

SECRETARIAT TO THE CREE NATION ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE FCONOMIC ALLIANCE

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



624, 3e Avenue, Val-d'Or (Quebec) J9P 1S5 Tél: 819-824-9888 Fax: 819-824-9588 reception@creenation-at.com

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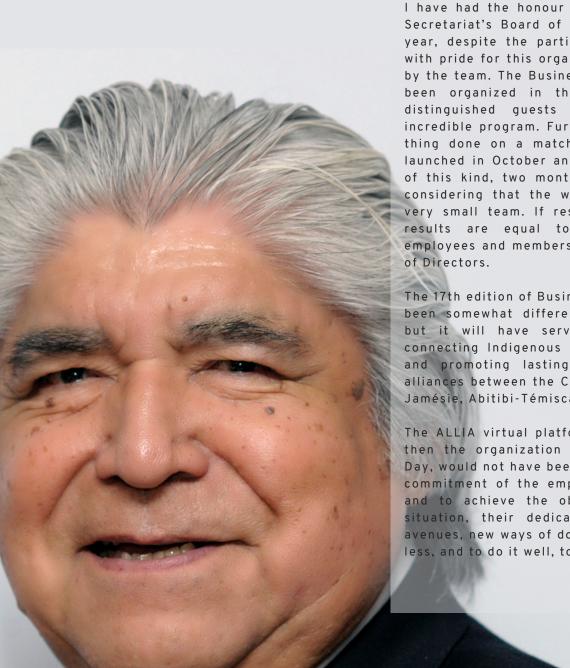
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## WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN DRS. TED MOSES



I have had the honour of serving as Chair of the Secretariat's Board of Directors since 2009. This year, despite the particular context, I was filled with pride for this organization and the work done by the team. The Business Exchange Day 2020 has been organized in the rules of the art with distinguished guests and dignitaries and an incredible program. Furthermore, to see the whole thing done on a matchmaking platform officially launched in October and already hosting an event of this kind, two months later, is almost a feat, considering that the whole thing was done by a very small team. If resources were reduced, the results are equal to the dedication of the employees and members of the Secretariat's Board of Directors.

The 17th edition of Business Exchange Day will have been somewhat different from previous editions, but it will have served the same purpose of connecting Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and promoting lasting relationships and social alliances between the Cree Nation (Eeyou Istchee), Jamésie, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Nunavik.

The ALLIA virtual platform project, its launch and then the organization of the Business Exchange Day, would not have been possible without the total commitment of the employees to meet the needs and to achieve the objectives set. Despite the situation, their dedication has opened up new avenues, new ways of doing things: to do more with less, and to do it well, to do it better.

We have experienced and continue to experience special moments and the year 2020, as different it has been, would have brought its share of challenges, but also its goals achieved and even surpassed. Congratulations to the Secretariat team, both small and large!

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## WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL MRS. CHANTAL HAMELIN

virtual that offered it to us.

It would be impossible to talk about 2020, not to mention the COVID-19 pandemic. For my team and for myself, if it is true that 2020 will have been marked by the pandemic, it will not have been just that.

The year that ended also allowed us to question ourselves, challenge ourselves and find solutions

outside our comfort zone, and «out-of-the-box», but

also to take stock of our vision of the future.

Although the Secretariat had to postpone the June 2020 Annual Conference and the Spring Mission of Orientation, it turned around and found an alternative to continue offering its information, communication, gathering and exchange services, the four pillars of its mission. And this alternative is the digital and the

Three free webinars from the Series: Sustainable Development in a Nordicity Context; a smart matchmaking platform launched in October 2020 that allowed us to hold a Business Exchange Day despite the unfavourable environment and, most importantly, to make it a great success; and personalized support at an average of 2.6 interventions per week throughout this year of challenges; these are just a few of the results presented in this annual report.

I am proud to see the increase in our social media subscribers, the quality of the exchanges and the new partnerships created during this particular year. Our motivation is our subscribers and supporters, our partners, our members, our contacts, in fact the entire network that relies on the Secretariat, who gave it to us.

