

## **Backgrounder**

### **Self-government agreement between the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada**

On February 24, 2023, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and Canada signed an updated *Métis Nation–Saskatchewan Self-government Recognition and Implementation Agreement*. This updated Agreement is an important milestone in ongoing work to promote reconciliation, advance the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan’s vision for self-determination, and build a stronger nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship.

#### **Background on the negotiations**

The *Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement* is the result of ongoing Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination negotiations between Canada and the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan. Advancing the formal recognition of Métis self-government was a priority identified in the Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation signed by Canada and the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan in 2018.

The parties first signed a negotiated self-government agreement in June 2019 that set out a distinct path for moving together toward self-government. It was one of the first self-government agreements reached with Métis in Canada and recognized a Métis right to self-government.

#### **New self-government arrangements**

The updated *Métis Nation–Saskatchewan Self-government Recognition and Implementation Agreement* (the “Agreement”) builds on this earlier progress and sets out an updated roadmap for moving forward together. This includes federal recognition of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan’s jurisdiction over governance and a new commitment to negotiate a subsequent core governance treaty.

The new Agreement incorporates these additional key elements to provide greater clarity, align with current federal approaches to reconciliation, and further advance the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan’s vision for self-government in a way that better meets their distinct circumstances, goals, and priorities.

#### **The updated Agreement: an overview**

The *Métis Nation–Saskatchewan Self-government Recognition and Implementation Agreement* came into effect upon signing and is now binding on the signatories. Upon signing, Canada affirmed that it formally recognizes that the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan is the representative government of the Métis Nation within Saskatchewan and has jurisdiction over their own core governance matters. This includes their own citizenship, leadership selection, and the operations of their government. In addition, the Agreement includes the commitment to negotiate a core



governance treaty with the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan as part of the work toward a more formal recognition of this jurisdiction in federal law.

The future core governance treaty envisioned in the Agreement will focus on governance matters and will include further details in key areas such as harmonizing laws and resolving disputes. The treaty will then replace the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan’s self-government agreement. It will require federal legislation to bring it into effect. Now that the Agreement is signed, the next step is federal legislation to provide a framework for putting the future treaty into effect.

### **Next Steps**

The Agreement outlines steps that must be completed before such a core governance treaty with the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan can come into effect through federal legislation. These steps include:

- Métis Nation–Saskatchewan ratifying their core governance treaty,
- the core governance treaty being approved by Canada, and;
- an implementation plan and supporting arrangements on fiscal matters being co-developed by the parties.

Once all steps are completed, a future effective date must be agreed to by the parties and set by federal Order in Council. The self-government agreement will remain in effect until the treaty that replaces it comes into force.

### **Looking Ahead**

The Government of Canada looks forward to continuing its collaborative work with Métis Nation–Saskatchewan on self-government and other shared priorities for achieving a lasting reconciliation for the benefit of their citizens and all Canadians.

While this joint work advances at the negotiating table, the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan will continue to prioritize their ongoing consultation and engagement with their citizens. The parties will also continue to update interested partners and engage stakeholders at key milestones as negotiations move forward and reconciliation is advanced. Both the self-government agreement and the future treaty it envisions deal with matters internal to the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan and will not affect the rights or interests of any other Indigenous group. If additional areas of jurisdiction or matters that may affect other Indigenous groups are negotiated in the future, appropriate Crown consultations will be undertaken. Canada and the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan remain committed to shared solutions that promote reconciliation, enhance community well-being, and are respectful of the rights and interests of all Canadians.