



Métis Nation



July 2017

PM Announces New Space for Métis Nation, First Nations and Inuit in Ottawa



On June 21, 2017, Leaders of Métis Nation, First Nations and Inuit joined Prime Minister Trudeau in a ceremony marking further steps on road to reconciliation including the transformation of the former U.S. Embassy building facing

Parliament into a new space for Indigenous Peoples.

In a ceremony in front of the building on 100 Wellington Street, the Prime Minister announced the Government of Canada's intent to work in full

partnership with representatives of First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation on next steps in the design and redevelopment of the property to ensure it becomes an inclusive space that reflects the vision of Indigenous Peoples and the spirit of

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reconciliation.

According to the Prime Minister: “Together, we have taken the first steps in what we know will be a multigenerational journey toward reconciliation. We have a lot of hard work ahead, and it is to all of our benefit that Indigenous Peoples be given a lead role in shaping the future of this country. This new space – located so close to Parliament Hill – will help ensure that the dialogue we have started is sustained and deepened as we move forward together.”

In his remarks to the gathering on Wellington Street which was closed to traffic for the ceremony, Métis Nation President Chartier stated:

“Parliament and the power it represents remains far removed from our people, their needs, their hopes, their dreams. But today’s transfer is an important step toward bridging that gap. It provides the Métis Nation with an eye on Parliament and provides Parliament and, indeed, all of Canada with an eye on us.”

Chartier was joined at the historic event by President

Chartrand of the Manitoba Métis Federation, President Poitras of Métis Nation of Alberta, President Froh of Métis Nation of Ontario and recently elected President McCallum of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. He thanked the Prime Minister and Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett for their sincerity in establishing a Permanent Bilateral Mechanism to co-develop policies and programs that address the needs of Métis people. He concluded by saying:

“Days away from the 150th anniversary of Confederation, today’s ceremony personifies the potential for a renewed, vibrant federation that includes the Métis Nation. And we hope that by 2020, when we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the creation of the Province of Manitoba by our forebearers, the realization of that potential will be well underway.”


Minister Bennett noted in an interview that the building is a prime piece of real estate and it will send a clear signal that First Nations, Inuit and Metis people represent the most important relationship to Canada. “It looks straight to the Parliament

buildings,” she said. “So it is location, location, location.”

Prime Minister Trudeau made two further announcements in the spirit of reconciliation. The Langevin Block, which sits across the street from Parliament Hill and houses the Prime Minister’s Office and the Privy Council Office, will be officially renamed the Office of the Prime Minister and Privy Council. Keeping the name of Sir Hector-Louis Langevin – an individual associated with the residential school system – on the Prime Minister’s Office was deemed to be inconsistent with the federal government’s vision of building a nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship with Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

The Prime Minister also announced that National Aboriginal Day will henceforth be referred to as National Indigenous Peoples Day consistent with Canada’s compliance with the spirit and intent of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.





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National Indigenous Leaders and Federal Ministers Declare Intent to Co-develop Indigenous Languages Legislation

On June 15, 2017, Métis Nation, First Nations, and Inuit leaders joined Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly and Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett to announce their intent to co-develop Indigenous languages legislation aimed at revitalizing and promoting Indigenous languages.

“Today marks another step in the right direction in building the nation to nation relationship between Canada and the Métis Nation, and demonstrates that this Government is serious about its partnerships with Indigenous peoples” said Métis Nation President Chartier. “Canada’s commitment to co-developing Indigenous language legislation in a concentrated and collaborative manner speaks to the commitment of the parties to get things done. I am looking forward to working with Minister Joly, National Chief Bellegarde and President Obed in developing meaningful and effective Indigenous language legislation.”



On December 6, 2016 Prime Minister Trudeau announced that the Government of Canada will enact an Indigenous Languages Act, co-developed with Indigenous Peoples, with the goal of ensuring the preservation, protection, and revitalization of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit languages in Canada. Over two-thirds of the 90 Indigenous languages still spoken in Canada are “endangered” according to

UNESCO’s endangered languages criteria; the remaining third are defined as “vulnerable”.

“The responsibility to preserve and restore Indigenous languages and cultures goes beyond the celebration of our collective history,” said Minister Joly. “I am proud of the role my department is playing in helping to restore and revitalize endangered languages and cultures.”





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President Chartier Joins Canada Mission to China

From June 4 – 10, 2017 President Chartier joined Minister of Natural Resources Canada, the Hon. Jim Carr and several dozens of Canadian businesses, corporations and agencies on a trip to promote Canadian business with China. Also on the trip was AFN Manitoba Regional Chief, Kevin Hart.

