



Métis Nation



June 2016

Canada to Fully adopt and implement U.N. Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples



l-r: Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett, President Clément Chartier, Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations Ambassador Marc-André Blanchard

with the Canadian Constitution. By adopting and implementing the Declaration, we are breathing life into section 35 and recognizing it as full box of rights for Indigenous peoples.”

President Chartier addressed the Forum and expressed his appreciation for the Trudeau government’s commitment to fully engage with the Métis Nation in the upcoming reconciliation process. He also encouraged the Canadian government to support the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples being considered by the Organization of American States.

Minister Bennett spoke to how the full adoption of UNDRIP will fit into a concrete

On May 10, 2016, Minister of Indigenous Affairs Carolyn Bennett electrified the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York City by announcing Canada’s full support for the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

roadmap to reconcile with Indigenous peoples in Canada:


“I am here to announce on behalf of Canada, that we are now a full supporter of the Declaration, without qualification,” Minister Bennett stated. “We intend nothing less than to adopt and implement the Declaration in accordance

“What does all of this mean for Canada now? It means nothing less than a full engagement on how to move forward with adoption and implementation, done in full partnership with First Nations, the Métis Nation and Inuit Peoples.”



Senator Nick Sibbeston and Métis Elder Oliver Boulette performing at Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations





June 2016

Justice Minister Wilson-Raybould Delivers Powerful Statement on Indigenous Rights to the United Nations

On May 9th, Canadian Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould delivered an unprecedented commitment by Canada to a nation-to-nation approach with the Indigenous peoples in Canada and to fully adopt and work to implement the terms of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

The Justice Minister promised to begin reversing the colonial legacy shaping Canada's Indigenous policies and start down the road of self-determination based on a nation-to-nation relationship between Ottawa and the First Nations, the Métis Nation and the Inuit.

"We want to demonstrate today and in these coming weeks our commitments to ensure that all Canadians have a truly concrete roadmap to reconcile with Indigenous people," said Bennett. "I am pleased to confirm that tomorrow it is Canada's intention to remove our permanent objector status and become a full supporter of the United Nations Declaration




on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," she added.

The endorsement represents a shift in policy away from that of the Harper government, which placed Canada among four countries that did not support the declaration. It is expected that Bennett's address tomorrow will elaborate on the roadmap for reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada.

President Chartier voiced strong support for Canada's new approach:

"At last we have a government that is working to adopt and apply international legal instruments that support Indigenous rights instead of containing and undermining those rights", said Chartier. "I am looking forward to Minister Bennett's statement tomorrow on how the government intends to move forward with the Métis Nation."





June 2016

Canada Consults Indigenous Peoples prior to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues



On May 4th, Canada held a one day session with representatives of Indigenous peoples and NGOs in support of Indigenous rights. The meeting took place in Ottawa and centered on Canada's proposed endorsement of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) at the UNPFII at the United


Nations in New York City the following week.

The consultation was quite broad, with Minister Bennett participating in a portion of it. Topics ranged from Canada's upcoming participation at the Forum, priorities in advancing international Indigenous issues, Canada's approach to the

implementation of the UN Declaration through policy and examination of approaches for meaningful engagement.

The discussion was wide-ranging with a lot of good ideas discussed and proposed approaches offered. While most of the dialogue addressed the global approach through

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UNDRIP, President Chartier took advantage of the opportunity to also address the Americas, including the negotiations on a draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ADRIP) and the negotiations about to take place from May 17-19th during the second week of the PFII. That this was likely to be the last session before it goes to the OAS General Assembly for potential adoption.


President Chartier also spoke to the need for Canada to re-instate its Indigenous Peoples Participation Program (IPPP) or something similar, whereby Indigenous peoples from Canada were able to find an Indigenous partner in Latin America for development aid projects, similar to one MNC had with an Indigenous womens'

organization in Nicaragua dealing with public health. This fund was cut off by the Conservative government. President Chartier also proposed that Canada, like it did in the 1970-90s, provide fiscal resources to enable the Indigenous peoples of the Americas to form a permanent representative body so that Indigenous peoples can interact on an informed, consistent and formal basis within the OAS, including in its General Assemblies and Summits of the Americas, and to once again fund Indigenous Summits of Indigenous Peoples coinciding with the Summits of the Americas, another initiative cut off by the previous government.

