



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Agreement reached to provide stability within the Office of the President**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Saturday afternoon, members of the Navajo Nation Council and President Ben Shelly met and signed an agreement that allows the President to remain in office until a presidential election takes place and a new president takes office.

Terms of the agreement reads as follows:

1. The parties agree that President Ben Shelly will remain in the Office of the President until such time that there is an election and a President-Elect and Vice-President-Elect are installed in office.
2. The parties agree that the election is of the utmost concern. As such, the parties will encourage, facilitate and expedite the conduct of an election so as to promote the stability of the Navajo Nation. Both parties agree to efficiently work towards an election for the President and Vice-President, and to enable that process in whatever way possible.

During Saturday's discussion, several delegates said the agreement is a positive step in the right direction by having two branches of government discuss the issue and reach a solution.

Council Delegate Tom Chee (Shiprock) commended the parties for meeting to discuss the issue face-to-face and for reaching the agreement.

"Coming to the table and talking with one another has made us revert back to our traditional ways to resolve this," stated Delegate Chee.

The agreement developed after Council members and President Shelly met on Jan. 22, to discuss the presidency and the future goals of the Navajo Nation.

The written agreement states that the parties agree "In the spirit of k'e and in consideration of the fact that both parties believe in a stable Navajo Nation government."

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) asked President Shelly to keep the lines of communication open throughout the remainder of his term, while reaffirming that the Council is not at fault for the circumstances of the current presidential election.

"The Council didn't start this mess. We had two losing [presidential] candidates who filed complaints after the election," said Delegate Tsosie. "The Council stepped in to try to resolve it."

On Jan. 9, an initial agreement was signed by members of the Council and President Shelly to allow him to remain in office at least up until Jan. 26, the start of the Winter Council Session.

Prior to the signing of the agreement, Council Delegate Mel Begay (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl'a'a') cautioned President Shelly and asked that his administration spend its funds responsibly for the remainder of the term.

When Council approved the Navajo Nation's FY 2015 Comprehensive Budget in September, included was a condition that limited each of the Nation's three branches from spending beyond 33% of its annual budget in the first quarter of the fiscal year, which ended on Dec. 31.

President Shelly assured Council that his administration would remain mindful of its spending, while pointing out that his office expended only seven-percent of its FY 2015 budget up to January.

The Navajo Nation Council is scheduled to convene for the Winter Council Session on Jan. 26 at 10 a.m. in the Council Chamber in Window Rock.

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