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Sixth Annual Statutory Report (2025) Pursuant to Section 10 of the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Act, Statutes of Canada, Chapter 29, 2019

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From the Ministers

Reconciliation is a journey we take together. It requires open dialogue, listening, and a willingness to confront hard truths about our shared past. But, above all, Reconciliation requires an ongoing commitment to taking action to create a better future.

To that end, the Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and I are pleased to present the 2024–25 annual report, which outlines the work and progress made last year by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern and Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), in advancing reconciliation by supporting Indigenous self-determination.

Alongside First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Modern Treaty partners we have taken meaningful steps over the past year to support addressing the legacy of residential schools, and responding to the Calls to Action as well



as the Calls for Justice. At the same time, we have strengthened Indigenous governance, continued to implement modern Treaties, supported self-determination and Indigenous economic development.

This work has been grounded in the recognition of Indigenous rights, the affirmation of Treaty and constitutional obligations, and deep respect for the leadership and priorities of Indigenous Peoples.

Guided by *the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, and Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada continues to work in true partnership with Indigenous People to shape policies and programs that will build a stronger, more united and more equitable Canada.

As we look back on the progress made this past year, we also recognize that there is much more work to do. Work that will be done together, based on respect, accountability, and meaningful collaboration.

We are focused on strengthening relationships, advancing economic development, closing long-standing gaps, and creating space for Indigenous Peoples to lead the way in building their own futures.

The Honourable Rebecca Alty, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

Canada's North is home to strong and vibrant communities, rich cultures, and enormous potential. The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and I are proud to share this year's report, which highlights the work of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) to support Northern prosperity, security, and self-determination.



From April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, the Department worked closely with partners across the North to advance shared priorities—climate resilience, food security, sustainable infrastructure, and economic development that reflects local needs and values. As Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, I will continue to advocate for a whole-of-government approach that supports strong, inclusive growth across the territories and northern regions.

The North faces unique challenges, from climate change to the high cost of living, but it also holds solutions and innovation rooted in Indigenous knowledge, community leadership, and regional strengths. By working closely with local communities, we can remove barriers, increase opportunities, and unlock the huge potential of the Arctic.

I look forward to continuing this important work, together.

The Honourable Rebecca Chartrand, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

Introduction

Reconciliation is an ongoing process that requires sustained commitment to relationships and meaningful action. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) remains dedicated to ensuring that Indigenous self-determination remains at the forefront of Canada's response to the economic crisis of today—including geopolitical shifts, climate change, and socio-economic disparities—The Department's

mandate is in an important position to support First Nations, Inuit and Métis leaders in this crisis response – tackling economic prosperity, security and affordability.

The 2024-2025 Annual Report outlines the Department's strategic priorities under three themes—Advancing Reconciliation and Self-Determination; Growing the Indigenous Economy; and Northern Prosperity and Security, highlighting the Department's efforts to strengthen relationships, address historical injustices, and uphold Indigenous rights.

This work is grounded in a range of legal frameworks, national policies, and reconciliation commitments, including: Section 35 of *the Constitution Act, 1982*; the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) Act*; the Attorney General of Canada's Directive on Civil Litigation Involving Indigenous Peoples; Canada's Collaborative Policy on Modern Treaty Implementation and obligations set out under Modern Treaties; the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action; the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan and the Federal Pathway; the Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples; decisions of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal; the Inuit Nunangat Policy; and, the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. CIRNAC also uses Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) to help ensure its work supports self-determination, strong governance, and the prosperity of Indigenous and Northern peoples. This approach is a legislative requirement under the *Canadian Gender Budgeting Act*, among other Acts of Parliament. Combined, these elements shape federal priorities, investments and actions to guide our shared path towards reconciliation.

CIRNAC takes a collaborative approach to policy development and implementation, ensuring that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis voices shape decisions affecting their communities while also contributing to Canada's prosperity. With Indigenous leaders, organizations, and governments, the Department has made significant strides in treaty implementation, governance support, and initiatives that address socio-economic inequities.

Achievements in 2024 provide an important foundation on which to build in tackling the current economic and sovereignty interest. These include significant progress in modern treaty implementation, increased support for Indigenous governance and capacity-building, and enhanced efforts to ensure that past breaches are not only recognized, but also addressed, bringing capital to communities for them to invest.

At the same time, Indigenous partners have emphasized the importance of transparency and balance. While progress has been made, there is still much work to do. Indigenous partners have consistently called for government reports like this one to not just share success but also acknowledge ongoing challenges. This includes systemic challenges in the implementation of Modern Treaties and Self-Government agreements as well as persistent socio-economic and policy gaps. CIRNAC is committed to this feedback and will continue working with partners to ensure further reporting—and all areas of work—are shaped by transparency, accountability and a commitment to shared progress on reconciliation and self-determination.

Advancing Reconciliation and Self-Determination

Efforts under this theme support a range of *United Nations Declaration Act* Action Plan Measures, including those that support co-developing approach to self-determination and ongoing section 35 rights based policy and program reforms; supporting Modern Treaty implementation, oversight and evolution; supporting engagement with partners to advance priorities; and, program and policy reforms within the Department.

Negotiations

Since 2017, discussions at rights-based negotiation tables have led to a total of 64 new arrangements:

- 1 modern treaty with self-government;
- 4 sectoral self-government agreements;
- 2 self-government treaties;
- 37 other constructive arrangements;
- 12 litigation and Special Claims settlements; and
- 8 apologies or exonerations to address past injustices.

A significant number of communities have outstanding legal claims, rights, and interests that have not been addressed through existing agreements, including those related to lands and resources. Respectful dialogue and negotiation are key to resolving these outstanding issues and reaching long-term agreements that benefit Indigenous Peoples and all Canadians.

The Government of Canada recognizes self-government as an inherent Aboriginal right under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Recognition of this right is based on the fact that Indigenous Peoples have the right to govern themselves in specific areas. Through negotiating self-government agreements, First Nations are able to move out from under the *Indian Act* and assume responsibility for a range of jurisdictional powers and authorities.

CIRNAC and Indigenous partners continue to hold innovative discussions at a variety of tables to make progress on priorities that support the self-determination of Indigenous partners, with an important focus on economic prosperity.

Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia

In British Columbia, progress was made towards concluding treaty negotiations. Notably, Canada and the Province of British Columbia initialled three individual treaties with Kitselas, Kitsumkalum, and K'ómoks First Nations, in summer 2024. This was a critical step in closing treaty negotiations at each of the three tables, signaling that substantive negotiations are complete. All parties are now working towards ratification (K'ómoks First Nation held a successful community ratification vote on March 8, 2025) and to address remaining issues including overlap consultations with neighbouring First Nations. If the treaties are successfully ratified by all parties, the treaties will be signed and take effect on their to-be-determined effective date.¹ Concluding these treaties will advance reconciliation and support these First Nations in moving forward as self-determining, self-sufficient and self-governing nations, create enduring intergovernmental relationships, and advance national socio-economic objectives that benefit all Canadians.

Haida Nation Negotiations

Haida Nation and Canada reached two historic reconciliation milestones in 2024-25.

On November 7, 2024, Bill S-16 *An Act respecting the recognition of the Haida Nation and the Council of the Haida Nation*, received Royal Assent in Parliament. The legislation affirms the Government of Canada's recognition of the Haida Nation's inherent rights of governance and self-determination. With the passing of Bill S-16, the Council of the Haida Nation is recognized under federal law as the government of the Haida Nation. Recognition of the Haida Nation's right to govern themselves and make decisions according to their own governance advances reconciliation and sets a foundation for a stronger Nation-to-Nation relationship.

On December 4, 2024, the Haida Nation and Canada signed the *Chiixuujin • Chaaw Kaawgaa "Big Tide (Low Water)" Haida Title Lands Agreement*, which recognizes the Haida Nation's Aboriginal title to the lands of Haida Gwaii, including lands submerged under freshwater, out to the foreshore (low-water mark). During a Special House of Assembly in November 2024, Haida citizens voted 97% in favour of the Agreement, representing the first time that Canada has negotiated recognition of Aboriginal title to specific lands.

On February 17, 2025, the Haida Nation and Canada celebrated the *Chiixuujin • Chaaw Kaawgaa "Big Tide (Low Water)" Haida Title Lands Agreement* at a ceremony in HIGaagilda (Skidegate), Haida Gwaii. The event was attended by the Prime Minister; the Minister of CIRNAC; Gaagwiis, President of the Haida Nation; Stephen Grosse, Vice-President of the Haida Nation; Hereditary Chiefs; matriarchs; and approximately 300 community members. Canada will introduce implementing legislation to bring the *Chiixuujin • Chaaw Kaawgaa "Big Tide (Low Water)" Haida Title Lands*

Agreement into effect. The Haida Nation and Canada will continue to work together to implement a transition process to reconcile federal interests and jurisdictions with Haida Aboriginal title.

