



**ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
BULLETIN
ASSEMBLÉE DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS**

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Assembly of First Nations Disappointed and Concerned About the Welfare of First Nations Children Following Decision by Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

(Ottawa, ON) – Yesterday, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled to dismiss a 2007 complaint filed by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCSC) on discrimination caused by unequal funding for First Nation children in the child welfare system.

AFN National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo stated: “We are very disappointed with this ruling by the Tribunal which seems to suggest it is acceptable for the federal government to treat our children unequally and unfairly.”

The Chair of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal dismissed the complaint yesterday, based on a questionable legal basis which suggests that the federal government can provide a different, and inequitable, level of service to First Nations children so long as the provinces and territories provide the service to all other children.

“We are reviewing the decision carefully and are going to consider all options to ensure this complaint moves forward because this is first and foremost about the welfare of First Nations children,” the National Chief said. “Our primary objective is ending the unequal treatment that places them in harm’s way. This issue is too important and needs to be heard on its merits and not de-railed by technicalities and legal maneuvering.”

The Tribunal ruling disregards numerous documents provided to the Chair that confirm this inequality, including reports by the Auditor General of Canada (2008), the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (2009) and internal documents from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

The co-complainant in this case, the FNCFCSC, has already stated its intention to appeal this decision within the next 30 days.

The Assembly of First Nations is the national organization representing First Nations citizens in Canada.

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