



Métis Nation



March 2018

Budget 2018 Makes Historic Investments in Métis Nation



photo: Prime Minister with VP David Chartrand before the budget speech

On February 27, 2018, Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau presented a budget in the House of Commons with unprecedented investments in Métis Nation priorities.

“The Métis Nation takes great pride in federal Budget 2018 which finally addresses the needs and aspirations of the Métis Nation”, said MNC Vice-President David Chartrand.

“After 148 years of waiting to enter the federation, this budget finally brings us home.”

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Under the heading “Supporting Métis Nation Priorities”, the budget states:

“The Government of Canada is deeply committed to renewing the relationship with the Métis Nation based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership, reflecting the commitments in the Canada-Métis Nation Accord...”

These investments in Métis Nation priorities reflect the government’s commitment to apply a greater distinctions-based lens to Indigenous funding decisions and support the Métis Nation’s vision of self-determination.”

Among the budget highlights are:

- \$500 million over 10 years for the Métis Nation Housing Strategy;
- \$325 million over 5 years in new Métis Nation employment and training funding; and
- Major federal investments in an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework and in Indigenous Child and Family Services which will include distinct allocations for the Métis Nation.

“The Prime Minister assured me in a meeting this morning that the budget would clearly recognize the distinct identity, rights and interests of the Métis Nation and the budget has done that,” said Chartrand.

“The budget addresses most of the first-year priorities under the Canada-Métis Nation Accord and we look forward to

tackling the other priorities such as education and health in the coming year. We appreciate the Prime Minister’s determination to get the language right in the budget.”





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Trudeau government to recognize Indigenous rights as basis for all government relations with Indigenous Peoples



In an address to the House of Commons on February 14, 2018, Prime Minister Trudeau announced an engagement process with First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation to formalize the recognition and

implementation of Indigenous rights through new legislation and policies.

The Prime Minister's speech outlined the following legislative and policy elements of a new

Indigenous Rights Framework which is expected to emerge from an engagement process:

Legislation to formalize the standard of recognition of Indigenous rights as the basis

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for all government relations with Indigenous Peoples;

A new policy that respects the unique needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to replace the current Comprehensive Land Claims Policy and the Inherent Right to Self-Government Policy;

Reforming government policies and practices to support the implementation of treaties and self-government agreements;

Mechanisms to support the rebuilding of Indigenous nations and governments, and advance Indigenous self-determination and the inherent right of self-government;

Creating new dispute resolution approaches to address rights related issues, including

overlapping territories and treaty implementation, that move us from conflict to collaboration;

Tools to strengthen a culture of federal government accountability and build greater trust between Indigenous peoples and the federal government; and,

Legislation establishing the two new departments that will replace Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada with a mandate that better serves the distinct needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

Interviewed by CTV's Power Play shortly after the Prime Minister's announcement, MNC President Clément Chartier said he was very encouraged by the Prime

Ministers' initiative (see interview at CTV <https://www.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1326477>). At the same time, he advised that proof of the government's commitment will be tested in the upcoming federal Budget on February 27, 2018 in which major priorities of the Métis Nation are expected to be addressed.





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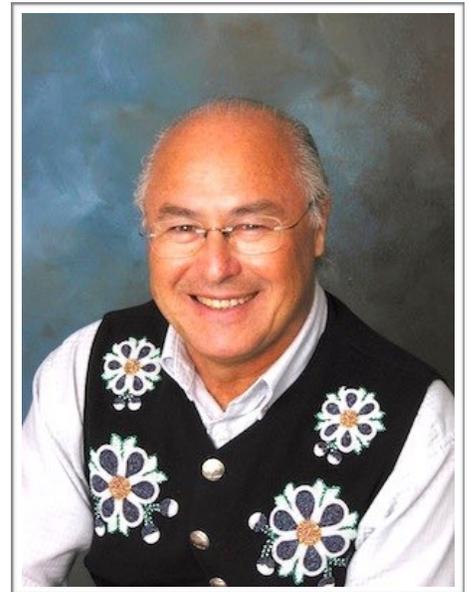
Message from the President

On February 14, 2018 the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau in the House of Commons announced a new initiative which will lead to the creation of a Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework. This new Framework, which will have the force of law through proposed legislation to be passed by Parliament prior to the next federal election in October 2019 is meant to put Indigenous nations and peoples on a stronger footing when asserting our respective rights.

