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

NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday March 26, 2008 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

KASHECHEWAN EXTENDS DEADLINE AS NAPS HEADS BACK TO NEGOTIATING TABLE

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy together with NAN Deputy Grand Chief RoseAnne Archibald supports the decision of Kashechewan First Nation Chief Jonathan Solomon to extend the 30-day deadline he delivered to the governments of Ontario and Canada in February regarding the need to address the growing policing crisis in his remote First Nation community.

"We want to see long term solutions that will finally resolve the outstanding issues," said Kashechewan Chief Jonathan Solomon after receiving indication from NAPS negotiators that both Ontario and Canada are interested in resolving policing issues across NAN territory. "The original deadline has been extended to April 17, 2008. This gives both levels of government an opportunity to prove their sincerity."

Kashechewan First Nation is a remote James Bay community with about 1,500 residents. The community is currently policed by Nishnawbe Aski Police Service (NAPS) which experiences ongoing and cumulative infrastructure challenges as displayed in the short documentary film *Nishnawbe Aski Police Service: A Sacred Calling* (2008).

NAPS, which is funded 48% by the Government of Ontario and 52% by the Government of Canada, serves 39 of NAN's 49 communities. Despite negotiations to address infrastructure needs with provincial and federal representatives since 1994, only one NAPS detachment meets national building code standards.

The police service was forced to close two detachments in February after reporting they failed to meet basic needs such as proper lighting, washroom facilities, monitoring capabilities, and cell construction. In addition, the NAPS detachment in Wunnumin Lake First Nation was closed March 20th for the same reasons, particularly the lack of washroom facilities and use of slop pails – also featured in the film documentary.

"The pressure is on our treaty partners (Ontario and Canada) to work with NAPS negotiators to develop long term and viable solutions to bring our police service up to basic standards," said NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy. "We are negotiating in good faith and expect both levels of government to do the same."

Further negotiations have been scheduled for April 16, 2008 in Ottawa.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty 5 – an area covering two-thirds of the province of Ontario. Kashechewan is one of NAN's communities and is part of Mushkegowuk Tribal Council.

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For more information please contact *Jenna Young, Director of Communications – Nishnawbe Aski Nation (807) 625 4952 or (807) 628 3953 mobile.* **Visit www.nan.on.ca to view short film documentary *NAPS: A Sacred Calling*.**