Nishnawbe Aski Nation
ᐊᓂᔑᓇᐯ ᐊᐧᑭ ᐃᐣᑯᓂᑲᓇᐤ ᐅᑭᒪᐧᐃᐤ
100 Back Street, Unit 200, Thunder Bay, ON P7J 1L2
Tel: (807) 623-8228 Fax: (807) 623-7730 www.nan.on.ca

NEWS RELEASE

Monday March 19, 2007 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NAN DISAPPOINTED 'THE BUDGET FOR EVERY CANADIAN' CONTAINS ONLY A FRACTION SPECIFIED FOR FIRST NATIONS

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy is disappointed only a fraction of what's being called the budget for every Canadian is designated for the country's First Nations.

"Given the build up to Budget 2007, I was hopeful the Harper government would address the need to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians on a larger scale," said NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy following federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's speech today in the House of Commons. "The Government of Canada needs to address the fiscal imbalance on a more comprehensive scale that includes First Nations along with provinces similar to the all-encompassing package committed to in Kelowna November 2005."

The First Ministers Meeting on Aboriginal Issues, which took place in Kelowna, B.C. November 2005, had former Prime Minister Paul Martin's Liberal government announcing contributions of more than $5 billion over the next five years to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians in the areas of education, health, housing, and economic opportunities.

Today's Budget specifies supportive measures to provide training and job opportunities for Aboriginal Canadians, assistance in home-ownership for First Nation members, improvement of drinking water, and enhancing the Aboriginal Justice Strategy.

Many of the 49 First Nation communities represented by NAN, such as Pikangikum (water and sewer) and Kashechewan (clean drinking water) First Nations, have made national news coverage in recent months showing living conditions similar to the Third World.

"Increasingly, the honour of the Crown outlined in James Bay Treaty 9 is being denied, as First Nation people in NAN territory are not being provided adequate resources to meet a basic standard of life," said Beardy.

The opposition is expected to vote on the Budget in the next two days.

***

For more information please contact: *Jenna Young Director of Communications Nishnawbe Aski Nation at (807) 625 4952 or (807) 628 3953 (mobile).*