on the Economy

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of discussions on the economy that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum.

The main spokesperson for the economy portfolio during the Forum was Chief Gilbert Dominique from Mashteuiatsh.

Major Messages on Economy

- One word to summarize theme: PARTNERSHIP.
- Openness to greater access to lands and resources, which is a major issue for First Nations; the partners' openness to serious discussions on access is encouraging.
- Development of a better fiscal framework and economic development is another complex issue for First Nations, but it is also crucial;
- It is hoped that discussions will allow the First Nations to undertake major projects along these lines;

Discussion Contents

All participants agreed on the fact that the economy is the starting point for the development of First Nations communities and that development is also essential for business and job creation.

(...) "The economy is a key element of the challenge we face to improve our social conditions." Chief Gilbert Dominique, Mashteuiatsh

The need to create jobs and businesses for and by the members of the First Nations is all the more crucial given the large proportion of youth in the First Nations populations. First Nations seek development which goes beyond mere survival economics.

It is also recognized that resource development in Quebec often takes place on Aboriginal territories. The framework identified in the *Indian Act* has been described by the First Nations as counterproductive to any potential development.

(...) "Economic development has been hindered by the outmoded structures of the Indian Act. This is compounded by the fact that there is very little consideration given to real First Nations issues" stated Chief Gilbert Dominique of Mashteuiatsh.

The members of the Inuit community who spoke emphasized the fact that Nunavik's geographic location has an impact on their socioeconomic situation, particularly with regards to job opportunities, training, the cost of living and social and community development.

Such a situation requires the implementation of mechanisms to share natural resources in a perspective of sustainable development for all parties. Large development projects which are planned on Aboriginal territories must ensure consultation of First Nation communities at every stage of the project.

(...) « We are left aside as if we don't exist. This needs to stop; we are sharing the territory. There need to be a specific consultation. » Chief Steeve Mathias, Winneway

(...) "First Nations youth have often expressed their desire to ensure that all economic development, including Quebec economic development, does not in any way preclude the protection of Mother Earth (...) Real sustainable development is crucial for the survival of all Aboriginal populations and for all human beings." Alexis Wawanoloath, First Nations Youth Council

Chief Dominique emphasized the importance of sustainable development for First Nations

(...) "Respect for the Earth and the environment (...) This respect must include the needs of the present generation and extend to the needs of the next seven generations" (...) [Along these lines,] "First Nations have developed strategic orientations."

Partners agreed on the importance of wealth creation within the communities. This can be promoted by providing financial tools such as access to risk capital as well as networking tools that will be an incentive for dynamic entrepreneurship by Aboriginal promoters.

Cooperative businesses should also be encouraged, which are well suited to Aboriginal culture from both a moral and a financial perspective; this must be promoted among all partners, government, First Nations and civil society.

At the same time, the First Nations have observed that some specific rules and legislation will have to be modified in order to promote First Nations economic development.

(...) "[It is] our intention to negotiate a fiscal pact which would be adaptable to the needs of all First Nations" stated Chief Gilbert Dominique, Mashteuiatsh

During the course of the discussions, many commitments were expressed in terms of partnerships in an effort to take into account the specific needs of various First Nations. Some comments emphasized sponsorship, mentoring and networking as the basis for sustainable development and Aboriginal entrepreneurship.

One member of civil society, Ms. H  l  ne Simard from the Quebec Cooperative Council, commented on the search for solutions and she offered to share the Council's expertise in these efforts.

Along the same lines, Mrs. Nancy Neamtan, the representative of the Chantier de l'  conomie sociale, made the commitment to work in partnership with the RCAAQ in order to promote the advancement of social economy in communities.

Social economy also stimulated numerous comments from the youth representatives, native women, and the native Friendship Centres.

(...) "[It is our] hope that social economy will occupy in important place in the economic development of our Nations » Alexis Wawanoloath, First Nations Youth Council."

Other representatives of civil society brought up various points of discussion in order to illustrate their perspective on issues facing First Nations, to demonstrate their support or to offer technical assistance. This was the case of René Babin, of the Quebec Federation of Forestry Cooperatives and of Guy Chevette of the Quebec Forest Industry Council.

There was also an important comment on the plight of native women at various levels. It is essential to implement initiatives that will meet their specific needs to improve their living conditions.

(...) « There is a lot of informal business, especially in the case of women; [we] need to broaden this business and broaden these initiatives and explore other initiatives and seek needs of women. » Ellen Gabriel, president of QNW

Presentation

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to the **Economy** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

4.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: ECONOMY			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>1.1 Creation of a structure mandated to represent, help with networking and assist in entrepreneurship development with First Nations private promoters</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial contribution from governments to set up a distinctive structure for First Nations entrepreneurs 2. A partnership with the Foundation de l'entrepreneurship to develop a mentoring service 3. A partnership with the Concours québécois sur l'entrepreneurship to emphasize initiatives by young First Nations entrepreneurs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial contribution: by 2007 2. Foundation partnership: December 2006 3. Concours québécois: October 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50,000 funding from INAC for a needs study leading to the creation of a structure to promote development of entrepreneurial skills and implementation of successful Aboriginal business models. • The government of Quebec will offer specialized technical aid and training for First Nations businesses in all regions of Quebec. Resulting business project will be eligible for financial support from the MDEIE. • The Quebec government will participate in business project funding for successful projects that emerge from this initiative. • Partnership with the Entrepreneurship Foundation in order to develop a mentoring and business development service for Aboriginal communities.

4.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: ECONOMY

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>1.2</p> <p>Set up of a First Nations lumber cooperative inside the Federation</p>	<p>Financial contribution from the governments of Canada (INAC, EDC) and of Quebec (MRNF, MDEIE) for the agreement with the Federation of Forestry Cooperatives. for the agreement with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration of the Quebec Federation of Forestry Cooperatives. • The Quebec Federation of Forestry Cooperatives • Collaboration of the Quebec Forest Industry • Collaboration of the Quebec Federation of Municipalities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement with the Federation: 2006 2. Implementation of the partnership with the Federation: Spring 2007 3. Setting up the cooperative: 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two contributions: INAC \$30,000, EDC \$33,480 for a total of \$66,480 to explore partnership possibilities in the forest industry and for creation of a forestry cooperative. • The MRNF confirmed a \$50,000 fund to support a First Nations forestry cooperative pilot project with the Quebec Federation of Forestry Cooperatives. • The MDEIE confirmed a \$50,000 fund to assist creation of First Nations forestry cooperative. • The Quebec Federation of Forestry Cooperatives made a commitment to work with First Nations. • The Quebec Forest Industry Council will promote partnerships as well as any future agreements for all forestry operations in which the Federation is involved. • The UMQ will partner in any potential First Nations forestry projects. • The Quebec Federation of Municipalities made the commitment to define and negotiate potential partnerships.

4.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: ECONOMY

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>1.3 Creation of an investment fund of the FIER-region type, specific to First Nations, on and off community</p>	<p>Financial involvement: Québec Government, Government of Canada, public non native and First Nations partners, private non native and First Nations partners</p>	<p>In 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MDEIE made a commitment to continue discussion with First Nations representatives; total capital expenditures may amount to \$30 million between and now and first 2 quarters of 2007. • INAC and other departments concerned made the commitment to take part in discussions and analysis to evaluate the possibility for the creation of a dedicated investment fund for promotion of Aboriginal business. •
<p>1.4 Creation of a loan guarantee fund (pilot project Mashteuiatsh), accessible to members of the First Nations, on and off reserve</p>	<p>1. Agreement with Mouvement Desjardins</p>	<p>In 2006</p>	<p>Desired partnership</p>

4.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: ECONOMY

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>1.5 Development of social economy projects on and off reserve</p> <p>Access to programs and traditional economic levers to start a business</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial participation of the government of Quebec (SAA) 2. Expertise and support from civil society: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Social Economy Working Group of Quebec b. Quebec Council of Cooperation 	<p>Beginning 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social economy working group made the commitment to work in partnership with the RCAAQ for the promotion of socioeconomic development in Aboriginal communities. • The Quebec Cooperative Council offered to provide expertise in a partnership dedicated to the search for solutions. • The SAA announced the first 5 year dedicated budget of \$55 million for the Aboriginal Initiative Fund to support economic development projects and job creation in the communities, including social economy projects, as proposed by Aboriginal entrepreneurs and organizations. A portion of this budget will be set aside for projects that will have a dynamic impact on the economic sector for all First Nations communities. There will be a dedicated budget for each community. • In addition to this budget amount, there will be an additional \$5M as a loan guarantee fund for Aboriginal promoters who deal with private financial institutions. • An advisory committee will be created to ensure sound management and to ensure needs of First Nations are met.

4.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: ECONOMY

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>1.6 Involvement of the First Nations as a major partner in the development of renewable energy in Quebec</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - «group» project for development of wind energy • mini hydro electrical power plants • 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial support from: INAC, CED, MRNF, Hydro-Quebec 2. Agreement with MRNF on the type and methods of participation of First Nations in the windmill project 3. Agreements with MRNF and regional municipalities on the methods of involvement in mini power plants projects 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement on windmills: in 2007 2. Agreement on mini power plants: in 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRNF agrees with creation of a wind energy discussion group in order to take into consideration First Nations concerns. The mandate of the Table will be to hear Aboriginal concerns and to take into consideration their interests at all Hydro-Quebec Calls for Tender of 250 KWh to be reserved for First Nations. • A reference guide is being prepared for communities' interest in developing mini-hydro-electric power centrals; First Nations will be consulted on preparation of guide. • MRNF will promote First Nations partnerships at all government levels, including municipal, regional.
<p>1.7 Finalizing the Fiscal Agreement Framework between the First Nations, the Government of Quebec and the federal government so as to simplify and harmonize the fiscal rules and regulations for individuals and businesses</p>	<p>Tri-part involvement agreement with the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involvement agreement: 2006 2. Agreement on draft treaty: 2007 3. Fiscal agreement: 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Revenue expects to begin work to examine potential scope of a fiscal agreement in order to allow all stakeholders the opportunity to commit to a formal negotiation process.

4.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: ECONOMY

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>1.8 Support for development and promotion of local businesses based on traditional jobs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model development allowing for training and sharing of knowledge • Workshops on starting a business • Access to business and export networks 	<p>Financial support and expertise (work groups) from the Governments of Quebec and Canada for development of an internal market</p>	<p>By 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDEIE announced that the application for financial support submitted to government for assistance with a workshop on business start-up and improved access to business and export networks will be dealt with at a meeting to be held within 2 or 3 weeks; the nature of participation will be discussed at that time in order to move the project forward. • INAC is willing to analyze these initiatives for they fit in with the economic opportunities program in place in the communities.
<p>1.9 Development of an offer for tourism, ecotourism and adventure services which respect the cultural differences and authenticity of First Nations products.</p>	<p>Partnership : Quebec Aboriginal Tourism Corporation</p> <p>Partnerships : regional tourism associations, associations, MAPA, FPQ, SEPAQ, AEQ, Archéo-Québec, EDCO, LDC's, municipalities and First Nations communities.</p>	<p>Starting from 2007</p>	<p>INAC is willing to analyze this initiative for it fits in with the economic opportunities program in place in the communities.</p> <p>Desired partnership</p>

4.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: ECONOMY

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>1.10 Creation of First Nations intercommunity Market</p> <p>Carry on a research on the First Nations needs notably women (on and off reserve) on issues related to the creation of and business consolidation as well as exchanges between communities</p> <p>Elaboration and implementation of an action plan to develop and intercommunity market</p>	<p>INAC</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Realization of the Study: 2006-2007 2. Implementation of plan: 2008-2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INAC made the commitment to complete by end of November 2006 the analysis of the project to promote creation of an intercommunity market.

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME SECURITY Portfolio

5.1 SUMMARY OF CURRENT PROBLEMS IN EMPLOYMENT/INCOME SECURITY

- According to the available statistics, 52% of the First Nations population of workable age remains unemployed.
- The unemployment rate of First Nations youths is at 32%, meaning three times that of the non-native across the province.
- Some 60% of adults have an annual income of 20 000 \$ and less. On the other hand, 61,8 % of First Nations women declare an income under 10 000 \$.
- The demographic structure of the First Nations, on and off territory, formed in a large proportion of youths who are or will soon be of workable age, foresee on a short term, a substantial increase of the population who will be looking for work.
- The obstacles to education and economic development, along with the obstacles to employment, are contributing factors for a weak participation in the labor market.
- The members of First Nations can hardly meet the registration criteria of the training programs, either technical or professional, and have a hard time completing these programs.
- The employment advisers are lacking tools for intervention, continuing training and information on the labor market.
- The migration phenomenon, which jeopardizes the notion of « residency », entails a financial imbalance for the foster communities when they manage the income security program.
- There is an absence of updated statistical data on Quebec's First Nations in practically all sectors.□□
- The technology of computerized system used by DIAND is way too costly and obsolete in the perspective of a take-over by the First Nations.

5.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN EMPLOYMENT/INCOME SECURITY

The socioeconomic development of the First Nations starts with the strengthening of capacities and skills of First Nations members living on and off territory, in order to access permanent high quality employment. The First Nations must also acquire a certain level of autonomy in establishing a full training system supporting the skills development in employment and re-entry into the labor force of the First Nations members, who are receiving employment insurance benefits or employment assistance, on and off territory.

5.3 ULTIMATE GOALS IN EMPLOYMENT/INCOME SECURITY

The employment rate must be increased within 15 years, in order to reach parity with the general population of Quebec, particularly for the youths and women. The objective is the creation of 11 000 jobs in order to reach this parity. The minimal objective is to maintain the current employment rate which involves the creation of 6 800 jobs. (These numbers correspond to an increase of 40% to 70% of the number of First Nations citizens currently working, which we estimate at approximately 16 000.)

5.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS IN EMPLOYMENT/INCOME SECURITY

- Reinforce the skill level of the First Nations labor force in trades which require technical and professional training, on and off territory.
- The promotion of technical and professional trades among First Nations members, on and off territory.
- The promotion of non-traditional trades among women.
- Encourage the First Nations members, on and off territory, to go back to school, taking into account the obstacles which are specific to women, among others.
- The establishment of rules in regards to access to trades and mobility of First Nations workers.
- The mobility of the First Nations manpower.
- The development of information and front line services on the labor market.
- The establishment of new employment and training service centers, on and off territory.
- The reinforcement of personal and professional capacities of human resources within communities and band councils.
- Provide support to communities in their fight against dependency on income security and sub-employment
- The development of social programs and active measures for employment.
- The development of skills in relation to socio-professional reintegration
- The transfer of skills for the management of income security towards the First Nations.
- The development of an information management system on income security by and for the First Nations.
- The access to information as a whole which is required for the management of First Nations income security programs.

5.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on Employment/Income Security

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the discussions that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum on the theme of Employment/Income Security.

The chief spokesperson for the Employment portfolio during the Forum was Vice-Chief Marjolaine Étienne from Mashteuiatsh.

The chief spokesperson for the Income Security portfolio during the Forum was Chief Georges Bacon from Unamen Shipu.

Major Messages related to Employment/Income Security

- Need to increase First Nations access to employment.
- Need to create partnerships to achieve this.
- Need to increase involvement of all levels of government and funding measures for development of human resources among members of First Nations.
- Fixed term objective for First Nations to gain control of employment development tools.
- Need to better understand the conditions behind enforcement of income security rules in First Nations communities.
- Establish tripartite dialogue for transfer of responsibility of income security to First Nations institutions.

Contents of Discussion on Employment

While Quebec society had its baby-boom in the post-war years, First Nations are experiencing their own baby boom now, which represents a specific challenge that they must meet, especially in consideration of their more limited resources and under employment. This is a unique demographic challenge for the First Nations.

(...) « In 10-15 years our youth will be in the job market. We need to respond to their needs. » Chief John Martin, Gesgapegiag

The need to create new employment and to train a skilled Aboriginal workforce was unanimously recognized by all stakeholders. Through increased access to jobs, the members of the First Nations will have greater motivation to continue or to resume professional studies, which will lead to greater self-esteem and autonomy.

Women and youth put considerable emphasis on the need for job creation for both respective groups.

There are barriers which impede full integration of qualified Aboriginal employees into the employment market, because they are not always able to meet established accreditation criteria. This situation demands that new solutions be explored and more innovative approaches to training with respect to the Aboriginal workforce.

The ultimate objective is to ensure that First Nations achieve parity of services with the other sectors of the Canadian and Quebec population. The decision-making processes and the employment and training procedures need to be transferred to the First Nations. Such a

transfer must begin by way of the transfer or expertise to First Nations employment services that dispose of adequate human and financial resources.

The creation and reinforcement of partnerships appear to be the designated route to follow in order to reach the Aboriginal training and job creations objectives that have been set.

Closely related to the idea of developing a skilled Aboriginal labour force is the requirement to ensure that there are adequate measures to preserve jobs.

In response, government partners, especially the Quebec government partners, agreed to take up the challenges regarding the integration of Aboriginal youth into the labour force, continuous training adult education, manpower qualification and the question of accreditation. They also promised greater openness in terms of available resources and financing required for finding new ways of dealing with employment problems.

Government involvement, in the opinion of many, is insufficient and will not solve the problem, but the promised efforts were appreciated by many of the First Nations stakeholders present.

Civil society also expressed its readiness to take part in the process. Some participants suggested that they could contribute to the training of the Aboriginal workforce by means of the resources available to private enterprise. This is all the more feasible because of the widespread lack of qualified manpower in Quebec and all new sources of manpower will be welcomed.

There is evidently a direct link between employment and the existing levels of poverty and social exclusion in Aboriginal communities.

Contents of Discussion on Income Security

Income security expenses by all First Nations in Quebec amount to \$55 million dollars.

*(...) "The improvement of Aboriginal quality of life in urban centres is directly dependent on the efforts invested in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, through increased professional insertion of young Aboriginal persons, who experience particular difficulties when it comes to joining the work force."
Édith Cloutier, President RCAAQ*

Prejudice, racism and discrimination are some of the causes that lead to poverty and social exclusion.

Well aware of this situation, the governments of Canada and Quebec committed to join discussions that may lead to the transfer of control of the system actually in place.

From this perspective, some irritants such as information exchange and data sharing must be discussed and resolved. The phenomenon of community migration is another significant issue that has an impact on income security. Studies must be conducted in order to examine this issue fully, because many communities claim they are being penalized by the outdated income security rules.

The governments are favourable to the creation of a discussion table to review the magnitude of the problem and the feasibility of corrective measures pursuant to any modification of income security management by First Nations.

Presentation

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to the **Employment/Income Security** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

5.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: Employment/Income Security			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
EMPLOYMENT			
<p>2.1 Development of an employment reintegration strategy particularly for the youths, in a way to increase the number of jobs available on and off the territory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of initiatives linked to social economy ▪ Strategy to facilitate the mobility of First Nations workers ▪ Establishment of re-integration enterprises 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of a mechanism for continued relations with MESS in order to identify the obstacles to the employment of First Nations 2. Development of financial and technical partnerships (civil society, Service Canada, HRSDC, CCQ, unions, sectorial councils, private businesses, social economy enterprises, etc.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of partnerships : from now to 2008 2. Implementation of the strategy : 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MESS confirmed its intention to continue discussions aimed at Aboriginal human resource development as part of its responsibilities under the Canada-Quebec agreement. Furthermore, depending on the nature of the work to be completed, it may invite any other stakeholders deemed appropriate, especially its federal counterparts in order to broaden the discussions.