On behalf of our very small team of great accomplishments, thank you. Thank you for believing in us for 18 years. Thank you for supporting us in partnerships and sustainable and harmonious development between the Cree Nation and Indigenous and non-indigenous Peoples, in the territories we will continue to serve with heart and passion.

Chartel Hamelin

It was in June 2002, that a symposium entitled "Gateway to Building Economic Channels" took place between the Cree Nation leaders and the business people of Abitibi-Témiscamingue. This symposium proved very successful and revealed a high potential for building alliances between both populations with respect and in the spirit of the "Paix des Braves" Agreement and Cree empowerment. The Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Témiscamingue Economic Alliance was therefore created as a non-profit organization to act and follow-up on the contacts and projects arising from the symposium.

### Partenaires:



·ΔσVdΔλd' Δ"CΓDΔλd' ∇ αCLD·C° (Δλd Δ\r)

Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)

Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

∆אל מעאיירות Cree Nation Government Gouvernement de la Nation Crie











Développement économique Canada pour les régions du Québec Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions MISSION

The Secretariat's mission is to promote sustainable relations and socioeconomic alliances between the Cree Nation (Eeyou Istchee), Jamésie, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Nunavik regions in order to foster harmonious development.

### The four pillars of the Secretariat:

**EXCHANGE** 



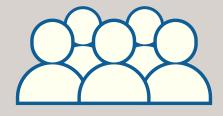
COMMUNICATE



**INFORM** 

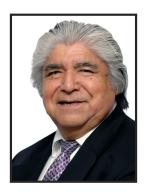


BRING TOGETHER





The operations of the Secretariat are managed by a Board of Directors composed of fifteen members, seven of whom are appointed by the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government, two by the City of Val-d'Or, two by the City of Rouyn-Noranda, two by the City of Amos, one by the City of Matagami, and one seat is occupied by the Director General of the Secretariat.



Drs.Ted Moses Cree Nation Government President



Pierre Corbeil Mayor of Val-d'Or Vice-President



Alfred Loon Cree Nation Government Secretary-treasurer



Sébastien D'Astous Mayor of Amos Executive member



Richard Brouillard Val-d'Or Representative



Diane Dallaire Mayor of Rouyn-Noranda



Patrick Deshaies Amos Representative



René Dubé Mayor of Matagami



Patrick Giguère Rouyn-Noranda Representative



Robin McGinley Cree Nation Government Representative



Louisa Saganash Cree Nation Government Representative



Bertie Wapachee Cree Nation Government Representative

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DRS. TED MOSES PRESIDENT



PIERRE CORBEIL VICE-PRESIDENT



SÉBASTIEN D'ASTOUS EXECUTIVE MEMBER



### Changes to the Board of Directors

Effective May 26, 2020, Mr. Patrick Deshaies replaces Mr. Jean-Pier Frigon, as the City of Amos' representative on the Secretariat's Board of Directors. Mr. Frigon had been a member of the Board since the early days of the Secretariat and his contribution was highlighted by the Chairman of the Board.

On December 10, 2020, the Board of Directors of the Secretariat welcomed Bertie Wapachee, as the new Cree health sector representative. He replaces Ms. Bella Moses Petawabano, who received the sincerest thanks from the President, Drs. Ted Moses, on behalf of the organization, for the ongoing work accomplished during her mandate.



### Calendar of governance meetings in 2020

Date	Meeting
May 26, 2020	B.O.D. regular
May 26, 2020	Annual general meeting
October 28, 2020	Extraordinary B.O.D.
December 10, 2020	B.O.D. regular



### Involvement and representation

Secretariat staff and management sit on several committees including:

- Ministerial Strategy for Labour Market Integration of First Nations and Inuit People, The Abitibi Joint Regional Committee, First Peoples Advisory Committee UQAT
- Regional Supplier Advisory Committee of the Office of Small and Medium Enterprises - Quebec Region
- Chiiyaaniu College working Group
- Higher Education Round Table, Chisasibi
- Board of Directors of Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue



### Administrative decisions surrounding COVID-19

### Telecommuting, March 13, 2020

As the pandemic situation continued, the Secretariat made the decision to continue its activities and organized telework for all staff.