This is another of the several initiatives instituted by the Trudeau government over the past two years. This Framework will certainly strengthen the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM) which the Prime Minister set up in December 2016. Its permanency will be made more real by legislation which is harder to amend than a mere policy or even an Accord. For example, over a 1 ½ year period in 2004/05, the Rt Honourable Paul Martin, the

Premiers and Indigenous Leaders negotiated the Kelowna Accord which was ratified by all Parties in November 2005 only to see the new Conservative government in February 2006 unceremoniously throw it to the garbage heap of history by publically proclaiming it was written on the back of a napkin.

Coupled with the PBM and the s.35 rights reconciliation process being engaged in by the federal government with our Governing Members, this Framework will be extremely helpful in assisting the Métis Nation in achieving its goals of a land base and self-government which we have been striving for since our political regrouping as a people in March 1983. The mechanism we chose was the Métis National Council which represents our nation and people nationally and internationally. March 8th marks the 35th anniversary of our national government.



Throughout the four First Ministers Conferences between 1983 and 1987, and again during the Charlottetown Round in 1992, the objectives of the Métis Nation remained the same and strong national positions were taken. Taking strong national positions has served us well. This is a path we cannot now abandon. Since we joined Canada in 1870, the 150th anniversary of which is in 2020, our Métis Nation homeland has been dismembered by five

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Message from the President

provinces, acknowledging that the first province, Manitoba, was of our own making and choice. Since then, four more provinces have either been created or had their boundaries extended into our traditional homeland.

With these new processes, and the engagement of our Governing Members who are established along modern provincial boundaries, we must guard against deepening the dismemberment of our nation through entrenched s.35 agreements. While it is practical and necessary for the Governing Members to negotiate their own self-government and related agreements, we must still have a strong national presence with overarching general principles, such as we have with our

national criteria for citizenship within the Métis Nation.

As we move forward in the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism process we will trigger the national provision dealing with s.35 so that all of our Métis Nation governments can proceed in a coordinated manner. This will certainly be strengthened by the proposed new Framework.

That these initiatives are paying off, that the nation-to-nation distinctions-based approach accepted by Prime Minister Trudeau is working, is demonstrated in the recent federal Budget 2018 with its unprecedented recognition of and investments in the Métis Nation.

By remaining strong and staunchly defending the Métis

Nation and its traditional homeland in western Canada, we are finally seeing positive results for our citizens. This has not been an easy battle, but by remaining true to who we are as a nation and people we are finally succeeding. We cannot, and must not, ever abandon our history, struggles and sacrifices.





March 2018

Li Michif mitooni katawashishin
(Michif is a beautiful language)
Report on the Michif Language Committee Meeting

- by Dawn Pritchard



The Michif Language Committee met in Vancouver on February 13 and 14th to further its work on the proposed Indigenous Languages Act. As background, the Government of Canada has committed to enact

Indigenous languages legislation to be co-developed with Indigenous peoples. The legislation will work to preserve, promote and revitalize Indigenous languages. The hope

is to present a Bill to Parliament this fall.

Elder Norman Fleury opened up the meeting with a prayer in Michif, the historical and official language of the Metis Nation.

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Unfortunately, President Morin Dal Col, Minister of Heritage, Culture and Families was unable to attend. Dale LeClair, Chief of Staff chaired the meeting on the 13th and President Chartier chaired it on the 14th.

Present were representatives from each of the five Governing Members; Gabriel Dumont Institute; Louis Riel Institute, and the Métis National Council.

