



Métis Nation  
of Ontario 

## **Métis Governments Move Forward on Self-Government—Together**

### ***Otipemisiwak: A National Conference on Metis Self-Government***

**March 3, 2020** – Métis governments from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario are gathering next week in Ottawa on March 9 and 10 for a first-of-its-kind conference on Métis self-government.

Collectively, these three Métis governments represent more than 200,000 rights-bearing Métis citizens living across Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario.

The conference builds on the historic signings of the Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreements (MGRSAs) in June 2019. The MGRSAs are the first agreements in Canada to recognize the Métis inherent right of self-government based on Métis rights recognition and implementation.

This conference will bring together Métis leaders, citizens, federal government representatives, legal experts, academics, and First Nations who have successfully negotiated modern day treaties and self-government agreements.

Some of the confirmed speakers include: Jason Madden, Métis rights lawyer, Partner, Pape Salter Teillet LLP; Tom Isaac, former Ministerial Special Representative on Métis s. 35 Rights; Carla McGrath, Director General of Negotiations Central, Crown-Indigenous Relations; Bertha Rabesca Zoe, Laws Guardian, Tłı̄ch̄ Government; Brian Calliou, Director of Indigenous Leadership and Management, Banff Centre; Karen Drake, Associate Professor, York University Osgoode Hall Law School; Marilyn Poitras, Director Indigenous Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan.

A copy of the agenda is available at [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org). The conference takes place at the Hilton Lac-Leamy in Ottawa on March 9-10, 2020 and will be live webcast so citizens from across the Métis Nation Homeland will be able to participate in this historic occasion: <https://freeman.streamme.ca/MetisOntario2020>

#### **Statements from Métis Government Leaders:**

“This conference is about who we are as Métis. We are Otipemisiwak – a people that own themselves. Our Métis governments have been built community meeting by community meeting, assembly by assembly, success by success. The MGRSA’s represent the next chapter in this long history of Métis self-government and self-determination.” – Audrey Poitras, Métis Nation of Alberta President

“The Traditional and democratic self-government structure of the Métis Nation Saskatchewan has been practiced and built since the days of Louis Riel in Batoche. This government structure needs to be understood, respected, and practiced. This conference represents an

opportunity for our federal partners to hear directly from us, in our own words, about our Métis rights and self-government.” – Glen McCallum, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan President

“The MGRSAs were the result of the Métis successfully advancing their rights before the Supreme Court of Canada over the last 15 years. This includes cases like *R. v. Powley* (2003), which recognized Métis s.35 harvesting rights in and around Sault Ste Marie Ontario, and the *Harry Daniels v. Canada* case (2016), which recognized the federal government’s role in advancing government-to-government relationship with Indigenous communities, including the Métis.” – Margaret Froh, Métis Nation of Ontario President

### **About the Self-Government Agreements**

On June 27, 2019, the Métis Governments of Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta each signed Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreements with Canada. The Self-Government Agreements provide for Canada’s immediate recognition of the inherent right to self-government held by the Métis communities and citizens represented by each of our Métis Governments, and set out a clear, mutually agreeable path for recognition of the Métis Governments as Indigenous governments in Canadian law. This is the first time that Canada has ever recognized an inherent right of self-government for Métis.

### **Media Contacts:**

**Julia Burns**  
Métis Nation-  
Saskatchewan  
Director of  
Communications  
306-343-8285  
[jburns@mns.work](mailto:jburns@mns.work)

**Marc St. Germain**  
Métis Nation of Ontario  
Director of  
Communications  
613-798-1488 ext.119  
[marcs@metisnation.org](mailto:marcs@metisnation.org)

**Amy Dillon**  
Métis Nation of Alberta  
Director of  
Communications  
780-455-2200 ext. 309  
[adillon@metis](mailto:adillon@metis)