Negotiations with Robinson Treaties First Nations (Restoule and Whitesand Out-of-Court Settlement Negotiations)

On July 26, 2024, the Supreme Court of Canada found that the Crown (Canada and Ontario) has a duty under the Robinson Treaties to consider, from time to time, whether it can increase the treaty annuity without incurring a loss and, if it can, the Crown must exercise discretion honourably to decide whether and by how much to increase the annuity. The Supreme Court ruled that the Crown was in breach of the annuity augmentation promise in the Treaties and that compensation for the past annuities was owed to the Robinson Superior Treaty First Nations.

The Supreme Court directed the Robinson Superior Treaty First Nations, Ontario and Canada to engage in time-bound negotiations to attempt to reach a negotiated settlement. The Court ordered the Crown to exercise discretion to determine the amount of honourable and liberal compensation to pay to the First Nations for past breaches of its duty to diligently implement the treaty if a settlement could not be reached within a six-month period.

As permitted by the Supreme Court decision, the First Nations have requested a Court review of the six-month engagement process and the amount of compensation determined by the Crown. The review began June 2025.

The Supreme Court of Canada decision does not impact the settlement finalized between the 21 Robinson Huron Treaty First Nations, Ontario and Canada in 2024 to settle the *Restoule* litigation. Additionally, Canada remains engaged in out-of-court negotiations with Ontario and Temagami

First Nation, the 22nd Robinson Huron Treaty First Nation, which still has an outstanding claim for past annuities under the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850.

As negotiations with both the Robinson Huron Treaty First Nations and the Robinson Superior Treaty First Nations have focused only on compensation for the Crown's failure to augment past annuities, additional negotiations will be required between Canada, Ontario and the Robinson Treaties First Nations to address implementation of the treaty augmentation promise in the future.

Musqueam Self-Government and Reconciliation Negotiations

Since 2017, Canada and the Musqueam Indian Band (Musqueam) have been exploring and negotiating priority areas to recognize and incrementally implement Musqueam's section 35 rights within their territory. These negotiations have included work on šxwq'wáltəltən – A Rights Recognition Agreement, as well as potential incremental implementation agreements relating to: self-government; revenue sharing; stewardship and marine management; fisheries; and potential transfers of federal lands.

On February 24, 2025, Musqueam and Canada signed a Revenue Sharing Agreement committing the Government of Canada to share a percentage of ground lease revenues from Vancouver International Airport with Musqueam. The Revenue Sharing Agreement is an important step forward in strengthening the partnership between Canada and Musqueam, contributing to economic reconciliation.

Musqueam and Canada also initialed the proposed Musqueam Self-Government Agreement on March 7, 2025. The initialed Agreement recognizes Musqueam's inherent right of self-government, as recognized

and affirmed by Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The Agreement also sets out Musqueam jurisdiction in a number of areas: core governance; membership; language and culture; lands management; public order, peace and safety; environment; natural resource management; wills and estates; education; traditional medicine; prohibition of alcohol and intoxicants; landlord and tenant matters; and the administration and enforcement of Musqueam laws, among others. Musqueam laws will only apply on Musqueam's reserve lands, with the exception of child and family service laws and laws regarding the designation and distribution of fish to members under Musqueam's communal fisheries system.

Musqueam is now engaging community members on ratification of the Musqueam Self-Government Agreement.

Treaty Negotiations in Central Canada (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario)

The Government of Canada is dedicated to working with First Nations to resolve past wrongs through negotiated settlements. In 2024-25, Canada concluded settlements pertaining to past implementation of historic treaties:

- **Lake Nipigon Plaintiffs** – The Lake Nipigon Plaintiffs represent four Robinson-Superior First Nations, including Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek, Whitesand First Nation, Red Rock Indian Band and Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek. In 2024-25, Canada and the respective Lake Nipigon Plaintiffs signed agreements to resolve the First Nations' Treaty Reserve Claims against Canada, which relate to a Treaty promise for reserve lands that date back to the signing of the Robinson-Superior Treaty in 1850. These agreements represent an important step in renewing the Nation-to-Nation relationship between Canada and the First Nations and Canada remains committed to longer term

work with these First Nations and the Province of Ontario towards a land-related settlement.

- **The United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising (UCCMM)** – represents five Manitoulin Island First Nations including the Aundeck Omni Kaning; M'Chigeeng; Sheguiandah; Sheshegwaning; and Zhiibaahaasing. On August 12, 2024, Canada and five Manitoulin Island First Nations signed the **Manitoulin Project Settlement Agreement**.

Apology to the five Manitoulin Island First Nations

On October 26, 2024, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations delivered a formal statement of apology on behalf of Canada to the five Manitoulin Island First Nations and their members, including the Aundeck Omni Kaning; M'Chigeeng; Sheguiandah; Sheshegwaning; and Zhiibaahaasing for past wrongs relating to the Crown's mismanagement of their monies in the late 1800s. The apology marks the beginning of a new chapter in the relationship between Canada and the First Nations. See [Statement of apology to United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising](#).

Apology to the Dakota- Lakota First Nations

On July 15, 2024, at Whitecap Dakota Nation, Saskatchewan, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations delivered a formal statement of recognition and apology on behalf of the Government of Canada to the 9 Dakota and Lakota First Nations in Canada and their members. See [Statement of recognition and apology to the Dakota-Lakota First Nations](#).

Treaty and Self-Government Negotiations North of the 60th Parallel

On May 27, 2024 Canada and Ghotenlene K'oditneh Dene (GKD) representing Sayisi Dene First Nation and Northlands Denesuline First Nation, re-initialed the GKD Treaty with a revised capital transfer offer. On July 16, 2024, Canada and Athabasca Denesuline (AD) representing Black Lake First Nation, Fond Du Lac First Nation, and Hatchet Lake First Nation re-initialed the AD Treaty. Together, these modern treaties without self-government would bring a full and final settlement in respect to AD and GKD Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories.

On November 19, 2024, the negotiators' draft of the Final Self-Government Agreement for the Tłegóhłı Got'ıneę was initialed by representatives from the Tłegóhłı Got'ıneę Government, the Government of Canada, and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Tłegóhłı Got'ıneę community members voted to ratify the agreement on March 31, 2025 with an absolute majority voting in favour of the agreement. There are a number of steps that the parties must undertake before enabling legislation is introduced in Parliament to put the agreement into effect. This marks a major milestone in advancing longstanding commitments to First Nations and Métis people under the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim that was signed in 1992.

Reconciliation with the Dundas Harbour Relocation Society

Canada and the Dundas Harbour Relocation Society negotiated and signed a settlement agreement on January 22, 2025 related to the High Arctic relocations of Inuit families between 1934 and 1948. On February 27, 2025, Canada delivered an apology to the descendants of the relocatees in Arctic Bay, Nunavut.

Apology to Inuit families for the forced relocations from Kinngait (formerly Cape Dorset)

On February 27, 2025, Canada delivered an apology to the descendants of the relocatees in Arctic Bay, Nunavut, the Minister delivered an apology to Inuit families for the forced relocations from Kinngait (formerly Cape Dorset) to Dundas Harbour between 1934 and 1948. These relocations prioritized Canada's sovereignty at the expense of Inuit lives, causing profound harm, including the erosion of cultural identity and intergenerational trauma. As part of the apology, Canada provided \$4.5 million to support affected families. See [Statement of Apology for the Dundas Harbour Relocations](#).

Memorandum of Understanding on the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke and Canada Relations: a New Path Forward, with the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on April 17, 2024 and marked a renewed commitment between the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke and the Government of Canada to dialogue, collaborate, and to work together in the spirit of good faith and mutual respect to strengthen the parties' relationship and advance self-determination. This agreement set the stage for exploring renewed relationships on subject matters such as lands, environment, registration, gaming, justice, fiscal relations, consultation, economic development, and child and family services.

Parks Rights Reconciliation Agreements

CIRNAC and Parks Canada concluded two Parks Rights Reconciliation Agreements (RRAs) towards implementing Aboriginal and treaty rights in national parks and Parks Canada administered national heritage places; Toquktmekl Agreement (Parks Rights Reconciliation Agreement with the

Mi'kmaq of PEI) signed September 2024 and Mi'gmawe'I Tplu'taqnn – Kopit Lodge (Parks Rights Reconciliation Agreement with the Mi'gmaq of New Brunswick) signed December 2024.