Dale LeClair provided opening remarks and reported on the work of the Joint Co-Development group. It is comprised of representatives from the Métis National Council, the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Heritage Canada. The group is working collaboratively, transparently and on a distinctions basis to co-develop this legislation. Their work forms the basis for Minister Joly's discussions with her cabinet colleagues all the way to developing drafting instructions.

On July 23, 2000, the Métis National Council recognized and declared Michif as the historical and official language of the Métis Nation. Michif is a

critically endangered language and most Michif speakers are at least 65 years old or older. It is important to take action now to protect, preserve and revitalize the Michif language and the proposed legislation is a means to do this.

Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) and Louis Riel Institute (LRI) have carried out initial consultations with our Michif speaking citizens. Karon Shmon from GDI and Sharon Parenteau from LRI presented on their consultations thus far, including from their session in Winnipeg, December 6th and 7th. They also presented a beautiful slide show of our Michif speaking elders, some of whom are no longer with us. Karon and Sharon will continue their good work on the language file, which now includes sitting on both the Communications and Institutions sub-committees of the Joint Co-Development group.

On behalf of GDI and LRI, consultant Celeste McKay drafted a paper detailing the position of the Métis Nation on the language legislation. She presented the paper at the language committee meeting

and a comprehensive discussion ensued. Celeste answered many questions, and responded to many comments all the while incorporating the input that she received. The position paper will be presented at the Michif Language Conference set for April 4th and 5th in Saskatoon.

The Committee discussed next steps. This includes finalizing the Métis Nation position paper at the National Michif Conference. This will set the stage for drafting instructions and consultations throughout the Nation. Such consultations should begin in May. Work will commence on the sub-committees of the Joint Co-Development Group. Further to the Communications and Institutions Sub-committees noted above, Aaron Barner of the Métis Nation of Alberta and Norman Fleury of the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan volunteered to sit on the Costing Sub-committee. Norman also volunteered to sit on the Education Sub-committee. Finally, the National Michif Committee is set to meet next in Winnipeg on May 10th and 11th to continue their good work.





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Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame Awards Gala Held in Toronto

On January 31st, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) held its 20th annual Hall of Fame Awards in Toronto. The CCAB was established in 1982 to foster and advance relations between Indigenous peoples and the corporate sector, as well as increased Indigenous peoples engagement in business.

After several years of witnessing success in the Indigenous business sector, the CCAB decided to institute the annual Hall of Fame Awards where successful First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation entrepreneurs are honoured for their achievements. One of this year's recipients is Métis Nation youth Jordan Jolicoeur who was awarded the fifth annual National Youth Aboriginal Entrepreneur of the Year Award. Celebration the evening with Jordan were his mother, father, sister and brother.



President Chartier and Jordan Jolicoeur

The Jolicoeurs are originally from St. Laurent, Manitoba but relocated to Stony Plain, Alberta in order to enhance their business opportunities. The business, Carvel Electric, was started by Jordan's father but for the past few years has been

under Jordan's leadership as President.

The Jolicoeurs are registered Métis Nation citizens, enrolled with the Métis Nation of Alberta, with whom they have contractual work.





March 2018

Global SDG7 Conference Held In Bangkok, Thailand

The United Nations held a global conference on sustainable development growth which the General Assembly of the UN set in motion in 2015 by adopting a fifteen year agenda which they hope by 2030 will achieve 17 SDGs and 169 targets which will lead to concrete action on eradicating poverty and ensure sustainable development.

A major focus of reaching sustainable development goals is energy, as it is linked to all other such goals and is essential in reaching the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. With sustainable energy and clean growth this will lead to poverty reduction, food security, clean water and sanitation, health and job creation for example.

The consisted of plenary sessions and inter-active



breakout session, with participants from national governments, UN Agencies, representatives of civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders. Unfortunately, there were no visible presence of Indigenous peoples other than President Chartier of the Métis Nation

and Joan U. Carling from the Philippines.