5.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: Employment/Income Security

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>2.2 Increase in the number of certified workers on the labor market (construction, mines and forestry sectors, etc.)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial partnerships for upgrading (MESS, Service Canada, CCQ, etc.) 2. Agreement with CCQ (construction accreditation) 3. Agreements with unions and sectorial councils for other fields of accreditation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial partnerships : in 2007 2. Agreement with CCQ : from now to 2008 3. Agreements with unions and sectorial councils from now to 2008 4. Accreditation of workers : from now to 2011 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment-Quebec committed to create a tripartite committee (FNQLHRDC-EQ-CCQ) in order to review constraints and to explore the possibility of offering make-up training courses in order to allow Aboriginal candidates to obtain job skills and trade credentials. ▪ Commitment by Forest Industry Council of Quebec: mandate private enterprise to provide manpower training; the forest industry should open its plants to provide practical training facilities for candidates to the workforce. ▪ President of FTQ expressed commitment to help design and deliver adapted training courses.
<p>2.3 Organizational capacity building in the area of consulting and information services on the labor market (IMT), on and off territory</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnerships with MESS and Service Canada in regards to the elaboration of a continued training plan for the employment advisers 2. Partnerships with MESS and Service Canada for the elaboration of an information profile on labor market 3. Financial plan with MESS and Service Canada 4. Sharing of expertise between 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnership with MESS and Service Canada, definition of the continuing training plan: from now to 2007. <p>Implementation of the action plan with a training guide: for 2009</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Partnership with MESS and Service Canada, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment-Quebec committed to proceed with transfer of expertise and to participate in working groups on following points: employment advisor training and labour market information. Taking into account the fact that the transfer of expertise will proceed by way of access to training, it will not be necessary to quantify the human resources. ▪ Quebec Minister of Labour committed to take an active part in the next Forum on Apprenticeship and Learning (employment and productivity) scheduled for spring 2007 and to ensure the follow-up on commitments will be integrated into the commitments for the Forum on productivity.

5.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: Employment/Income Security

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
	<p>the CLE, Service Canada and First Nations employment and training services ex.: career counselling services)</p> <p>1. Participation of the IMT</p>	<p>definition of the IMT action plan: from now to 2007</p> <p>Implementation of the action plan and the IMT guide : for 2009</p> <p>3. Financial plan : from now to 2007</p> <p>4. Exchanges with CLE and Service Canada : from now to 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The CCQ expressed its commitment to take part in the feasibility study for the creation of a virtual vocational training centre for Aboriginal candidates. The Centre will ensure coordination of Aboriginal cohorts who register in the trades programs.
<p>2.4 Creation of new service centers and addition of resources for the current service centers</p>	<p>1. Agreement with MESS for continued funding of employment and training measures</p> <p>2. Constitution of a FN-Quebec Canada Committee to examine the historical claims of the AFNQL in relation to the 1997 Canada provinces transfers</p>	<p>1. Agreement with MESS : 2007 Newly established centers : 2008</p> <p>2. Constitution of the FN – Québec – Canada Committee: 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MESS expressed its commitment to accompany the FNQLHRDC in its dealings with the federal government in order to obtain funding for new urban centres FNQLHRDC. ▪ Furthermore, Employment-Quebec will conclude a service agreement with an external organization, outside of Sept-Îles, for a two year mandate, the purpose of which will be to deliver services to Aboriginals. The organization will be identified by Employment-Quebec and by the FNQLHRDC. Parties will agree on terms and conditions of the agreement and on the budget over the course of the fiscal year. The costs will be the same as the costs for the agreement with FNQLHRDC; number of clients to be determined. ▪ Employment-Quebec will sign a lump sum

5.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: Employment/Income Security

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
			<p>agreement (Type 4, structured support for employment integration) for April 1, 2007 with FNQHRDC for a total amount of \$220,500 (300 clients at per capita cost of \$735) in order to improve existing services and to ensure that more clients, particularly youth and women, have access to service; it will also focus on accountability on demonstrating that the plan has improved service delivery to clientele, both in number and in quality of follow-up. These clients will be over and above clients already receiving service from the organization (about 1,200). An additional budget reserve for about 200 additional clients or \$147,000 has been forecast in case the demand rises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment-Quebec will sign a new agreement on April 1, 2007 with FNQLHRDC for \$ 150,000 in order to hire 3 new follow-up advisors in order to help clients overcome personal problems that hinder their integration into the employment market (3 year commitment for a total of \$450,000 dollars). ▪ An operational process to facilitate First Nations access (for members, both on and off reserve), to orientation, entrepreneurship and training services purchased from Employment-Quebec, will be implemented, along with participation allowances in conformity with Employment-Quebec criteria. ▪ The government of Canada (Service Canada) expressed interest to establish 2 pilot projects in one Anglophone and one Francophone First Nations community, in accordance with the new

5.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: Employment/Income Security

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
			approach to all government services provided to the population of Canada.
<p>2.5 Increased dissemination of information on current and upcoming services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication and information Strategy, on and off territory ▪ Support tools for the dissemination of information : FNLC, urban service centers, CLE, mobile booths 	Partnerships with MESS, Service Canada to develop an offer of services in the area of information distribution for and by the First Nations (single window : Service PN)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnerships: 2006 2. Elaboration of the strategy : 2007 3. Implementation of the strategy (including support tools) : 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment-Quebec committed to make sure that the FNQLHRDC would become better known within its network. A meeting has already been planned with wit management and operations representatives and FNQLHRDC will ensure that there is a follow-up to ensure that the information is transmitted.
INCOME SECURITY			
<p>2.6 Analysis of migration phenomenon in order to re-evaluate concept of residence within the context of income security funding agreements</p>	Partnerships with INAC and MESS to analyze problem resolution for issues related to migration	Partnership: 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MESS will help set up and take part in tripartite working committee with INAC and FNQLHSSC. ▪ INAC will help set up and take part in tripartite working committee the mandate of which will be to develop a framework agreement.
<p>2.7 Creation of new income security management system for First Nations, to ensure better program control mechanisms</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement with INAC or with any other relevant public organization on transfer of competence and authority 2. Partnerships with 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transfer agreement with INAC: 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Federal government expressed commitment to continue work on transfer of the FNDBMS income security module and to assume costs of transfer and for costs to ensure skills acquisition for success of project. ▪ MESS will work in partnership to respond to

5.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: Employment/Income Security

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
	<p>governments on human and financial resources to create new management system</p> <p>3. Agreements with Band Councils on transfer of income security related information</p>	<p>2. Partnership with the governments: 2007</p> <p>System development: 2009</p> <p>3. Agreements with Band Councils: by 2010</p>	<p>training needs on use of new database management system.</p>
<p>2.8</p> <p>Develop solutions that will ensure better control over income security programs, especially in the areas of the power of investigation, information sharing between Band Councils and MESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and analyze and solutions ▪ Framework agreement on federal-provincial-FN exchanges 	<p>1. Working committee to identify and analyze resolutions to problems with MESS and INAC</p> <p>2. Working committee to develop tripartite framework agreement to regulate federal-provincial-FN interactions with respect to income security: INAC and MESS</p>	<p>1. Committee to analyze resolutions to problems: in 2006-2007, within 9 months</p> <p>2. Framework Agreement Committee: in 2006-2007, within 6 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MESS will cooperate towards creation of a tripartite committee to solve problems related to information sharing and exchange, program control, and migration. It will also work to help develop a framework agreement with Appendices. Such a framework agreement will define criteria for sharing information and expertise and for the provision of training. • The government of Canada committed to creation of a tripartite committee to analyse and to find solutions to the problems solve problems described. It also committed to develop a draft framework agreement to forecast interactions between the parties within nine months. • MESS would like to participate with INAC and FNQLHSSC in initiative to set up tripartite committee, which is presently under development by FNQLHSSC.

5.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: Employment/Income Security

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>2.9 Development of specific measures for First Nations members in and outside communities in the context of the <i>Plan on the Fight against poverty and social exclusion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delegate management of Plan to First Nations ▪ Studies on dysfunctional behaviours and other consequences of poverty ▪ Creation of individual and community skills building tools 	<p>Financial partnership with government of Quebec (MESS)</p> <p>Partnership with the Canada government</p> <p>Partnership Chagnon Foundation</p> <p>Support from CSN</p>	<p>By 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The will take part in a joint working committee which will have the mandate to develop structured projects to improve First Nations living conditions and to help defeat poverty in FN communities. • MESS made commitment along same lines as federal government (to pursue discussion for creation of multi-partite working group -MESS, INAC, FNQLHSSC, Chagnon Foundation) and will work within joint working committee for the fight against poverty and social exclusion. • MESS made commitment to pursue process to delegate management of fight against poverty and social exclusion on reserves to the Social Development Office as part of an integrated territory approach • Employment-Quebec committed to sign agreements with Native Friendship Centres as Part of the Social Assistance and Accompaniment Program. • As an adjunct to this program, Employment-Quebec committed to review possibilities of signing partnership and cooperation agreements with Native Friendship Centres to help responds to the needs of youth living outside of communities. (18-24 years of age) (over three years: \$200,000). • A declaration of friendship from CSN to help fight against prejudice and discrimination. A declaration of friendship to ensure closer relations between Aboriginals and non Aboriginals.

6. Education/Culture and Languages Portfolio

6.1 SUMMARY OF THE EXISTING ISSUES IN EDUCATION/CULTURE AND LANGUAGES

- Important and increasing gaps between First Nations and non native citizens in education.
- Important rates of school drop out and failures at all education levels. More than 48% of First Nations members living off reserve did not complete their high school level, compared with 26% of the general Canadian population. An average of 90% of First Nations Youths do not finish high school before the age of 18.
- Youths are not necessarily ready to integrate sports into their lifestyles, which is indispensable to their health and ultimately their learning process.
- Absence of second level services to support school success and service development.
- Major difficulties for First Nations to access professional training. Inadequate funding for postsecondary studies.
- Absence of postsecondary education programs that include First Nations culture.
- Danger of First Nations Youth losing their culture because of:
 - A disruption in the intergenerational transmission caused by the loss of cultural identity in the adult population;
 - Lack of knowledge of their own cultural heritage;
 - A non native environment that leads to the loss of the Native language.
- Existence of prejudice and the lack of recognition of the First Nations culture in the Quebec general population.

6.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN EDUCATION / CULTURE AND LANGUAGES

The educative and cultural development requires First Nations to take charge of a complete education system as well as the enhancement of their languages and cultures in all milieus. This must be achieved through the principles of First Nations autonomy, jurisdiction and authority.

6.3 ULTIMATE GOALS IN EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUAGES

- An increase in the education level for First Nations and the improvement of the school success rate for First Nations members living on and off reserve.
- Decreased rates of school drop out in the First Nations Youth population living on and off reserve, to bring it to the same level as the Quebec general population.
- Development of physical capacities for First Nations Youth as part of the education process.
- Reinforcement of identity and self-esteem for First Nations members through the enhancement of languages and cultures, knowledge and savoir-faire.
- Decreased prejudices towards First Nations members.

6.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS IN EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

- To obtain First Nations jurisdiction over the education system on and off reserve.
- Implementation and management of a complete education system (elementary, high school, professional and post secondary programs) with the appropriate resources.
- Development of strategies, programs and professional training programs (especially in forestry) favouring the hiring of the First Nations workforce on and off reserve in partnership with the civil society.
- Recognition and skills upgrading and knowledge acquired through work.
- Ensure that First Nations are aware of existing and on-going training programs.
- Development of educational tools for History, Languages and Culture.
- Youth awareness on the importance of physical activity and the development of healthy lifestyles.
- Development and coordination of sports and recreation initiatives at the school and community levels.
- Development of cultural competencies for teachers and non native stakeholders who work in the communities.
- Improvement of the access to information and communication technology.
- Improvement of the relations between the First Nations education system and other systems (provincial, national and international) in order to improve access and school success for the students.
- Courses dealing with First Nations culture must be integrated in the elementary and high school teachers' Bachelor's degree.
- Support to First Nations cultural development initiatives and provide the necessary resources to achieve them.
- Integration of First Nations languages and cultures in their education systems and in their community lifestyles.
- Sharing of First Nations languages and cultures with the non native environment and population.
- Promotion of university level research on the issues related to First Nations members.
- Development of First Nations contemporary and traditional arts and culture and increasing the distribution markets.
- Creation of intercultural relations between First Nations Youth and young Quebecers.

6.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on Education/Culture and Languages

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the discussions that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum on the theme of Education/Culture and Languages.

The chief spokesperson for the Education portfolio during the Forum was Chief John Martin of Gesgapegiag.

The spokesperson for the Adult and Vocation Education files during the Forum was Chef Harry McDougall from Pikogan.

The spokespersons for the Youth issues during the Forum were Alexis Wawanoloath and Nakka Bertrand of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Youth Council.

The spokesperson for the Education (Urban Centres) sub-files during the Forum was Édith Cloutier, President of the RCAAQ.

The chief spokesperson for the Culture and Languages portfolio during the Forum was Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho from Ekuanitshit.

Key Messages related to Education/Culture et Languages

- Education must be considered as the future foundation for First Nations and a requisite for employment, leadership development and capacity for action.
- Eliminate chronic under-funding of the education, language, and culture sectors in First Nations communities.
- Undertake a process leading to First Nations autonomy in the fields of education and vocational training.
- Support the teaching and practice of Aboriginal languages and extension of First Nations cultures to ensure their vitality and to ensure intercultural dialogue.

Contents of Discussion on Education

The spokespersons and stakeholders immediately emphasized the important link between education and employment. Jobs, and more importantly quality jobs, are very rare in First Nations communities. The communities pointed to the government's failure to properly manage the education system for First Nations, especially the federal government, who has prime responsibility for First Nations education delivery.

(...) « Education has a lot to do with strengthening of people. » Chief John Martin, Gesgapegiag

(...) « [Education means] consolidation and strengthening of community to function in contemporary society. » Chief John Martin, Gesgapegiag

(...) "The errors caused by the Indian Act must be repaired." Chief Max Gros-Louis, Wendake

Faced with a high level of school drop-outs, the First Nations are seeking to establish strategies to increase access to vocational training programs so that it can begin to develop its own qualified manpower sources.

Various Aboriginal stakeholders emphasized the chronic under-funding of First Nations specific education and training facilities in comparison with average Canadians.

Based on these observations, First Nations agree that they should assume the control and administration of their own education system to ensure that they can provide good quality basic and continuing education services in order to reduce the socioeconomic gap separating the Aboriginal population from the overall Canadian population.

(...) « First Nations must take the lead in their education. (...) the future of whole communities is running short. » Chief John Martin, Gesgapegiag

In response to these observations both governments recognized that there is a close link between education and socioeconomic conditions; education is the structuring lever that will ensure active participation in community development.

The Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport du Québec (MELSQ) is ready to strengthen the link that already exists with First Nations.

The objectives of the commitments presented by the MELSQ are to improve the educational context by stimulating youth interest in practical, technical, and vocational training and by creating more relevant educational environments that correspond more closely to their interests and needs. In addition to these objectives, there is a recognized need to offer adapted adult education services in order to allow all First Nations access to professional job training.

Almost 70% of all new jobs require post-secondary education and all stakeholders agreed that is essential that all members of the First Nations have access to a post-secondary level of education. This will require government investments in higher education learning facilities that are specific to First Nations needs and realities so that today's youth find relevance in the educational institutions that truly meet their needs.

In addition to the obvious link that exists between education and employment, both the Chiefs and other First Nations representatives recognized the crucial role of education in encouraging civic involvement among youth who will become the Aboriginal leaders of tomorrow. This is another indicator of the crucial role of higher education, at both college and university levels.

(...) « Without leadership we will go nowhere ». Chief Phil Einish, Kawawachikamach

The same position was taken by the representatives of Native Women, who stated that they wished to play an active role in curriculum design in order to help women escape from their marginal roles and assume more decision making functions within the communities. First Nation women are often forced to abandon their studies because of their social roles. It is essential for them to have the opportunity of pursuing their education to ensure their full

integration into the community and thus improve their employment opportunities as well as their sense of self-esteem.

Youth education was also reviewed from the perspective of sports and recreation, for youth inside and outside communities; this perspective was especially emphasized for its link to ensuring healthy lives for your Aboriginals; physical activity was promoted as an essential element of education, because it is both motivating and dynamic. The emphasis on active sports involvement is another way of preventing youth apathy.

The problem is critical for Aboriginal youth in urban centres, who attend institutions where they are usually the minority. One way to help them is to ensure that there is a homework support program that can be provided by the Native Friendship Centres, to provide learning support in a culturally adapted environment.

Civil society expressed its desire to be involved in this issue and reinforced the argument that there must be more investment in Aboriginal education, which is profitable not only for First Nations communities, but for Quebec society as a whole. Civil society representatives demonstrated their support by the announcement of concrete actions for the implementation of technical support designed to increase the scope and influence of institutions to be created in the future.

School board representatives offered their support for the development of the education sector in order to increase the number of First Nations graduates from post-secondary education programs. This will increase not only their employability but will also enhance their leadership skills, as future leaders.

One of the representatives from the union movement stated that insecurity breeds prejudice, which can be countered by giving priority to full Aboriginal economic integration. Education is more than mere instruction and it must be viewed as a collective effort of the community in order to be useful.

Contents of Discussion on Culture and Languages

First Nations demands in the area of language and culture were based on the necessity of breathing new vitality into language and culture to ensure that all members of the communities remained connected to and rooted in their values, their history and their traditions in order to strengthen their sense of identity.

(...) "I tried to live like a white person...but I was unhappy. I never understood what happened to me!" Chief Thaddé André, Matimekush-Lac-John

There is also a need to increase awareness among non Aboriginal professionals about employment in the communities so that they can better understand both the needs and the expectations of First Nations; they must be better ready to integrate into the new environment in which they are working and with which they often interact over long periods of time.

This implies not only the need to distinguish between the two value systems, Aboriginal and non Aboriginal, but also the ability to recognize and reinforce First Nation artistic and cultural expression in order to ensure the viability of Aboriginal culture. Aboriginal languages must be preserved and taught more widely at both primary and secondary levels, so as to ensure linguistic proficiency among the younger generations.

Government paternalism was severely criticized because of the under-funding of culture and the low level of language education, which leads to a significant generation gap.

(...) "Language is a vehicle of history, our way of life and our convictions." Chef John Martin, Gesgapegiag

Conscious of the importance of language, both governments promised greater openness and dialogue on the issues raised.

Presentation

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to the **Education/Culture & Languages** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
EDUCATION			
3.1 To obtain full authority and jurisdiction over First Nations education.	Negotiation framework agreement wit INAC	In 2007	Desired partnership
3.2 Creation of a uniform and standard structure for First Nations in adult education (example : school council) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of 2 regional adult education centres ▪ Definition of an improved service offer for adult education 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement with MELS on the creation of a structure for adult education. 2. Agreement with MELS to fund 2 adult education centres 3. Partnerships with school commission aiming to improve service offers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement with MELS : 2007 2. 2 Centres : from now until 2008 3. Partnerships with SC : from now until 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MELS will provide \$150,000 in funding for the next two years in order to finance its commitment of resources and to establish two regional adult education pilot centres, the first of which will be opened in September 2008; MELS also commits to issuing a report on the progress towards the establishment of a First Nations adult education school board. • MELS made a commitment to identify the school boards that have had greatest success with First Nations adult and vocational education and will try to ensure that such best practices are generalized in target areas in order to improve services offered.

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>3.3 Study on professional and technical training situation</p>	<p>Technical and financial partners : INAC and MELS</p>	<p>1. INAC Renewal of education program authorities and other specific elements : June 2007</p> <p>2. Finalization of study : 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MELS announced that it would participate in funding for an amount up to \$100,000 or 40% of the total cost to conduct a study, the objective of which will be profile the profile of obstacles that hinder youth and adult clientele from full integration into technical and vocational education programs. • INAC made commitment to fund and cooperate on project to prepare list of obstacles which hinder youth and adult clientele from full integration into technical and vocational education programs. The project will be eligible for \$150,000 in funding over two years.
<p>3.4 Implementation of second level education services comprised of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A data collection system ▪ Quality standards ▪ Band schools evaluation procedures 	<p>Partnership with INAC</p>	<p>From now until 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INAC signed a draft agreement with FNEC to develop a working plan to introduce 2nd level education services. \$150,000 in funding will be provided.

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>3.5 Implementation of a First Nations sports and recreation program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of needs (survey and consultation project) ▪ Promotion and realization of activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hiring of community officers (school and community milieus) ○ Setting up of a Quebec en form sector (on and off reserve) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1. Financial support from INAC to do the survey ▪ 2. Partnerships with the SAA, the Secrétariat à la jeunesse and MELS on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exchange of expertise in sports and recreation • Financial resources to do the promotion projects and realization of activities 	<p>1. In 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MELS will contribute the expertise of Kino Quebec to develop tools and programs related to the Community Schools program. MELS will set aside \$20,000 for the FNEC, which will come from the bilateral Canada-Quebec agreement on sports activities – the funds will be distributed \$10,000 in 2006-2007 and \$10,000 in 2007-2008. The goal is to develop teaching and awareness tools to increase students' participation in sports and outdoor activities. • MELS will lobby to have <i>Quebec en forme</i> team increase its involvement with certain native friendship centres, while maintaining its standards of operation. • The Premier announced funding to hire a sports coordinator. The Youth Secretariat and the Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat, in conjunction with MELS, announced total investments of \$1,050,000 over a two year period. • The federal government made the commitment to provide \$65,800 to conduct a needs study on infrastructure, material resources, human resources, and the data required to draft an action plan for the creation of a Sports and Recreation Program in First Nations communities.
<p>3.6 Homework support program and high school remedial courses for First Nations members living on and off reserve</p>	<p>Financial support from Quebec (MELSQ)</p>	<p>In 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds will be set aside for the homework assistance program delivered by the native friendship centres, in conjunction with Quebec School Boards. MELS gave the commitment to fund \$60,000 the first year, and \$100,000 for each subsequent year for a total of \$260,000.

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>3.7 Elaboration and delivery of adapted professional training projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realization of a training pilot project 	<p>Funding shared by INAC and MELS for the professional training study</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnership CCQ-Kahnawake for the implementation of a virtual training centre various construction fields 2. Support from MELS for the elaboration of the projects 3. Funding shared by INAC and MELS for the professional training study 4. Support from MESS for the delivery of projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See MELS and INAC commitments at 3.3

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>3.8</p> <p>Implementation of a First Nations of Quebec postsecondary institution</p>	<p>Financial partnerships with INAC & MELS</p> <p>Partnerships with the associated CEGEP</p> <p>Participation of the Civil society : Sono-Video et Polycom</p> <div style="background-color: #90EE90; width: 100px; height: 15px; margin-top: 10px;"></div>	<p>Before 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MELS made commitment to work with FNEC and its CEGEP partners to create an Aboriginal college studies centre by fall, 2008. • MELS made commitment to pay the regular grant per student that is currently paid to college study centres as well as an additional \$50,000 per year for adapted guidance programs to help the student clientele. The total subsidy will amount to \$1 Million dollars or more over the next five years. • INAC commits to taking part in the start-up of a project s leading to the creation of a post-secondary institution (college level) and the development of the college curriculum including adapted services, by providing \$165,000 funding in 2006-2007 and \$200 000 in2007-08. • Other government commitment: the Sono-Video and Polycom companies promised \$35,000 towards the creation of the post-secondary program in form of expertises, tools and peripherals wit one year guarantee, starting with the hardware is implemented.
<p>3.9</p> <p>Construction of a First Nations Pavillion on the campus of the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue in Val-d'Or</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial partnerships with INAC and MELS 2. Other partnership : Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue in Val-d'Or 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In 2007 2. In cours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MELS will invest \$3.8 to build the First Nations University Campus and up to \$ 1.15 M for 5 years, i.e. \$350,000 per year to support education and training of future Aboriginal students who enrol in the new Campus that will be part of the UQAT. • Canada Economic Development agency will provide \$3.8 M for all regions in Quebec.

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>3.10</p> <p>Implementation of a formal and permanent advisory structure aiming to improve training practices and collaboration mechanisms</p>	<p>Agreement with MELS</p>	<p>Decembre 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MELS and the FNEC agreed on a Declaration of Joint Intention, which will eventually translate into Memorandum of Understanding related to the formal creation of permanent joint forum.
CULTURE ET LANGUES			
<p>3.11</p> <p>Culture and Languages program for First Nations students (elementary, high school and adult education levels)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of the required educational tools ▪ Teachers training 	<p>Professional support in program development and educational tools: MELS</p>	<p>From now until 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MELS will offer as of January, 2007, professional support to the ICEM for the development of Innu Language and Culture Program.
<p>3.12</p> <p>Development of arts and culture initiatives to favor the fulfillment of future artists and their influence on the various markets</p>	<p>Joint financial partnership : CALQ and MCC</p> <p>Joint financial partnership: INAC</p>	<p>From now until 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MCC made the commitment to sign Cultural Development Agreements in response to the demand for financial support of cultural initiatives adapted to Aboriginal needs. There is openness to the signing of new agreements. Such agreements need to be improved and renegotiated. ▪ Regarding the Cultural Development Agreements that have already been signed, MCC is willing to review with concerned First Nations the possibility of reorganizing priorities. ▪ The federal government recognizes the importance of promoting Aboriginal language and culture and is willing to to review projects/initiatives/activities that help promote Aboriginal languages, culture and traditions.

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>3.13 Awareness/training programs intended for the professionals who work in the communities and for the general population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand the « Rencontre Québécois/Autochtones » program ▪ Implementation of a CEGEP and university level training for non native professionals 	<p>Partnerships with MELSQ, SAA, the Justice Department of Quebec, CDPDJ</p>	<p>In 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MELS made commitment to increase its annual funding to the ICEM from \$18,000 to \$30,000 in order to allow the Institute to conduct its cultural awareness campaign. This increase will be guaranteed for the next three years. ▪ The Secretariat of Aboriginal Affairs will set aside \$15,000 for an inter-cultural awareness project. ▪ INAC will commit to join a tripartite committee in order to develop a course to promote the retention of non Aboriginal professionals in First Nations communities in Quebec. ▪ MELS is quite open to joining ICEL and INAC in the work designed to define existing client needs and tools and the contents of the new education services to be provided. ▪ MELS will also fund ICEM so that a professional resource can be hired to coordinate the tripartite implementation committee: budget \$60,000.
<p>3.14 Creating opportunities for sharing of expertise dealing with issues related to First Nations in the world. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language conferences ▪ International First Nations Congress ▪ First Nations Research Chair ▪ First Nations Department 	<p>Financial partnerships with Heritage Canada, Dialog Network, INAC, SAA, MELS and universities</p>	<p>In 2007</p>	<p>Desired partnership</p>

6.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: EDUCATION/CULTURE & LANGUES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>3.15 Aboriginal participation in re-writing of history text books in order to better reflect First Nations contribution to development of Quebec</p>	<p>Partnership with MELS</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MELS is ready now to offer a position to an Aboriginal expert designated by the AFNQL on the Advisory Committee for assessment of didactic resources; this committee defines the criteria of approval of history text books based on approval of approved education program.
<p>3.16 Other action</p>	<p>Collaboration of the Bloc québécois</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If First Nations decide to establish an annual Aboriginal National Lobbying Day, they will receive support from the Bloc québécois.

7. HEALTH PORTFOLIO

7.1 SUMMARY OF EXISTING PROBLEMS IN HEALTH

- There are a number of gray areas in health jurisdictions, especially in regards to the roles and responsibilities of the various government levels.
- In Canada in 2001, the difference in life expectancy for a member of the First Nations compared to that of an immigrant was 6.4 years in favour of the immigrant.
- Some 52% of children, 42% of teens, 67% of adults and 81% of the elderly from the First Nations of Quebec are either overweight or obese.
- Over 14% of adults of the First Nations of Quebec suffer from diabetes, twice the amount of the general population of Quebec. Only 53% of adults have been screened for diabetes.
- Over half the Quebec First Nation's adults are smokers. Over 50% of pregnant women smoked during their pregnancy. 76% of teens started smoking before age 13.
- A smoker who is diabetic has an eleven to one chance of dying from a heart attack and three to one chance of dying from a cardiovascular disease.
- Infant mortality rate in is very high among the First Nations population in Canada.
- The health care system has trouble filling the needs of the First Nations. There will be a serious loss of income, up to 2.85 billions dollars in five years.
- Nurses working for the First Nations are called upon to provide treatment outside the legal framework of their professional practice.
- Many communities have no up-to-date emergency plan to handle emergency situations or pandemics.
- Generally speaking, the First Nations of Canada are suffering from diseases that are existing in Third World countries. For example, the tuberculosis rate is 8 to 10 times higher than that of the rest of the Canadian population.

7.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN HEALTH

Health development for the First Nations requires that they will take charge of a complete health system in a global approach emphasizing prevention. This should be done according to First Nations principles of autonomy, ability and authority.

7.3 ULTIMATE GOALS IN HEALTH

- Improving and maintaining the health of members of the First Nations, on and off communities, to equal the general Canadian population.
- The improvement of living conditions of First Nations members living on and off the communities.
- Protecting members of the communities in case of catastrophes and pandemics

7.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS IN HEALTH

- Pursuing the development and the implementation of a global approach promoting prevention targeting health determinants (environment, lifestyles, healthy child development, etc.)
- Developing a First Nations expertise in research, training, prevention and intervention for the targeted health problems.
- Access to financial resources allowing us to do our own research, develop our own activities and implement the actions included in our strategic plans.
- Better access to quality health services same as the general Quebec population.
- Integrating traditional healing process.
- A global health plan established by the First Nations with priorities and service management in harmony with local communities.
- Clarifying and formalizing of links with immigrant health institutions and harmonizing with their services.
- Acquiring technologies to improve health care and services.
- Focus on specific nursing practice fields in First Nations communities.
- Ability for communities to apply an emergency management plan to handle possible catastrophes or pandemics.
- Improving access to a program of non-insured health benefits (NIHB)
- Control over the First Nations NIHB program that respond to the real needs.

7.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on Health

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the discussions that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum on the theme of Health.

The chief spokesperson for the health portfolio during the Forum was Chief Jean-Charles Piétacho from Ekuanitshit.

Major Messages related to Health

- Improved access for members of First Nations to quality health and prevention services.
- Begin process for transfer of health authority to First Nations.

Contents of Discussion on Health

The first important principle to keep in mind is that First Nations have a holistic vision of health and consequently health treatment should not be approached in the same way it is for the general Quebec population.

(...) "Good health is essential to better education, better employment and better housing. I feel that I am in good health when I speak my own language" stated Chief Jean-Charles Piétacho, Ekuanitshit

The First Nations are the ones who are in the best position to meet the needs of their population, once they have acquired competence in the domain of health.

(...) "Contrary to what governments believe, this is not about teaching us how to take better care of our people, but of allowing us to regain control of our resources [human and financial] as a prerequisite to real development in relation to our health" stated Chief Jean-Charles Piétacho, Ekuanitshit

Concerted action by all First Nations is required and the main focus must be on prevention. The importance of physical activity was also emphasized.

The creation of a health blueprint will be central to the concerted action, as it will define the strategic orientations and the parameters of action to be undertaken.

Several substantial gaps were identified in terms of health services, which hinder the achievement of improved health for the Aboriginal population, especially for populations that are located in remote regions, far away from urban centres. Specific means will be required to fill these gaps, especially through the injection of new resources so that solutions can be found.

(...) "First Nations are partially responsible for these problems. But the lack of recurrent funding is constant" stated David Gill, Youth Council

As nurses have a critical role to fill in community health, especially in remote regions, the nursing role must be adequately regulated in legislation to allow nurses the authority to provide specific treatments, while ensuring that the health of users is protected at all times.

OIIQ offered to cooperate to help this file move forward.

The participants were also reminded that the communities are not prepared to face pandemic emergencies or major catastrophes that might endanger the health and safety of people living in the communities.

Fully aware of their responsibilities in case of a pandemic, the governments announced their commitments to continue with their efforts to inform communities about the importance of emergency preparedness and about Aboriginal participation in defining the roles of the stakeholders (individuals and institutions) who will need to intervene and provide technical support in case of major emergencies.

Recognizing the precariousness of Aboriginal health, as has been frequently reported by the First Nations as well as the variance in health conditions between the general population in Quebec and the Aboriginal population, both governments recognized that health must be given priority focus. The whole basis of the health system must be consolidated: i.e. both the service infrastructure and first line services and special attention must be paid to questions of addiction. Both governments will channel investments in this direction even if they are not able to respond to all requests that have been made.

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Presentation

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to the **Health** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

7.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HEALTH			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP

7.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HEALTH

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>4.1 Blueprint Finalizing and implementing the health blueprint for the First Nations of Quebec</p>	<p>Financial support from the FNIHB, INAC and MSSSQ</p>	<p>In 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MSSS has committed to provide the <i>FNQLHSSC</i> support and expertise to help it finalize its health and social services blueprint. ▪ Health Canada has committed to provide \$50,000 in funds to the <i>FNQLHSSC</i> to help it complete its health action plan in conjunction with its First Nations and provincial partners. ▪ Health Canada: Funds amounting to \$12.1 M over 4 years will be set aside for the First Nations, the Inuit and the Métis of the Quebec region. These funds will be used to help adapt health services to their needs as and to facilitate integration of health services provided by Quebec with those funded by the government of Canada. (Details of how \$12.1 M are to be distributed: \$63 M \$ over 4 will be reserved for the province of Quebec to allow it to adapt existing services so that they are better suited to meet Aboriginal needs. \$5.8 M will be reserved for First Nations and Inuit communities and for Aboriginal organizations in Quebec as part of the health integration budget, which will be provided the Aboriginal Health Transition Fund.)

7.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HEALTH

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>4.2 Awareness and prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development and implementation of health awareness and prevention strategies to fight against the various health problems 	<p>Financial support from the FNIHB, INAC and MESS</p>	<p>From here to 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MSSS made the commitment to transfer to the <i>FNQLHSSC</i> the \$100,000 that has been reserved for Quebec in 2006-2007 from the Aboriginal Transition Health Fund. The government of Quebec committed to pursue its discussions with Health Canada in order to obtain the \$6.3 million that has been reserved for Quebec by Health Canada as part of the Transition Fund and to transfer these sums to the <i>FNQLHSSC</i>. ▪ <i>FNQLHSSC</i> core funding will be increased from \$ 166 000 to \$ 210 528; \$44 528 will be applicable in the current year and indexed for subsequent years. ▪ Health Canada announced \$16.2 M over 5 years in upstream investments for health promotion and prevention in Aboriginal communities. ▪ MSSS has committed to systematize the referral function which will make it easier to ensure continuity of care, for individuals who have received treatment outside the community and then return and continue treatment within their own community. This will allow for faster and better convalescence.

7.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HEALTH

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>4.3 Emergency plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting up or updating emergency management plans in communities ▪ Training staff in communities ▪ Development of a section on the pandemic 	<p>Cooperation agreement and financial support from INAC, Health Canada, MSSS,</p>	<p>In 2006 & 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Canada has set aside \$280 000 (\$10 000 per community) to help communities develop their emergency action for influenza and other epidemics in Quebec. • Health Canada continues to advise communities to ensure that they are adequately prepared for any pandemic by identifying the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, so that the technical support needed will be well coordinated and readily available. • Health Canada will offer an additional \$50 000 to the <i>FNQLHSSC</i> so that it can hire a liaison/coordination officer to ensure preparedness for influenza and other epidemics. • INAC has committed to fund emergency plans and to assume training requirements for all First Nations communities in the upcoming years. • INAC will provide \$40,000 for the development of an information kit on psychosocial intervention in the event of any major influenza outbreak. • MSSS reserves an amount of \$ 60,000 for coordination and liaison purposes between the communities and the health network

7.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HEALTH

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW-UP
<p>4.4 Developing a framework for nursing Developing a framework for nursing in communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating an interprofessional committee on the health of the First Nations with concerned professional corporations 	<p>1. Financial support to set up the committee and implement its findings: Health Canada, FNIHB, MSSSQ 2. Expertise support: Ordre des infirmiers et infirmières du Québec (OIIQ)</p>	<p>In 2006 & 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MSSS, in conjunction with the MSSS has committed to working with First Nations to redefine nursing regulations to ensure that nursing practice is exercised to the advantage of First Nations communities. ▪ OIIQ supports the CSSSPNQL and communities in this process. ▪ Health Canada will provide \$32 000 to the <i>FNQLHSSC</i> so that it can hire a professional resource person and develop a working plan to review the legislative provisions that govern nursing practice in First Nations communities.

8. SOCIAL SERVICES / EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES Portfolio

8.1 SUMMARY OF EXISTING PROBLEMS IN SOCIAL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Social services¹

- 46% of teenage girls, 23% of teenage boys and 39% of adults have already contemplated suicide;
- 12% of teenagers and 18% of adults have tried to commit suicide in the course of their life.
- 44% of teenagers have used drugs or volatile substances in a period of 12 months.
- A majority of community workers estimate that at least 50% of members of the communities were victim of sexual abuse and that the rate is increasing.
- The rate of spousal abuse and homicides are 8 times higher in First Nations women than in non native women.
- In 2005-2006, 10 943 placement files were registered for a population of 11 372 youths aged 0 to 18. These files concerned 1005 children for a total of 191 309 days in placement.
- 50% of teenagers repeated a school year; 41% of teenagers have problems at school.
- 20% of adults receive employment insurance and 24% get social assistance.
- 60% of adults have an annual income of 20,000\$ or less; 61% of First Nations women report an income below 10,000\$.

Early childhood services:

- The number of allotted spaces presently available to the First Nations does not respond to the needs of a really young and increasing population.
- Members of the First Nations living in urban areas cannot access the First Nations and Inuit Daycare Initiative although many families have to reside outside the communities.
- No specific funds are available for First Nations children with special needs.
- Off reserve daycare is not adapted to the First Nations culture and realities.