These agreements enable traditional activities such as harvesting and other cultural practices in National Parks and provide for the establishment of joint management structures, the maximizing of economic opportunities, and the conservation, protection and presentation of Indigenous culture and heritage in various Parks Canada administered sites. They are legally binding and are supported through grants from Parks Canada for the duration of the agreements. These agreements continue to build towards the longer-term objective of reconciliation through the recognition and implementation of Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, as affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada in the 1999 *Marshall* decision.

Self-Government Agreements

Negotiated self-government agreements recognize the inherent right of Indigenous Peoples to make their own laws in many areas, including: governance, social and economic development, education, health, lands and more. A key goal of the Department is to support rights-based self-government, which is the highest form of Indigenous self-determination.

On November 30, 2024, the Manitoba Métis Federation and Canada signed the Red River Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Treaty. This co-developed Treaty recognizes the Manitoba Métis Federation as the government of the Red River Métis, who have an inherent right to self-government, and recognizes the jurisdiction of the Manitoba Métis Federation over Red River Métis citizenship, elections, and other operations.

Framework Agreement on Self-Government between Canada and the Atikamekw Council of Wemotaci (signed May 23, 2024)

As part of the ongoing discussions on the recognition of Indigenous rights and self-determination, the signing of the framework agreement has enabled the Atikamekw Council of Wemotaci and the Government of Canada to formally begin negotiations toward self-government. The priorities identified by the Atikamekw First Nation of Wemotaci in the framework agreement include: the establishment of an autonomous Indigenous government; education; economic development; land management; and taxation.

Collaborative Fiscal Policy Development Process

The Collaborative Fiscal Policy Development process (the Collaborative Process) brings together Self-Governing Indigenous Governments to co-develop fiscal policy that supports the implementation of self-government agreements.

In 2024-25, Canada and Self-Governing Indigenous Governments partners completed the co-development of expenditure need proposals in three key areas: infrastructure (Stage II), language revitalization, and lands and resources management. While approval of this fiscal model has not yet occurred, the Collaborative Process has been a model for transparent and constructive collaboration.

Modern Treaty Implementation

CIRNAC leads on the negotiation, implementation and management of new and existing modern treaties. This also includes oversight and coordination of Canada's 8,000 modern treaty implementation obligations as CIRNAC

engages and advises other federal departments on their own federal accountabilities. CIRNAC also takes a leadership role in maintaining the relationships between Canada and Indigenous Modern Treaty and Self-Governing Partners, in addition to ensuring education, awareness, and understanding across all federal departments on the responsibilities of policy-making in this area.

To date, 27 modern treaties have been signed in Canada since 1973, which include more than 100 Indigenous communities. Of these, 21 have a self-government component or are a self-government treaty. The exercise of jurisdiction, as expressed/defined in modern treaties and self-government arrangements, is a key concept in Indigenous self-government, whereby Indigenous Governments manage their own affairs in areas such as education, health and land use. However, while the negotiation and implementation of modern treaties and self-government arrangements are obligations of the Crown, these processes have been criticized as being long and complicated, creating barriers to full and effective implementation. Reviews of the comprehensive land claims and self-government policies are ongoing.

This year, CIRNAC worked with five federal departments to review, adjust, and distribute federal investments and programs-services funding directly to modern treaty and self-governing partners through distinctions-based allocations. This approach allowed for CIRNAC to negotiate and amend fiscal arrangements with these partners, resulting in reduced administrative burden while respecting and continuing to ensure that autonomy and self-determination are respected. For example, CIRNAC worked with modern treaty self-governing Indigenous government partners to implement their distinctions-based housing strategies by amending their funding agreements to incorporate Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy funding. However, partners have

raised persistent systemic challenges and gaps in the implementation of Modern Treaties, such as the functioning of implementation structures, and ensuring a whole-of-government approach to implementation is advanced by all departments. The Department is committed to working with partners to address these issues.

Co-developed by Canada and Indigenous Modern Treaty partners, *Canada's Collaborative Modern Treaty Implementation Policy* (2023) (the Policy) provides clear direction to federal departments and agencies in implementing modern treaties, with the specific goal of advancing a systemic shift in the federal public service's institutional culture, reflected in behaviour, decision-making, and actions at every level of the federal government. The Policy aims to strengthen oversight and accountability in meeting Canada's obligations to modern treaty implementation, advance a whole-of-government approach, add new implementation tools to complement existing mechanisms, develop a strategy for the comprehensive, meaningful and reliable measurement of progress of implementing modern treaty obligations, addressing the barriers to implementation and improving dispute resolution processes.

The Policy also established the Intergovernmental Leaders' Forum, which is a permanent, annual meeting between the Prime Minister, appropriate federal Ministers, and leaders of Indigenous Modern Treaty and Self-Governing Indigenous Governments. The most recent Intergovernmental Leaders Forum was held on May 2 2024, and was convened to advance a co-developed agenda of nine established and emerging priority areas, spoken to by Indigenous Modern Treaty and Self-Government leaders, the Prime Minister, and key federal ministers.

Topics discussed included the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation; Bill S-13 - *An Act to Amend the Interpretation Act*; addressing the toxic illegal drugs crisis; and Canada's emergency management framework. Among the accomplishments that were noted at the forum included the Prime Minister's announcement of the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation and the progress made on moving Bill S-13 through the parliamentary process. In fulfilling its purpose, the 2024 forum served as a venue for productive, ongoing conversations on critical topics where work remains to be done, establishing policy priorities for the year ahead and directing federal and Indigenous members to undertake collaborative policy development on the established priorities.

Oversight Mechanism for Implementation of Modern Treaties

For over 20 years, Indigenous Modern Treaty Partners have been calling for improved independent oversight to hold the federal government accountable for modern treaty implementation. The Policy included a commitment to co-develop, within six months, recommendations to put in place credible, effective, sustainable and independent oversight mechanisms to hold the federal government accountable to Parliament.

In October 2024, Bill C-77, *An Act Respecting the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation* was introduced in the House of Commons and completed first reading. However, due to the prorogation of Parliament in January 2025, all bills that had not received Royal Assent, including Bill C-77, would need to be re-introduced in order to proceed through the legislative process.

Nunavut Contract Renewal and Core Funding

On March 8, 2025, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Government of Canada, and the Government of Nunavut signed a renewed Nunavut Implementation Contract for 2024-25 to 2033-34. This is the first time since the original Nunavut Implementation Contract came up for renewal in 2003, that the Parties were able to successfully renew the Contract through negotiations. The Contract will be investing \$1.5 billion over 10 years into the territory for the benefit of Inuit and Nunavummiut. The renewed funding includes:

- funding to Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated for institutional capacity, tripartite efforts to design/develop pre-employment training for Inuit, and one-time funding for the Inuit Heritage Trust for the construction of a new Nunavut Cultural Centre;
- funding to the Government of Nunavut for incremental implementation funding, as well as funding to support the design/development of programming to advance Inuit employment in government (in-service delivery and pre-employment training);
- funding to better support CanNor (including Pilimmaksaivik as the federal centre of excellence in Inuit employment in government) in its significant coordination efforts to raise Inuit employment levels, including program funding for in-service delivery and pre-employment training for Inuit; and,
- renewed core funding levels for the 5 institutions of public government in Nunavut, including the 3 Regional Wildlife Organizations and the 27 Hunters and Trappers Organizations.

Gwich'in Tribal Council

Over the past several years, collaborative work with the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Government of the Northwest Territories resulted in the approval of amendments to Chapter 6 of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement. Amended languages create new Dispute Resolution mechanisms as requested by the Gwich'in Tribal Council. The amendments package received approval and was signed by Her Excellency the Governor General on June 20, 2024. These changes strengthen Canada's commitment to collaborating and resolving disputes with Indigenous partners.

Administration of Justice

February 8, 2025, marked a historic moment with respect to the future of justice for self-governing First Nations in the Yukon. The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, along with Teslin Tlingit Council's Naa Shaáde Háni and the Yukon Premier, signed an amendment to the Teslin Tlingit Council Administration of Justice Implementation Plan related to corrections and community services. Teslin Tlingit Council is the first modern treaty First Nation with a completed Administration of Justice Agreement. With the corrections and community services component of the Implementation Plan now in place, Teslin Tlingit Council can fully exercise self-government jurisdiction over justice matters, and move forward with implementing their vision for justice, peace, and safety in their community.

