



UNION
OF NOVA
SCOTIA
MI'KMAQ

90 San'tele'sew Awti – Suite 201
Membertou, Nova Scotia B1S 0A5
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March 4, 2026

Province of Nova Scotia
Premier Houston
Minister Martin

Re: Tripartite Forum

Premier Houston and Minister Martin,

We are writing on behalf of the Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq to express our surprise and concern regarding your government's decision to eliminate its total funding contribution to the Tripartite Forum for the 2026–2027 fiscal year.

While we recognize the fiscal pressures facing the Province, we believe that the operational and symbolic consequences of withdrawing from financial participation in the Tripartite Forum far outweigh the relatively modest savings achieved. The Province's annual contribution represents a very small fraction of overall provincial expenditures, yet it plays a foundational and integral role in sustaining a trilateral forum that has served both Nova Scotia and its Mi'kmaq communities for nearly three decades.

Recommended by the Marshall Inquiry and established in 1997, the Tripartite Forum was designed as a venue for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, the Province of Nova Scotia, and the Federal government of Canada to work together to strengthen relationships, address matters of mutual concern, and improve socio-economic outcomes for Mi'kmaq communities. Over time, and particularly through the signing of the 2002 Umbrella Agreement, the Tripartite Forum evolved to provide a structured and coordinated collaborative space to address non-Section 35 issues in a practical and solutions-focused manner. Given the Tripartite Forum's origins and its ongoing role in strengthening Nova Scotia–Mi'kmaq relations, it was concerning to learn of this decision through a general notification letter rather than through prior and timely dialogue at the political level.



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In recent years, our respective governments have reaffirmed the value of the Tripartite Forum and have been actively working together to renew and strengthen its structure and relevance. Considerable effort has been invested in charting a more responsive and forward-looking path. The Forum remains an important venue outside of formal negotiations and consultation processes and has the potential to support progress on many shared priorities such as economic development initiatives, infrastructure and resource projects, and coordinated responses to emergencies to name only a few.

Nova Scotia funding supports core functions of the Forum, including liaison and secretariat staffing, project funding, and the coordination of working committees. The elimination of this support places the operational stability of the Forum at great risk and will have immediate implications for staffing and program delivery.

We respectfully ask that your government reconsider this decision. Now is a time for strengthened collaboration, not retrenchment. We are confident that, through discussion and partnership, a sustainable path forward can be identified that maintains the integrity and effectiveness of the Tripartite Forum while demonstrating provincial fiscal and political responsibility.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter and to work together toward a constructive solution.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

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Chief Leroy Denny
Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs

DocuSigned by:
Douglas Brown
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Douglas Brown
Executive Director
Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq