Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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NEWS RELEASE

Thursday April 3, 2008 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NAN SUSPENDS NORTHERN TABLE UNTIL KI LEADERSHIP RELEASED

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy announced today a unanimous decision of support for Kitchenuhumaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) leadership by NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly and the decision by NAN to suspend bilateral discussions with the Government of Ontario regarding lands and resources until the immediate and unconditional release of KI Chief and Council currently serving a six month jail sentence.

``We cannot in good conscience continue to engage in bilateral discussions with the Government of Ontario while one of our leaders and his council are in jail for Ontario`s failure to fulfill its duty,``said NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy. "First Nation leaders from NAN territory have lost their freedom because the Government of Ontario ignores the need to overhaul the mining act based on supreme court rulings to consult and accommodate First Nations prior to development."

Beardy's comments come after two days of deliberations among Chiefs of NAN's 49 First Nation communities and a direction to intervene in an appeal process expected to be scheduled for mid April.

KI Chief Donny Morris, Deputy Chief Jack McKay, councilors Sam McKay, Darryl Sainnawap, Cecilia Begg, and band member Bruce Sakakeep were sentenced to six months in jail after disobeying a court order allowing junior mining exploration company Platinex Inc. to access KI traditional territory.

Litigation between KI, Platinex Inc., and the Government of Ontario has been ongoing since Platinex sued the remote First Nation community for $10 billion after they were told to vacate KI traditional land February 2006.

The bilateral partnership between the Chiefs of Nishnawbe Aski Nation and the Government of Ontario, termed the "Northern Table", was established November 2007 with the intent to jointly develop a results-based process to address and resolve current challenges in the areas of consultation and accommodation, resource development, mining, parks, and licensing permits within NAN territory.

Beardy announced initial suspension of the bilateral partnership after KI Chief Donny Morris and council were sentenced to six months in jail March 17th for civil contempt of court.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities within James Bay Treaty 9 and Treaty 5 territory. KI is a signatory to Treaty 9 (1929).

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