New Joiners to the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement

The Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation and Sheshegwaning First Nation requested to be added as parties to the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement. Both First Nations completed community approval processes

and met all the conditions required to be added as parties to the Agreement. Canada, B'Maakonigan (the Anishinabek Nation Government) and the two First Nations agreed on an adherence date of April 1, 2025.

To add the new joiners, the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement and the Schedule to the *Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement Act* was amended to reflect the addition of two First Nations to the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement to ensure consistency between the agreement and the legislation. These amendments were approved by Governor in Council on December 16, 2024.

Claims

Resolution of Specific Claims

An [analysis \(PDF\)](#) based on a sample of 20 First Nations with recently settled claims found that 50% of settlement funds were invested or saved, 30% contributed to service expansion or economic development, and 15% were provided in individual payments. Based on economic modeling, the analysis suggests that \$3 billion in settlement compensation (the average yearly amount between 2020-21 and 2024-25) generates more than 12,300 jobs, \$806 million in labour income, and \$1.3 billion in GDP growth, shared by the Indigenous communities and neighbouring regions.

Specific claims are disputes that First Nations have against the Government of Canada in relation to its failure to uphold its legal obligations with respect to Historic Treaties and the improper management of First Nation lands, monies, and other assets. The 1973 Specific Claims Policy provides a voluntary alternative dispute resolution framework provides a path to

address the federal government unmet legal commitments. It offers the option of reaching agreements through negotiated settlements, instead of going to court.

In 2008, the Specific Claims Policy was updated to align with the new *Specific Claims Tribunal Act*. This legislation sets out specific timelines for the Government to assess and negotiate claims. It also created the independent Specific Claims Tribunal, which has the authority to make legally binding decisions, including on the validity of specific claims and award compensation up to a maximum of \$150 million per claim.

The Department's Specific Claims Program deals with a large volume of cases from across the country. Over the last five fiscal years (2020-21 to 2024-25), 229 claims were resolved for approximately \$15.1 billion in compensation. As of March 31, 2025, there were 754 claims in the Specific Claims inventory, with 117 new claims being filed with the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs in 2024-25. The Department completed the evaluation of 70 claims during this same period.

Settlement of Agricultural Benefits Claims

Treaties 1 through 11 signed between the Crown and First Nations from 1871 and 1921 and are the only Historic Treaties that contained provisions for agricultural benefits. Through these treaties, Canada promised ploughs, seeds for important crops, livestock such as cows and bulls, and other farming necessities. These agricultural benefits were intended to help First Nations economic development. However, as a result of Canada's failure to fulfil these treaty promises, these communities lacked the necessary equipment to support their members.

Using a consistent method to determine compensation can significantly speed up the resolution process when multiple First Nations have similar specific claims. This approach expedited the resolution of agricultural benefits claims with Treaty 8 First Nations (e.g.: claims that Canada did not provide the agricultural implements and benefits it committed to in the treaty). To make compensation negotiations quicker and easier, the Department has adopted an expedited resolution framework for agricultural benefits claims under treaties 4, 5, 6 and 10.

In February 2025, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, acknowledged the settlement of Agricultural Benefit Claims with the following First Nation Communities: Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation; James Smith Cree Nation #370; Little Black Bear First Nation; Ministikwan Lake Cree Nation; Moosomin First Nation; Mosquito, Grizzly Bear's Head, Lean Man First Nation; Pasqua First Nation; Piapot First Nation; Pelican Lake First Nation; Poundmaker Cree Nation; Saulteaux First Nation; Sweetgrass First Nation; Waterhen Lake First Nation and Witchehan Lake First Nation.

Once fully settled, \$1.72 billion will be provided in combined compensation to these First Nations. Under the expedited resolution framework for agricultural benefits claims, Canada has settled 69 claims for \$7 billion in 2024-25, including 37 settlement from \$5.28 billion under the Expedited Agricultural Benefits Claims initiative.

Childhood Claims

As of March 31, 2025, a total of \$10.15 billion in compensation has been paid to survivors. The Department continues to uphold a principled approach, ensuring that individuals who have experienced similar harms receive comparable compensation, thereby maintaining equity across

Childhood Claims settlements.

Indigenous Childhood Claims Litigation includes class actions, individual and multi-plaintiff litigation related to the Sixties Scoop, Indian Residential Schools day scholars, Indian Days Schools, Indian Hospitals, Indian Boarding Homes, provincial residential schools, joint schools, and other education and care programming.

Progress has been made in resolving claims where the federal government has clear liability. Settlements have evolved, applying lessons from past cases to better balance individual compensation with future-focused programming for healing, wellness, education, language, culture, and commemoration.

On March 6, 2025, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and the representative plaintiff jointly announced that a proposed settlement agreement had been reached for the Federal Indian Hospitals (Hardy) class action.

Addressing the Legacy of Residential Schools

Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Burials

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (National Centre) is a key element of the Residential Schools Legacy Program, preserving the history and experiences of Residential School Survivors, supporting ongoing education and research and promoting reconciliation efforts across Canada. In 2024-25, CIRNAC provided \$2.33 million to support the National Centre's continuing efforts to implement Call to Action 72 (National Indian

Residential School Student Death Register and public-facing Memorial Register) and Call to Action 73 (National Indian Residential School Online Cemeteries and Burial Sites Register).

The National Centre and CIRNAC co-administered the National Advisory Committee, which continued to work with Survivors and provided independent, trusted, and expert information in areas such as Indigenous laws and cultural protocols, forensics, archaeology, archival research, and criminal investigations to Indigenous communities. Guided by a Circle of Survivors, comprising First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation members, the National Advisory Committee ensured that Survivors' voices and perspectives remained central to the Committee's work. In 2024-2025, CIRNAC provided \$2.29 million to the National Advisory Committee, which held information webinars to support communities' efforts to search for their missing children and held knowledge sharing gatherings in Quebec City, Quebec; Vancouver, British Columbia; Whitehorse, Yukon Territory; and Calgary, Alberta.

On October 1, 2024, First Nations, Inuit and Métis residential school Survivors gathered on Parliament Hill to re-raise the Survivors' Flag. Survivors came together to share their truths about the residential school system and honour the memory of all the children who never returned home. The Survivors' Flag symbolizes Canada's ongoing commitment to reconciliation and acknowledges the enduring trauma and ongoing impacts on Survivors and the generations that came after them.

Residential Schools Missing Children – Community Support Fund

Since the launch of the Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund in June 2021, CIRNAC has received 190 formal requests for funding from Indigenous communities and organizations totaling over \$715.9 million. During 2024-25, 97 funding requests totalling \$53.6 million

were approved, and the Program implemented 16 new agreements and amending existing agreements to include 2024-25 funding, bringing the total of agreements entered into since 2021-22 to 160. Of these, 150 communities (93%) are conducting research/knowledge gathering, 125 (78%) are working on memorialization/ commemoration projects, and 85 (53%) are undertaking technical fieldwork investigations. Additional information can be found on the [Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Funding Recipients](#) website.

Meeting Commitments

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Advancing the Calls for Justice

On October 4, 2024, the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba announced \$1.3 million in federal funding to advance a Red Dress Alert pilot in Manitoba under the leadership of Giganawenimaanaanig.

The third Indigenous-Federal-Provincial-Territorial Meeting held on January 29-30, 2025 brought together over 145 participants in-person and 188 in a virtual capacity. Main topics of discussion included the importance of data, on the ground efforts including Family Information Liaison Units, 2SLGBTQI+ experiences and initiatives, human trafficking, and the Red Dress Alert.

In response to the national inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls, the Government of Canada has come together to create a federal pathway for departments to support systemic change to address

the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls (MMIWG) and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

CIRNAC leads and coordinates the Government of Canada's work on the Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People. This pathway is the Government of Canada's contribution to the National Action Plan and includes the work of over 21 departments and agencies.

Of the 231 Calls for Justice, 215 call on the federal government to take action, and the Government has supported a further 4 in the course of its work in ending the crisis. With progress reported annually, the 2024-25 Federal Pathway Annual Progress report shows that the federal government has advanced a total of 130 Calls for Justice, compared to last year's report which detailed 112 Calls for Justice. This year, federal departments and agencies worked together to improve transparency, better represent the progress being made, and increase the scope of their reporting against the Calls for Justice, while reaffirming the urgency and scale of the work that remains. The [2024-2025 Federal Annual Progress Report](#) was released on June 3, 2025.

An [online navigation tool](#) enables Indigenous partners and Canadians to learn about federal efforts to end the national tragedy of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. The tool shares annual updates on federal efforts to address the Calls for Justice.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Advancing the Calls to Action

In 2021, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations was given the responsibility of leading federal efforts to speed up the process of carrying out all of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Action. So far, over 85 percent of the Calls to Action that the federal government is

responsible for, either alone or shared with other jurisdictions or partners, are complete or well underway. Details about progress on the 76 Calls to Action under federal jurisdiction can be found on [Delivering on Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action](#). Further details on the Government of Canada's progress in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls to Action can be found in the [Delivering on Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action](#).

National Council for Reconciliation

On April 30, 2024, Bill-C-29, *an Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation (the Act)*, received Royal Assent, and came into force on July 2, 2024. The Act created the National Council for Reconciliation, fulfilling Call to Action 53 and setting the stage for the Government of Canada to address Calls to Action 54-46. On March 3, 2025, the Council was officially established as a national, permanent, independent, non-political, and Indigenous-led organization dedicated to advancing reconciliation in Canada. That same day, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and the Transitional Committee jointly announced the nine inaugural board of directors for the National Council for Reconciliation, allowing the Council to formally incorporate under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*.

Under the *National Council for Reconciliation Act*, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Métis National Council, and the Native Women's Association of Canada were invited to submit their nominations in Fall 2024. Four positions on the board of directors are reserved specifically for their respective nominees.

United Nations Declaration Act: Advancing the Action Plan

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (the Act) recognizes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration) as an international human rights tool and provides a framework to move forward with applying the Declaration at the federal level. Under the Act, the Government of Canada must work in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples to meet three obligations: take all measures necessary to ensure the laws of Canada align with the Declaration (section 5); prepare and implement an action plan to achieve the objectives of the Declaration (section 6); and write annual progress reports and submit them to Parliament (section 7).

Justice Canada leads the whole-of-government approach called for in the Action Plan for the Act which includes measures that reflect the priorities and proposals identified by First Nation, Inuit, Métis and Modern Treaty Partners. The objectives of the Declaration and the related Act are aligned with CIRNAC's mandate, resulting in CIRNAC involvement in about one-third of the measures included in the Action Plan. Indigenous partners have formally called on the Government of Canada, namely CIRNAC, ISC and Justice Canada, to make sure the Declaration is implemented across provincial and territorial jurisdictions.

The fourth annual report on implementation progress will be presented by the Minister of Justice to Parliament in 2025 and will include updates on the status of the 44 Action Plan Measures CIRNAC leads from April 2024 to March 2025. While progress has been made over the past year, there are ongoing challenges and limitations in advancing this work and that further efforts are needed to achieved the objectives of the UN Declaration and advance reconciliation.

Engagement

Whole-of-Government Approach to Consultation

Throughout the year, 16 engagement sessions were held, involving 323 participants from 223 communities. This engagement was split into two phases:

- Phase 1 engaged 249 participants from 165 communities; and
- Phase 2 during three sessions saw 74 participants from 58 communities. A what we heard report was developed based on what was heard in Phase 1 and shared with the Indigenous Advisory Committee (which was established to contribute to an updated set of guidelines) for feedback.

The Crown has a duty to consult and accommodate Indigenous groups when it considers actions that might negatively impact potential or established Aboriginal and treaty rights. Government of Canada departments and agencies are responsible for understanding when their actions might have negative impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

CIRNAC supports other government departments in fulfilling their legal duty to consult. To support a meaningful whole-of-government approach to the Duty to Consult, CIRNAC is working with Indigenous communities and organizations on the renewal of the Guidelines for Federal Officials to Fulfill the Duty to Consult (2011). In 2024-25, a report was released to present the learning from this engagement process to date.

The Federal Initiative on Consultation supports the co-development and implementation of consultation protocols and resource centres to build Indigenous capacity to meaningfully respond to consultation requests. In

2024-25, a consultation protocol was established with three First Nations in the Regroupement Petapan and an existing consultation protocol with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government (previously known as Métis Nation of Alberta) was amended to reflect changes to their internal government structure, contributing to self-determination and reconciliation.

The Department also supports working together for assessing major projects under the *Impact Assessment Act*. The Department's participation in policy initiatives related to major projects has included:

- Clean growth and regulatory efficiency initiatives, including cumulative effects;
- Federal funding support, including the Critical Mineral Infrastructure Fund Committee;
- Pre-planning major initiatives like the High Frequency Rail Project and the Regional Assessment for the Ring of Fire Region; and
- Leading engagement and writing a report with recommendations to improve Crown Consultation Coordination.

The Department participated in approximately 48% of designated projects assessed under the *Impact Assessment Act* in 2024-25, participated in the governance structure of the Impact Assessment - Horizontal Initiative, and supported the Canadian Energy Regulator in the assessment of a number of significant non-designated projects.

Permanent Bilateral Mechanisms

The Department coordinates efforts across the Government of Canada to improve its relationships with Indigenous Peoples through the Permanent Bilateral Mechanisms. These mechanisms provide a structured platform for

identifying joint priorities, co-developing policies, and monitoring progress on shared goals.

Canada-Assembly of First Nations Permanent Bilateral Mechanism

The Canada-Assembly of First Nations permanent bilateral mechanism was established in 2017. In 2024-25, the permanent bilateral mechanism held three meetings: two meetings of senior federal and First Nations officials, and one meeting of Ministers and First Nations leadership. The Leaders meeting, held in June 2024, was the first meeting between federal Ministers and First Nations leadership after a five-year hiatus. During this meeting, leaders supported renewing the permanent bilateral mechanism by refreshing the shared priorities that had been in place since 2017. Updated joint priorities were confirmed by senior federal and First Nations officials in October 2024, and are pending endorsement by federal and First Nations leaders at the next meeting to be co-chaired by the Prime Minister.

Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee

The Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC) is the permanent bilateral mechanism for Inuit, established in 2017. In 2024-2025, the ICPC achieved significant progress in its efforts to support Inuit communities and promote reconciliation. In December 2024, Cabinet approved a Cabinet Directive on the Implementation of the Inuit Nunangat Policy, which is now in effect, supporting consistency and accountability around the implementation of the Policy by federal departments and agencies. The Policy promotes prosperity, supports community and individual wellbeing throughout Inuit Nunangat, and recognizes Inuit Nunangat – the Inuit homeland – as a distinct geographic, cultural, and political region. It promotes the application of an Inuit-lens to all new or renewed federal policies, programs, services, and initiatives in Inuit Nunangat or that benefit Inuit.

Progress was also made in advancing a federal policy on Inuit education through collaborative drafting and plans to engage regional governments. Economic development efforts were strengthened by defining criteria for Inuit-led businesses and incorporating these into federal practices. The ICPC Reconciliation Measures and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People Working Group made progress on the tracking of National Inuit Action Plan implementation progress, and has prioritized efforts to prevent human trafficking.

Apology for the Nunavik Dog Slaughter

The Minister delivered a formal apology to Nunavik Inuit for the effects of federal policies that resulted in the mass killing of sled dogs during the 1950s and 1960s. These actions, which were carried out under the guise of public health and safety, caused profound harm to Inuit communities by disrupting their way of life, limiting their ability to travel, hunt, and access resources. As part of the apology, the Government of Canada announced \$45 million in funding to support reconciliatory programming in Nunavik.

See [Statement of apology regarding the Nunavik Dog Slaughter](#)

Canada-Métis Nation Permanent Bilateral Mechanism

In April 2017, Canada, the Métis National Council, and its then five Governing Members (i.e., the Métis Nation British Columbia; the Métis Nation Alberta; the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan; the Manitoba Métis Federation; and the Métis Nation Ontario) signed the Canada-Métis Nation Accord, establishing the Canada-Métis Nation permanent bilateral mechanism. Due to evolving governance within the Métis organizations, there was a pause on Leaders meetings in 2024/25. Instead, in October

2024, a strategy session to discuss Métis priorities was held between federal officials and Métis officials from the Métis National Council, Métis Nation British Columbia, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government (formerly the Métis Nation Alberta), and the Métis Nation Ontario. Additionally, federal officials continued to meet with regional Métis governments throughout the year to facilitate the ongoing relations.

Key Relationships with Indigenous Organizations

Canada has ongoing relationships with Indigenous organizations and communities not represented in the permanent bilateral mechanisms through agreements including whole-of-government Political Accords, Declarations, and Memorandums of Understanding. These mechanisms help to ensure diverse perspectives and voices inform the decision making regarding federal program, policy, legislation, and services with a goal to advance reconciliation and joint priorities.