8.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN SOCIAL SERVICES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

The development and the social well-being of First Nations requires the full take over of the health system according to a global approach that focus on life promotion, healthy child development and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. This must be done according to the principles of First Nations autonomy, jurisdiction and authority. All First Nations children and their families must have access to quality services controlled by the community. They must also have access to culturally relevant services that enrich the language and that contribute to allow children, their families and the community to reach their full potential.

¹ Data taken from the First Nations Longitudinal Health Survey, 2002, FNQLHSSC and the First Nations Study on sexual abuse led by Quebec Native Women in 2005.

8.3 ULTIMATE GOALS IN SOCIAL SERVICES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Improving living conditions for First Nations members, on and off communities.
- Improving the psychosocial and spiritual health of First Nations members, on and off communities, especially by targeting problems of poverty, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, addiction, violence and sexual abuse, most of those particularly affecting women, children and teenagers.
- The protection of children and their cultural identity.
- The legal recognition of traditional adoption.
- The decrease of the First Nations homeless population in the cities.

8.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS IN SOCIAL SERVICES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

In Social services

- Developing global psychosocial approaches adapted to the on and off reserve context, in focusing on prevention measures.
- Improving the availability and accessibility to psychosocial services for:
 - Suicide: setting up a full range of services adapted to on and off communities, especially targeting youths.
 - Violence and sexual abuse: developing prevention and intervention programs adapted to on and off reserve particularly for women.
 - Addictions and drug and alcohol abuse: expanding the NNADAP program to include all forms of addiction.
- Developing and applying prevention and support strategies to families and the whole community to fight against the different social problems.
- Improving shelter services offered to First Nations women and children victims of all forms of violence.
- Developing our own First Nations youth protection system.
- Developing a First Nations expertise in research, training, prevention and intervention in the targeted psychosocial problems.
- Increasing the number of front line workers, on and off reserve.
- Access to financial resources allowing implementing strategic plans.
- Developing a process to fight poverty including the professional and personal skills development, to create jobs and to improve living conditions.
- Setting up activities related to social and cooperative economy in First Nations communities.
- Identification of development areas to diminish poverty.

Early childhood services

- Developing a First Nations authority for daycare services, on and off reserve.
- Improve the global approach in programs and initiatives aimed at developing early childhoods keeping in mind the needs and realities of the communities.
- The creation of a group of First Nations Childcare services.
- Equal access to services for children with special needs as well as for their families.
- Continued training for front line workers working with First Nations children;.
- Developing a support program for parents with children aged 0 to 6 (promotion of parenting skills, etc.)

- Elaboration and offer of education programs targeting culture and languages for children.
- Developing reading programs.

8.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on Social Services /Early Childhood Services

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the discussions that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum on the theme of Social Services /Early Childhood Services.

The chief spokesperson for the Social Services /Early Childhood Services portfolio during the Forum was Chief Daniel Pien from Lac-Simon.

Major Messages related to Social Services /Early Childhood Services

- Adopt a holistic health view linked to the physical, spiritual, emotional and mental lifestyles and values of the First Nations.
- Increase financial resources in order to be able to respond to these needs.
- Inject new resources in order to facilitate prevention.
- Continue to work towards the development of a First Nations authority in the area of social services and early childhood services.

Contents of Discussion on Services Social

Problems occurring in the area of social services are inter-related and linked to all the dimensions of health: physical, spiritual, emotional and mental. In other words, First Nations have a holistic view of health, which stems from their millennial values and traditions.

In the opinion of many, the resulting social problems of the First Nations appear to be the symptoms of a social malaise and community identity crisis. This view draws a link between the manifestation of the problems, the cultural development, and the respect for the traditional life style of Aboriginal peoples.

It will be through their capacity to exercise full authority over social services that First Nations will be in a better position to answer the needs of the users.

*(...) "We must make sure that our children and youth have the opportunity to learn their language and to know their origins, their culture and their history."
Chief Daniel Pien, Lac-Simon*

(...) "Substance abuse is a form of evasion. [this is because] there is a problem with the system of values." Nakka Bertrand, CJPNQL

A holistic approach is based on the premise that actions and interventions should focus on prevention, especially because the First Nations population is largely composed of young people. However, almost all the resources invested, both financial and human, are devoted to crisis management and there remains very little left over to promote long term changes.

In spite of this observation, it is crucial to review and increase the financial resources to ensure that funding for First Nations is proportional to the needs expressed and the distress they provoke, including but not limited to violence, suicide, child placements, and substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, gaming, etc.). These realities are often the sad plight of Aboriginals living both inside and outside the communities. Such problems are increasing.

The placement of First Nations children in foster homes or centres outside the communities is of grave concern to the First Nations; it is a way of uprooting them from their culture and of ignoring their specific needs and lifestyles.

Quebec Native Women suffer the negative impact of this “epidemic of violence”, particularly sexual violence against women and children. This observation is closely related to the pressing need to provide financial support to facilities that provide assistance to women and children, including first line psychosocial counselling and shelter services. Such support is deemed indispensable for the full integration into the socioeconomic and political life of First Nations communities

(...) « [We] need a multi-level approach ». Ellen Gabriel, president QNW

Women pointed out to the federal government representatives the structural disadvantages that arise from the non recognition of specific rights for native women in the communities, particularly in the area of marriage.

First Nations members who live in the urban centres experience very similar conditions. Intervention in this context however will be different and the focus of intervention will lie mainly with the Friendship Centres. The development of an action plan and of a calendar is urgent and must be completed as soon as possible for First Nations members inside and outside of their communities.

Governments have admitted the problems that afflict members of the First Nations. Yet their response has been far below the level of financial support requested. They prefer to invoke the structural causes of existing problems. The First Nations stakeholders did however appreciate the admissions made and the efforts offered, especially by the government of Quebec.

Contents of Discussion on Early Childhood Services

The importance of early childhood becomes all the more relevant, when one takes into consideration the birth rate of the First Nations population; early childhood must be seen as the gateway to the future for First Nations.

The focus again must be on a holistic approach that includes, health, culture and education.

The improvement of early childhood services, the development of First Nations authority over these services, the development of services for special needs children and the support for their families, training for educators and support for parenting skills are major issues in this file.

It was also deemed important to develop a global strategy for all these services, inside and outside of communities.

The government of Quebec demonstrated its support for the objective of developing quality early childhood services, by indicating that it was willing to consider the transfer of some childcare services.

Presentation

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to **Social Services and Early Childhood** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

8.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : SOCIAL SERVICES & EARLY CHILDHOOD			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
SOCIAL SERVICES			
<p>5.1 Psychosocial intervention services Set up psychosocial first line intervention services adapted to First Nations in the communities and Friendship Centres especially for vulnerable groups (children, Youth, women, elders and people on social assistance) o Develop intervention skills</p>	<p>1. Financial support for the communities: INAC 2. Financial support for the Native Friendship Centres : MSSS 3. Sharing of expertise to develop skills: MESS</p>	<p>Starting in 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MSSS, in partnership with Friendship Centres, has committed to a transfer of knowledge and expertise between local social service centres and the Friendship Centres to identify areas of compatibility and potential partnership for the delivery of services to members of First Nations.
<p>5.2 Suicide prevention Implementation of the suicide action plan for First Nations "Action for Life" o Developing local development plans and tools for prevention, intervention, post intervention, psychosocial support, medical support and support for those in grieving</p>	<p>Financial and technical support: INAC, Health Canada, Technical support: MSSS</p>	<p>Starting in 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The federal government will continue its involvement at the working group consultation table (Quebec, Canada, First Nations) regarding communities in crisis. ▪ MSSS has committed to promoting knowledge and expertise transfer for benefit of community case workers who are interested in developing front line services, including training programs that produce a positive impact on suicide prevention. ▪ Health Canada shall review the possibility of updating the

**8.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN :
SOCIAL SERVICES & EARLY CHILDHOOD**

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
in grieving			<p>action plan <i>Action for Life</i> and is considering funding certain other activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health Canada has committed to continue its work with Aboriginal organizations for suicide prevention in FN communities and will commit \$ 3,8 in funding over 4 years as upstream investments for suicide prevention among Aboriginal youth in Quebec. For each of the next 4 years, \$100,000 will be set aside as part of a regional emergency crisis intervention fund. In 2006-2007, \$400,000 will be budgeted for community impact projects and \$7,000 will be made available to each community that wishes to apply for this provision. ▪ MSSS has committed to a transfer of knowledge and expertise for the benefit of community social service workers who wish to develop first line services through training programs that shall be designed to produce an impact in terms of suicide reduction.
<p>5.3 Fight against drug and alcohol abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the NNADAP program be extended to include other forms of addiction • Creation of a First Nations detox centre 	<p>Financial support: INAC, MSSS and SAA</p>	<p>Starting in 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MSSS has committed to launch with <i>FNQLHSSC</i> a communication program designed for specific communities, the purpose of which is to prevent the shift from pleasure gambling to excessive gambling (\$265,000 investment) and to train community social workers to recognize compulsive gambling (\$72,500 investment). MSSS makes the commitment to review access to adapted detoxification services to be designed in consultation with First Nations. ▪ Health Canada has committed to continue its work with First Nations and Inuit to improve access to services for treatment of other forms of addiction, and this in conjunction with Quebec services. ▪ Health Canada will reserve a \$80,000 budget for 2006-2007 to examine possibilities of ongoing training for addictions counsellors, particularly by way of distance training.

**8.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN :
SOCIAL SERVICES & EARLY CHILDHOOD**

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>5.4 Fight against violence and sexual abuse Improving service delivery to fight against violence, especially violence towards women and children living on and off reserve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing intervention protocols and prevention activities ▪ Developing expertise and developing training for community workers ▪ Follow up with the implementation of the global prevention, awareness and intervention strategy for sexual abuse for First Nations ▪ Increased shelters for victims of violence ▪ Developing support services for victims ▪ Broadening the partnerships with the workers and non native networks through an advisory committee "For the Betterment of our Nations" ▪ Creating a specific program for abusers 	<p>1. Financial support from the Government of Canada and the Québec Government</p> <p>2. Government of Canada and Québec Government to address underfunding of the First Nations women shelters</p>	<p>Starting in 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As part of the government action plan to reduce domestic violence, MFACF will continue its awareness program, including an Aboriginal specific component. The program will include theatre sketches for schools, a directory of available resources and an Aboriginal community radio campaign. ▪ MSSS made the commitment to provide \$50 000 recurrent funding, beginning in 2007-2008, to create a coordinator position with the NWQ for women’s shelters and the promotion of non-violence. ▪ INAC has committed to continue its \$51,000 funding for NWQ training activities and support for women’s shelters and will also grant NWQ \$75,000 for implementation of its Global Prevention, Awareness and Intervention Strategy for First Nations women who are the victims of domestic violence. The <i>FNQLHSSC</i> will also be involved in this strategy. ▪ In order to satisfy the needs of 5 shelters located in First Nations communities in Quebec, \$158,050 will available immediately for the operating needs of the centres. The funds will be reviewed for an increase.
<p>5.5 Youth Protection</p>	<p>Financial and expertise support:</p>	<p>From now until 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MSSS made the commitment to work with First Nations to

**8.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN :
SOCIAL SERVICES & EARLY CHILDHOOD**

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>Creation of a First Nations authority for Youth protection Put in place measures to ensure that services are adapted to First Nations realities on and off reserve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognition of traditional adoption ▪ Carrying out research by First Nations on issues related to child placement and support to families ▪ Developing mechanisms for foster care in the communities ▪ Support strategies for parents and families ▪ Creation of a management system for child and family services ▪ Applying the recommendations included in the memoir on Bill 125 ▪ Applying recommendations found in the Wen:de Report "The Journey Continues" <p>Protecting elders</p>	<p>support: INAC, Health Canada, MSSS and MFACF</p>	<p>2009</p>	<p>review evaluation criteria for the accreditation of foster and placement centres for youth in difficulty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MSSS made the commitment to work with First Nations to develop a common framework for communities that desire to adopt their own youth protection regime, as they are entitled to do under S. 37.5 of the Youth Protection Act. ▪ By agreement with INAC, MSSS shall invest monies saved through the ceiling cap on youth protection services provided by the Youth Centres and on the INAC additional contributions for the development of first line services. The sums amounting to \$ 1.5 millions over 3 years are to be invested in first line services To the amount of \$500,000 till March 31, 2007 to implement new initiatives including development of concrete prevention and family support measures. ▪ INAC will fund \$25 000 to determine which prevention services should be given priority for First Nations and what kind of support is needed for the strategies to be implemented. ▪ Health Canada has confirmed it will provide \$25,000 for a pilot project to determine First Nations needs with respect to parenting skills and prevention services. ▪ INAC to fund \$35 000 for development of First Nations authority with respect to family and childcare. ▪ INAC to take part in tripartite discussions on traditional adoption and accreditation of foster homes or families. ▪ MFACF wishes to examine the mechanisms to be put in place for assistance to elders. Meetings will be held to discuss possible mechanisms.
<p>5.6 Regional Research and Development</p>	<p>Financial support: MSSS, FNIHB,</p>	<p>Starting in 2007</p>	<p>Desired partnership</p>

**8.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN :
SOCIAL SERVICES & EARLY CHILDHOOD**

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a program on best practices on prevention and intervention tools • Research on the pre-disposing factors of the overrepresentation of First Nations children in childcare 	INAC		
<p>5.7 Early Childhood Services Develop a First Nations authority for First Nations Childcare services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delegation of certain powers for First Nations childcare services 	Agreements with MFACF, concerning the delegation and exercise of certain powers for childcare services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From now until 2010 2. In 2007-2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MFACF reiterated its intention to negotiate with the <i>FNQLHSSC</i> an agreement on the delegation of certain childcare services. ▪ Childcare services are eligible for the handicapped children allowances and for the allowance for children from underprivileged regions.
<p>5.8 Developing a global strategy for First Nations early childhood services on and off reserve</p>	Government of Quebec and Canada	From now until 2008	
<p>5.9 Broadening of access to program and funding for First Nations early childhood services off reserve</p>	Government of Quebec and Canada	From now until 2008	Desired partnership

9. INFRASTRUCTURES Portfolio

9.1 SUMMARY OF EXISTING PROBLEMS IN THE AREA OF INFRASTRUCTURES

- Not all First Nations communities have access to high-quality drinking water.
- In a large number of communities, the water treatment plants need to be upgraded.
- Need for ongoing training for the water management technicians in many communities.
- There is a lack of data, shortage of qualified personnel and follow-up in relation to the water management in First Nations communities as a whole.
- Many communities situated in isolated regions are linked to the provincial road network through unpaved roads which makes it very difficult to maintain in all seasons.
- The sharing of those unpaved roads with the heavy goods vehicle traffic on extended distances creates major safety problems for First Nations users.
- Communities which are not linked to the road network incur outrageous costs in order to move around and get their supplies.
- A large number of communities have an internal road network that is unpaved and difficult to maintain and drain. Therefore, numerous health problems become associated to the omnipresence of dust in the air and to water leaks in basements.
- Many remote, isolated or hemmed-in communities use the bush network built by the forest industry. Three problems arise: the environmental impact; the respect of the First Nations' rights; the safety on those roads and the lack of road markings.
- Access to the territories through the use of bush roads is creating a pressure threatening territorial occupation activities as well as ecosystems and at the same time is disrupting wildlife habitats.

9.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN INFRASTRUCTURES

The upgrading of the living conditions and socioeconomic development of the First Nations starts with the restoration of equity between the First Nations and the municipalities and surrounding towns in regards to living conditions. This involves firstly the First Nations' participation in the decision-making process of infrastructures and economic spin-offs which are generated, and secondly the development of skills and capacity building of the First Nations in areas connected to infrastructures.

9.3 ULTIMATE GOALS FOR INFRASTRUCTURES

- Achieving the level of category A (low intervention level) for all aqueduct networks and waste water systems of Quebec's First Nations communities as a whole.
- Road networks for isolated or remote communities, comparable to those of the municipalities and surrounding towns.
- Safer access roads.
- Local road networks with easier maintenance.
- A marked decrease of respiratory problems caused by dust.
- Economic spin-offs for those First Nations affected by the infrastructure projects.

9.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS FOR INFRASTRUCTURES

- Linking isolated communities to the provincial road network.
- Standardization of the local road networks for isolated communities.
- The involvement of the First Nations in the decision-making process and in water management, from hydrographic basins to taps.
- Acquisition of skills and expertise in water management.
- Monitoring the high-quality of infrastructure (roads and aqueduct and sewerage networks).
- Guaranteed funding required for the necessary infrastructure works.

9.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on Infrastructure

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the discussions that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum on the theme of Infrastructure.

The chief spokesperson for the Infrastructure portfolio during the Forum was Grand Chief Lucien Wabanonik of the Algonquin Nation Anishinabeg.

Major Messages related to Infrastructure

- Infrastructure development is essential to economic development.
- Infrastructure quality has an impact on the First Nations health and security.

Contents of Discussion on Infrastructure

Appropriate and adequate infrastructure development is one of the main conditions for sustainable socioeconomic development in First Nations communities. Such sustainable development will never be possible without the full participation of the First Nations at every stage of the decision-making and implementation process, including discussions on the economic spin-offs ensuing there from.

(...) "First Nations have been kept out of the decision-making process at both the federal and the provincial levels." Chief Lucien Wabanonik, Grand Chief Anishinabeg

Infrastructure development is also closely related to housing, to the economic activities, to the health and to the safety of the First Nations. Some of the most important infrastructure requirements are potable water management and access roads to and from communities.

As the government of Quebec has prime responsibility in this area, it responded by inviting First Nations representatives to join in a regional reflection process on lands, resources and road access issues.

Some of the stakeholders from the regional municipal administrations offered their cooperation in order to help to work with the First Nations in a global review of water and watershed management issues.

Presentation

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to **Infrastructures** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

9.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : INFRASTRUCTURES			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP

9.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : INFRASTRUCTURES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>6.1 First Nations' involvement in water management</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuing training for First Nations water management technicians 2. Establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive picture of the situation 3. Ensure the follow-up of works on the water management systems within communities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expertise and financial support for training : INAC, Health Canada, Environment Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support: MDDEP • Support by the UMQ 	<p>From here until 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INAC has committed to provide \$ 70 000 in funding to consult partners on the best mode of consultation-coordination and to ensure support for First Nations in the performance of their community water management duties. ▪ Health Canada has committed to pursue its efforts to increase the monitoring and surveillance capacities with respect to water quality in Aboriginal communities by means of training sessions that will be designed for community controllers. ▪ Environment Canada shall continue to act as expert stakeholder with Health Canada and INAC and will provide expert technical advice when required to intervene in specific projects such as waste water management. ▪ MDDEP can also provide technical expertise on water management issues. It made the commitment to cooperate and provide its technical expertise to avoid potential accidents. ▪ MDDEP has reiterated the intention of the partners of the Saint Lawrence Action Plan to integrate interested First Nations and that First Nations be considered as stakeholders in water issues. ▪ The UMQ invited the First Nations to join various organizations involved in watershed issues. The UMQ has developed an apprenticeship program for operators, which is given on site with accompaniment. UMQ made the commitment to provide liaison services to First Nations.

