

President's Message

September 20, 2017

This is an exciting time for the Manitoba Métis and our Métis Government. Our Annual General Assembly is taking place this week where we will celebrate two important milestones for our Métis governance and leadership.

This year we celebrate 50 years of Governance and 20 years of Leadership. The MMF is continuing the traditions of governance and leadership that are rooted in the time of our Forefathers. Our Métis Government is deeply rooted in our historic military, political and legal struggles, as well as the buffalo hunts of the 1800s. It survived a reign of terror followed by a dark period of history lasting nearly a century. Our people rose up in the mid-1960s to advocate and revive our collective rights of self-determination and self-governance.

I am honoured to be your President for the past twenty years. During our time together, we have helped our people build their future and support their families. Together, we continue to advance our Métis Agenda. It is the participation of our Métis Citizens at the Local, Regional and Provincial levels that is the essence of good participatory and representative governance. With over 3000 delegates at our Annual General Assembly, it is a sign of democracy in action.

This year's Annual General Assembly will be a historic milestone. It will be a time to reflect upon what has brought us to where we are and where we will go from here. The MMF continues to provide responsible and effective Métis self-governance on behalf of the Métis Nation's Manitoba Métis Community. Your government is always accountable to you – the Métis People. The MMF's effectiveness, and its accountability back to our grassroots citizens, is due in part to our democratic reporting.

Our constitutionally mandated assemblies are a fundamental part of this democratic reporting. It is through the assembly that the will and authority of our People is both expressed and confirmed each year. After reviewing reports on past and current activities, and following discussion and debate, our Métis delegates give direction to their elected representatives.

But, importantly, the foundations of our success over the past 20 years is because of the plan we developed and began to implement back in 1997 when I became President. As I have stated before, we are in the process of negotiating a constitutionally protected, recognized self-government. This is part of the plan to ensure the Métis Government is vested with the necessary authorities and jurisdictions that will give us more strength and expression in how we meet the identified needs of our Citizens. The Manitoba Metis Federation has a vision and plan to foster strong, healthy and self-reliant Métis families, local communities and businesses. We are building to create self-sufficiency, self-determination and strong, representative Métis self-government.

We have experienced much success over the years. The Métis Citizens of Manitoba are on the cusp of receiving even greater things. The Métis Government has been hard at work negotiating agreements and new relations that are built on nation-to-nation and government-to-government principles. Favourable changes in government, a renewed commitment by Canada to seek reconciliation and the support of recent Supreme Court decisions have created an environment for progress.

I am looking forward to sharing at the Annual General Assembly what has been happening. I am also looking forward to sharing with you good news about investments the Métis Government has, and will, undertake on behalf of the Métis Citizens of Manitoba. I want to share with you my gratitude and thanks for your continued support and trust in your Métis Government. It has been my humble pleasure to serve the Métis Citizens of Manitoba these past 20 years. I am honoured to be your President.

In closing, I send my thoughts and prayers to each of you, especially those who have cause to mourn, are shut-in or sick. May you be comforted and strengthened by family and friends. I look forward to see you at the Annual General Assembly.

Meeqwetch,