



**Métis National Council**  
#4-340 MacLaren St.,  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0M6  
[www.metisnation.ca](http://www.metisnation.ca)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **THIRD MÉTIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SYMPOSIUM CONCLUDES IN WINNIPEG**

*ALL PARTICIPANTS AGREE TO CONTINUE PURSUING MÉTIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES*

**MARCH 19, 2015 WINNIPEG, MB:** Métis Nation leaders, Aboriginal Affairs Ministers from Canada, Ontario and Manitoba and industry representatives took part in the symposium which aims to build partnerships and Métis economic development opportunities.

Since the last MEDS in 2011, the contributions made by Métis businesses, entrepreneurs, and workers to this country's prosperity have continued to grow, and this third Métis Economic Development Symposium presented an opportunity for participants to learn from this success and consider areas for further action that can drive even greater economic outcomes for all Canadians.

During the two day symposium, participants took place in a series of roundtables on business development, labour market development, and major projects.

### **QUOTES:**

**Métis National Council President Clément Chartier:** "The signing of a Métis Economic Development Accord between Canada and the Métis National Council at MEDS III affords us the opportunity to develop a strategy to move ahead on Métis economic priorities. The participation of the Provinces and industry will be critical. We value the important initiatives on Métis economic development in Manitoba and Ontario and hope to see that replicated in the three westernmost provinces. Likewise, we value our industry partnerships and appreciate the strong corporate presence and participation in MEDS III. Partnering is the key to success."

**Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Bernard Valcourt:** "It was a pleasure to participate in a symposium where all partners agree to work towards the common goal of creating even more Métis economic development opportunities. Our Government will continue working with all its partners for more jobs and growth for all Canadians."

**Manitoba's Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Eric Robinson:** "Manitoba is very pleased with the growth of Métis businesses and entrepreneurs over the past few years in the province of Manitoba. We remain committed to working with our partners from across Canada who have been working for many years toward the development of a long term Métis economic development strategy. The recent successful Métis Economic development Symposium has contributed to that momentum, and we congratulate all involved in this important initiative."

**Ontario's Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development David Zimmer:** "Attending the third Métis Economic Development Symposium was a great opportunity to learn of new ideas and initiatives, and share the work we've done with the Métis Nation of Ontario. We are committed to working together to ensure that Métis people have every opportunity to succeed and play an ever more significant role in the economy."

### **Quotes from Métis National Council Board of Governors**

**Manitoba Metis Federation President David Chartrand:** "The Manitoba Metis Federation is committed to nurturing a strong economic development strategy that creates a climate of success for Métis business and partnerships. Through MEDS III we have been able to identify and take advantage of mutually beneficial partnerships with industry innovators and leaders in the areas of natural resource development. These initiatives will improve the fortunes of Métis citizens through training, job creation, capital access and a structure that encourage Métis business development. The symposium afforded an opportunity for Métis and their partners to share successes and lessons learned. These discussions have deepened existing relationships and helped forge new ideas for even greater Métis economic development stability and success."

**Métis Nation British Columbia President Bruce Dumont:** "Having the opportunity to participate in this third Metis Economic Development symposium along with our Metis brothers and sisters from Ontario west to British Columbia really helps us to share ideas and experiences on increasing Metis involvement in Canada's economy. Metis have a proud history of entrepreneurship in Canada and this symposium revealed ways that our entrepreneurship can become even stronger which will lead to greater opportunities for Metis families and businesses as we move forward. The signing of the Metis Economic Development Accord with Canada is of significant benefit to Metis Nation British Columbia and as a member of the Metis National Council, I am particularly proud of this achievement."

**Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras:** "We are happy to see Canada come together with the Métis Nation to sign the Economic Development Accord. It is essential that strategies that result from today's historic signing are adequately resourced to ensure Métis at the community level benefit."

**Métis Nation of Ontario President Gary Lipinski:** "The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased that the Métis Economic Development Symposium provided the opportunity to highlight the progress we have made working together with the Government of Ontario. The achievements we have realized through the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, the Métis Voyageur Development Fund, green energy contracts and other initiatives are making a difference for Métis in Ontario as well as strengthening the whole Ontario economy."

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#### **For more information please contact:**

Ke Ning  
Métis National Council  
c: (613) 297-5193  
e: [ken@metisnation.ca](mailto:ken@metisnation.ca)

*The MNC represents the Métis Nation in Canada at the national and international levels. The Métis Nation's homeland includes the 3 Prairie Provinces and extends into Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and the northern United States. There are approximately 350,000 – 400,000 Métis Nation citizens in Canada, roughly a quarter of all Aboriginal peoples in the country.*