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Tansi, Bonjour, Hello friends and family!

I hope many of you are welcoming spring after the long, cold winter we had. It's always nice to bring in a new season, reflect on the changes and challenges we experienced, and appreciate the opportunities ahead.

As an organization, MN-S is also going through the process of reflection and renewal. We worked hard through the winter and I am pleased to share updates on some key issues.

Transparency

When we took our offices, we acknowledged that our priorities were transparency, accountability and good communication. This remains an important area for our citizens and we are working to continue to improve the way our people can access information. We started a Facebook page and post information about events and opportunities. We have revamped our website to ensure information is accessible, accurate and timely. These were the first steps and now that we have these channels in place, we will continue to work toward improving our ability to provide timely and meaningful information.

Governance

As a Nation, we continue to meet with our federal counterparts on self-government through the framework signed at Batoche in 2018. (You can find the framework on our website.) The framework ensures engagement for dialogue to work through the longstanding issues of Métis rights as Indigenous peoples under Section 35. Examples include land claims, land-related issues, governance, protection of culture, and redress of past wrongs such as the residential school. It also includes working to develop programming for Métis people.

Progress

I am so humbled to have visited every region in Saskatchewan and to see the pride and innovative thinking of our people. Our meetings and dialogue are leading to real progress, as we explore investments into Metis communities and recognition of our Sixties Scoop children. As a Nation, we will continue to advance our issues and provide progress updates.



OFFICE of the PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT

In addition to meeting with citizens, I have advanced and advocated our issues and Nationhood at every level of government. This includes working with our First Nation relatives and with bands, Tribal Councils and the FSIN to develop healthy partnerships.

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC)

In early February, we signed a 10-year agreement on Early Learning and Child Care that represents where children will have opportunity to experience high-quality, culturally rooted early learning and child care programming. Programs such as Aboriginal Headstart in Ile-a-la-Crosse will benefit and ensure our unique culture and language will thrive.

The ELCC is in the planning stages of undertaking research on allocation models, regional/community demographics and population analysis. The work will help us develop a business plan related to childcare needs and establish a child-care support program for young families.

All work associated with implementation of the MN-S ELCC will be culturally based and family-centered, with a focus on developing effective policies and programs. We intend to look at wrap-around services or create HUBs that are fully supportive of the continued mental, physical, spiritual and emotional well-being of the care and learning of Métis Children and their families. We are looking at creating, improving and expanding education and training programs including infrastructure and capital investments for the safe care and learning of Métis Children. The MN-S has secured funding for 10 years, with annual allocations for the first four years of \$9.57million.

Urban Programming (UPIP)

One of the best parts of my role is meeting our citizens across the region – whether it is in small Métis communities or in urban centres. We have worked diligently with the federal government to improve its urban programming when it comes to our members. As such we continue to push the government on its Urban Programming for Indigenous People program, lobbying for it to be resourced properly and to reflect the real needs of our people.

A UPIP committee has been established that will oversee the formulation and updating of policies, as well as managing identified urban issues for the betterment of



OFFICE of the PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT

the coordination of the UPIP program. A UPIP coordinator has been engaged starting April 1st and they will coordinate the four funding streams: organizational capacity; programs and services; coalitions; research and innovation. Funding has been secured for 2018-19 and 2019-20 to deliver programs and services to urban Indigenous peoples in their community.

Housing

Our housing needs are similar to those of our First Nation cousins and the recent federal budget included an investment that will allow us to work with Métis citizens on securing mortgages for first-time home owners. There will be a focus on reducing the core housing need gap that exists between Métis Nation citizens and non-Indigenous Canadians in Saskatchewan.

We will be able to address Métis citizens' housing priorities, improve housing outcomes and address needs across the housing continuum to ensure there is adequate, suitable, affordable and sustainable housing for Metis. It is a priority to address the needs of the most vulnerable Métis people – those with risk of homelessness, persons with disabilities, survivors of domestic violence, people with mental health issues and addictions, veterans, seniors and youth). We are also advocating for support for the capitalization of Métis Nation housing institutions, to improve the sustainability of Métis housing corporations currently providing subsidized and affordable housing and Métis home ownership.

Currently we are building a plan to make housing affordable and to meet the needs and priorities of communities, improve housing outcomes and advance reconciliation with the Métis Nation by supporting self-determination.

Veterans

Our veterans – men and women who have served dutifully to protect their homes, communities, Nation and country – are being rightfully recognized after decades of being shut out. We are proud of our veterans and their sacrifices and we take every opportunity to honour them. They have worked tirelessly to be acknowledged and I am humbled they are finally being recognized.

Sixties Scoop

I want to share with you the engagement work we are doing with Sixties Scoop survivors. This was a horrific time in our history, one that wreaked destruction on our



OFFICE of the PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT

families, communities and Nation. It has impacted us in so many ways and we know the impact and we are moving to engage and work together on healing.

The Metis Nation Canada has engaged with each region to start a dialogue with each other to heal and to share information on what is happening. I am proud of the work we are doing in this healing area.

Moving Forward

Finally, as we move forward, I am confident that we are building strong, dedicated, strategic capacity at our MN-S secretariat. As I stated above, we are working to better our communication channels and to be accessible.

Please reach out, we are here for you. As we embark on the new format of the MNLA, I am excited about the diversity of voices and solutions that will be shared particularly in our key priorities.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve and engage it is incredible to witness the strength and pride of our Nation.