

What the Parties Are Saying

In anticipation of the 2015 Federal Election, the Métis National Council (MNC) presented a list of questions to the political parties in order to determine their stand on Métis rights and issues. Below, you will find the list of questions followed by the answers each party submitted to the MNC. To date, the Liberal, NDP and Green parties have responded. Other responses will be added as they are received.



An Ongoing Government to Government Relationship and Process

Will your party support legislation or other means to recognize the Métis Nation, its governing institutions and its right to govern itself under its own constitution?

Canada must complete the unfinished work of Confederation by establishing a renewed Nation-to-Nation relationship with the Métis Nation, based on trust, respect and cooperation for mutual benefit. A Liberal government will work in partnership with the Métis Nation, on a Nation-to-Nation basis, to further Métis self-government.

Yes. Tom Mulcair and Canada's New Democrats recognize the right of the Métis people to self-government and have a deep commitment to developing Canada's Nation-to-Nation relationship with the Métis Nation. This will remain a constant priority for an NDP Government.

We feel it is time for a new era and a new federal government that embraces a true Nation-to-Nation relationship, built on respect and committed to making meaningful progress for Métis citizens. The NDP has a long history of fighting for the rights of Indigenous peoples, including Métis peoples, most notably illustrated by the insistence of the NDP and Ed Broadbent that Aboriginal Treaty Rights be enshrined in the Canadian Constitution.

Tom Mulcair and Canada's New Democrats believe that the current and previous federal governments have spent far too much time and energy fighting Indigenous peoples in court rather than seeking to build a respectful and meaningful partnership. If elected to form the next federal government we will work with the Métis peoples to support and further establish their institutions and rights.

The Green Party is committed to honouring the rights of Métis, including the inherent right to self-government. We will swiftly implement The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) which declares that "Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means to financing autonomous functions."

Consistent with UNDRIP, we will support legislation that recognizes the Métis Nation, its governing institutions and its right to govern itself under its own constitution.

Will your party establish a process at the Cabinet level to deal directly with the Métis Nation leadership on Métis Nation priorities (i.e. lands and resources, self-government and economic development)?

As a matter of national priority, a Liberal government will develop a Federal Reconciliation Framework, created in full partnership with Indigenous Peoples. This framework will include mechanisms to advance and strengthen self-government, advance land claims and resolve historic grievances. We will specifically work with Métis groups, as well as relevant provinces and territories, to establish a federal claims process that sets out a framework to address Métis rights protected by s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, supporting Métis self-government, and resolve outstanding Métis claims against the Crown.

Yes. Tom Mulcair and the NDP have committed to establishing a cabinet-level committee chaired by the Prime Minister himself—to ensure that all government decisions respect treaty rights, inherent rights and Canada's international obligations, starting with the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples. Canada's New Democrats see this not just as the responsibility of one department but the duty of the entire Government of Canada.

Greens will work to build a new, nation-to-nation partnership based on mutual respect and understanding with the Métis Nation. We will establish a process at the Cabinet level to deal directly with the Métis Nation leadership on Métis Nation priorities.

Greens will also work to transform the relationship between Ottawa and Indigenous peoples by establishing a Council of Canadian Governments. This body will meet regularly, bringing together governments representing the provinces, territories, municipalities, and Indigenous Peoples so that all parties will be able to work towards solutions to the challenges facing their people. For the first time, we will meaningfully engage Métis leadership as full partners in intergovernmental decisionmaking, for the good of all of us. The Council of Canadian Governments will restore a more cooperative federalism to Canada.

Will your party support an annual summit of the Prime Minister with Métis Nation leadership?

As Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau will meet with Métis leaders each and every year of his government's mandate.

Yes. Tom Mulcair has, and will, meet regularly with the Métis Nation leadership to advance the Nation-to-Nation relationship. This will continue in his role as Prime Minister.

Yes. The Prime Minister must meet directly with Métis Nation leadership.

Will your party support a biennial summit of the Prime Minister and the Premiers of the five westernmost Provinces with the Métis Nation?

A Liberal government will ensure a renewed, Nation-to-Nation relationship between the federal government and the Métis Nation; recognize the Métis Nation as a full partner in the federation; and work with the Métis Nation to create fairness and equality of opportunity. We would also be open to working with the Métis Nation and relevant provincial governments to hold regular meetings to make progress on shared priorities.

Yes. Tom Mulcair and the NDP will support meaningful exchanges between the westernmost Founders of Confederation, including the provinces and the Métis Nation. The NDP believe that there is much to be gained by working together as partners and building a Nation-to-Nation relationship.

Yes. This would be a requirement of a nation-to-nation relationship.

Will your party commit to implementing a block funding agreement that will guarantee reliable and flexible funding for the Métis Nation? Will your party commit to a funding formula based on the real costs of Métis Nation governance? Will your party commit to transfer payments that will enable Métis self-governing institutions to establish similar types of programs and services as those enjoyed by other Aboriginal peoples?

The Liberal Party of Canada understands that none of our shared goals can be achieved under the status quo. Improving Métis quality of life requires distinct, and innovative approaches and a real partnership with Métis groups, as well as provinces and territories. A Liberal government is committed to working with our partners to achieve results for Métis children, youth, families and communities. A Liberal government will undertake a collaborative review, in partnership with Métis groups, of existing federal programs and services available to other Indigenous Peoples to identify gaps and areas where strategic investments are needed in order to improve Métis quality of life.

Further, we will make sure the Kelowna Accord – and the spirit of reconciliation that drove it – is embraced, and that its objectives are met, in line with today's challenges. A Liberal government will immediately reengage with the Métis Nation, as well as First Nations and Inuit communities, in a renewed, respectful, and inclusive Nation-to-Nation process to advance progress on critical issues such as housing, infrastructure, health and mental health care, community safety and policing, child welfare, economic opportunity, and education.