In all likelihood, Canada will retake the leadership role internationally in promoting and

assisting with the rights of Indigenous peoples, something that Minister Stéphane Dion signaled in a panel session (Canada is Back: Leadership on the World Stage) at the Liberal Biannual Convention May 27-28th in Winnipeg in response to President Chartier, saying that there are three major pillars in this program of action, one of them being Indigenous peoples and that he would welcome Indigenous peoples participation in order to share with the rest of the Indigenous world the experiences unfolding in Canada between the government and Indigenous peoples.





June 2016

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES ON VERGE OF ADOPTING A DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

On May 17-19, 2016 President Chartier attended a three day session of negotiations in Washington DC for the last scheduled negotiations on the quest of points of consensus on a draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ADRIP). This was the 19th meeting with the first one beginning in 2003, and the process itself beginning in 1989.

This initiative did not receive the same kind of attention by Indigenous peoples that was given to the negotiations process which took place in the United Nations which culminated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) adopted in the UN




Photo: June Lorenzo (USA) and Jaime Arias (Colombia) two of the main negotiators

General Assembly by a vast majority of countries in 2007, with a number of countries abstaining from the vote and Canada, the USA, New Zealand and Australia voting against it. Since then those four countries have either accepted it in full or with reservations. Canada

adopted it in 2010 but with conditions.

In May, Minister Bennett on behalf of Canada at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues declared that Canada fully adopted the UNDRIP and that it would be

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the basis of the on-going relationship and reconciliation initiatives between Canada and Indigenous peoples in Canada, on a nation-to-nation basis.

Beginning in 2007 Canada and the USA took the position at the OAS negotiation table that they would only be observers going forward as the other countries and Indigenous delegations agreed that the UNDRIP would be the base from which to work, nothing in the draft ADRIP could be below the UNDRIP standards.

Even after Canada's change of position in 2010 they continued with their non-engagement in the dialogue and in 2015 did not even enter the room for the three negotiation sessions which were meant to try and finalize the draft.

With no consensus achieved last year, a further and last one was agreed to. Although Canada fully endorsed the UNDRIP the week before, and while


Canada did return to the table, they stated they were not in a position to fully engage as they needed to review the draft and to also consult their Indigenous partners in Canada.

After three hard days of negotiations, with Mexican Ambassador de Alba on the last day going back and forth between the government and Indigenous parties, who were in different rooms, at the end of the session was able to get the two parties to arrive at a consensus, one that enabled the Indigenous delegations to be able to provide its consent. One of the last achievements was to ensure that the draft contained an article that clearly stated that the both the ADRIP and UNDRIP "constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the Americas". There is also a non-derogation clause which states that "Nothing in this declaration shall be construed as diminishing or extinguishing

rights that indigenous peoples now have or may acquire in the future."

While the UNDRIP is universal, in that it applies to all Indigenous peoples worldwide, the ADRIP is specific to the Americas and the Caribbean Indigenous peoples and deals with many subject matters in greater detail. In the end, the ADRIP will be of significant political, moral and legal support particularly in Latin America where Indigenous peoples in many cases require greater protections, not only with respect to laws, but for their very lives!





June 2016

Message from the President

After a 32 year quest for adopting a Constitution for the government of the Métis Nation, the upcoming June 16th Constitution Convention offers another opportunity to our collective leadership to finalize the text of a draft constitution which could then be taken to the General Assembly on June 17-18th for adoption.

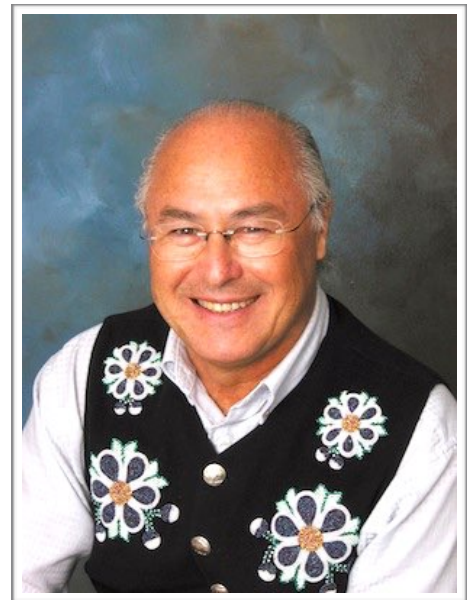
A Constitution is an important part of governance, setting out general principles of importance to the Métis Nation, a division of powers between the national government and the Governing Members as well as institutions of government and their responsibilities.

