



NEWS RELEASE

April 11, 2024

Identity summit brings leaders together to discuss rampant Indigenous identity theft

Winnipeg, MB, in the National Homeland of the Red River Métis and Treaty One Territory – The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), the National Government of the Red River Métis, and the Chiefs of Ontario (COO), are pleased to announce an Identity Summit aimed at tackling rampant identity theft faced by many Indigenous Nations in Canada today.

Co-hosted by both MMF and COO, the summit will take place in Winnipeg on May 14 and 15, 2024. This historic summit marks an unprecedented gathering of First Nations, Inuit and Red River Métis leadership from across Canada, all of whom are bound by concerns about the wholesale theft of their respective identities by those seeking to use them for their own purposes or gains.

“As I and the Chiefs of Ontario have stated on numerous occasions, the claims being made by the Métis Nation of Ontario have no factual and legal basis and undermine all legitimate First Nation, Inuit, and Métis rights-holders,” said Ontario Regional Chief Glen Hare. “We look forward to co-hosting this historic event with the Manitoba Métis Federation to address the issues that legitimate rights-holders are facing in all regions due to the federal government’s deeply flawed Bill C-53 legislation.”

“We need to do this because governments and institutions are legitimizing groups making false claims in our territories.”

Article 8 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture. Widespread identity fraud extinguishes that right. It further requires Canada to provide effective tools to prevent and correct any action that has the aim or effect of depriving Indigenous peoples of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities. In essence, identity fraud is affecting the integrity of all Indigenous Nations as distinct peoples. This issue must be addressed not only by legitimate Indigenous rights-holders, but also by the state and other institutions.

Indigenous leadership and expert panelists will discuss the true national scale of collective Indigenous identity fraud and explore options for a coordinated response and solutions to this problem. This will highlight the imperative of protecting Section 35 rights and legitimate Indigenous rights-holders.

"Our warnings of Indigenous Identity theft of the Red River Métis, First Nation and Inuit peoples are at the forefront in this country and the time has come for Canada to address these fraudsters and ensure they know who they are treating with," said Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand. "We can no longer stand by and allow these cultural thieves and identity colonizers get away with the damage they are doing to our peoples. We too look forward to co-hosting this historic event with the Chiefs of Ontario and taking the next steps in confronting this threat to our existence as distinct peoples and nations."

-30-

Advisory: Media are invited to attend this historic event. More information will be shared in the coming weeks, but outlets wishing to plan their attendance for the Identity Summit in advance can reach out to the individuals noted below.

For more information, media may contact:

Kat Patenaude
Media Relations Advisor
Manitoba Métis Federation
204-801-7710
Kat.Patenaude@mmf.mb.ca

Chris Hoyos
Director of Policy and Communications
Policy and Communications Sector
Chiefs of Ontario
416-579-4998
Chris.Hoyos@coo.org

The Chiefs of Ontario supports all First Nations in Ontario as they assert their sovereignty, jurisdiction and their chosen expression of nationhood. Follow Chiefs of Ontario on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @ChiefsOfOntario.

"

The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) is the democratically elected National Government of the Red River Métis, also known as the Manitoba Métis. The Red River Métis are a distinct Indigenous Nation and People and Canada's Negotiating Partners in Confederation and the Founders of the Province of Manitoba.