### Orientation Mission's Postponement, March 23-24-25, 2020

The President of the organization, Drs.Ted Moses made the decision to cancel the orientation mission that was scheduled for March 23, 24 and 25, 2020, in the context of a coronavirus pandemic. The orientation mission had received 15 registrations and was to allow the visit of the communities: Chisasibi, Wemindji, Waskaganish. As all participants had already paid, the Secretariat, after contacting the host communities of the mission and then each participant by telephone and email announcing the cancellation or postponement but, on a date to be determined, quickly proceeded with the reimbursement of each.

### Postponement of the 2020 Conference: Energy and Environment in a Nordicity context, scheduled to be held in Amos – April 16, 2020

The Secretariat issued a press release on April 16, 2020 announcing the postponement of the holding of its annual conference which was to be held in Amos on June 10 and 11, 2020, under the theme: Energy and environment in a northern context. Organized in partnership with the City of Amos and the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government, this conference offered a rich program and renowned speakers.

In order to comply with the instructions and directives issued by the federal and provincial governments in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and also to ensure that we offer programming that matches the efforts of the organization and its collaborators and partners, Board Chairman Drs Ted Moses made the decision to postpone this event to a later date.

### Initiatives to the post COVID-19 context and economic recovery

Ms. Hamelin, Director-General, has taken steps to reflect on the best ways to implement, in the organization, new ways of providing the services and to continue to respond to the needs, in a very different context of intervention. Also, on the development of a communication plan for the Secretariat's activities limited in their usual format, in the context of COVID-19. Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton and Rouillier Communications were selected for these mandates.

### Chantal Hamelin Director general

Chantal Hamelin joined the Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Témiscamingue Economic Alliance in June 2009 as the Director of operations, responsible for promoting business matchmaking between Cree Nation businesses and indigenous and non-indigenous businesses in Northern Quebec. Ms. Hamelin studied Business Administration, Marketing Option. She has worked for more than a dozen years as a manager for the development of business links in the field of post-secondary education. She also started her business in 2008 offering advice in market development, in the field of recruitment and development of business links. She was involved for several years on the Board of Directors of the Fondation du Centre hospitalier de la Vallée de l'Or, where she served as president for two years. With her practical experience in the Secretariat's operations and in the field, as well as her extensive network, she has held the position of Director-General of the Secretariat since 2019. A member of numerous regional economic development and Indigenous communities committees, Ms. Hamelin has also served on the Board of Directors of the Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue since June 2018 and accepted the Vice-Chair in January 2021.



### Jacqueline Monfourny Communications Coordinator

Holder of a bachelor's degree in Earth Science (geology) and of an MBA, Jacqueline has over fifteen years of experience in economic development. She has been the export commissioner for the Outaouais region for six years. Also, she has also been involved, many years, as an international consultant to transfer the Quebec's Economic development model in South America, mainly within the framework of CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) projects.

She has worked in various sectors: consulting, social economy and environment, agri-food and manufacturing, construction and artificial intelligence, as vice-president of division at DIAGNOS. A return to mining as a co-founder or officer of mining companies has once again brought her internationally, to Ghana and Haiti.

Versatile, adaptable and a good communicator in the three languages she masters (French, English, Spanish), she taught as a lecturer at the University of Quebec in Hull, UQAH (now UQO) as well as NEXPRO trainer for Development Bank of Canada (BDC). Ms. Monfourny enthusiastically joined the Secretariat in January 2020 as Communications Coordinator.



### Geneviève Binette Administrative Assistant

Geneviève Binette joined the Secretariat team in August 2020, as administrative assistant. With solid knowledge in logistics and project management acquired during her atypical career, she brings to the Secretariat experience and a thirst for learning and renewal. In 2008, she returned to her hometown after travelling around the world, mostly by bike,

and after having lived in western Canada and in the United States. Originally from Anicinabe on her father's side, she chose to teach in nearby Anicinabek communities. She will also lead the Jeunes Musiciens du monde (JMM) organization in the Kitcisakik community until 2017.

Geneviève has managed numerous Anicinabek cultural projects and organized several events with JMM in schools as well as with Minwashin. The Secretariat is pleased to welcome this woman of challenge and passion, open-minded and showing great dynamism, just like the organization she joins.





