



Canada

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ADVANCING RECONCILIATION**

**THIS AGREEMENT** is made in triplicate this 30<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2017.

**BETWEEN:**

**MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA**  
as represented by its President  
("MNA")

-and-

**HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF CANADA**  
as represented by the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs  
("Canada")

(hereinafter referred to collectively as the "Parties" and individually as a "Party")

**WHEREAS** the Métis were one of the Aboriginal peoples who lived in the Northwest prior to Canada's westward expansion following Confederation;

**AND WHEREAS** these Métis people referred to themselves and were recognized by others as the Métis Nation, and trace their roots to the western fur trade;

**AND WHEREAS** Métis in Alberta have established the MNA to represent them through democratically elected governance structures at the local, regional and provincial levels throughout the province;

**AND WHEREAS** the MNA is mandated to advance Métis rights, self-government and self-determination in Alberta as well as improve the cultural, social, physical, emotional and economic well-being of Métis in Alberta;

**AND WHEREAS** section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, states that "the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed" and "the 'aboriginal peoples of Canada' includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples";

**AND WHEREAS** the Supreme Court of Canada has noted that section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, calls for a process of reconciliation between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples through which the rights and outstanding claims of Aboriginal peoples are determined, recognized and respected through honourable negotiations with the goal of reaching just and lasting settlements;

**AND WHEREAS** the MNA, on behalf of Métis in Alberta, asserts Aboriginal rights and outstanding claims that are protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, which require reconciliation;

**AND WHEREAS** the MNA also seeks to advance reconciliation through working with Canada to improve the individual and collective well-being of Métis in Alberta as well as close the gaps between the Métis and other Canadians;

**AND WHEREAS** Canada is committed to working, on a nation-to-nation, government-to-government basis with the Métis Nation, through bilateral negotiations with the MNA, in order to advance reconciliation and renew the relationship through cooperation, respect for Métis rights, and ending the status quo;

**AND WHEREAS** the Parties have agreed that their representatives will engage in a time-limited, exploratory discussion table with a view to identifying a mutually-acceptable path forward in order to advance reconciliation between the Crown and Métis in Alberta;

**NOW THEREFORE** the Parties agree as follows:

1. The Parties will establish and participate in an exploratory discussion table.
2. The objective of the exploratory discussion table will be to develop a mutually-acceptable framework agreement to serve as the basis for negotiations to advance reconciliation with Métis in Alberta.
3. The Parties recognize the importance of having the Province of Alberta's participation in a process to advance reconciliation, and will, when and where appropriate, encourage the Province of Alberta to contribute to the exploratory discussion table's discussions as an active participant.
4. The Parties recognize the unique history and jurisdictions of the Métis Settlements General Council and the eight Alberta Métis Settlements (collectively the "Métis Settlements"), as defined by the *Métis Settlements Act*, RSA 2000, c M-14, as well as the importance of having the Métis Settlements' participation in a process to advance reconciliation, and will, when and where appropriate, identify mutually agreeable mechanisms for the Métis Settlements to contribute to or potentially participate in the exploratory discussion table.
5. If the Parties are able to develop a mutually-acceptable framework agreement through the exploratory discussion table, the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs will then take measures aimed at obtaining a formal negotiation mandate.
6. Unless the Parties otherwise agree, the exploratory discussion table will have at least one meeting every six weeks from the date this MOU comes into force, and, subject to paragraph 13, the exploratory discussion table's discussions will conclude by September 2017.

7. Each Party will determine who will represent it at the exploratory discussion table.
8. The Parties will jointly select a suitable time and place for each meeting.
9. Canada recognizes that the MNA requires reasonable capacity to participate in the exploratory discussion process contemplated under this MOU. The Parties will work to develop a mutually-acceptable workplan and budget to support the MNA's participation in the exploratory discussion table. Any workplan, budget and funding agreement shall be consistent with the policies of the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.
10. Except for this paragraph 10 and paragraphs 11, 13 and 16, this MOU is not legally binding, is intended only as an expression of good will and political commitment, and does not create, amend, recognize or deny any legal or constitutional right or obligation on the part of either Party.
11. Whether or not disclosed to any person or persons,
  - a. this MOU (other than paragraphs 10, 11, 13 and 16),
  - b. all discussions of the exploratory discussion table, and
  - c. all records, information and communications that disclose the content of discussions or the content of a Party's positions or viewswill be without prejudice to the legal rights of, and to the positions which may be taken by, any Party in any legal proceeding, negotiation or otherwise. Except for the purpose of enforcing paragraph 10, 11, 13 and 16, the Parties will not seek admission of or voluntarily tender, in a court of law or in any proceeding before a tribunal or board, evidence respecting this MOU or respecting any item mentioned in (b) or (c) of this paragraph 11.
12. The Parties will discuss the possibility of establishing a joint communications approach in relation to this MOU, which may include details on how and when the Parties would jointly inform the public or the media of the fact of this MOU and its contents.
13. Unless the Parties agree otherwise, in advance and in writing,
  - a. all discussions of the exploratory discussion table will be held in camera and remain confidential,
  - b. a Party will not disclose any records, information or communications that reveal the content of discussions or the content of the other Party's positions or views, and
  - c. during the term of the exploratory discussion table's discussions, a Party will not disclose any records, information or communications of the exploratory discussion table that reveal the content of either Party's positions or views.

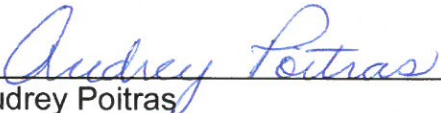
14. This MOU comes into force when signed and, subject to paragraph 15, will remain in effect until it is replaced by a subsequent agreement between the Parties.


15. Either Party may terminate this MOU on 30 days' written notice to the other Party.

16. Unless the Parties otherwise agree in writing, the provisions of paragraphs 10, 11, 13 and 16 will survive the conclusion of the exploratory discussion table's discussions and any termination of this MOU.

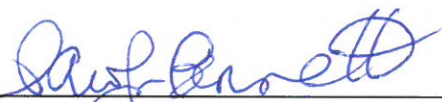
**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** this MOU has been executed by the Parties as of the date first written above.

**MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Audrey Poitras  
MNA President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bev New  
MNA Co-Minister for Métis Rights

**HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF CANADA**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Honourable Carolyn Bennett  
Minister of Indigenous  
and Northern Affairs