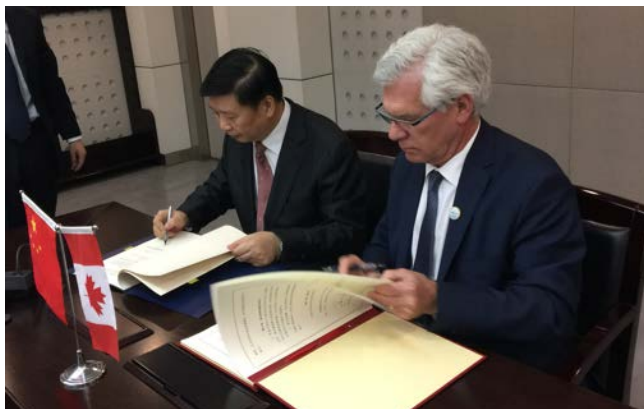
There were numerous forums, workshops and venues at which both Chinese and Canadian businesses were able to exchange points of views and discuss potential business opportunities, addressing a large number of opportunities

including energy efficient initiatives, clean growth and timber products. During the mission there was also an opportunity to do a site visit where Canadian wood products are being used as an alternative to steel and concrete.

At several of the



Minister Jim Carr, President Clément Chartier, Minister Jiang Daming




Ministers Jiang Daming and Jim Carr sign MOU

sessions, both President Chartier and Regional Chief Hart, were able to discuss some of the issues facing Indigenous peoples in Canada, including the

issues of land and resource rights and the requirement of the duty to consult and accommodate by all industries, foreign and domestic, that are operating in traditional Indigenous territories.





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President Chartier Attends OAS General Assembly in Mexico

President Chartier once again attended the General Assembly of the Organization of American States in Cancun, Mexico. At last year's General Assembly the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ADRIP) was adopted.

This year, the General Assembly adopted a Plan of Action which will see countries within the Americas work with Indigenous peoples in order to undertake implementation of the Declaration. It should be noted that Canada supported or at least did not oppose the Plan of Action although it has not yet indicated whether it will



endorse the American Declaration. Apparently, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada is still reviewing the Declaration and then intends to consult Indigenous peoples.

In attendance for this session were a larger than usual delegation of Indigenous peoples

including leaders and journalists. Both delegations were able to make interventions. On behalf of Indigenous leaders and communities, Jaime Arias from Colombia made the intervention.

For information on the session, please visit the website of the Indian Law Resource Center based in Washington, D.C. at www.indianlaw.org





July 2017

Northern Village of Pinehouse Holds Annual Elders Gathering

From June 11-16, 2017 the village of Pinehouse, SK held its annual Elders Gathering with the theme: "In Memory of Elders we Lost 2016" as well as "Honouring Five Couples Celebrating 50+ Years of Marriage".

This year was also special in that Pinehouse resident, Glen McCallum, on May 28th was elected to the Presidency of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan which was proudly marked by the village residents.

Joining in the grand entry were newly elected Vice-President Gerald Morin and Treasurer



MN-S President McCallum, MN President Chartier, MMF President Chartrand

Mary Ann Morin. Also joining were Métis Nation President Clément (Clem) Chartier and

MMF President David Chartrand. Several First Nations leaders were also in attendance, as were federal government officials who were present to learn as well as provide moral support.



Most importantly, there were many Elders from throughout northern Saskatchewan who were present to enjoy the hospitality and traditional foods and music, sharing stories and visiting around campfires.





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Members of the Provincial Métis Council Sworn-In




On June 25th on the first day of a two day Provincial Métis Council meeting at Jackfish Lake Lodge the newly elected leaders of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan were sworn-in. On the second day, Ministerial Portfolios were announced and following the two day meeting, the new leadership is ready to get down to work.

Métis Nation President Chartier and Vice-President Chartrand were in attendance to witness the swearing-in as well as provide words of encouragement and cooperation.



President Chartier, MN-S President McCallum, MMF President Chartrand, MN-S VP Morin





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Message from the President

April 2017 marked the 35th anniversary of the coming into force of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. This was a milestone accomplishment under the leadership of the Rt. Hon. Pierre Trudeau. Not only did the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms, being Part I of the *Act*, provide the basis for addressing discrimination against First Nations women, Part II of the *Act* provided for the recognition and affirmation of the Aboriginal and Treaty rights of Indigenous peoples within Canada.