9.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : INFRASTRUCTURES

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>6.2</p> <p>Development and implementation of a plan (over a 3-year range) to maintain, build and pave access roads to isolated communities and their local road networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Setting-up of a work table ○ Identification of target roads ○ Feasibility study to be done or completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Technical and financial partnerships with: Transport Quebec & SAA b. In collaboration with INAC 	<p>From 2007 to 2010 (3 yrs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MTQ intends to increase the grant offered as part of the <i>Access Road Maintenance Program for Remote Communities</i> to \$4,000/km per Aboriginal community in order to ensure proper road maintenance. ▪ MTQ wishes to offer its participation as well as that of the SAA at a tripartite consultation table in order to proceed with a needs assessment and to set the priorities for interventions. ▪ The MTQ would like to see the creation of or assist with the implementation of enabling conditions with regards to the training and accompaniment in the area of road repairs and maintenance. ▪ INAC has committed to take part in a discussion table with the First Nations and Quebec to assess needs and set the priorities for interventions.
<p>6.3 Other</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The government of Quebec announced the third funding round of the Aboriginal Initiative Fund (AIF) for a total of \$35 million over 5 years to allow Aboriginal organizations and communities to renew and improve community equipment and infrastructures. An advisory committee will be created to ensure effective management that truly responds to First Nations needs.

10. HOUSING Portfolio

10.1 SUMMARY OF THE CURRENT PROBLEMS IN THE AREA OF HOUSING

- In 2006, the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador have been living through a real housing crisis with a backlog of 8 800 units and 40% of the housing stock being in need of renovations.
- The beneficial effects of the additional funding announced by the Federal Government in 2005 will be lost because of the permanent reduction of the social housing budget (-38%).
- The lack of funding to tackle the issue of contamination by mould and vermiculite.
- The announced investments are insufficient to resolve the crisis.
- Some communities in need of new housing constructions cannot go ahead with their projects due to a lack of space on their territory.
- The transfer of land to communities for housing construction purposes takes from 7 to 10 years in average.
- The inability of the First Nations to provide new housing units to members living off territory.
- High-quality housing is indispensable to ensure superior quality of education, health, economic development and general well-being.
- The poor housing conditions are one of the three key factors responsible for the numerous foster care placements in First Nations communities.
- The inability to access capital funding is a tremendous barrier to housing development on and off territory.

10.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN HOUSING

The securing of upgraded living conditions of First Nations members, both on and off territory, starts with the establishment and implementation of a new comprehensive pact with the federal government, the participation of the other partners of the First Nations in the area of housing and a complete take-over by the latter of their housing development.

10.3 ULTIMATE GOALS IN HOUSING

- A concrete upgrading of the housing conditions in First Nations communities.
- The reduction of social pathologies associated to poor housing conditions both on and off territory.
- A wide range of choices as regards housing construction for First Nations members living on and off territory.
- A sense of belonging to the First Nations with regards to the new housing approach.

10.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS IN HOUSING

- The elimination of the housing backlog in the communities within a five-year span.
- Speed-up the transfer of parcels of land to the First Nations for housing construction purposes in the communities and the establishment of new communities.
- Promote healthier housing conditions in the communities.
- The exercise by First Nations of their authority in the area of housing on and off territory, as well as the means required to allow them to fully assume control.
- An appropriate First Nations capacity to provide quality housing in compliance with a rate of occupation that is acceptable to their members living on and off territory.
- Improved First Nations' access to capital in order to significantly increase construction.
- A wide range of options to control, manage and build housing based on the needs of each nation, including the current system (2006).
- The possibility for each First Nation to negotiate new housing agreements directly with Canada, within the scope of the new approach.

10.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on housing

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the discussions that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum on the theme of housing.

The chief spokesperson for the housing portfolio during the Forum was Chief Lance Haymond of Eagle Village First Nation.

Major Messages related to housing

- Poor housing conditions are the cause of a wide range of social problems for First Nations communities.
- The gaps between housing needs and supply are enormous and are increasing year in year out.
- First Nations should acquire their own housing authority.

Contents of Discussion on housing

In conclusion to a process that goes back to the year 2000, the housing presentation given by the First Nations chief spokesperson for this portfolio, demonstrated clearly the urgency of the current housing shortage as well as substandard living conditions. The presentation also shed light on the increasing housing gap between supply and demand.

It was also demonstrated that poor housing conditions are the root causes of a range of social problems such as violence, abuse and addictions.

The question of the third world conditions prevalent in the community of Kitcisakik was also aired and broadly criticized.

(...) "The conditions we live in are very similar to those of a refugee camp...although we are located next to a Hydro-Quebec dam... we have no electricity. We share our water from a community well" stated Chief Edmond Brazeau, Kitcisakik

(...) "The Ininiks [of Kitcisakik] do not want a turnkey project. They want to make their own decisions" stated Chief. Edmond Brazeau, Kitcisakik

Based on these observations, the First Nations proposed a phase of accelerated housing initiatives to allow the supply to catch up with the demand, which would unfold in parallel with an initiative to explore new ways of delivering housing services. The ultimate goal would be for First Nations to take charge of community housing development based on a model that would offer a range of solutions adapted to the needs of each nation.

The government representatives recognized the extreme urgency of the housing conditions, which should be considered as a prerequisite for First Nations socioeconomic development. They also recognized the gap between supply and demand in First Nations communities.

Both levels of government stated that housing would be a priority focus of the priorities they would have to treat. The best way to deal with such priorities will be through structural changes and through the eventual control of housing by a First Nations authority.

The main stakeholder in this file, the federal government, was not able to give a positive response to the demands that had been articulated. It limited its commitment to the “development of a tripartite action plan” with CMHC and the AFNQL, with discussions to be continued.

In response to failure of the federal government to respond to these issues, the First Nations demonstrated their disappointment.

Presentation

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to **Housing** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

10.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HOUSING			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
REDUCE THE HOUSING SUPPLY LAG			

10.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HOUSING

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>7.1</p> <p>Construction of 8 800 housing units, renovation of 5 000 units, decontamination of 1 700 units, and infrastructures to serve 7 300 lots for housing construction in First Nations communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of more efficient tools of acquisition of new lands for housing construction purposes • Establishment of fully-fledged new communities (ex : Kitcisakik) • Development of capacities within the First Nations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of a tripartite action plan (INAC, CMHC, First Nations) 2. Funding for a housing coordinator 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. from 2006/07 to 2011/12 2. Effective 2007/08 3. Effective 2006 4. Effective 2006 5. Effective 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INAC and CMHC announced their commitment to work with First Nations towards the development of a tripartite action plan to increase the supply of suitable housing in the communities and to continue to provide the same level of technical and financial support to the tripartite housing committee to enable implementation of the committee's joint working plan • INAC to fund AFNQL Housing Coordinator Position: \$100,000 • CMHC announced possibility of negotiating with AFNQL the provision of resources to provide a housing program for First Nations members living outside communities.

NEW HOUSING APPROACH

10.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HOUSING

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>7.2</p> <p>Preparation of negotiations on a new housing approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparation of the negotiation position of the AFNQL ▪ Preparation and implementation of a community strategy of the AFNQL with the First Nations ▪ Management of the negotiation process by the AFNQL and the First Nations 	<p>Financial support of the Canadian Government</p>	<p>From 2006 to 2008</p>	<p>In the event that the federal government decides to issue new budget envelopes, the SHQ will be open to the possibility of reviewing and negotiating with the AFNQL the resources required to implement a housing program for members of the First Nations who live outside the communities.</p> <p>Desired partnership</p>

10.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : HOUSING

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>7.3</p> <p>Establishment of a negotiation table for the development of a new housing approach for both on and off territory in regards notably to the exercise of authority in this area, as well as new methods of funding, accountability, construction, maintenance, capacity building (planning, management, and governance), domiciliary ownership, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of experimentation projects in regards to new housing approaches. • Facilitate the access to capital for the development of housing on and off territory. • Implementation of the new approach 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation at the table : Government of Canada , CMHC 2. Financial support for development of pilot projects : Government of Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 yrs starting in 2007 • Starting in 2007 • Starting in 2007/08 • Starting in 2006 • Starting in 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INAC announced its commitment to contribute financial and technical resources to help create experimental projects to explore innovative housing solutions in the communities. Financially: \$100 000 in 2006-2007 and \$200 000 in 2007-2008. ▪ Will continue collaboration in regional tripartite housing committee (INAC, CMHC and AFNQL).

11. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & YOUTH COMMITMENTS Portfolio

CONTEXT (NOTE TO READER)

Discussions on the theme of sustainable community development took place during the final session of the Forum on Friday morning, October 27, since the Forum was scheduled to end at noon on the Friday.

On the same morning, two other themes were also discussed, infrastructure and housing.

The reader must understand that at a certain point, the discussions on sustainable community development began to be impacted by the tone of discussions that had taken place earlier in the morning and hence the parties felt that it was necessary to modify the agenda and to get right into the more politically motivated issues.

For this reason, some of the elements that were to be discussed under sustainable community development were postponed and the discussions were focused on much broader themes than had originally been planned in the Forum Working Document.

The reader will find a summary of these discussions in the first part of this document in the section entitled *Contents and Highlights*.

Thus most of the themes to be discussed under sustainable community development were not formally discussed with the exception of Points 8.1, 8.4 and 8.10.

Nonetheless the discussions that were held prior to the Forum on these points make it possible to outline certain partnerships. These have been integrated into the Action Plan Table on sustainable community development, as the reader will certainly see a little farther on in this document.

It is also worth pointing out that during said discussions a certain number of partnerships and commitments related to the Youth theme were also developed. These partnerships were announced during the closing hours of the Forum and have been included in a final Table, which follows the Table on sustainable community development.

11.1 SUMMARY OF THE CURRENT PROBLEMATICS IN THE AREA OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Some outfitting operations, forestry and mining camps have contaminated the soils on First Nations territories with wastage, oil, gas, etc.
- There is no financial program available to clean up the contaminated sites.
- The development of projects (hydroelectric, forestry, mining, transport, resort) is decreasing the quality of the territory (lakes, rivers, forests and biodiversity) in its entirety.
- There are no updated statistics on the First Nations of Quebec and the federal government does not comply with the OCAP principles.
- The federal government does not recognize the research and consultation protocols developed by the AFNQL.
- This way of doing things does not take into account the culture and realities of the First Nations and contravenes to the First Nations' right to governance, as recognized by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.
- An increasing migration of First Nations members towards urban centers.

11.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN COMMUNITY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The vision of the First Nations in the area of sustainable community development is based on notions of balance, respect and accountability. A balanced sustainable development entails meeting the current needs without compromising the capacity of the future generations in making choices and growing.

A respectful sustainable development implies a harmonious co-habitation of human beings with

the physical environment. It requires that the resources of the environment be managed according to the capacity of the setting.

A responsible sustainable development entails a harmonious management of economic, social, cultural, environmental, institutional and political dimensions of the First Nations setting. It calls

upon the development of know-how and partnerships.

This holistic vision takes root in the values, principles and practices as well as in the cultural diversity which constitutes the specificity of the First Nations.

11.3 ULTIMATE GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- A safe environment for individuals and the First Nations communities.
- The rehabilitation and maintenance of biodiversity.
- The continuity of natural resources.
- The effective utilization of natural resources and a responsible consumption.
- Consider the needs of the future generations when meeting today's current needs.
- Governance institutions endowed with tools and necessary means to achieve their economic development mandates, on and off the territory.

11.4 MEANS AND WAYS TO REACH THE GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Active participation of the First Nations in all consultation processes preceding the elaboration of government measures which have an impact on their socioeconomic development.
- An enlightened knowledge on the part of the First Nations decision-makers and necessary support in relation to their decisions.
- Development of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.
- Awareness of risks linked to climate changes among the communities.
- The need of partnerships with the other occupants and users of the territory.
- Participation in the decision-making process.
- Involvement of the First Nations in the assessment of impacts, analysis of sites and identification of rational solutions added to the promotion of skills transfer.
- Involvement of youths and women in the decision-making process.
- Control of quality of human actions (governance, compliance with regulations and protocols, codes of ethics and conduct).
- Establishment or strengthening of structures supporting the First Nations members living in urban centers.

11.5 Summary of Forum Discussions on Sustainable Community Development

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the discussions that were held at the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum on the theme sustainable community development.

The chief spokesperson for the sustainable community development portfolio during the Forum was Grand Chief Lucien Wabanonik from the Algonquin Nation Anishinabeg.

Major Messages related to sustainable community development

- Co-management of lands and resources is essential for sustainable community development.

Contents of Discussion on sustainable community development

Fully aware of the sensitivity of this issue, the First Nations stated with great insistence that sustainable development issues are closely related to land and the co-management of lands and territories.

*(...) "In a perspective of sustainable community development, land and resources are at the very heart of the First Nations identity. This privileged link is misunderstood and therefore garnishes very little of the respect it deserves."
Grand Chief Lucien Wabanonik, Algonquin Nation Anishinabeg*

The First Nations are demanding an end to internal colonialism and that they be fully associated with any socioeconomic development that occurs on the territories they occupy. This must be through co-management of the land resources based on protection for Aboriginal living habitats and responsible management of available resources for the long term and equitable benefit of all parties involved.

Co-management means that First Nations must acquire the tools that will allow them to fulfil their role; this will be achieved through the reinforcement of the financial and technical capacities of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Institute for Sustainable Development, including the resources it needs to adequately consult FN populations and to gather the data required while ensuring the integrity and intellectual property of all data gathered for the purposes of decision-making.

Certain actions must be taken to protect the First Nations living habitats and to prepare communities to deal with the effects of ongoing climate change.

The governments, especially the government of Quebec, stated that they appreciated the First Nations position and offered First Nations a greater role in national decisions to be made in Quebec as well as in local and regional affairs with regional or municipal governments. The desired goal is to create new solidarity between local authorities and First Nations communities.

First Nations involvement at the initial stages of any decision-making process is a principle that is recognized and accepted. Both governments also promised to improve cooperation

between government services and First Nations to ensure that their needs are adequately met.

Lastly, in response to the demand for stable and recurrent funding for existing First Nations institutions, both governments identified the sources of dedicated funding for “recognized Aboriginal community organizations”.

Presentation

Please refer to the context notes at the beginning of the sustainable community development section.

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to **Sustainable development** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

11.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>8.1 Implementation of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion table on the harmonization of policies of the governments of Quebec and Canada with the Strategy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation of the governments of Quebec and Canada in the Discussion table. 2. Adequate funding agreement to pursue the promotion and implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting-up of the Table :in 2006 2. Funding to pursue promotion: in 2007 3. Funding for implementation : from now to 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INAC has committed to continue discussions on sectorial cooperation in order to ensure implementation of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador sustainable development strategy and of the INAC policy. ▪ INAC has committed to continue discussions (development of business plan) to procure recurrent core funding for the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute. ▪ The MDDEP will invite Aboriginal communities to participate in a special session of the public parliamentary commission on the government's draft sustainable development policy.

11.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>8.2 Creation of partnerships with the governments and the civil society for the co-management of the territory and its natural resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of one or several comanagement formulas • Identification of methods and procedures of harmonization • Consultation on the territorial development plan • Involvement prior to the revision process of the Loi sur les forêts et des règlements sur les normes d'intervention (RNI) <p>2.</p>	<p>Participation in a working table regrouping the MAMR and Local & regional political authorities</p>	<p>1. Formulas of co-management : from now to 2007</p> <p>2. Methods and procedures : from now to 2009</p> <p>3. Revision of the Law and of the RNI : from now to 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MAMR is working on the development of a draft land development policy and hopes to work with the First Nations during the upstream phase in order to reach a consensus. This will also be conducted with other partners such as the UMQ and other elected officials. ▪ In the context of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum, the MDDEP will invite Aboriginal communities to propose areas to be protected in view of the upcoming protected zones strategy plan and the plan for potential development in specific zones.
<p>8.3 Recognition of the First Nations Consultation Protocol within the scope of elaboration of policies, regulations, programs and projects by the governments</p>	<p>Agreement with the governments of Quebec and Canada</p>	<p>In 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The federal government shall take into account the First Nations consultation protocol in the development of its approach to consultation on accommodation. ▪ The government of Quebec announced that the Aboriginal Initiative Fund would provide a \$25 million budget over 5 years as a support for consultation. These funds will be set aside for costs incurred by Aboriginal nations and communities for expertise, travel and meetings attended during the consultation process initiated by the government of Quebec.

11.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>8.4 Creation of a Research and Statistical Institute for the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a feasibility study • Development of an action plan 	Discussion with Statistique Canada	In 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistics Canada intends to continue discussions with AFNQL representatives in order to reach an agreement on the collection, analysis, dissemination, and ownership of data to the satisfaction of both parties.
<p>8.5 Creation of a consortium on energy Creation of an action plan dealing with the development of renewable energy and the establishment of energy efficiency measures in the communities</p>	Contribution agreement with the governments for the creation of the consortium on energy and climate changes and for the development of measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of the consortium : in 2007 2. Establishment of measures : from now to 2010 	<p>Desired partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MRNF has committed to work with any future consortium of experts focusing on renewable energy development projects. ▪ In this perspective, the MRNF has committed to taking part in the evaluation and relevance of funding needs such as feasibility studies, ad hoc expertise, etc.
<p>8.6 Action plan to deal with climate changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and develop the awareness of the First Nations • Amendment to the Government of Quebec's • 2006-2012 action plan with the goal of involving the First Nations • Assess the vulnerability of communities in regards to climate changes 	Contribution agreement with the governments for the creation of the Consortium on energy and climate changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of the Consortium: in 2007 2. Heightening of awareness: effective 2007 3. Assessment: in 2009 	Desired partnership

11.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>8.7 Development of an action plan for the cleaning and decontamination of contaminated soils and territories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of contaminated sites • Elaboration of an action plan for the cleaning and decontamination of sites • Implementation of plan and follow-up 	<p>Financial support by the government of Canada</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Computerized system : in 2007 2. Identification of sites : in 2007 3. Implementation and follow-up : from now until 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INAC anticipates on reserve investments in the amount of \$1,234,100 over the next 2 years (\$425 600 in 2006-2007 and \$808 500 in 2007-2008). ▪ MRNF has committed to take part in working group studying the problem of land and soil decontamination. The working group will also develop a plan for management of residual materials. MRNF will ensure adoption of any legislative changes needed to prevent similar situations from being repeated. ▪ Based on the experience of the James Bay and Nunavik Environment advisory Committee that was created for decontamination of Aboriginal lands, the MDDEP will assess how work accomplished to date can be adapted in response to the needs of specific Aboriginal communities
<p>8.8 Establishment of a consultation table on the urban stakes and its solutions</p>	<p>Financial participation by the government of Canada</p>	<p>In 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$30 000 funding will be granted to RCAAQ to conduct a study designed to gain a better understanding of Aboriginal realities in urban centres, as well as their needs, challenges and issues.