This is the number of subscribers to our newsletter, produced 3 times a year and to the numerous information relays concerning our activities or those of our partners, throughout the year.

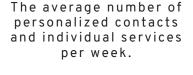


This is the increase in traffic on Facebook and other social networks, for the year that is ending. This represents more than 5,000 people affected by the information conveyed.



+22%

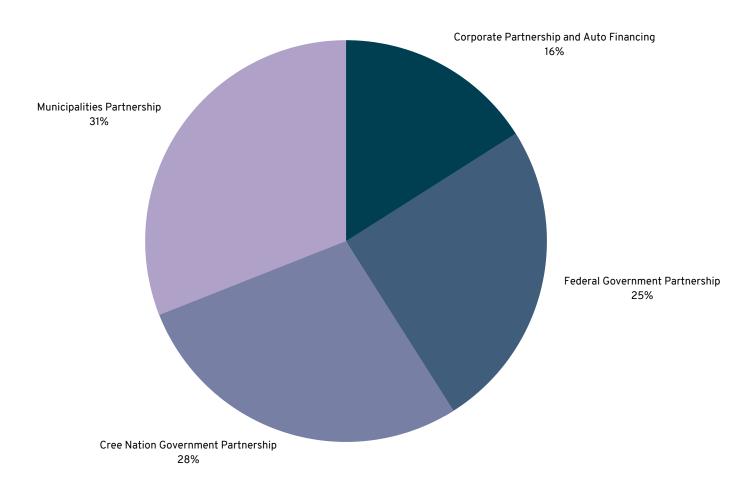
This is the increase in contacts on LinkedIn in the past year.





The number of pages of the WEB site that users have accessed.

The Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Témiscamingue Economic Alliance is a non-profit organisation composed of partners who believe in building mutually beneficial relationships. This partnership is the foundation of the mission of the Secretariat in developing harmonious sustainable socio-economic relations between all partners and regions served and beyond, mission based on the four pillars of information, gathering, exchange and communication. Four important axes also of any sustainable development. Below is our sustainable funding model.



### THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE SECRETARIAT: INFORM-COMMUNICATE-EXCHANGE-BRING TOGETHER

## Series of three free webinars on sustainable economic recovery in a nordicity context

### Programs and projects Waste management challenges and SOLUTIONS



The first webinar in the series, to which registered 45 people, was viewed by about 30 of them. Lasting 45-minute session, including the Q&A with two speakers on the topic of the Residual Management Challenge in the Nordic context and the solutions and programs available, this opening webinar on the series proved to be a great success.

Mr. Karl Côté of Sanexen presented the first part:

Waste management in the North poses many financial and environmental challenges. The fact that communities are isolated, some without road access, and at a great distance from waste treatment services such as recycling plants and hazardous waste treatment facilities increases waste management costs. Some waste management practices have been adapted to the realities of the North, but most are still underdeveloped in many communities. Available programs and funding are helping communities implement realistic solutions.

Ms. Elisabeth Morin of Fonds Écoleader, the second part:

The Écoleader Fund offers a boost to Quebec companies ready to adopt eco-responsible practices and clean technologies. It can represent an excellent lever for businesses in economic recovery in a context of Nordicity. This presentation will allow you to learn more about the Écoleader Fund and what it can do for businesses in a Nordicity context.

## Les initiatives énergétiques et les programmes pour les entreprises



The second webinar on June 18, 2020, at 2:00 p.m., received 53 registrations and nearly 40 participants attended.

Denis Audette, from the Ministère du Transport-Québec, was the first presenter:

This brief overview of energy initiatives in the Nordic region will, as a first step, reveal some of the achievements in the hydro-electric, biomass, wind, and solar sectors.

In a second phase, the implementation limits of renewable energies will be briefly discussed to stimulate discussion on how to approach the hidden face of the iceberg.

The following questions will also be addressed: What other projects are under development? How to participate in their design or realization? How do we ensure that local people are not just spectators in the development of these solutions?