This year, CIRNAC continued to support the implementation of the Canada-Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Political Accord, the Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada Memorandum of Understanding, the Native Women's Association of Canada Accord, and the Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Declaration.

In 2024-25, 33 Indigenous women's and two-spirit grassroots organizations received \$7.366 million in funding through stable multi-year agreements for activities that increased capacity to engage with community, support Indigenous women, and inform the federal government on key mandate items and priorities. For example, 2 Spirits In Motion Society convened 13 community leaders from kin organizations to develop a comprehensive financial and funding strategy, create a forward-looking strategic work plan, and facilitate engagement between community leaders and government ministers.

In 2024-25, over 60 Métis and non-status Indigenous organizations received \$11.6 million in funding for capacity building, governance and accountability operations – contributing to reconciliation and economic development.

National Space for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis & Dedicated Algonquin Space

The national space for First Nations, Inuit and Métis and dedicated Algonquin space, at 100 Wellington Street and 119 Sparks Street, is located in the heart of Canada's Parliamentary Precinct in Ottawa, which is on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin. First Nations, Inuit and Métis and local Algonquin representatives will continue to refine the vision for this space that is expected to provide a place for Indigenous Governments, institutions, and organizations to conduct intergovernmental meetings and host events. It will also provide Canadians from coast to coast to coast and visitors around the world with a unique opportunity to gain a clearer understanding of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their important contributions to Canada's past, present, and future.

In summer 2024, 100 Wellington Street was opened to the public every Wednesday to Sunday, offering tours of exhibit spaces to highlight the rich histories and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Public education events were also held on National Indigenous Peoples Day and Canada Day.

On March 4, 2025, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the President of the Métis National Council signed a Letter of Intent and a Collaboration

Implementation Framework that solidifies the permanent First Nations, Inuit and Métis presence and the dedicated Algonquin space in the Parliamentary Precinct.

Indigenous Climate Leadership

In 2022, the Government of Canada committed to advance Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda and launched a three year co-development process that empowers self-determined climate action. 2024-2025 saw the conclusion of the Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda's co-development process which culminated in the submission of 37 region-specific climate recommendations from First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and representative organizations and endorsement by Indigenous political leaders.

Through the co-development process, it was determined that regional capacity on a distinctions basis was required for meaningful Indigenous-led climate action. With support from the Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners were able to hire 44 regional climate coordinators to conduct community level engagement on climate recommendations. Engagement was Indigenous-led, enabling Indigenous Governments and organizations to undertake data collection in a culturally competent manner, consistent with Indigenous knowledge, ceremony, traditions of gathering, and governance. This process helped establish regional governance to carry out climate action at the local level.

With funding from the Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda and building off of regional engagement, First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners advanced the development of their climate change strategies. In 2024-2025 the Métis National Council released the Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy while Métis regional strategies neared completion. In Inuit Nunangat, while renewing the existing National Inuit Climate Change

Strategy, regional climate change strategies for Nunavik and Nunatsiavut were released. Regional climate strategies for First Nations are under development and many will be finalized in 2025-2026.

Growing the Indigenous Economy

First Nations Fiscal Management

Economic self-sustainability is an important element of Indigenous self-determination. To support this goal, the Department has created programs and policies to support First Nation communities to be more autonomous economically. Through the *First Nations Fiscal Management Act* (The Act) and the support of the four fiscal institutions, First Nations build their capacity and are able to exercise jurisdiction outside of the *Indian Act* in the areas of financial management, property taxation and local revenue, infrastructure, and access capital markets on a similar basis as other levels of government. This allows for greater control over financial, fiscal and infrastructure management and provides access to long-term, low interest financing for infrastructure and socio-economic development projects.

Participation in The Act is optional. To participate, a First Nation must submit a Band Council Resolution to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations requesting to be added to the schedule of The Act. Once a First Nation has been added to the schedule, it can begin working with any or all of the First Nations institutions established under the act:

CIRNAC has worked closely with the First Nations Finance Authority, the First Nations Financial Management Board, the First Nations Tax Commission, Modern Treaty First Nations and the Province of British Columbia, to co-develop regulations that adapt the *First Nations Fiscal*

Management Act to enable self-governing groups to access the pooled-borrowing regime under the Act. The draft regulations were completed in early 2025 and published for consultation.

- the First Nations Tax Commission: a shared-governance institution that regulates and streamlines the approval of property tax and new local revenue laws of participating First Nations. It also builds administrative capacity through sample laws and accredited training, and finds a way for First Nation government and taxpayer interests to be met fairly and respectfully;
- the First Nations Financial Management Board: a shared-governance institution that helps First Nations strengthen their local financial management regimes. Additionally, it gives independent certification to support borrowing from the First Nations Finance Authority and for First Nations economic development;
- the First Nations Finance Authority: a non-profit corporation that allows qualifying First Nations to work together to raise long-term private capital at better rates through the issuance of bonds. It also provides investment services to First Nations; and,
- the First Nations Infrastructure Institute: a newly established shared-governance institution that seeks to support First Nations achieve better and more sustainable infrastructure outcomes, including through capacity building, knowledge transfer, advisory support, certification and monitoring services.

Key results in the *First Nations Fiscal Management Act* include:

- 376 First Nations (64% of all First Nations under the *Indian Act*) have opted into the *First Nations Fiscal Management Act*, with 302 having

created financial administration laws, and 153 having put in place taxation laws which produce over \$100 million in annual tax revenues;

- 167 First Nations are borrowing members of the First Nations Finance Authority. Of these, 87 have borrowed over \$3.1 billion since 2014 (the first year they issued its inaugural bond) for infrastructure and community economic development. These projects included financing to acquire equity stake in green energy projects (i.e. approximately \$500 million), large businesses such as Clearwater Seafoods (i.e. \$250 million loan for equity stake) and natural resource projects such as Cedar Liquefied Natural Gas (i.e. \$1.4 billion over 4 years); and,
- The First Nations Finance Authority estimates that loans to its member First Nations since 2014 have resulted in the creation of 23,530 jobs and stronger local economies, as seen by an economic output of \$5.1 billion across Canada.

Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management

The First Nations-led Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management provides ways for communities to gain greater control of their lands and resources by withdrawing from the 44 land management provisions of the *Indian Act*. Following the passage of the Framework Agreement on *First Nation Land Management Act* in December 2022, the Framework Agreement itself has the force of law.

The Framework Agreement establishes how a First Nation takes back authority to govern their lands according to a community approved land code. First Nation land laws derive from this land code. Each unique First Nation land code is designed to meet a community's specific needs. Community self-determination over their land, environment, and natural resources provides more opportunities to economically benefit arising from

the resources on their lands. As of March 31, 2025, 212 First Nations have signed the Framework Agreement, and 118 First Nations have operational land codes to manage their lands.

The Lands Advisory Board was created under the Framework Agreement. It represents the First Nations who have signed the Framework agreement on key land-related issues. This Board is elected by operational First Nations and advocates for the rights and advancement over land-related issues for signatory First Nations. CIRNAC works closely with the Lands Advisory Board to modernize the Framework Agreement as needed and collaborate on projects to support Framework Agreement First Nations. A recent project collaboration being led by the Lands Advisory Board is to create the First Nation Land Governance Registry which will support Framework Agreement First Nations in land management. This new, First Nation-owned and operated registry will be faster and more dynamic and allow First Nations to manage their lands and related economic opportunities at a faster pace. The development of this registry has advanced significantly over the 2024-25 fiscal year and is on track for implementation by 2027-28.

Additions to Reserves

The Minister of Crown–Indigenous Relations is also responsible for the *Addition of Lands to Reserves and Reserve Creation Act*. This legislation sets apart reserve land for the use and benefit of First Nations. Lands are at the heart of First Nation traditions, identity and economic opportunities. Through the Additions to Reserve and Reserve Creation process, First Nations are strategically expanding their land and resource base. This also includes developing urban reserves. These expansions support First Nations in reclaiming traditional lands, preserving cultural heritage and advancing reconciliation. They can also promote collaboration with other

government levels and are often associated with economic growth by attracting investments, fostering new businesses, and creating opportunities for economic growth.

A pilot project led by the Lands Advisory Board and Tzeachten, in collaboration with the Government of Canada, was launched to streamline the Additions to Reserve process and reduce timelines. As a result, the policy requirements were completed in approximately 10 months from Tzeachten's initial engagement with Indigenous Services Canada— a significant improvement compared to the average range of 2-5 years typically required to process Additions to Reserve proposals. This addition to reserve supports Tzeachten's efforts to expand its land base and enhance services for its members.