After several years of consultations, presentations and drafting sessions by the Métis Rights Panel there are only three paragraphs which need to be dealt with. With a renewed effort, there is no reason why the Convention cannot find a solution to enable us to move forward on the road to self-determination.

The Métis Nation is on the verge of a major breakthrough

with the new relationship with the Trudeau government. The current policy of dealing with us on a nation-to-nation basis in pursuit of reconciliation based on s. 35(i) Aboriginal rights, informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, provides a reasonable opportunity to finally secure the Métis Nation's pursuit of a land base and self-government.


While a Constitution does not guarantee success, it helps consolidate our engagement as a government and legitimate representative of our people and nation. We not only need to successfully negotiate with the federal and/or provincial governments, we also need to have the understanding and support of the general public. There is likely still a lot of confusion in the general public with so many bogus fly-by-night organizations both nationally and provincially who profess to represent the Métis Nation. While they do not necessarily pose any real threat to our governments, they remain a distraction, with many of them



appropriating our symbols, such as our flag.

With the adoption of a Constitution setting out the principles, objectives, institutions and powers of our self-government system, we will be in a position to propose to the federal government the passing of a *Métis Nation Relations Act* which recognizes our Constitution as the basis of Métis Nation self-government. Once this is accomplished, there will be no doubt about the role of Métis Nation governments as the sole and legitimate representative of the Métis Nation.





June 2016

Canada and Manitoba Metis Federation sign MOU following historic Supreme Court land ruling

On May 27, 2016, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett signed a memorandum of understanding with MMF President David Chartrand in Winnipeg, MB.

“The signing of this historic document sets the stage for the parties to advance their exploratory talks on reconciliation in response to the 2013 Manitoba Métis Federation et al v. Canada decision of the Supreme Court of Canada,” the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAC) said in a news release.

MMF President David Chartrand said it was historic and would create “the frame of the house.”

“It’s a very, very important document, a very important time in history and something that we waited 146 years — 32



years in the courtroom — for,” he said.


In 2013, the Supreme Court found the federal government failed to follow through on a promise it made to the Métis people more than 145 years ago.


The Manitoba Act of 1870 promised to set aside 5,565 square kilometres of land for 7,000 children of the Red River

Métis. That land includes what is now the city of Winnipeg.

The land deal was made in order to settle the Red River resistance, which was fought by Métis struggling to hold onto their land amid growing white settlements. Part of the Act was to make sure that Métis communities had an advantage in the newly formed province, but it took 15 years for the land

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to be distributed through a random lottery, destroying the dream of a Métis homeland.

A legal challenge by the MMF sought recognition for the treatment of its people after the 1870 government land deal. The case went to the Supreme Court, which declared that “the federal Crown failed to implement the land grant provision set out in s.31 of the Manitoba Act, 1870, in accordance with the honour of the Crown.”

The decision did not order any remedies, but steps have been made, INAC said. In 2015, the government appointed a ministerial special

representative on Métis engagement to “explore ways to advance dialogue on reconciliation.”

INAC said Friday’s agreement “sets the stage for time-limited exploratory talks to see if the parties can find the common ground to move into formal negotiations,” but details of a timeline were not provided by the government or the MMF.

“The court decided there needed to be a relationship, and so today we have agreed that we will sit down and develop a framework for what that actually will mean in breathing life into the rights of the Métis people that are in section 35 of

the constitution,” Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett said.


INAC said the goal is to develop a framework over the coming months.


Chartrand said he expects the framework to be together by the fall. It will need to be ratified by the prime minister before the parties can negotiate a settlement, which could be a monetary payment for a trust or possibly lands.

“It’s going to change the very lives of our nation forever, from now on, once this thing comes into its full settlement,” Chartrand said.