11.6 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>8.9 Strengthening of organizational capacities of institutions, both on and off territory which are dedicated to the development of First Nations, in order to ensure a stable funding and the development of expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization representing the women (QNW) • The organizations representing the youths • The organization representing the First Nations members living outside the communities (RCAAQ) • The institutions of the AFNQL per say (the Commissions and the Councils) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support from the government of Quebec ▪ Discussion with Health Canada and QNW 	<p>Starting in 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health Canada has begun discussions with Native Women of Quebec (NWQ). ▪ The government of Quebec announced a \$5 million budget over 5 years for community action from the Aboriginal Initiative Fund. This financial assistance is destined mainly for recognized community organizations that are known in the milieu and that provide services to Aboriginals. This budget will provide these organizations with stable recurrent funding.
<p>8.10 Strengthening of relations with other settings through concerted efforts and networking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between the institutions of the First Nations • With the civil society and the local or regional governing authorities 	<p>Discussions with the local & regional by the intermediate of the MAMR</p>	<p>In 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MAMR will support initiatives that are developed on a voluntary basis among Aboriginal communities locally and regionally; at the present time, MAMR expects potential intervention in three areas that reflect the variable status of relations between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal communities living on the same territory: closer relations between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal communities; inter – community agreements and the implementation of operational relations between regional authorities and First Nations.

Presentation

Please refer to the context notes at the beginning of the sustainable community development section.

The following table presents a summary of the proceedings of the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum held in Mashteuiatsh October 25, 26 & 27 October, 2006 with respect to **Youth commitments** portfolio. The first column is the list of proposed actions for governments and civil society. The second column lists the partners present at the Forum, who accepted to state their commitments with regards to the proposed actions or who may be stakeholders in the ensuing process.

The third column represents the proposed timelines for fulfilment of proposed actions. The final column lists the formal commitments made by government and civil society partners, as expressed in column one.

11.7 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: YOUTH COMMITMENTS			
ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP

11.7 FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM ACTION PLAN: YOUTH COMMITMENTS

ACTIONS	PARTNERSHIPS	INITIAL TIMELINE	FORUM FOLLOW UP
<p>Youth commitments presented at the concluding session of the Forum</p>	<p>Government of Quebec</p>		<p>The government of Quebec has committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure funding for the First Nations Youth Council in order to promote youth consultations and networking; \$300,000 in funding is expected over the next three years. ▪ Ensure funding for the youth coordinator working with Quebec Native Women by means of an investment of \$105,000 over the next three years. ▪ Ensure funding for the youth coordinator working with the Native Friendship Centres in order to support Aboriginal youth in urban centres: \$105 000 until 2009. ▪ Encourage youth forums in specific regions to promote First Nation representation in the regional forum. ▪ Take into consideration Aboriginal youth representation in the framework of modernizing the Standing Youth Council. ▪ Ensure Aboriginal youth representation on the Partners Committee for the Youth Action Strategy (2006-2009) of the Quebec government. The AFNQL has delegated Mr. Ghislain Picard as Aboriginal representative; he may choose another representative to accompany him. ▪ A \$44 000 was announced by Premier Charest for the creation of an Aboriginal youth internet site.

ANNEXES

1. Lexicon of Abbreviations
2. Opening remarks by the Forum's Copresidents
3. Closing remarks by the Forum's Copresidents

APPENDIX 1

LEXICON OF ABBREVIATIONS

AANTC	Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation Tribal Council
AEQ	Aventure Écotourisme Québec
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
AFNQL	Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador
AIC	Aboriginal International Conference
CAC	Canada Council for the Arts
CALQ	Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
CCQ	Commission de la Construction du Québec
CDEO	Community Economic Development Organisation
CDFM	Centre de développement de la formation et de la main-d'œuvre Huron-Wendat
CDPDJ	Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse
CED	Canada Economic Development
CLD	Centre local de développement
CLE	Conseil local de développement
CRD	Conseil régional de développement
CRSIPNQ	Comité des responsables en soins infirmiers des Premières Nations du Québec
DGSPNI	First Nations and Inuit Health Branch
EQ	Emploi-Québec
FDA	Fonds de développement pour les Autochtones
FIA	Fonds d'initiative autochtone
FNEC	First Nations Education Council
FNHRDCQ	First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Québec
FNQLEDC	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission
FNQLHSSC	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission
FNQLSDI	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute
FNQLYC	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Youth Council
FNS	First Nations Statistics
FNSDOMS	First Nations Social Development Office Management System
HRSDC	Human Resources and Social Development Canada
ICEM	Institut culturel et éducatif montagnais
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
LFNC	Local First Nations Commission
MAMR	Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions

MAPA	Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêches et de l'Alimentation
MCC	Ministère de la Culture et des Communications
MDDEP	Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs
MDEIE	Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation
MFACF	Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine
MRNF	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et Faune
MSSS	Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
NBP	Native Benefits Plan
NIHS	Non Insured Health Services
OCAP	Ownership, Control, Acces and Possession
OIIQ	Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec
QNW	Quebec Native Women
QOF	Quebec Outfitters Federation
RCAAQ	Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec
RUIS	Réseau universitaire intégré de santé
SAA	Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones
SEPAQ	Société des établissements de plein air du Québec

APPENDIX 2

OPENING REMARKS BY THE COPRESIDENTS OF THE FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM

Gilbert Dominique Chief Host of Mashteuiatsh

Pita Aatami, president of the Makivik Corporation

Ghislain Picard, Regional Chief AFNQL

Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

Jean Charest, Quebec Prime Minister

FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM

Opening Ceremony, Wednesday October 25th 2006

The read version is final.

*Mr. Prime Minister of Quebec,
Honourable Minister of the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada,
Chief of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador,
Ladies and gentlemen, Chiefs of the First Nations,
Mr. President of the Makivik Corporation,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Kuei nuhtim pahpeik^u etishiek^u,

Welcome to Pekuakami, welcome to Mashteuiatsh!

It is a great honor for us, the Pekuakamiulnuatsh to invite so many public distinguished guests to our community, at one time.

It is an even greater to honour to invite so many men and women who share a common goal, which unites us and to which we are committed: improving the living conditions for the First Nations who live in this territory named Quebec.

Hosting such an unprecedented event gives the community of Mashteuiatsh the hope that the directions, actions and commitments made during this forum will allow us to achieve our goal, to become healthy and proud communities and an autonomous First Nation.

The place where we meet today, which is called Mashteuiatsh, has been for several generations a gathering place for the Innuatsh, who traveled throughout this great territory.

After spending several months on this land, the families met on the banks of the majestic Pekuakami and spent the summer months together, fraternizing and sharing with one another before returning to their home for the fall.

Several people of my community still remember with emotion the magical moment when all of the band members gathered.

The form of this meeting has nothing to do with the one I mentioned, although I hope that its spirit will be similar and allow us to plunge into our precious heritage bequeathed to us by our ancestors, who were happy, simple, respectful and independent people.

I believe that because of this spirit, the Pekuakami Innuatsh have always tried to maintain good relations and to cohabitate in peace and harmony with their neighbours, as well as being respected as a people.

This territory is big enough and has enough richness for two major societies, who respect and recognize one another, to blossom, expand and meet the highest of their expectations.

We will relentlessly strive towards the recognition of our identity and of our rights. That is why we are fully committed to negotiating a Treaty in good faith with the governments to reach.

Although there are some inevitable challenges, I believe that we will achieve our goal through the openness of mind, good faith and good will of one and all.

Mashteuiatsh is a community that has been blessed with a flourishing economy. This economic development is due to the dynamism of the community and the partnership agreements that we negotiate with different parties. However, my co-citizens are still faced with several social challenges and the difficulty of seeing the future with optimism.

I believe that this great historical event will serve as the basis for a new type of relation, Nation to Nation, with Quebec.

As First Nations, we must change our attitude and suggest changes that not only come from our desire but especially from our actions.

We must no longer wait for decisions to be taken for us elsewhere. It is time to start working together to build the future we want for our youth.

Young people are a great treasure for our nations but are also today's greatest challenge for our communities. It is our duty to ensure that their life becomes a source of happiness, pride and fulfillment.

Throughout this Forum, let us sincerely seek concrete solutions and actions for the wellbeing and for the social and economic development of the First Nation communities.

We must put down the barriers that prevent us from going further, set aside our reluctance and give ourselves a real chance to improve the living conditions of the First Nations.

I believe that our presence here proves that we truly wish to work together and to take actions for the future. Just like going down rapids, the challenge will be easier if we row in the same direction.

In conclusion, I think it is important to remember where we come from; we all come from Mother Earth. We must therefore work together to find balance in our development, to leave behind a healthy Earth for our children. We should support the “Zero Waste” initiative, which will be presented during this forum.

I would also invite everyone to take part in the entertainment activities that were organized by my community for you. Please take the time to visit our precious Museum.

I would also like to thank the young people who lent their infrastructures to the adults participating in this Forum.

Enjoy your stay in Mashteuiatsh!



**Opening remarks
For Pita Aatami, president of the Makivik Corporation
First Nations socioeconomic Forum
Mashteuiatsh
October 25th, 2006**

Regional Chief Ghislain Picard,
Chiefs of First Nations of Quebec,
Premier Jean Charest,
Ministers of the Government of Quebec,
Minister Jim Prentice,
Ministers and representatives of the Federal Government,
Members of the Inuit delegation,
Distinguished invitees,

As President of Makivik Corporation, I am proud to participate to this historic rendezvous with the governments of Quebec and Canada but also with the other aboriginal peoples of Quebec,

- Pleased to be participating in this meeting:
- All of Nunavik's regional organizations have worked together on our presentation
- Introduction of organizations at the main table: Makivik, KRG, KSB, NRBHSS, Saputiit, KMHB
- Other organizations attending: TNI, Avataq, FCNQ, etc.
- We all have been working on this process since the Public Speaks conference in Kuujuaq, 2004.
- We have been prepared since February 2006 to hold our own Forum with Quebec (and Canada) and I now invite both governments to commit themselves to attend the Katimajit Conference to discuss our issues, concerns and proposals at greater length
- As some of you may already know, Nunavik is distinctive in many ways:
- Geographically: no connection to the road and hydro grid of Quebec, resulting in a substantially higher cost of living. Gasoline is very expensive in Nunavik: \$1.69 a litre where the cost of the same litre is around \$0.87 in Quebec. Food items, for example, cost 50% more than in the south of Quebec: a litre of milk costs \$1.88 in Quebec City and \$3.56 in Kuujuaq.

- Our communities themselves are only connected to each other by air links and snowmobile trails. Our health, municipal, education and other services are thereby much more expensive to deliver
- Nunavik is the region of Quebec most affected by climate change. The melting of the permafrost and the shortening of the freeze up is already creating difficulties in accessing hunting areas to harvest food for our residents
- Culturally
- Quebec's Inuit place a very high premium on maintaining and enhancing the relevancy of our language and cultural practices – Inuktitut is expected to be one of only two aboriginal languages to still be in use at the end of this century
- Politically
- 30 years ago, at the time of the negotiations for the JBNQA, Inuit opted for a municipal model of local government
- Most regional activities centralized, such as health, education, regional management, public security, training, etc., making the transition towards autonomy through Nunavik Government an easier and logical transition
- Economically
- Nunavik's economy has a high reliance on public sector funding, making our ability to deliver services susceptible to changes in provincial and federal budgets and orientations
- Unlike most First Nations members, Nunavik's Inuit pay income and sales taxes. There need to be special fiscal policies to take into account severe regional disparities
- We rely on subsistence hunting as our most important anti-poverty activity
- Socially
- Highest birthrate in Canada, meaning that our needs in terms of health, education, youth programs, housing, etc. are rapidly escalating
- Highest suicide rate, significantly shorter life span and other indicators reflective of the rapid transition between a nomadic existence to life in communities
- Nunavik's issues
 - List of outstanding issues with our partners is very long and reflects the unique circumstances of Nunavik
 - We will only be able to deal with some of the issues over the course of the next two days
 - Essential to continue this dialogue after leaving Mashteuiatsh and we invite you again to meet with us in Nunavik at the Katimajit Conference

Thank you.

**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS OF REGIONAL CHIEF GHISLAIN PICARD
AT THE FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM**

OCTOBER 25 2006

(The delivered version shall be deemed authentic)

CUSTOMARY GREETINGS

BRIEF MESSAGE IN INNU

This gathering is unprecedented. But it's not historical...at least, not yet.

In order for this Forum to be described as historical, the commitments taken here today should be imbued with a true meaning and the outcome of our proceedings should take on a true historical SENSE. The challenge rests with each one of us gathered here today. We each have a responsibility: the First Nations, the Quebec government, the Canadian government and the civil societies (aboriginal and Quebec), and these responsibilities must be assumed.

It is with great honor, and at the same time with much humility that I address these few words tonight. The 10 nations, duly represented by their Grand Chiefs, Chiefs, Vice-Chiefs, and elected Councillors are here to make a difference and contribute to what we have all been hoping for, for a very long time: ***change things, this time for real.***

Some might say that a certain revolution is required for our communities. One thing is certain: ***a status quo is no longer acceptable.*** This Forum must help us initiate, together, these enormous tasks which will allow us to change tack and help in the radical transformation of the socioeconomic conditions of aboriginal peoples.

I don't want to be an alarmist, but time is of the essence. In 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in a 4000 pages and 58 millions dollars report disclosed the whole extent of problems: poverty, suicide, drug and alcohol dependency, unemployment and violence. In an effort to change things, 400 recommendations were proposed. Ten years later, I find that things did not really change.

And yet, at the time, the urgency to act had been raised. In 1999, after an inquiry on aboriginal peoples living in Canada, the United Nations Human Rights Committee affirmed, and I quote: *"the situation of Aboriginal peoples remains the most pressing problem which Canadians are confronted with"*. That's 7 years ago.

We've seen very little progress since then...

While the socioeconomic conditions of the First Nations continued to deteriorate. I think of the level of diabetes which went from 10 to 15% over the past five years. I think also of the employment rate which is 30% lower than that of the average in Quebec. Add to this an increasing demographic rate of 2,5%, and you can easily imagine the scale of pressure which is intensifying in our communities.

Our challenge is a major one, I agree. And faced with this challenge, we have an obligation for results. We can't fail and deceive a growing youth, which, in many cases, does not even have the means to live out of hope.

I am sure that each First Nation leader present here today has dreams about his First Nation being all fulfilled, without violence, without drug, without school drop-outs, without social assistance, a First Nations responsible for its development, autonomous in its choices and proud of its distinct culture. This dream, this vision must really take shape within this Forum and find expression in a concrete mission that I will call the "Mission 10 000 possibilities". This means, 10 000 new houses within the next five years, 10 000 new jobs within the next 10 years and 10 000 youths who will avoid school drop-out or return to school for completion of their secondary V; these are all new opportunities for the members of the First Nations.

If we commit ourselves immediately to reach these objectives, perhaps we could avoid the predictable crisis.

May I remind you that a quarter of our populations are currently under 15 years of age. Our challenge is similar to Quebec's in the fact that it's a challenge of a generation, but the opposite. We must make room for these youths, whom, within 10 to 15 years from now, will be in need of jobs, housing and services. It is most urgent to act immediately.

To help us, we have a whole range of concrete proposals on the table which will provide food for thought during our proceedings.

A New Alliance

In order to really change things, a political will is required, which unfortunately was not always visible. The Forum deals with social and economic issues, but in reality we will never be able to deal with these issues without a New Alliance between our respective governments. It will be essential that together, we find a new equilibrium of political powers and economic resources. Only a New Alliance will help really change things and truly restore the social and economic conditions of individuals, families, communities and nations.

We have never relinquished our status of Nations, we have been recognized as such in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and when we signed treaties to share our lands and our resources. More recently, they were recognized as nations by a resolution of the National Assembly. This happened in 1985, under the initiative of René Lévesque, and following a meeting similar to the one which gathers us in Mashteuiatsh this week. Through this resolution, the Quebec National Assembly recognizes to the First Nations among others, the right to autonomy within Quebec; the right to their culture, their language, their traditions; the right to own and control their lands; the right to participate in the economic development of Quebec and benefit from it.

At the time, our representatives found that this resolution was not going far enough. Consequently, today, we realize that it went much further than any other government had since agreed to go.

No matter what we say, what we do, the aboriginal cultures, values and philosophies of our peoples were and remain fundamentally different from everything that characterizes the dominant society of Quebec. Let's be clear and let's be honest: I am not Canadian, I am not a Quebecer, I am Innu. Our nations have their own identify, have distinctive rights and will never be assimilated to the dominant society.

And yet, our aboriginal peoples continue, still today, to be denied from the right to shape their societies and institutions on their own and in line with these values.

Therefore, a nation whose development is planned by others, whose territory is developed and expropriated by others, whose rights are established and interpreted by others and for the benefit of others, is reduced to insignificance and dependency. The issues affecting the territory and the resources are undeniably on our path.

There are not many ways to put an end to the state of dependency: the First Nations themselves must control the resources which will empower them to become responsible for their own destiny and build institutions in line with their values. To pick up on the words of the late Dédé, from the group "Les Colocs" I would say: pass us the puck and will score goals!

We wish to bequeath to the youths who will follow, answers rather than questions, solutions instead of problems. We wish to pass them on a new relation which will contribute to the economic and political stability of Quebec and which necessarily, goes through the recognition of our rights, including the ancestral title on the territory and its resources.

Some greeted with skepticism my wish of seeing the *Indian Act* disappear within the next 5 years. It could seem unrealistic, idealistic, but if we do not aim at this objective, what will be our vision? This law is the ultimate colonial tool and will always act as a brake on our development. The prosperity of our people is based inevitably on a new legislative framework.

One other thing which the First Nations can no longer accept is to be the victims of ping-pong games between the federal government and the Quebec government. How can we accept that issues affecting us be discussed between governments, without our presence, without our being involved? From now on, I would like all issues which concern the First Nations, to be discussed with the First Nations and the sharing of skills to no longer be used as a pretext for not acting.

On the level of relations between aboriginals and non-aboriginals, there is in fact much work to do. As you know, the lack of knowledge about our realities generates indifference, biased opinions, and at times, racism.

Time has come to demystify a certain number of deep-rooted prejudices such as the one where Aboriginal peoples are costing money to the government, more than for the other citizens. The reality is a whole different thing.

I was not born yesterday. I know very well that a change of perception will not be easy. As Albert Einstein was saying, it is harder to break up a biased opinion than an atom.

But the recent efforts, I am referring to the work of the Quebec Human Rights Commission, show that popular education is necessary and that everyone gains by better knowing the First Nations, their history, their contribution, their culture...

This week's proceedings are as important for our populations in our communities who are observing at a distance and wondering about the utility of such an exercise. I want to tell them that their representatives worked hard in preparation to this forum and that they are here today with the firm conviction to make a difference. We do not want to return to our communities without anything concrete, without instilling a new feeling of hope to our respective populations.

We do not have much opportunity to give hope to our youths. This week's forum can be an opportunity.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to all those who came here today. Your presence testifies to a genuine goodwill of contribution to the socioeconomic development of the First Nations. This Forum can already be described as a success in light of the significant participation. Thank you for your presence, thank you for your ideas.

May the Creator inspire our works and make them fruitful so that our people are blessed with feelings of hope.

Enjoy the Forum.

