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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Métis Nation in strong support of Supreme Court of Canada's dismissal of the *Corneau* leave to appeal application

May 2, 2019- A Statement from Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier.

Today's dismissal of the leave to appeal application in the *Corneau* case by the Supreme Court of Canada will hopefully put to rest the groundless claims to Métis section 35 rights of groups in eastern Canada. The lower courts have ruled repeatedly in a multitude of cases across Atlantic Canada and Quebec against claimants to Métis rights under section 35 of the *Constitution Act 1982*. Quite simply, they can find no evidence of historical Métis communities in these regions.

This fact is obvious to the citizens of the Métis Nation in our historical homeland in western Canada. We know that our people emerged during a particular historic period, the fur trade era, in a particular region centred on the prairies. It was here that we developed a distinct identity, culture, language and political consciousness that manifested itself in the Métis Provisional Governments under Louis Riel in Manitoba in 1869-70 and in Saskatchewan in 1884-1885.

This is historical reality as is the century long struggle of our people to assert our nationhood within the Canadian federation. That long struggle culminated in a number of crucial victories in the Supreme Court of Canada and the historic decision of the Trudeau government to establish a nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship with the Métis Nation.

Unfortunately, there has been a proliferation of groups in eastern Canada claiming Métis section 35 rights on the basis of being of mixed ancestry. They have no connection to our people and nation but seek to usurp our rights and benefits that we have fought so hard to attain.

The fact that many of these groups are generating significant amounts of money through the sale of membership cards with bogus promises of tax exemptions or are rooted in the white rights, white nationalist movement and seek to undermine First Nations rights, is particularly disconcerting. For this reason, the Métis Nation and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs signed a mutual recognition agreement and sent a joint letter to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations expressing our deep concerns over the claims and practices of these self-styled "Métis" groups in Nova Scotia.

Hopefully the decision of the Supreme Court not to hear an appeal in the *Corneau* case will deter these groups from continuing their attempts at identity theft. At the same time, we remain committed to working with the federal government on solidifying and advancing the nation-to-nation relationship between Canada and the Métis Nation.

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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 the contiguous parts of British Columbia, Ontario, the Northwest Territories and the United States. There are approximately 400,000 Métis Nation citizens in Canada, roughly a quarter of all Aboriginal peoples in the country.