Source: CBCnews

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/metis-federation-of-manitoba-signs-mou-1.3604370>





June 2016

Chartier Participates at Ile a La Crosse Meeting



On May 2nd President Chartier attended a public meeting at Ile a la Crosse, joining Kathy Hodgson-Smith in an evening session to discuss the *Daniels* decision, the proposed meeting on the Ile a la Crosse Boarding School with Minister Bennett and the land claim action filed in 1994.

A lot of questions were posed about the meaning of the *Daniels* case and while many people were not happy with the fact that whatever benefits may flow will not be know for a while yet, they were nevertheless pleased that the issue was finally resolved and

that it could prove to be of significant help as they move forward.


In terms of the land claim action, the meeting was informed that at least the declaration being sought that Métis are covered by 91(24) has been answered, and that should also be positive for a finding that the term "Indians" used three years later in the 1870 Rupert's Land Order protecting certain rights should also come to the same conclusion as it was only three years later. This finding would make the case for arguing that the Métis of the claim area continue to have

existing Aboriginal title to the land and resources for which a declaration is being sought.

The pending Isaac Report on s. 35(1) reconciliation was also discussed and that in a meeting with the Minister of Justice that her preference was to negotiate a settlement and not have to litigate. Therefore, that there is a real possibility of settling the land claim litigation.

With respect to the boarding school issue, that the Minister is still willing to attend a meeting, that it is simply a matter of scheduling, and that hopefully the meeting will happen soon.





June 2016

Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada




On May 6, 2016, President Chartier sat down in the MNC office with the publisher of the Canadian Geographic, Mr. Gilles Gagnier, to discuss an exciting new project, the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada. One of Canada's best-read full-size magazines with over 3.173 million readers per issue, the Canadian Geographic is published by the Royal

Canadian Geographical Society which has invited the Métis National Council to partner with it on the project.

The Atlas will be an interactive, multiplatform project entailing everything from giant floor maps to an array of print and digital resources. It will have the potential to build capacity for intercultural understanding and

should prove to be a powerful educational tool in classrooms. The MNC has offered its support to the Society in its efforts to launch the project and looks forward to future collaboration on a project that has great potential to inform and educate Canadians about the Métis Nation.





June 2016

Métis Nation Speaks on Trans-Pacific Partnership

On May 20, 2016, President Chartier met with Mr. David Lametti, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, who is conducting part of the federal government's consultations with various sectors on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). This trade agreement among twelve Pacific Rim countries was signed on 4 February 2016 in Auckland, New Zealand and provides all parties with up to 2 years to complete domestic ratification.

President Chartier addressed some of the priorities of the Métis Nation with regard to TPP in the discussions with Mr. Lametti and Andrew McCracken, Deputy Director, Office of the Deputy Chief Negotiator. He stated that, with the high labour force participation rate of Métis people, the overall impact of the TPP on jobs in Canada is of critical importance, particularly in sectors such as mining and energy development which are of particular importance to Métis communities in western Canada.

President Chartier also voiced his support for those provisions that would shelter rights or preferences of Indigenous peoples now and in the future. He stated that, given the hard work of Métis Nation governments in improving economic conditions for their constituents, it is imperative that federal and provincial policies and programs offering preferential treatment of Métis businesses be protected. These would include the procurement policies of those governments including set-asides for Métis businesses. Likewise, the institutions of Métis Nation governments that provide economic development services such as business financing or enable equity participation of Métis Nation governments in industrial projects should be afforded the broad reservation of Indigenous state-owned enterprises so that they may accord more favourable treatment to Métis persons and businesses in their purchases and investments.




l-r: John Weinstein, David Lametti, Clément Chartier

President Chartier stated that, consistent with the constitutionally protected harvesting rights of Métis people confirmed in the *Powley* decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, the exclusion of measures related to Indigenous harvesting of natural resources from the scope of the chapter on environment is important. On the trade side, TPP should be used to expand or create new foreign markets for the produce of traditional Métis harvesters including freshwater fish and furs.

President Chartier also stated that the TPP sections on intellectual property protection should be used to protect and promote traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples and ensure they benefit from commercialization of this knowledge.





June 2016

Chartier Speaks at INAC Aboriginal Awareness Week

On May 25th, President Chartier gave a one hour presentation to the Committee for the Advancement of Native Employment (CANE) who are employees of INAC. The session started by an introduction by Francois Ducros, ADM.