**Notes for a speech by the Honourable Jim Prentice, PC, QC, MP
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal
Interlocutor for Métis and Non-status Indians at the Opening of the First
Nations Socio-economic Forum
October 25, 2006**

Mashteuiatsh, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Quebec

[Rémi Kurtness, Forum moderator, will introduce the Minister. Mr. Picard and Mr. Dominique will have already spoken. Mr. Charest will say a few words after Mr. Prentice's speech.]

Thank you, Mr. Kurtness.

Mr. Picard, Mr. Dominique, Mr. Aatami and Premier Charest, participants and observers, good evening.

It is an honour for me to be here at Mashteuiatsh, on Innu land, and I would like to thank you, Chief Dominique, for the warm welcome to your community.

I am very proud to be here with you this evening as co-chair of this first Socio-economic Forum of the First Nations of Quebec. Here we are finally, assembled after many months of intense consultations, discussions and collaboration in readiness for these three days.

I owe special thanks to Ghislain Picard, Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, who first proposed the Forum. I must also call attention to the excellent work of all those who participated in preparing for this Forum. I would also like to express my gratitude to Steven Blaney, my representative at the Forum.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to work in close collaboration with the AFNQL, the Government of Quebec and other partners. And like you, I am anxious to move forward with an innovative and realistic approach that is closely attuned to our shared objectives.

The Forum has great personal significance for me, because we will be discussing the future of Aboriginal youth. Together we must find ways to provide the young people of your communities with more opportunities, better jobs and above all greater confidence in their own abilities.

Writing in *Le Devoir* last week, Chief Picard asserted that pious wishes cannot inspire hope in young people for a promising future; vague promises are not enough. I am entirely in agreement with these words.

Now is the time for solutions that are concrete, effective and achievable. Early in the New Year, Canadians, Quebecers and First Nations peoples elected a new Government of Canada. This government does not adhere to pious wishes—this is not its style. This government has clear priorities; its only goal is to adopt concrete solutions and deliver concrete results to Quebec.

Last week in *Le Devoir*, Chief Picard said that vague promises are not enough. I am entirely in agreement with these words. Now is the time for solutions that are concrete, effective, and achievable.

To find solutions with real impact, Canada's new government has adopted a new approach that reflects my discussions with many Aboriginal representatives. This approach is built around four themes.

The first theme involves building up the individual self-reliance of the members of your communities by giving them the means and tools to assume responsibility and take charge of their own lives.

To achieve this, we must address the most critical needs, such as education and housing.

The second theme involves speeding up the settlement of claims and treaty rights issues; the huge backlog of cases attests to the urgency of reviewing the way we do things.

Thirdly, we must help you develop the economic potential of First Nations communities; and in training, skill development and entrepreneurship. The quality of life of your members depends on it.

The fourth and last theme concerns self-government; to achieve this, modern structures of governance and accountability will be needed. Any new initiatives (whether in regulations, standards or legislation) must be the result of consultations with you, the representatives of the Aboriginal peoples.

Groups like the Assembly of Chiefs of Quebec and Labrador and your regional bodies have an important role to play. And equally important will be close collaboration with the provinces, territories and our other partners.

The 2006 Federal Budget has earmarked additional resources enabling us to move forward. Over three billion dollars have been approved. We have demonstrated that we acknowledge the importance of combining our efforts and yours to improve living conditions in Aboriginal communities and to infuse young people with hope.

I am convinced that in order to achieve sustainable progress on these issues, all parties must demonstrate courage and perseverance in carrying through structural adjustments.

It is up to each of us to show creativity in formulating new legislation, developing new projects and proposing new approaches.

Lastly, we must establish new partnerships and strengthen those that already exist, in a climate of respect and trust.

I believe that all of this is possible. My faith is founded upon the successes of the community where we have gathered this evening.

Be it the fur or construction trades, the thriving tourism industry, or the management of the region's energy and forest resources, Mashteuiatsh represents an economic boom for the Lac St. Jean region and hope for all First Nations in Canada and indigenous peoples abroad seeking to take control of their destinies.

I am eager for the results of the five workshops starting this evening, and I trust that the output of our deliberations will be creative and collaborative. In working together, I hope that we will enjoy as much success as Mashteuiatsh, which has welcomed us so warmly.

I am hopeful that the next few days will be productive and will result in the tangible, concrete plans and solutions we need to effect real change in your communities – that will move us forward and enable us to get things done.

Thank you.

Opening Remarks of Prime Minister Jean Charest, Co-President of the Forum

Ladies and Gentlemen, Chiefs of the First Nations,
Inuit Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen, Elders of the First Nations,
Mr. Co-Chairs,
Dear colleagues of the federal government,
Ministers and elected members of the government of Quebec,
Members of Parliament,
Members of the civil society,
Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. President of the Assembly,

It is an honor for me to act as Co-Chair of this historical event and to welcome you today to Mashteuiatsh.

The number, quality and representation of the participants at this Forum came from the desire to establish new relations in Quebec.

It is a unique event in our common history that will allow us to unite our strengths, to respect one another and to reach our common goal, which is to ensure the development of Quebec.

Our futures are intertwined. Our future is a shared one.

I would like to thank Mr. Gilbert Dominique, who is one of the Co-Chairs and Chief of Mashteuiatsh's Innu community.

Chief Dominique, thank you for the quality and the warmth of your welcoming.

I would also like to salute the Honourable Jim Prentice, Co-Chairs of this Forum and Minister of the Indian and Northern Affairs Development Canada, for his collaboration.

I especially want to thank Mr. Ghislain Picard, Co-Chairs of this Forum and Regional Chief of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador.

He has believed in this project from the beginning and has made it possible.

I have described this gathering as being historic.

Historic, because this is a forum initiated and organized under the leadership of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador.

I am also delighted that the idea to hold this First Nations and Inuit Socioeconomic Forum partially came from the Generations Forum that my government held in the fall of 2004 to discuss today's major challenges in Quebec: the demographic challenge and the public finance challenge.

Our society is faced with the challenge of improving the social and economic conditions of the Inuit and First Nations Quebec.

We recognize that the Quebecois people must support the social and economic development of the First Nations.

It is a question of justice and equity between the different groups of our society.

This will enable us to build a stronger, more just and more inclusive Quebec.

This Forum brings together Quebec's institutional and socioeconomic leaders.

Indeed, all of Quebec has mobilized for this event.

Civil society has also mobilized for this event.

For the government of Quebec, the Forum is the opportunity to get to know each other and to understand each other more.

Throughout the next days, several Ministers of Quebec's government, under the coordination of Mr. Geoffrey Kelley, Minister Responsible for Indian Affairs, will actively take part in our discussions.

As much as possible, we want to find concrete solutions that are especially adapted to the needs of the Inuit and First Nation communities.

This Forum is thus a turning point in the history of the relations between the province of Quebec and the Inuit and First Nations.

In every society throughout history, every successful social, political and economic change was born from the desire to cohabitate.

In order to live together, we must enter into dialogue, listen, mobilize our strengths and take action. Our work will succeed in this spirit of partnership.

We are here to learn to understand each other.

We strongly believe that Quebec will grow by fighting under-development and by supporting the social and economic growth of our Aboriginal co-citizens.

The participants and delegates will have to use their imagination, creativity, dynamism and ingenuity in the upcoming days.

The echo of our work must be heard throughout Quebec and must resonate with sustained and fruitful efforts.

It is the only way to find realistic and sustainable solutions to the questions discussed.

We are here to prepare the future together.

The participants can count on the rich experience of the delegates to identify adapted, viable and sustainable solutions.

The Elders' wisdom will guide us and enable us to reconcile modernism with traditions.

The Aboriginal women's vision will help the participants to promote egalitarian and non-discriminatory approaches.

The elected members' leadership, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, will allow us to discuss our differences openly and respectfully.

Because the Inuit are faced with specific challenges, for example in terms global warming, they will help think reflect on sustainable development.

We can also count on the support and participation of business leaders, financial, union and employer association representatives.

They will be called upon, with the Inuit, First Nations as well as Quebec and Canada governments, to create economic and social partnerships that will secure the ideas and solutions that were imagined here.

The success of our dialogue strongly depends on the quality, honesty and depth of our exchanges in the following days.

Dreams must become projects and projects must become reality.

We want to improve the living conditions whether it is in the field of education, health, vocational training, job creation, culture or urban integration.

This will give way to a modern society, which is open to the world and yet capable of living within the respect of its history and traditions.

We know that there are several pending political issues between the governments, Inuit and First Nations and that all of our exchanges are embedded in these issues.

As Prime Minister, I am committed to pursue this dialogue with the Regional Chief of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, Mr. Ghislain Picard.

I hope that all of the discussions, between the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, Inuit, governments of Quebec and Canada, will be held in an open mind.

The exchanges and discussions will continue after the Forum.

I would like us to use the leadership that will be demonstrated in the upcoming days to find concrete solutions that are in the best interest of the Aboriginal communities' development and of Quebec.

We have achieved excellent results through collaboration and agreements in the past years.

The economic and social development of several Inuit and First Nations has remarkably accelerated, especially following the signing of certain agreements with the government of Quebec.

We are here today because we yet have a lot to do.

We hope that the communities and Nations that are negotiating may reach an agreement.

This will allow them to channel their energy towards the improvement of the living conditions of their communities and members and to build a promising future for their youth.

We are here because we cohabitate in the same territory and wish to develop a new solidarity.

We are here to recognize the importance of each and everyone's contribution.

We are here to mark history and to open new horizons based on a mutual respect and the common will to share and live together.

We are here to share the dreams and aspirations of Quebec's aboriginal youth and to build an open society with them in which they may reach their full potential.

This meeting marks a new beginning. We are all responsible towards our children, our History and ourselves.

The development of Quebec is more than ever made possible through participation, empowerment and partnerships with the Inuit and First Nations of Quebec.

I wish all the participants and delegates to engage in fruitful exchanges.

Thank you.

APPENDIX 3

CLOSING REMARKS BY THE COPRESIDENTS OF THE FIRST NATIONS SOCIOECONOMIC FORUM

Pita Aatami, president of the Makivik Corporation

Gilbert Dominique Chief Host of Mashteuiatsh

Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities
Canada

Ghislain Picard, Regional Chief AFNQL

Jean Charest, Quebec Prime Minister

Closing remarks for Pita Aatami, president of the Makivik Corporation

(Native language)

Thank you very much Mr. Kurtness for your chairing of this conference for the last couple of days. Before I get started, I want to thank the translators. They're the number one for me during the conference. Otherwise, I wouldn't have understood the conference. So thank you very much translators wherever you are. But, give them a big hand, the translators.

Before I start thanking the people that made this conference possible, the theme of this conference, I've been listening for the last couple of days, is partnership from both levels of government. Also from First Nations and Inuits. That's the key word that I've been hearing, partnership. And also the word respect. In order for us to accomplish and do the things that we've been talking about, we really do have to have a real partnership. And I don't want to leave this conference and forget about this conference, of all the things that have been said.

And when Mr. Mukash talked about having a conference, another conference in four years to gauge the, the progress that's been made. For me, that must be a must. To have a yearly get-together, for me, it's a little bit ambitious because of all the things that has, the logistics involved and so forth. So I'd much rather have a five-year plan for example, that we can look at and see how we progressed in the last five years, that each nation from each different Aboriginal groups, come up with a plan that they can give to the Government of Québec and the Government of Canada and in the next five years, come back and say what have we accomplished? This is something that I'd like to see.

But, we talk about respect. But when we leave each other, it's like we forget it. We do need each other in order to accomplish what we've talked about. So I'm very, very hopeful that we'll be able to see that. And I just want to thank Mr. Dominique, Gilbert, Chief of Mashteuiatsh. This is my third trip to Mashteuiatsh. I first came here when Clifford Moe was still a chief. Then I came the second time when they opened the cemetery because we do have Inuit buried in this community. In the early 50's, late 50's and early 60's, my people used to be sent here to the hospital and some died unfortunately while they were here. So we do have some links with the community of Mashteuiatsh. So, and when they opened the cemetery, we were very, very happy Mr. Dominique, for opening the cemetery with the names being added on. So I wanted to thank you for that.

I also wanted to thank Mr. Picard. It must not be easy to bring all your nations together with the different chiefs that I've heard that were reluctant to come but were happy to come. Thank you very much also Ghislain for making this possible. And I've learned something that by working together, we can accomplish a lot. My closest neighbours in terms of geography are the Crees, and I had a meeting yesterday with Mr. Mukash. That's why sometimes I wasn't around on the table when I should have been sitting here, but I've had other commitments. Steve, I'm sorry I wasn't here 99% of the time, like Mr. Charest, but I was here about 80%.

And also, all the ministers. There were so many ministers. I'm very impressed with Quebec. I just wanted to name a few. Claude Beauchamp, Laurent Lessard, Pierre Corbeil, Claude Bachand, Line Beauchamp, Jean-Marc Fournier, Carol Hébert, Julie Boulet, Nathalie Normandeau, Michel Cochin, Philippe Couillard. If I forget any ministers, I'm sorry. There were so many ministers here that it showed the commitment of Quebec, that they want to work with First Nations and the Inuit people. So I'm very, very happy.

And at the same time, I recognize the opposition. Our MNA, Mr. Letourneau, thank you for coming here. Mr. Boisclair that was here for a few days, Mr. Dumont. And also from the federal government Mr. Prentice, Jean-Pierre Blackburn and Mr. Cannon that just arrived. And our MP for, on the federal side, there was also here Mr. Levesque. And also, Mr. Blaney. Thank you for sitting in all this, during this conference. Mr. Duceppe. We have a lot to thank for. I mean, some, there was some disappointments, but unfortunately, we can't have everyone here all at the same time.

And I wanted to say Mr. Charest, you did shine among the best. So Mr. Charest, I look forward to working with you in the years to come, and that you're always find in our opinion, and you saw that last night by drumming, then after that by dancing with the people. That's what kind of leaders we need that will be close to the people, that are not just going to shy away from events like this. So I wanted to thank you for that.

We do have a yearly gathering in my community called (inaudible). It's our music festival, so don't be surprised when we... You get an invitation to go drumming in my community. And when you spoke about Ghislain being too old for the youth, with today's technology, don't be surprised. We might become younger in the future. No, but we thank the people of Mashteuiatsh, the hospitality that we received from you, and I look forward to seeing all of you in the near future to have a further conference to gauge, like I said, see what kind of progress that has been made.

We have a lot of work ahead of us, but by working together, we can accomplish a lot. So thank you everyone.

Closing Speech, Chief Gilbert Dominique, Mashteuiatsh

Thank you very much.

It was undoubtedly the performance by the Premier, to the sound of the teuehikan that will ensure that this Forum enters into the Annals of History.

Honourable Premier of Quebec, Regional Chief of the AFNQL, Mr. President of the Makivik Corporation, Honourable representatives for the government of Canada, honourable Chiefs of the First Nations, Ladies and Gentlemen; we have now come to the culmination of this extraordinary event, the First Nations Socioeconomic Forum. This was important not only for us as participants, but for all those who have closely followed the proceedings and who are concerned about the future of the First Nations.

This week I could clearly perceive the great interest in the Forum, both in Mashteuiatsh and all over Quebec for the issues that have been debated and raised at the Forum. Quite clearly, even if we are at the final stage of the Forum, this must not be seen as the completion or conclusion of our work. We have merely come to a new step on our work within a process that is becoming increasingly common and in fact we must even pick up the pace.

I stated in my opening remarks that my hope was that this Forum would set the basis for a new type of relationship, a nation to nation relationship with both Canada and Quebec. The announcements that were made and the intentions that were declared by various stakeholders from the First Nations sector, from the government sector and from civil society are testimony of a new dynamic, which in my view can only be constructive.

We have definitely seen a new dynamic emerge here at Mashteuiatsh during this whole week. It is our obligation and duty to not let this opportunity pass. We must work hard to ensure that we all share a common objective. The commitments made by the Premier of Quebec with regards to the political relationships between the Chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and the government of Quebec are most positive. This is a major step that supports the vision we have expressed and that we have always expressed, i.e. our wish to be considered as true nations.

We must keep in mind that we have to both broaden and strengthen our relations and our alliances in the spheres of economics, culture, social services and education. The economy has to be placed at the centre of our preoccupations and we are especially aiming a sustainable economy. There are many projects in the communities that are on the point of emergence and some very good opportunities which are within our reach. I believe that this requires a certain amount of support, through a type of partnership, as well as the appropriate tools to ensure our success.

At this time, I wish to make a slight digression to illustrate this point with the example of an interesting community partnership that is being developed with the Desjardins Movement. We have for some time now been working on the development of a Guarantee Fund in cooperation with Desjardins, with members of the community and the SAA. We succeeded in putting together a fund of \$1.1 million dollars, which we have used to leverage another \$3.4 million dollars for the community.

These are the types of tools that will allow our communities to develop economically and to take advantage of the assets they have. Yet we must also be ready to go the next stage. At this moment, through our close work with the Desjardins Movement, represented at this Forum by Mr. Poirier, we are now devoting the time and the energy needed to take us to the next stage. We want the fund to evolve to the next level so that it can be used to leverage the emergence of second generation businesses in the community. The challenge we have set for ourselves is to increase the Fund from \$1.1 M to \$10 M.

It is then very clear that both Canada and Quebec are our financial partners and at some point we will be seeking help to allow us to continue to build and develop along the lines of the example I just mentioned.

On the other hand we have spent a great deal of time speaking about very significant dossiers, including the sharing of natural resources. This is a crucial issue to my mind, because it holds the key to the development of our communities. It is important for First Nations to be involved, and this I cannot stress enough: there must be upstream involvement in the decision making process, by virtue of our ancestral rights and by Aboriginal title. We must be a full fledged party to the process and never again be excluded from issues that involve development on the territories we occupy.

Lastly, we are aware of a wide range of challenges in the social, cultural and education spheres. We have to tackle these issues immediately. It is important to take into account the distinctive identity of each Nation. We must be able to adjust to reality and take into account the diversity of challenges that affect our various communities and our strengths. We must be sure that we share our successes so and increase our radius of influence to help others to benefit in proportion to their capacities.

We as Aboriginals wish to seize the opportunity that we ourselves created at this Forum so that we can increasingly act pro-actively. One central stakeholder in this dynamic, the federal government, must be ready to recognize and adopt this new reality that we have been describing all this week and be willing to commit to a greater level of involvement than what was indicted this week. There is a real crisis in the area of housing, among others, that requires immediate attention and action.

With regards to the government of Quebec, as I mentioned a little earlier, I strongly encourage the Premier to make a personal commitment to developing a joint resource sharing plan with the First Nations. It should be remembered that this territory is First Nations territory. Let us come to an agreement on the principles that will be advantageous for all.

I would also like to throw out the challenge to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Boisclair and to the Leaders of the other parties to make similar commitments. I believe that it is equally important for the Union of Municipalities of Quebec, and the Quebec Federation of Municipalities in all regions to support this process. Because it will be in partnership with Quebec municipalities that we will be able to implement the development we wish to see and to ensure positive economic benefits for all our respective communities.

