

COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION
NIAGARA ON THE LAKE
JULY 24, 2013

Regarding recent meetings with the Prime Minister and federal ministers that offer potential for enhancing the current state of federal-provincial engagement on the priorities of the AAWG, I am pleased to report on my meeting with the Prime Minister and his Minister of Aboriginal Affairs on April 29, 2013.

Among the priorities discussed was the development of a long-term Métis economic development strategy in 2013, an objective set out in the communiqué from the 2011 meeting of federal and provincial Aboriginal affairs ministers and Métis Nation leaders.

As you may recall, at last years COF, the Premiers of the five westernmost provinces reaffirmed their support for the development of this strategy.

My meeting with the Prime Minister and Minister Valcourt resulted in a number of understandings which I believe will advance the process further.

Minister Valcourt and I signed the renewal of the *Métis Nation Protocol* which I am providing to you today.

As some of you who were at the July 2008 COF in Quebec City will remember, the five Premiers from Ontario-West agreed to come to the table if invited by the feds, which then led to the September 2008 Protocol which provided for that multilateral potential.

The renewed protocol states that within the context of multilateral discussions outlined in the 2008 *Métis Nation Protocol*, the Government of Canada and the Métis National Council and its Governing Members wish to extend their joint discussions with the five westernmost provinces on the development of a Métis economic development strategy and accord.

I impressed upon the Prime Minister and the Minister the need for continued federal leadership in developing the long-term Métis economic development strategy by way of a multilateral accord with the five provinces and the Métis Nation.

The Prime Minister and I discussed a number of bilateral aspects of this strategy with a particular focus on shared priorities and some related strategic investments.

The Prime Minister agreed to a broader meeting of the MNC with him and a number of his ministers to address these shared economic priorities and a plan

for moving forward.

This gathering is expected during the fall.

A draft economic development accord has been prepared by the federal Minister's office and my office that identifies some objectives, principles, priorities and expected outcomes that could be considered toward the development of the strategy.

It is my hope that, in the spirit of last year's reaffirmation of support for the development of the strategy, the Premiers of the five Provinces will direct their ministers to work with us on the document to encompass the interests of all the jurisdictions involved in the development of the long-term Métis economic development strategy.

I should also note that during the past two years, we have engaged industry through a series of regional engagement sessions that have identified best collaborative practices that could figure in the development of the strategy.

The consummation of a long-term Métis economic development strategy by the Government of Canada, the five provinces and the Métis Nation, with the input of our industry partners, offers the COF and the AAWG an important model for the type of federal engagement we have all been seeking in the area of economic development.

If successful, it is something that the Métis Nation would like to duplicate with these jurisdictions in other key areas such as education and housing.

For the Métis Nation, the distinctions-based, regional approach has served us well while engaging in the multilateral COF and AAWG processes.

Now that the Prime Minister is engaged in Métis Nation economic development, I am asking the Premiers of the five Provinces to ensure that this unique opportunity for moving ahead jointly is pursued in order to capitalize on the progress we are all making in our respective jurisdictions.

Thank you.