New Democrats, will initiate a review of all federal funding to the Métis organizations by the new Indigenous cabinet-level committee that will be chaired by the Prime Minister. As part of building a stable and long term Nation-to-Nation relationship, Canada's New Democrats will work collaboratively to establish funding agreements, based on the costs of maintaining self-governing institutions and the services provided to Métis citizens.

Yes. The Canadian Government must hold up its end of the Canada-MNC Governance and Financial Accountability Accord 2013.

Yes. Funding must be adequate and stable, based on the real costs of Métis Nation governance.

Yes. We will restore the landmark Kelowna Accord, and the corresponding \$5.1 billion commitment, to improve education, housing, health care, employment, and living conditions for all Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Will your party commit to supporting the renewal of Métis-specific Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) in 2017 and move them to an A based multi-year program?

Métis individuals and communities face unique socio-economic issues and challenges based on their distinct histories, geographies and on-the-ground realities. A Liberal government will renew and expand funding by \$50 million to the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy. This will include continuation of a distinctions-based approach, which respects the unique realities of First Nations, Inuit and the Métis in the delivery of these programs and services to their communities. The Liberal Party of Canada is committed to working with our Métis Nation partners to achieve results for Métis children, youth, families and communities and we look forward to an open and ongoing dialogue with the MNC about converting ASSETS to a permanent program. In addition, we will provide \$25 million over 5 years to implement a Métis Economic Development Strategy, developed in partnership and consultation with Métis groups.

In order to advance opportunities for Métis youth and Métis businesses, an NDP government is committed to engaging in a collaborative process to review existing programming and funding as well as opportunities for economic development amongst Métis communities.

An NDP government will work with Métis organizations to plan and ensure the sustainability of the Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategy (ASETS) as a permanent program to provide skills training for Métis youth. In addition, an NDP government will engage the Métis Nation in discussions around federal support for educational initiatives such as strategically targeted bursaries and scholarships to help ensure that Métis youth have opportunities to attain their educational goals and career aspirations.

An NDP government will partner with Métis organizations to promote and support industry partnerships and economic opportunities for the Métis community, including through the use of Aboriginal Capital Corporations.

To identify new opportunities, an NDP government will review existing federal policies for resources development with the goal of updating and improving consultative processes and identifying opportunities for Métis participation and benefit, including skills development and training; Finally, an NDP government will review federal policies for Aboriginal procurement in order to address and remove obstacles faced by Métis business owners and to improve access and opportunities to the bidding process.

The Green Party supports the continuation of this highly successful program, and will work with the MNC to support skills training for Métis people. Programs like ASETS are most effective when they are implemented in close collaboration with stakeholders - like the MNC.

Will your party support performance based strategic investments in Métis educational, training and economic development institutions?

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Yes. The Green Party will use all tools at its disposal to promote and support industry partnerships with the Métis. We will invest in education and skills training, to ensure that Métis youth and adults, and their communities, reach their full economic potential.

Will your party support adequate resourcing for the MNC and its Governing Members to participate effectively in the implementation of the Métis Economic Development Accord?

As referenced above, a Liberal government will work with Métis groups and existing Métis financial institutions to develop a Métis Economic Development Strategy that identifies strategic federal investments that can be made to enhance Métis entrepreneurship as well as Métis participation in business development and economic growth. We would also provide \$25 million of funding over 5 years to implement this new strategy.

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Yes.

Will your party support negotiations with the MNC and its Governing Members directed toward agreements on these matters that could be constitutionally protected? Will your party commit to adequate resourcing of the MNC and its Governing Members to participate in Métis s.35 rights reconciliation discussions?

The unique rights and claims of the Métis people require the federal government to collaborate with Métis groups, the provinces and the territories to meaningfully engage, negotiate and reach just and lasting settlements with Métis communities. This is essential to how reconciliation with the Métis people will finally be meaningfully advanced and achieved.

As noted above, a Liberal government will work with Métis groups, as well as necessary provinces and territories, to establish a federal claims process that sets out a framework to address Métis rights protected by s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, supporting Métis self-government as well as resolve outstanding Métis claims against the Crown.

Tom Mulcair and Canada's New Democrats recognize the right of the Métis people to self-government and have a deep commitment to developing Canada's Nation-to-Nation relationship with the Métis Nation. This will remain a constant priority for an NDP Government. We feel it is time for a new era and a new federal government that embraces a true Nation-to-Nation relationship, built on respect and committed to making meaningful progress for Métis citizens. The NDP has a long history of fighting for the rights of Indigenous peoples, including Métis peoples, most notably illustrated by the insistence of the NDP and Ed Broadbent that Aboriginal Treaty Rights be enshrined in the Canadian Constitution.

Tom Mulcair and Canada's New Democrats believe that current and previous federal governments have spent far too much time and energy fighting Indigenous peoples in court rather than seeking to build a respectful and meaningful partnership. If elected to form the next federal government we will work with the Métis peoples to establish a process to address the inadequate protection of Métis rights by previous federal governments, including legally establish Aboriginal rights, Métis land claims and other inherent rights as Indigenous peoples. Our commitment to right the wrongs of the past includes a commitment to support and further establish their Métis institutions and self-government.

Yes. The federal government must recognize and implement the right of Métis people to self-government and lands and resources. True reconciliation will take time, and while we work to build a new, nation-to-nation partnership based on mutual respect and understanding, there are urgent and important steps that must be taken by the federal government to put the relationship on firmer footing. We begin by recognizing indigenous rights and title, and will negotiate in good faith to settle land claims, establish treaties and selfgovernment arrangements. Yes. In order to engage as equal partners in these nation-to-nation negotiations, the MNC and its Governing Members need adequate resourcing.