Isabelle Leblanc, from the Ecoleader Fund, gave the second part, which is summarized below:

The Ecoleader Fund provides a boost to Quebec businesses ready to adopt eco-responsible practices and clean technologies. It can be an excellent lever for businesses in a northern economic recovery. Her presentation provided an opportunity to learn more about the Ecoleader Fund and what it can do for businesses in a northern context.

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## INFORM-COMMUNICATE EXCHANGE-BRING TOGETHER

### Developing harmonious and sustainable partnerships with Cree nation's businesses



Presented on August 27, 2020 at 10:00 am, and lasting one hour, this bilingual webinar recorded a number of 80 registered participants, of which, nearly 55 actually attended. This first full Secretariat webinar thus had record attendance on this topic of interest.

Extract of the Eventbrite invitation:

Doing business and creating partnerships with Indigenous businesses can be an interesting avenue for accessing new markets and interesting business opportunities in a northern context. It is important to be well prepared and to know the facilitating factors but also the constraints and barriers.

In this introduction on the subject, Mrs. Hamelin, Director General of the Secretariat for Economic Alliances Nation Cree Abitibi-Témiscamingue, presents the partnership guide, published by SCNATEA, thus answering essential questions on the planning and development of harmonious relations and sustainable partnerships.

Drs Ted Moses, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Secretariat, and signatory of the Paix des Braves (2002) will be the special guest who will brief the participants on several aspects of relations between Indigenous and non-indigenous. In 1984, Drs Moses became Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) of James Bay, a position he held for three terms, from 1984 to 1987, then from 1999 to 2005. He played a very important role in the socio-economic development of the Cree Nation.

This webinar in French with the address of Drs Moses in English, is an excellent opportunity to prepare adequately to do business with Indigenous and particularly Cree businesses, with the goal of harmonious, sustainable, and profitable development for all parties involved.

The free webinar series ended with great success and a confirmation of the need for such activities to bring our members and partners together in the context of the continuing pandemic. The allia platform pilot project began with the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The Secretariat, due to the definition of its mission, its objectives, and its activities, has been affected in the way it operates and delivers its services.

Following the organization of webinars which worked very well, SCNATEA evaluated the possibility of having a tool that would allow, throughout the year, the networking of companies and the organization of activities in a Virtual.



On June 9, 2020, SCNATEA signed an agreement with PairConnex to start a pilot project approved by resolution of the Board of Directors. The implementation of this project was carried out by the permanent team of the Secretariat with the help of the firm Rouillier Marketing for branding and promotion of the platform.

The results having exceeded the expectations and the objectives set on the platform as of October 28, 2020, the recommendation of the management was to continue the project as a regular activity of the Secretariat. A resolution to this effect was adopted by the Board of Directors on October 28, 2020.

The platform has 150 participants, 125 of whom are active. The "Networking Day 2020" event on the platform on 9 December 2020 had a significant impact on registrations. And on connections around this date, reaching 450 connections in the week of the event and nearly 200 connections the same day.



"I have to say this is one of the most innovative and best orchestrated exchange days I've had the chance to attend. The platform is simple, effective and precise. A model to follow for other economic andcultural organisations. I am lucky to have taken part in this event; alreadylooking forward to 2021".

- Scott Szabadkai, Machinerie Saint-Pierre

www.alliab2b.com



Since the launch of the allia platform, more than 1,300 user connections have taken place.



The number of active participants, as of December 31, 2020, on the allia platform launched in October 2020.



The number of virtual kiosk visits during the 2020 Business Exchange Day



This is the rating given by the respondents to the satisfaction survey following the virtual event.

### 2020 BUSINESS EXCHANGE DAY



Kiosks, conferences and speed-networking with Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses and organizations.

#### Conference topics:

- La Grande Alliance; the Private Housing Initiative; the Cree Trade Agreement and the Resilience of the Crees during the COVID reality.
- Update on Plan Nord's projects and collaboration with local communities.