The objective of the annual speakers series is to share our respective histories, cultures, rights, experiences and aspirations. In this particular presentation the organizers were especially interested in sharing his thoughts and highlighting the unique and dynamic role that the Métis people play(ed) in Canada's history, as well as his thoughts for the future of the Métis Nation in light of the recent *Daniels* decision.

President Chartier covered the emergence and evolution of the Métis Nation, its distinctive history, homeland, attributes of nationhood, military struggle, dispossession from their lands and resources, history of exclusion and marginalization and generally the struggle to survive as a distinct people and nation and its ultimate successes through the hard work and determination of our past leaders.




With the re-organization of our Métis Nation governments in the early 1980s and the ensuing constitutional and legal battles, culminating in the April *Daniels* decision, the full endorsement of the *UNDRIP* by Canada and the Trudeau government's new policy of engagement with Indigenous peoples and governments on a nation-to-nation basis the Métis Nation has never been in a better place for securing our rightful place

within Canada, as one of three orders of government, and a move away from being dealt with simply as a "National Aboriginal Organization".

President Chartier's talk was well received and he was thanked for taking the time to come and share his thoughts with them.





June 2016

The Church's Debt

- by *Clément Chartier, former Ile a la Crosse Boarding School Internee*

The citizens of the Métis Nation have always been deeply spiritual, with the Roman Catholic religion being the main expression of that spiritualism. But the relationship between the Métis and the Catholic Church and its priests has been difficult, from the Church's betrayal of the Métis resistance movement at the Battle of Batoche in May 1885 to its collusion with the federal government in the national policy of assimilation and cultural genocide inflicted upon Indigenous peoples.

Over the past several weeks, the media has reported the shameful actions of the church shirking its agreement with the residential school survivors by hiding behind legal loopholes to get out of its responsibilities. Hardly a high standard for an institution which professes to be the messenger of God on earth.

Reneging on its commitment to provide resources to help address the historic wrongs perpetrated against Indian residential schools victims is

simply another in a long standing Church practice. About 2.7% of the attendees of these Indian residential schools were Métis.

More egregious for the Métis is the fact that the vast majority of our people who attended Church-run Métis residential and boarding schools have been excluded altogether from the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, the federal government's 2008 apology and the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. That exclusion and the continuing denial of responsibility by the government and Catholic entities remains a stain on Canada. This is particularly so for the Catholic Church entities which imposed the same acts of psychological, physical and sexual abuse and cultural genocide on the Métis as they did on First Nations people and remain unaccountable for those acts.

For ten years, I attended the Church-run Métis residential/boarding school at Ile a la

Crosse, Saskatchewan where many of us suffered sexual and physical abuse, isolation, loneliness, trauma, and terrorism inflicted by a number of the nuns, brothers and lay persons responsible for our care. There has been no compensation for any of us, let alone official acknowledgement of the problem. Yes, the Church should honor all of its commitments to victims of the Indian Residential Schools and not use legal loopholes to weasel out of those commitments. At the same time, the Church and the Government of Canada must address their failure to offer any compensation to the victims of Church-run Métis residential and boarding schools. Justice has eluded us for too long.

This of course must also be addressed in the context of day schools for Métis, Inuit and First Nations who did not attend residential schools per se but were nevertheless victims to Canada and their agents' policies of assimilationist and genocidal policies.





June 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

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|--|------------|----------------|
| • Aboriginal Affairs Working Group Meeting (AAWG) | June 9-10 | Ottawa, ON |
| • MNC Constitution Convention | June 16 | Winnipeg, MB |
| • MNC General Assembly | June 17-18 | Winnipeg, MB |
| • Seven Oaks Bicentennial Celebrations & Commemoration | June 19 | Winnipeg, MB |
| • Board of Governors Meeting | June 22 | Ottawa, ON |
| • PBLI Conference on Daniels | June 23-24 | Ottawa, ON |
| • Back to Batoche Days | July 15-17 | Batoche, SK |
| • Council of the Federation Meeting (COF) | July 19-22 | Whitehorse, YK |
| • MNA AGA | Aug 5-7 | Smoky Lake, AB |
| • MNO AGA | Aug 27-29 | North Bay, ON |
| • ASETS Conference | Nov 22-24 | Vancouver, BC |





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