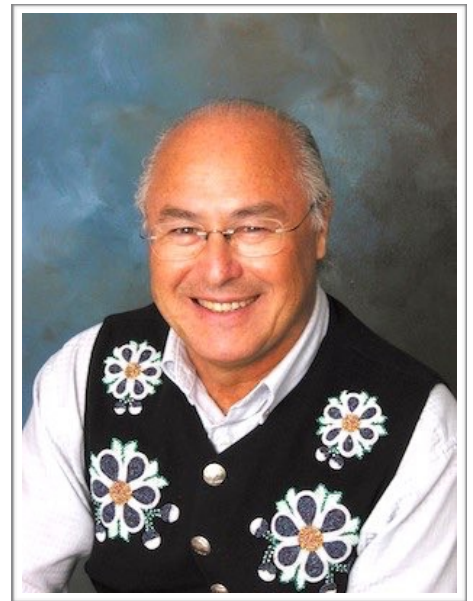
For the Métis Nation, under the leadership of President Harry Daniel, we were after many decades of being ignored and marginalized, once again engaged in nation-building, like we were under the leadership of President Louis Riel when we joined Confederation in 1870 under through the *Manitoba Act 1870* and the *Rupert's Land Order 1870*.

Since at least 1992, it has been conceded by the federal and provincial/territorial

governments that the inherent right of self-government possessed by Indigenous nations and peoples is entrenched and protected by s.35. This resonates with the current pronouncement by the current Liberal government that s.35 is a full box.

This government, led by the Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, has gone beyond mere utterances of catchy phrases and has entered into a number of processes with Indigenous nations and peoples on a distinctions-based, nation-to-nation, government-to-government basis. In our case, the Métis Nation has finally seen its years of lobbying to be engaged on an intergovernmental basis come to fruition.


Since the first constitutional conference on Aboriginal constitutional matters in March 1983, the Métis Nation has been pursuing its right to a land base and self-government on the basis of the universal right of self-determination as a people. The Métis Nation has now




moved closer to these goals through the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism announced by Prime Minister Trudeau in December 2016 and the currently unfolding s.35 rights reconciliation negotiations tables being entered into with our Governing Members.

Of great significance is the bold step by Prime Minister Trudeau in March 2016 to in fact enter into true inter-governmental meetings when engaging with provinces/territories and the national representatives of

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Indigenous governments, which was replicated in the December 2016 First Ministers Meeting and the subsequent Permanent Bilateral Mechanism process. This engagement is with the government of the Métis Nation and the AFN and ITK who are the national representatives of their respective governments.

This recognition by the Prime Minister has been fiercely opposed by a number of Premiers who wish to simply deny the inherent right of self-government of Indigenous nations and peoples and continue the practice since 1982 of dealing only with “organizations”, not governments. These Premiers seem to forget, or perhaps ignore that there are three constitutional orders of government in this country: Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation), federal and provincial. After 35 years one would think they would move beyond that posturing.

Under the guise of “inclusiveness”, they insist on including Indigenous advocacy groups like Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and the Native Women’s Association of Canada in talks alongside

governmental representatives of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation. Such was the case of the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG) that was established by the Premiers’ Council of the Federation (COF) in 2009 to fill the void created by the Harper government’s abandonment of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial-Aboriginal (FPTA) table in 2006.

The Trudeau government is willing to re-engage with the Provinces and Indigenous peoples in a Federal Provincial Territorial Indigenous Forum (FPTIF) but this Forum will not be viable if it mirrors the experience of the AAWG. The attempted switch over from the AAWG to the FPTIF in June 2016 ended in failure as the provincial/territorial governments did not accept the Terms of Reference jointly submitted by the AFN, ITK and the Métis Nation. At the ensuing press conference after the meeting, I made it clear that the Métis Nation would not participate in the on-going process unless our Terms of Reference were recognized. We do not wish to backslide from the nation-to-nation relationship that the Prime

Minister has established with the Métis Nation.

I suggested at the time that a compromise was possible if the interests of Indigenous governments were not undermined by being at the table. The agenda for FPTIF would have to be organized so that the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation could each engage with the federal and provincial governments on a nation-to-nation, government-to-government basis while some topics could be opened to Indigenous organizations that may have a particular field of expertise in subject matters.

To be sure, the Métis Nation has been consistent. As the Métis Nation spokesperson at the COF (Premiers) meetings since 2004 in all my interventions I have called upon the Premiers to acknowledge s.35 inherent self-government rights and have inter-governmental meetings with Indigenous peoples and nations, but this has not yet been accommodated.

At what point will we finally say “enough is enough” and take a stand?



July 2017

UPCOMING EVENTS

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| • North American Indigenous Games | July 16-23 | Toronto, ON |
| • Council of the Federation (COF) Meeting | July 17-19 | Edmonton, AB |
| • Métis Nation Special Sitting of the General Assembly | July 19-20 | Saskatoon, SK |
| • Back to Batoche Day | July 21-23 | Batoche, SK |
| • Métis Nation of Alberta AGA | Aug 10-12 | Peace River, AB |
| • Métis Nation of Ontario AGA | Aug 19-21 | Kenora, ON |
| • Manitoba Metis Federation AGA | Sept 23-24 | Winnipeg, MB |
| • Métis Nation of British Columbia AGM | Sept 23-24 | Dawson Creek, BC |





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