### Invited Guest speakers include:



Ors. Ted Moses, O.Q., President Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Témiscamingue Economic Alliance



Dr. Abel Bosum, Grand Chief the Grand Council of the Cree



Sylvie Bérubé, Member of Parliement, Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eeyou, Houof Commons, Canada



Jonatan Julien, Member of Charlesbourg, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Minister Responsible for the Côte-Nord Region



Pierre Dufour, Member for Abitibi-Témiscamingue (A-T), Minister of Forests, Wildlife an Parks, Minister Responsible fo the A-T Region and the Nord-



Ian Lafrenière, Member fo Vachon, Minister Responsit for Indigenous Affairs



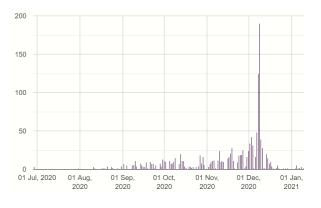
Denis Lamothe, Member for Ungava, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and to the Minister of

The Chairman of the Board of Directors, Drs.Ted Moses, said he was extremely satisfied with the day and the work of the team. For the first time in its existence, the Secretariat was able to bring together three ministers, Ministers Dufour, Jonatan and Lafrenière and Parliamentary Assistant Denis Lamothe, the Deputy Sylvie Bérubé and the Grand Chief Dr Abel Bosum and also many other dignitaries and speakers.

#### 1037 PARTICIPATIONS

During the virtual event, more than a hundred registered participants were able to benefit from the various activities offered: conference, personalized meetings and kiosk visit. Altogether, the allia platform recorded 1037 participation, at one portion of the day or the other.

#### Individual connections since the beginning of the platform





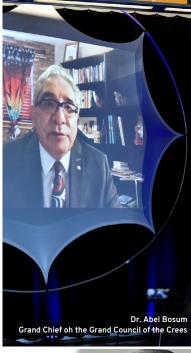


The Business Exchange Day event on the allia platform was a great success but also raised questions about what the participants valued the most. Thus, the 173 visits to 9 booths during the event represent individual choices of the participants and this portion was highly appreciated.

#### Major sponsor of the event:









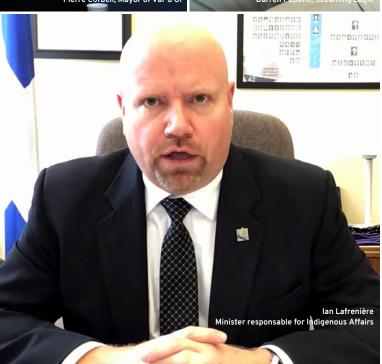












Extract from the 2021 action plan

### **OUR OBJECTIVES**

(in collaboration with the representatives of the regions we represent)

**Intensifying** actions to inform organizations and businesses, allowing them to engage in evaluating different potential avenues and advance with their reflections of strategic alliances;

**Facilitating** communications within our initiatives, while emphasizing on communications in the forms of socio-economic alliances particularly in targeted and promising sectors;



**Collaborating** promoting, and referring the services of relevant stakeholders;

**Maintaining** ongoing dialogue and facilitate contacts, allowing for the creation of a climate conducive to socio-economic alliances, and facilitating the development of economic partnerships while being aware of the sector-based training needs of the Cree Nation;

**Developing** a positive and lasting relationship between the neighbouring Algonquin, the Inuit of Nunavik and others:

**Maintaining** the unique and significant strategic alliances, collaboration and cooperation within all partners of the Board of Directors;

**Encouraging** business exchanges, socio-economic development, and cultural awareness.



BUSINESS ANTA"CPG.AL ANOY.AL

# Business Exchange Day attracts northern development activity

BY PATRICK QUINN DEC 30, 2020



While it wasn't quite business as usual, this year's Business Exchange Day was a successful networking event for the Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Témiscamingue Economic Alliance, the non-profit organization dedicated to building collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous entrepreneurs in the region.

About 200 participants joined the event virtually via the Secretariat's recently launched Allia networking platform, which enabled them to access the day's presentations from prestigious guest speakers, visit eight interactive kiosks from the Cree Nation and other entities, and arrange meetings with other participants.

"To see this day with distinguished guests and dignitaries fills me with pride for the small team of the Secretariat," said their president Ted Moses. "Our team did not let the chaos of life keep us from our mission, which is to bring people together and promote exchange. If you know you're doing something important, keep moving forward and don't stop."

