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

NEWS RELEASE

Friday March 6, 2009 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NAN WOMEN'S COUNCIL CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Women's Council spokesperson Jackie Fletcher together with NAN Deputy Grand Chief RoseAnne Archibald are celebrating the accomplishments of Nishnawbe Aski women as International Women's Day is celebrated around the world on March 8, 2009.

"The women of Nishnawbe Aski have come a long way through the long-term adversity of colonialism, residential school abuse, Sixties Scoop and the loss of culture, but despite hardships and setbacks I see many positive changes happening in our communities," said NAN Women's Council spokesperson Jackie Fletcher. "Today we are rebuilding our confidence, pride and self-esteem, and together we will be as strong as we once were. I am proud to be a Nishnawbe Aski Nation woman."

International Women's Day has been observed since in the early 1900s and is marked with hundreds of events throughout the month. In recognition, Fletcher acknowledged the efforts of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, the NAN Women's Council, the NAN Women's Development Project and Equay-wuk (a women's group serving 31 remote First Nation communities) for their leadership and dedication to improving the lives of women in the NAN territory.

"First Nation women have traditionally played an important role in the healthy development of our families and communities," said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Archibald, who is responsible for the Women's Issues portfolio. "It is only through acknowledgement, support and encouragement that positive change is happening, where First Nation women are taking their rightful place in Nishnawbe Aski Nation by sharing their gifts as leaders, mothers and all of the roles they fulfill in their families and communities."

Nishnawbe Aski Nation and the NAN Women's Council host several events each year for women and youth including the Seven Sacred Teachings Youth Gathering (January 2009) and the Reach for the Stars: NAN Women and Youth Resiliency Conference (March 2008).

Archibald is serving as non-governmental organization advisor to the head of the Canadian delegation at the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women at United Nations headquarters in New York (March 2 - 13). She is one of two indigenous women selected from across Canada for the delegation.

The NAN Women's Council ensures the on-going involvement of women in the decision-making process of Nishnawbe Aski Nation – a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities within James Bay Treaty 9 and Treaty 5 territory, an area covering two-thirds of the province of Ontario.

* * *

For more information please contact *Michael Heintzman, Media Relations Officer – Nishnawbe Aski Nation (807) 625 4906 or (807) 621 2790 mobile or Jackie Fletcher – NAN Women's Council (705) 255 1024 mobile*