The Department is in the process of redesigning the Additions to Reserve Policy in collaboration with First Nations and their organizations. This redesign will address longstanding concerns that the current process is inefficient, overly complex, and prone to delays — resulting in significant missed opportunities. In summer 2024, a Technical Advisory Committee was created bringing together representatives from the First Nations Land Management Resource Centre, the National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association, the Assembly of First Nations, a representative of Self-governing First Nations, Indigenous Services Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada to provide guidance on the policy redesign. The Government of Canada also approved nine interim changes to the Additions to Reserve Policy, which focus on streamlining processes, easing requirements, and removing key barriers, offering immediate benefits to all First Nations seeking to add land to reserve while broader policy reform continues.

Distinctions-based Housing and Infrastructure

Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy

Distinctions-based funding for housing and infrastructure, including Urban, Rural and Northern housing (\$77 million to Metis and \$172.61 million to Inuit in 2024/25); and school foods (\$62 million provided starting 2024-25) was delivered to Inuit Treaty Organizations and Métis Governments. Funding flows to groups reflected ITK Board decisions for Inuit allocations and Treasury Board decisions for Métis allocations.

Budget 2023 committed \$4 billion over seven years, starting in 2024-25, to implement a co-developed Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy (U.R.N. Strategy) while Indigenous People living in urban, rural, and northern areas face unique challenges accessing adequate housing. In fiscal year 2024-25, CIRNAC and ISC worked with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Self-Governing Indigenous Governments to implement their distinctions-based housing strategies by amending their funding agreements to incorporate U.R.N. funding. A request for proposals (RFP) was launched by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, on behalf of the Government of Canada, inviting Indigenous proponents to submit proposals to establish a National Indigenous Housing Centre. At the time of finalizing this report, work to conclude this process was still underway.

Northern Prosperity and Security

Efforts under this theme supports the *United Nations Declaration Act* Action Plan Measures to ensure access to traditional foods and local food systems, as well as co-developing approaches to implement Inuit self-determination.

Arctic and Northern Policy Framework

The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework was launched in 2019. It was co-developed with northern Indigenous partners, including Inuit, First Nations and Métis, the territorial governments of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon, and the provincial governments of Manitoba, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador. The Framework provides "a shared vision of the future where Arctic and northern people are thriving, strong and safe"; it informs the Government of Canada's national and international policy objectives with the priorities of Northerners. The Framework Indigenous-territorial-provincial-federal tables are unique in Canada; they emphasize collaboration "with the North" rather than "for the North."

Housing and infrastructure needs continue to be key priorities for Framework partners, along with Arctic and northern security and defense, international Arctic policy, and mental health and wellness. Reflecting this, the 2024 Leadership Committee meeting, co-chaired by the Minister of Northern Affairs and the Premier of Nunavut, included the participation of the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Associate Minister of Health. Specific priorities noted during the 2024 Leadership Committee meeting included coordinated and northern-specific approaches to

investments on big projects, such as the Mackenzie Valley highway, the Kivalliq hydro-fibre link, the Iqaluit hydro project, and the Grays Bay road and port. Partners also identified a number of additional priorities, including enhanced funding for the Canadian Rangers; greater coordination with territorial and Indigenous Governments on emergency management and public safety; investments in local economies; climate change; economical air services; and cross-border mobility.

The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework's commitment to healthy and resilient communities and poverty reduction continues to advance food security in Indigenous and northern communities in cooperation with Indigenous partners.

In 2022, the Food Security Research Grant was launched which funded five Indigenous-led research projects that address key questions and challenges with respect to food access inequality, the dynamics of existing federal food access programs and food insecurity among Indigenous Peoples living in isolated communities. The final reports for these projects were submitted in Spring 2025. The second phase of the Food Security Research Grant will launch in 2025 and focus on tangible solutions to improve NNC's programming. The results of these research projects will be leveraged for policy improvements.

The Nutrition North Canada Research Symposium took place in December 2024. The Symposium hosted 35 participants. Early recommendations included need to increase access to country food and long term stable funding.

Work continues with Inuit partners to implement the Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy, which calls for an Inuit-led approach and whole-of-government collaboration. Investments from Nutrition North Canada through the Harvesters Support Grant and Community Food Programs Fund to the Inuit land claims organizations are continuing to flow over the next three years to support the Strategy and its implementation plan.

Finally, in February 2025, Ms. Aluki Kotierk, former President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, was appointed as the Minister's Special Representative to conduct an independent review of the Nutrition North program. The findings of the Ministerial Special Representative will reflect the results of extensive engagement and are expected to recommend significant changes. Her final report is due by March 2026.

Nunavut Devolution

The devolution of responsibilities for public lands, freshwater and non-renewable resources to territorial governments is a long-standing federal priority. Devolution of these responsibilities was completed in Yukon in April 2003 and Northwest Territories in April 2014. Nunavut is the final territory where lands and resources are still managed by the federal government.

In Nunavut, devolution of responsibilities for lands and natural resources has been part of the vision of Inuit self-determination. Signing the *Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement* (Devolution Agreement) on January 18, 2024 in Iqaluit by the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of Canada was the next step in the reconciliation of governance in Nunavut and self-determination of Nunavummiut. In addition, signing the Devolution Agreement launched a three-year implementation phase that bring devolution into effect so the

Government of Nunavut will take over lands and resources responsibilities on April 1, 2027. Completion of devolution will ensure greater local control and decision-making, while fostering effective relations among the Government of Nunavut, Inuit, and Indigenous entities. This will further advance the reconciliation of governance in Nunavut and self-determination of Nunavummiut.

During 2024-25, first year of the implementation phase, important milestones were achieved that will further contribute to reconciliation and self-determination in Nunavut. Governance structures committed in the Devolution Agreement were established including Implementation Representatives Table, Implementation Planning Committee, and several subject matter expert working groups. The Implementation Plan committed in the Devolution Agreement was developed and signed in fall 2025. This plan will be guide the implementation phase to ensure all legal obligations and other commitments are met.

The Transitional Human Resources Development Strategy committed in the Devolution Agreement was launched in February 2024 which will advance recruitment, training and retention of Inuit in positions of employment that will devolve to the Government of Nunavut; thereby contributing to their self-determination and reconciliation. In addition, conducted several engagement sessions were held with federal employees in Nunavut many of whom will devolve to the Government of Nunavut on April 1, 2027.

All legal obligations and other commitments for 2024-25 have been met and the implementation is on track. Collaborative relationships among the Parties and with the Indigenous groups being consulted were further strengthened during 2024-25. Undertaking the processes and deliverables

committed in the Devolution Agreement will help enable self-determination and reconciliation in Nunavut and amongst Indigenous groups while preparing for devolution and after it takes place.

Implementation of Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement

Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement specifies Inuit employment obligations. In an effort to meet Article 23, CIRNAC, with input from northern and Inuit partners and in support of the Whole-of-the-Government Inuit Employment Plan, submitted its departmental specific Inuit Employment Plan (IEP) in September 2024. As the federal lead in the implementation of the Nunavut Agreement and the largest federal employer in Nunavut, CIRNAC has taken on the leadership role in implementing the federal commitments.

Northern Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program

CIRNAC is responsible for the management of a portfolio of approximately 150 contaminated sites (as of March 2025) in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The Northern Contaminated Sites Program receives funding from two sources. The Northern Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program funds the eight largest high-risk sites: Faro, United Keno Hill, Mount Nansen, Ketzka River, and Clinton Creek mines in Yukon, and, Giant, Cantung and Great Bear Lake group of mines in the Northwest Territories. The Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan, a horizontal initiative led by Environment and Climate Change Canada, funds most of the remaining sites. Through these programs, a variety of economic opportunities are available to Indigenous partners, including training and employment opportunities, and Indigenous benefit agreements.

The Giant Mine Remediation Project

The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, announced the appointment of Murray Rankin as the Ministerial Special Representative to address the legacy of the Giant Mine. Rankin, a lawyer with expertise in Indigenous, environmental, and public law, will assess the impacts of the mine on historical Treaty rights and explore pathways to resolution. His work will include engaging with Indigenous communities and providing recommendations to support reconciliation and healing.

The Project contributed approximately \$400,000 in annual funding to the North Slave Métis Alliance, as per the signed Community Benefits Agreement, whereby the federal government will support socio-economic development opportunities. A Procurement Framework Agreement was signed with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, which prioritizes contracts with Indigenous-owned businesses in the community. In 2024-25, The Project Team has engaged in negotiations with the Tłıchǫ Government and signed an Economic Benefits Agreement for \$2.0 million per year for the life of the Project.

