



NORTHWEST TERRITORY MÉTIS NATION

NEWS RELEASE

NORTHWEST TERRITORY MÉTIS NATION LAND CLAIM NEGOTIATIONS

FORT SMITH, NT – Due to a lack of funding, the Northwest Territory Métis Nation was forced to halt the NWTMN Land Claim Negotiation process for February and March, which has resulted in the cancellation of two Main Table negotiation sessions.

Despite the progress that has been made at the land claim negotiations and an increase in negotiation workplan activities, including additional Main Tables, self-government workshops and enumeration activities, the Government of Canada refused to provide adequate funding. The funding for land claim negotiations is provided solely by the Government of Canada. Previously the NWTMN was required to take out negotiation loans to participate in negotiations. Now that Canada provides contribution funding for negotiations, Canada has cut funding to the NWTMN. The NWTMN has received 31% of the funding the NWTMN has applied for which makes it impossible for the NWTMN to hold self-government workshops to communicate and consult with Indigenous Métis Members regarding the draft land claim agreement.

Earlier in February, President Garry Bailey raised the short-fall capacity funding issue directly with Minister Carolyn Bennett, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, during a meeting. While the Minister Bennett committed to reviewing the situation, her official communicated that no additional funding would be forthcoming for this fiscal. We also raised the outstanding issue of the implementation of the *Daniels* decision to provide the NWTMN with core funding, and funding for the delivery of programs and services for our membership. Canada has yet to respond to our request for the implementation of the *Daniels* decision.

A workplan for the 2018 / 2019 fiscal year was entered into among the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the NWTMN which set clear timeframes, schedules and deliverables. The Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories agreed to completion of the negotiations within 18-24 months (expiring May 2019) to resolve substantive issues. Government has yet to respond to the counter-offer tabled by the NWTMN.

The reduction in funding flies in the face of the public pronouncements made by the Government of Canada related to a “new approach” for land claim negotiations.

The NWTMN is disappointed that as a result of insufficient funding, the conclusion of the NWTMN land claim negotiations will be delayed further. The NWTMN is concerned about the future of the land claim negotiations, given that the NWTMN relies on Canada to fund the negotiations. The NWTMN awaits Canada’s offer for 2019 / 2020 land claim negotiation funding.

In order for good faith negotiations to be carried out, government must ensure negotiations are adequately resourced. The cancellation of negotiations is appalling given Canada’s commitment to reconciliation.

For more information, please contact:

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