President Chartier made an intervention pointing out the need for more engagement in this process of Indigenous peoples if the UN was hoping to reach its 2030 objectives.





March 2018

Emergency Commercial Fisheries Meeting Held in Manitoba



On February 13, 2018 the Manitoba Metis Federation sponsored an emergency meeting to deal with a number of critical issues faced by large numbers of fishermen in Manitoba, as well as to deal with fisheries matters generally in the prairie provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The commercial fishery in Alberta was shut down in 2014 affecting large numbers of Métis fishermen.

Mr. Terry Beech, Parliamentary Secretary to the federal fisheries minister addressed the meeting confirming that he will take the message back to Minister LeBlanc. Representing the

provincial government was Deputy Minister Rob Olson who also pledged to work with the fishermen to try and assist them in resolving some of their issues.

One of the most pressing issues is the transition to a free market from the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation a federal Crown corporation established in 1969. Many of the fishermen this year dealt with private buyers and are

currently owed thousands of dollars for their products.

President David Chartrand who called the meeting pledged that he would provide all the assistance necessary to the fishermen who wish to work collectively in pursuing a better system for selling their catch. President Clem Chartier who was present at the meeting provided words of encouragement.

Attending the meeting were about 120 Métis fishermen from Manitoba, joined by about 25 Métis fishermen from northern Saskatchewan.





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Métis Nation Health Forum

By Wenda Watteyne

A first ever Métis Nation Health Forum was held in Ottawa on February 26, 2018. The Forum brought together over one hundred participants including Métis Nation leaders, officials and staff, government guests from a range of departments and agencies and other health collaborators.

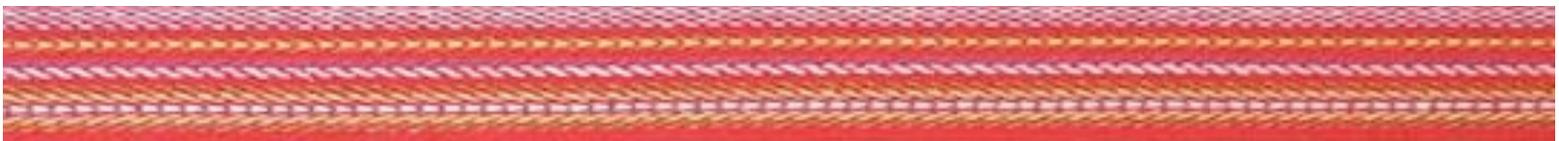
Métis Nation Minister of Health, Clara Morin Dal Col and Vice-President David Chartrand welcomed participants and addressed aspects of Métis history, culture and community needs in the area of health. Governing Member panels delivered presentations on Métis Nation approaches to prevention and health promotion, social determinants to health, programs and services, health status data and research outcomes. The Forum concluded with an address by



Minister Philpott and MN Minister of Health Clara Morin Dal Col

Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, the Honourable Jane Philpott. The Minister spoke to the importance of closing the health status gap that exists between Métis and non-Indigenous Canadians, gender issues and to advancing commitments to improve Métis health and wellness under the Canada-Métis Nation Accord. Knowledge holder Oliver

Boulette chaired the day's proceedings, along with Will Goodon. The Health Forum and reception was an excellent opportunity for participants and guests to learn about the Métis Nation and about health and wellness issues, challenges and solutions.





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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Métis Rights Panel Meeting March 8-9 Fort McMurray, AB
- Métis Nation Education Conference March 20-21 Ottawa, ON
- Métis Nation Child & Family Services Conference March 26-28 Winnipeg, MB
- National Michif Conference April 4-5 Saskatoon, SK
- Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Symposium April 6-7 Saskatoon, SK
- Indigenous Leaders Summit of the Americas April 11-12 Lima, Peru
- Summit of the Americas (OAS) April 13-14 Lima, Peru
- United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues April 16-27 New York, NY



2018: Rights of the Métis Nation Child





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