In conclusion, I wish to thank Regional Chief, Mr. Ghislain Picard, and the Forum organizers who have done a marvellous job. The Regional Chief hit the right note, when he said it was time to "pass the puck" to us. To use his very apt image, which is, is easily understood by all, people in Quebec know hockey. So let me continue the metaphor. I would put it this way. On the skating rink and at this moment it is the First Nations rink, we the First Nations are playing

against a rival. The rival is not the government of Canada or the government of Quebec, the rival we are facing is the social situations in the communities, the distress, the suicide rate, the housing shortage, the low level of education, school drop-outs and finally the loss of a sense of hope.

Let us all join together to make one good team. I would like to build the line-up and I think we only need one line-up: at centre position, we will have the First Nations, on left wing, the government of Quebec and on right wing, the government of Canada. Our defensemen will be civil society, business and First Nations organizations. This line-up will constitute our dream team and will take us to victory. Let's make sure as well that we don't have to go into over-time. Now is the time to act. Lastly, thank you, one and all for coming to Mashteuiatsh. This has been an incredible honour for my community and for the Pekuakamiulnuatsh to host the Forum this week. I wish to thank the participants for your openness and your willingness to work for the betterment of all ours communities.

I wish to personally thank the Premier, the Honourable Jean Charest. Your commitment and assiduous attendance at this Forum in Mashteuiatsh is a great source of hope for the future. Thank you very much for your attention

Closing Speech, Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities Canada

Thank you, and thanks for giving me the pass.

Dear friends, over the course of the last two days, which are now coming to a close, the Aboriginal leaders of Quebec and Labrador, the representatives of the governments of Canada and Quebec, as well as other partners, met in a climate of partnership and cooperation. Some may see increased funding as the best solution to the numerous challenges that face Aboriginal communities. It is our belief that there are other factors involved and these must be taken into consideration if we are to achieve the solutions we seek. We have to change our ways of doing things.

The new government of Canada strongly believes that it has adopted an approach that will lead to true change. An approach based on in depth reform of the structure and of the legislative framework in order to lay the foundations for sustainable, autonomous and prosperous communities.

In the meantime, we are aware of the immediacy of the issues we face. And we are proud of the progress we are making in improving the quality of life of Aboriginal People. We are setting targets and taking real, tangible steps to achieve them. We have made clear commitments in the area of education, economic development, health, social services and water and housing.

With regards to Forum follow-up mechanisms, the government of Canada is committed to working in close conjunction with its partners from the provincial government and from the First Nations. Annual meetings will provide us with the opportunity to follow-up on implementation of Forum commitments. We will thus be in a position to provide progress reports and to discuss potential actions that will lead to concrete results.

As I stated earlier, even though this is the closing ceremony of the Forum, it in fact marks the beginning of a new era. The commitments made over the course of the last three days have prepared the ground for conditions that are replete with promising potential to ensure a brighter future for Aboriginal youth in Quebec and Labrador. But we will not stop there. We shall continue to work in order to ensure that the next generations will enjoy the benefits of continual improvements. Please allow me on behalf of the government of Canada to tell you that we are totally committed to achieve real progress which will be of benefit to First Nations communities and their citizens. The government of Canada will also adopt concrete measures to improve community infrastructure. In our first budget, we invested \$17.5 M in 600 new housing units and in the development of 450 residential lots to increase the amount of housing that is available to Quebec First Nations. This represents a total of 270 new units per year through 2009. Quebec is entitled to \$38.2 M from the Aboriginal Housing Trust for members of the First Nations living off reserve. This was fund was announced in the federal budget and its purpose is to support investments aimed at improving the housing supply and to improve access to land ownership for Aboriginal Canadians living off reserve. I understand from the debates that we engaged in this morning that this is not only a priority for the government of Quebec, as the Premier so clearly indicated, but also a priority for our

government. Meanwhile, we shall continue to work with Aboriginal peoples to increase affordable housing and to help communities find new solutions that will lead to a process of transformation that will allow Aboriginal communities to trace a new path towards a better future.

Annually, INAC invests nearly \$1 billion for First Nation infrastructure and housing. This funding includes basic community facilities, including water and sewage systems, housing, fire protection and electrification systems, roads, schools and other community buildings. Clean drinking water is absolutely vital to the health and the safety of every Canadian in every community. This is why almost as soon as we took office, we announced a detailed plan of action to provide First Nation leaders with the tools and resources they need to deliver clean water to their communities. This plan of action includes mandatory training and support for local operators, which is well underway here in Quebec.

These targeted initiatives and commitments will help increase overall prosperity and ensure improved living conditions for all Aboriginal peoples: First Nations, Métis and Inuit. The new government of Canada would like to take advantage of the new ELA, printed during the Forum and looks forward to renewed relations based on partnership.

We are gathered here today and we shall gather again to review the progress made and examine potential opportunities to achieve concrete results. Our unfailing determination will help build a country in which all citizens will find their place and be able to contribute, excel and prosper. Thank you kindly.

Closing Speech of Regional Chief Ghislain Picard

OCTOBER 27 2006

(Aboriginal language)

First and foremost, I would like to tell you this. The actions and the efforts we make in the world in which we live, and this world is not always easy, as we have already seen for the First Nations, always contain elements of risk and challenge. This is how I interpret the commitments that moved us to organize the assembly that we are now on the point of concluding.

I would also like to make a digression to focus on the communities that are represented by the Aboriginal leaders at this Forum, who have taken part in the discussions and debates of the last three days. I wish to turn my thoughts to these communities that have seen many seasons pass and years and decades go by, during which their situations have hardly improved. This is not a threat that I am uttering, only a final observation that things must progress and must change.

The French writer Gustave Flaubert wrote and I quote: "Success is a consequence, not a goal." The measure of the success of this Forum will be gauged in the consequences it brings about. In this respect, I think we can already foresee a measure of success, because First Nations responded by their attendance at the Forum and their efforts to achieve a consensus for action.

We are concluding this Forum with a common action plan and vision for the future of the First Nations. From this point forward, we shall focus our efforts on reaching the goals that we have set and in convincing all levels of government to support us in the process.

I am extremely proud of our Aboriginal leaders, because despite all our diversity, despite the obstacles we encounter on the route, we have come out of this Forum more united and stronger than ever with a clear determination to see things change. For things to change, we must have access to territories and resources. This will be our central focus for the next weeks and months. It is clear for us that the socioeconomic development of the First Nations will be closely linked to access to lands and resources. Our horizon is co- management.

I wish to thank the participants from civil society. We have made many wonderful discoveries and created new bonds. I sense a real friendship with many of the stakeholders in civil society and I know that this friendship is mutual. It is up to us now to cultivate these new relationships that are being forged.

I wish to thank the Premier of Quebec for his significant contributions and for the contributions of his government. It is indeed our hope to see greater openness from Quebec on land and resource issues. But I must admit that I am delighted with the new dialogue that has emerged between the government of Quebec and the First Nations. But the time has also come for us to direct this dialogue towards more serious questions, as Quebec holds the key to access to lands and resources, which I repeat are essential to the development of our peoples.

I would also like to thank for his presence the President of Makivik Corporation, Pita Aatami, and for their participation the Inuit people of Nunavik. I understand their deception

concerning their limited place in this forum, the limited place of questions related to their nations. So I would like to state publicly that I fully support the idea of a specific forum for the development of the north and I'd like to wish them success in their endeavour.

I wish to thank the federal government for its presence. I am fully familiar with the convictions of Mr. Steven Blaney, MP for Lévis-Bellechasse. I am convinced that he would have liked to see a greater federal presence at this event in order to respond more effectively to our expectations.

We know that a great deal of work lies ahead of us to persuade the federal government to recognize the irrefutable evidence that has been presented during this Forum. For the last three days we have planted a few seeds, which in due season will certainly bear fruit. Even in the poorest of soils, we always have hope that the seed will grow. I also want to thank all of those people who dedicated such hard work to the success of this conference under the capable management of Melanie Vincent. You have completed a monumental task. Congratulations!

I wish to thank all the representatives of the media who covered our deliberations and transmitted the message to the population of Quebec. One of our objectives was to raise the awareness around our most pressing concerns. I believe we have succeeded in this.

Lastly, I owe a special debt of thanks to Chief Gilbert Dominique of the Innu community of Mashteuiatsh for the gracious hospitality that has been shown to us and for having provided us with a reflection of the values that are so very important to us, as First Nations. I wish to thank the entire population and particularly the youth of Mashteuiatsh, who loaned us the use of their facilities, where we have undertaken our work. I wish you all best of success. Thank you.

Closing Speech of the Honourable Jean Charest Premier of Quebec

Thank you Mr. Kurtness.

Ladies and gentlemen, honourable Chiefs of the First Nations, I wish to salute the distinguished presence of the President of the Makivik Corporation, Mr. Pita Aatami and the Inuit delegation. Ladies and gentlemen, the elders of the First Nations, fellow co-presidents, colleagues from the federal government, elected members of government and ministers from the government of Quebec and from the government of Canada, ladies and gentlemen from Civil Society, honourable president of the Assembly, ladies and gentlemen:

You will recall that at the beginning of this Forum, I declared that we came here to join in a dialogue, but especially to listen and to listen very closely. During the course of my political career I have learned that dialogue begins with the ability to listen and from time to time I have learned the hard lesson that even when we think we have been listening, we have to learn to listen in a different way: to take the time to get to know each other better, to help and to be able to change things.

This work does not happen all by itself; it can only happen with the assistance of all those who accompany us on our mission and for this very important Forum, I wish to thank all my colleagues from the government for their contributions. Pita Aatami has already named them, but I wish to name them again: Pierre Corbeil, Raymond Bachand, Lawrence Bergman, Laurent Lessard, Michelle Courchesne, Philippe Couillard, Carole Théberge, Line Beauchamp, Jean-Marc Fournier, Benoît Pelletier, Julie Boulet, Claude Béchar, Nathalie Normandeau, Françoise Gauthier.

My colleagues from the federal government Daniel Bernard, Pierre Marsan and Carl Blackburn, and a very special colleague whom I wish to thank, because I had the good idea to entrust to him the responsibility for this Forum, the Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, on the day of his fiftieth birthday. And today I am proud of this wise choice, because he has conducted with great aplomb all the work that had to be done within the government of Quebec. Geoff Kelley, thank you very much for the work you did. I also want to recognize the presence of the Leader of the Official Opposition, Mr. André Boisclair, who attended a good part of the Forum. Today we also have with us Mr. Michel Létourneau, the MLA from Ungava, representing the Parti québécois, who also attended for a good part of the Forum. He was joined by Sylvie Roy, MLA for Lotbinière. Federal MPs included Mr. Duceppe of the Bloc Québécois, who was accompanied by his colleagues, Marc Lemay and Mr. Gauthier. From the ruling government, we had with us Mr. Lawrence Cannon, Jim Prentice and Jean-Pierre Blackburn.

But I especially want to thank one person, who in my eyes, carried a great deal of responsibility on his shoulders in conditions that were not always easy, but he accomplished his task with an immense amount of sincerity. And if in keeping with the metaphor of Gilbert Dominique, we have to choose a star, I would definitely award one to Steven Blaney for all he accomplished and which, as I predict, he will continue to accomplish in the future. Thank you very much Steven Blaney.

I have thanks to express; I have already done so for Geoff Kelley, but I wish to do so again because he was backed by a great team. I have to tell you that the government of Quebec is very fortunate. We have a civil service that is highly accomplished and often allows us to

appear better than we deserve. Included in the civil service team with us at the Forum are André Maltais and Christian Dubois whom I wish to thank in particular. I must also thank Elizabeth McKay, Office Director of Geoff Kelley, who did a marvellous job.

I also wish to thank the members of civil society who attended, including a few exceptional appearances, which are truly a first. Some seemed to indicate that there were too few representatives of civil society, but for me the opposite is true, because they made a truly exceptional contribution to this inaugural Forum. I was glad to see with us Claudette Charbonneau, President of the CSN, and Nancy Neatman, a very important spokeswoman for social economy, which was largely discussed during the Forum and which holds a great deal of promise for the future.

Also in attendance was Mr. Poirier from the Desjardins Movement, who attended the entire Forum; please forgive me if I have not mentioned everyone, but we also had municipal representatives with us during all our deliberations. All of this allowed us to conduct an exercise which will undoubtedly have a major impact on perceptions in Quebec.

The first thing that I wish to state with regards to our relations and I wish to say this to all the people of Quebec, is the extent to which our communities and the First Nations and Inuit communities are diversified communities. This is part of the reality we live in. The realities of the Mohawks in the South are not the same as those of the Inuit in the North. This is just one factor that we must keep in mind.

And as Ghislain Picard and others have said, I also wish to express a wish that this Forum may be an occasion for us to get to know each other better and to gain a better understanding of our respective realities. My first wish is that the people of Quebec begin to have a better understanding of the First Nations and the Inuit, whose realities are not always easy. I have to admit that during this Forum there were some things I found very hard.

It was not easy to listen to Chief Thaddé André who spoke so eloquently yesterday and with a great deal of emotion about all that he has had to experience. It is very difficult to listen to someone describing such difficulties and with so much emotion. His very decision to share this with us is already a great contribution to the Forum.

The Chief spoke about identity. I wish to tell you that as you spoke, all the people of Quebec heard you. This is a debate that we are very familiar with and one that affects us profoundly, because it is part of our values. Your heartfelt cry makes us want to work even harder to work with you and to understand your reality so that we can grant to you, to your children and to your grand children the recognition, which was sometimes denied to you.

In this sense the declarations of Chief Brazeau and his description of his community are a challenge for all of us. No one in Quebec should remain indifferent to the conditions you described. This is why we have to fight against prejudice and false perceptions that unfortunately we see too often in our population. Some of the perceptions are negative, some are positive and there are some that have to be corrected. But we know that today in 2006, there are third world conditions in Quebec in our Aboriginals communities.

And all those who accept to get involved and who accept their responsibilities, like myself in the first place, like the federal government, like Chief Picard, but like you also, each and

everyone of you, who carry the burdens of your communities on your shoulders; listening to you today, I understood that I carry heavy responsibilities, as you also do.

This is all the more difficult with respect to the inventory of issues... I refer, among others, to housing and the presentation we heard yesterday from Chief Haymond. This is such an important issue that it might intimidate us and slow down our action.

Chief Haymond this morning described an issue and a challenge that's so, so important that it could become, it could become if we, if we were not up, up to the task, it could become overwhelming. A billion dollars worth of investments that we need. We know that the money is difficult to come by, but the need nonetheless is there in front of us. So how do we, how do we deal with this? We don't have all the answers, but we have a part of them. The one thing I know is that we cannot allow ourselves to be overwhelmed.

The one thing I know is that we cannot allow ourselves to be overwhelmed. We cannot allow ourselves to become discouraged or to fall into fatalism. It is essential for us to tackle these problems and to find the solutions. I have my notes from the Forum which give me the confidence to repeat our commitments. I won't read you all these notes, but there are some achievements that I wish to point out, because they are the result of some special work. These achievements are very promising for the future. The Aboriginal Campus in Val d'Or will be a reality. I thank Mr. Cannon and the federal government for their contribution to this achievement. I also wish to thank Edith Cloutier who is president of the Board of Administration of the University of Quebec in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, who heads a remarkable institution and who will also be at the forefront of a promising initiative, which is all about our future as it will help us educate our youth so they can assume their rightful place in Quebec society.

But the person with whom I spoke the most and with whom we worked the most is my friend and colleague Pierre Corbeil, MNA for Val d'Or and Minister of Natural Resources and who has devoted a great deal to this ambitious project. Thank you Pierre for all your work and today I am very happy to announce that this project is coming to fruition.

Education was also widely discussed and I can't emphasize how essential it is to improve our record in the area of education, because education is what will help us fight dropping out. And I call on both the First Nations and the Inuit to entrust to you a very simple mission. Henceforth we must ask all fathers and mothers in our communities to help. If we want to succeed in our mission to educate, it will be the parents who will be the key to success if they accept the education of their children as a personal mission and a mission for life the. This will be for the benefit and prosperity of all in Quebec.

Neither the government of Quebec nor the government of Canada can replace the parents, whose words of encouragement and affection to their children, day in and day out, are of such profound importance to encourage their children to persevere and to work at school. No one can replace the parents. And if we wish to succeed, the education system is the key. We need an education system that is built to meet our needs, not one that is imposed on you from the outside, but one that truly reflects your values and your realities. I also want to tell Chief Martin how moved I was as he described the tragedy we are witnessing in Quebec with regards to the high suicide rates in the communities, particularly among the youth. This is an unfortunate tragedy for the entire population of Quebec. But we can act on these questions. When you mentioned yesterday that each new suicide is a reminder of the previous one, I understood the weight that of these comments and the weight of these memories. This is a challenge for all of us.

The situation of women is also of concern. The figures are brutal and I admit that it is almost embarrassing when we learn that 60% of all women have been victims of sexual abuse and 80% victims of spousal abuse or violence. This is a reminder of how hard we have to work, all of us together to correct such injustices.

Lastly, I had an experience yesterday which was a first in my life. I was on stage not to deliver a discourse but to (inaudible) Grand Chief Matthew Mukash. I thought it took a long time for him to get in sync with me.

I want to, I want to say to the Grand Chief Matthew Mukash that my wife Michelle thought we were pretty good yesterday, but she said to me you know, I could see you counting one, two, three, four. And, and I think our, this opportunity in this moment is symbolic. It does, it does speak to the fact that we are on the same song sheet, that we share the same world and that we are destined to work together. And, and I, I believe that. And I think we are going to change. We are going to change things.

So ladies and gentlemen, I wish to conclude by reminding Ghislain Picard that at the very beginning of our deliberations he said one thing that really moved me. He said that I am not Québécois and I am not Canadian, I am Innu. Ghislain, I am Québécois, I am Canadian and I am not Innu. Any maybe you will remember that once when he had breakfast with Max Gros-Louis to discuss and prepare this Forum, Mr. Gros-Louis, or Chief Gros-Louis, for those who know him, is truly the dean of all Chiefs; he has a fine sense of humour and through his humour he is able to say a lot to us if we listen carefully.

Chief Gros-Louis announced to me with pride that he had never voted against me. Quite clearly though, in the ensuing conversation he also told me that he had never voted period! And there is a distinction made by certain Chiefs and by certain members of the First Nations communities who say: I do not feel like a Québécois citizen or a Canadian citizen. Ghislain, Chief Picard, I am the Premier of all Québécois. It is not up to me to decide your identity, but regardless of their sense of attachment, I am the Premier of all Québécois, including the First Nations and Inuit.

I would be very happy if one day in my life if one day they were able to say: "Yes I am also a Québécois." If the members of the First Nations felt as though they were full fledged members of Quebec society and contribute to its development so that they could say, "I am also a Québécois." To do this, Gilbert Dominique reminded us that will happen through sharing, by sharing both resources and prosperity. I believe the same thing. Today, I do not have all the answers, but I believe and I am committed to finding these answers which will allow you to share the fruits of the earth, to prosper and to live and fully participate in Quebec in a way that is fulfilling for you.

In conclusion, I hope one day to be able to return to Mashteuiatsh to thank Gilbert Dominique and his entire community for the unforgettable hospitality they have shown us. But I hope even more that one day my children and my grandchildren will come here and be able to say "our parents were here one day, because there was Mashteuiatsh." Thank you