The majority of construction work packages are solicited by the Manager as part of the Geographically Restricted (Regional) Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (the Regional Strategy). This strategy limits tendering to Indigenous businesses within the area of the contract where capacity exists, therefore maximizing local, regional, and Indigenous employment and business opportunities. A recent example of a successful application of the Regional Strategy is in relation to the core industrial area contract awarded to True North Environmental, in a joint venture with Det'on Cho, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation development corporation, for \$101 million.

Faro Mine (Tsē Zūl) Remediation Project

Faro Mine was once the largest open pit lead-zinc mine in the world. It is located in the south-central Yukon, near the town of Faro, on the traditional territory of the Kaska Nations, and upstream from the Selkirk First Nation. The Faro Mine Remediation Project Team has continued working with First Nation partners to fully develop a community-based framework for Project participation.

The Community-Based Revegetation Strategy achieved significant milestones with its fourth annual planting program and third annual seed collection and metals uptake investigation. Notably, 100,000 plants were re-established at the Faro Mine site, with many grown from Kaska-collected seeds and planted by Kaska people. Additionally, the seed collection work in August 2024 saw participation from the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and North Slave Métis Alliance, highlighting the success of the Community-Based Revegetation Strategy. This success is paving the way for an Indigenous-led revegetation program for the Giant Mine Remediation Project. Learning from the success of the Community-Based Revegetation Strategy, CIRNAC and Ross River Dena Council are now collaborating on the Tsē Zūl Land Care Plan. The goal of this initiative is to articulate a Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) vision for community involvement in the remediation project and objectives for the long-term care and stewardship of Tsē Zūl.

Ross River Dena Council's successful development and ownership of the Tsē Zūl Camp represents a significant socio-economic milestone for the Faro Mine Remediation Project. Through collaboration with Parsons, Dena Nezziddi Development Corporation, and the Faro Mine Remediation Project team, RRDC has established itself as the largest Indigenous camp services

provider in the Yukon. This success not only strengthens RRDC's future role in workforce and economic development but also positions it for involvement in other major projects across the territory.

The Faro Mine Remediation Project continues providing consistent annual funding, including in 2024-25, to Ross River Dena Council, Liard First Nation and Selkirk First Nation for their meaningful involvement in the Project. This encompasses both leadership level strategic involvement in the governance and day to day technical meetings and workshops.

Nunavut Region

Under the Inuit Capacity Development Program, contractors have access to funding up to 2% of the total project cost to develop and deliver a training program to local Inuit and Northerners. The intent of this training is to offer further capacity building in communities near remediation work to enable those interested in developing skills that could be used in the labour market and often targets skills needed to work in the construction and remediation field. In 2024-2025, Salumaq Environmental Contracting Limited, an Inuit-owned contractor, located in Coral Harbour, delivered a capacity training program to community members.

Northern Regulatory Regimes and the Northern Regulatory Initiative

Implemented actions under the Northern Regulatory Initiative including:

- advanced planning of a proposed Regional Study in the Slave Geological Province (Northwest Territories);
- launched a pilot initiative for five First-Nation-led cumulative effects and baseline studies in the Yukon; and

- launched a pilot Indigenous capacity building secondment program in partnership with the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board in the Northwest Territories.

Northern regulatory regimes implement commitments from Modern Treaties for integrated, coordinated, and participatory systems of natural resource management. Their successful implementation relies on community participation (and in some cases Indigenous decision-making), intergovernmental relationships, and traditional, local, and scientific knowledge.

Alongside Modern Treaty partners, CIRNAC continues to meaningfully participate in the co-management of lands, waters, and resources in Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. This includes working in partnership on improving regulatory efficiency in all three territories. To enhance this work, the CIRNAC-led Northern Regulatory Initiative of Canada's Critical Minerals Strategy aims to increase confidence and efficiencies in northern resource management. Operational elements of the initiative, such as collaborative regulatory dialogues, are developed and implemented in partnership with Indigenous Governments and organizations.

Key accomplishments in 2024-25 align with the Government of Canada's commitment to Indigenous reconciliation and self-determination include funding pilot programs and other Indigenous-led research:

- a secondment program in the Northwest Territories supporting three Indigenous Governments by providing resources and training to build their internal capacity for more effective review of application/management plans and participation in regulatory processes;

- \$2.5 million to support five Yukon First Nation-led studies, over three years, in areas with the potential for critical mineral and infrastructure development. Each study will be designed to meet the needs and interests of First Nations across the Yukon, including environmental, social and economic impacts. The information from these studies will inform regulatory processes, so decisions can be better informed and made faster.
- Support enabling regional Inuit associations to conduct studies and develop land management tools that will better enable their decision-making when it comes to resource development.

Also supporting reconciliation and self-determination is the capacity support provided through CIRNAC's Northern Participant Funding program to Indigenous Governments and organizations wanting to participate more meaningfully in Northern resource co-management Board-led project reviews (i.e., impact assessments, water licencing processes). In 2024-2025, contributions totaling over \$1.5M were provided to 19 distinct Indigenous Governments and organizations to support research and other activities enabling them to effectively bring their views forward in four major regulatory processes and share their concerns about impacts to rights. Additional funding supported Indigenous non project-specific impact assessment capacity building, specifically focused on strengthening the ability to identify and communicate enhanced GBA+ considerations in impact assessment.

Conclusion

The Department's initiatives emphasize reconciliation and self-determination, particularly in Canada's Arctic and Northern regions. These regions are undergoing substantial societal transformations driven by

treaty implementation, governance advancements, and cultural revitalization. Modern Treaties and Self-Government agreements continue to reflect Indigenous perspectives. By championing Indigenous-led governance, CIRNAC supports the establishment of systems that align with the aspirations of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.

CIRNAC is currently operating within an intricate geopolitical and economic environment, including navigating the impact of tariffs imposed by the United States. These tariffs significantly affect Canada's economy, especially in sectors linked to Indigenous communities and Northern regions. In response, CIRNAC advocates for Indigenous voices in trade and economic policy discussions, supporting self-determination and fostering sustainable growth. A comprehensive approach underpins the Department's work, ensuring Indigenous Peoples and Northern communities benefit from equitable economic solutions despite global challenges.

Canada's Arctic and Northern regions are undergoing significant transformation, driven by progress in self-determination and reconciliation. Modern Treaties and Land Claim agreements now cover most of the region, with ongoing negotiations further shaping governance structures. Shared governance and co-management mechanisms at all levels of government are advancing societal transformation. Strengthening collaboration, particularly through the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework goal of supporting reconciliation and self-determination, remains essential. This includes initiatives in Treaty implementation, representation of Indigenous Peoples, revitalizing Indigenous languages and cultures, and addressing historical wrongs.

CIRNAC is reforming the Specific Claims process and consultation protocols to improve collaboration and align more closely with self-determination objectives. Further, partnerships with Indigenous institutions, such as the Lands Advisory Board and First Nations Financial Management Board, help grow Indigenous economies and self-governance. For instance, initiatives under the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management and the *First Nations Fiscal Management Act* regime provide tools for financial and infrastructure management, enabling socio-economic development and land stewardship. Addressing Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action remains a vital focus, with particular emphasis on Calls to Action 72 to 76 regarding Missing Children and Burial Information. CIRNAC supports community-led efforts to document, memorialize, and preserve graves associated with residential schools, fostering healing and reconciliation for Survivors and their families. These endeavors demonstrate CIRNAC's commitment to addressing historical injustices while supporting pathways to healing.

In line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, CIRNAC is aiding the transition of Indigenous Peoples from colonial administrative systems to governance structures that reflect their vision and aspirations. This includes expanding Modern Treaties and Self-Government agreements, reforming fiscal policies, and ensuring representation for Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes. These efforts exemplify CIRNAC's dedication to empowering Indigenous communities while highlighting partnerships and collaboration.

Despite ongoing challenges, CIRNAC's work underscores its commitment to fostering reconciliation, and self-determination. By embracing a collaborative, inclusive, and whole-of-government approach, CIRNAC continues to pursue meaningful transformation and resilient futures for Indigenous Peoples and the Arctic and Northern regions.

Footnotes

- 1 Effective date is normally about two to three years after signing, to give all parties time to prepare for implementation by passing legislation and ensuring the First Nation's readiness. The *Indian Act* would no longer apply and the implementation process could begin at this stage.
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