The event on December 9 fell in the middle of a particularly action-packed week for economic activity in the region. Most significant was Quebec's relaunching of a billion-dollar northern development plan comprised of 49 initiatives to be completed over the next three years.

While most of the funding is targeted towards infrastructure for expanding access to the territory, the plan also supports tourism, workforce training, waste management, internet access and food security. The three provincial ministers who spoke at Business Exchange Day emphasized the proposed improvements to living conditions and environment conservation.

"We'll strengthen our economy by working together, providing enduring prosperity, taking care of the environment," said Indigenous Affairs Minister Ian Lafrenière. "We're not talking about occupying the North – we're talking about living in the North. I believe in this open dialogue, nation to nation. That's why there are three ministers present."

Following news of the imminent closure of Matagami's Glencore mine, Grand Chief Abel Bosum announced an agreement for developing strategic infrastructure projects to support sustainable ore processing in the community. By optimizing transportation routes and upgrading equipment, the partnership aims to encourage stable development that ensures the region's vitality.

"It is important to understand what this means," said Bosum. "The Cree and the people of Matagami are going to put themselves first. Together we will develop infrastructure projects that will provide a welcoming environment for the developer in a manner that respects our commitment to the land and our obligations to future generations."

During his speech, the Grand Chief described the Cree Nation's unique vulnerability to the pandemic and the difficult sacrifices necessary to maintain its mandatory 14-day self-isolation law, such as workers unable to see their families for as long as 20 weeks.

He also defended his controversial signing of the Grande Alliance with Quebec earlier this year, which was the reason for the recent hunger strike by Chisasibi resident Heather House (Bosum reportedly called to assure her the agreement was not binding).

"We are seeing that not many people truly understand what the Grande Alliance is all about," Bosum asserted. "People think it's just about building a railway. It is a way of creating a vision for the future where the Cree and their amazing communities feel valued instead of opportunistic exploitation of our resources.

"We're proposing something incredibly ambitious and there will be doubters from all sides," he continued. "In a world defined by isolation and polarization, we're proposing something that will not feel comfortable and will require patience where there is so little."

In response to detractors who say the Cree are "taking up too much space", Bosum declared that a robust First Nation ready to co-create the future is something Canada has never witnessed. As if to demonstrate that development goes both ways, CREECO (Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company) announced the next day it was assuming full ownership of the Quality Inn in Val-d'Or.

The award-winning hotel was founded in 2011 in a 50-50 partnership between Trahan Holdings and CREECO, which is owned by the Cree Nation Government and acts through the Board of Compensation. With the hotel's former president Fernand Trahan moving on to other ventures, CREECO will be solely responsible for its significant contribution to the region's tourism industry.

"They are the first Cree of Northern Quebec owning 100% of a hotel," explained Secretariat director-general Chantal Hamelin. "We want to see Crees get involved in economic development in our region. We hope to see more – there's lots of space. The Crees say they are open for business and the region here is open for Cree business as well."

While the less committal nature of virtual events resulted in more calling and convincing to secure attendance at this year's Business Exchange Day, Hamelin received rave reviews for their innovative and value-added approach. Although she was generally pleased with Allia's performance as a platform, she intends to have more control next time over its meeting scheduling.

"We're organizing a spring conference on the theme of environment and energy," Hamelin shared. "In those 49 actions [of Quebec's northern plan], there are a lot specifically touching environment and energy, so I'll ask the companies to talk about some real projects. It's going to be on Allia again unless we can all meet by then."

As successful as the virtual event was, many acknowledged that it was nothing close to the connections developed by meeting in person. While the pandemic has been an inconvenient interruption for big business, the event's participants remained united in their optimism about the region's economic future.

"In 2020, you are only as safe and as strong as your neighbour," stated the Grand Chief. "We will all come out of this pandemic stronger if we pursue it together. I'm looking forward to 2021 as a year we can start up many of these projects that have been suspended and move forward with our greater ambitions for the future of our people."

### THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE SUPPORTERS





















#### www.creenation-at.com

624, 3e Avenue, Val-d'Or (Quebec) J9P 1S5

Tél: 819-824-9888 Fax: 819-824-9588 reception@creenation-at.com

Graphics: Geneviève Binette

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