



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

ᐱᐸᓂᐱᐸᐱ ᐱᐸᐱ ᐱᐸᐱᐱᐱ

100 Back Street, Unit 200 Thunder Bay, ON P7J 1L2
Tel: (807) 623-8228 Fax: (807) 623-7730

NEWS RELEASE

Friday, December 21, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NISHNAWBE ASKI NATION GRAND CHIEF CALLS ON CANADA AND ONTARIO TO RESPOND TO CHIEF THERESA SPENCE AND END HUNGER STRIKE

THUNDER BAY: At a press conference today, Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Harvey Yesno called upon Canada and Ontario to respond to Chief Theresa Spence of Attawapiskat First Nation, as she enters day 12 of her hunger strike. Chief Spence's hunger strike is to demand a response from the Prime Minister on treaty issues.

"Chief Theresa Spence is not alone, the Chiefs of Nishnawbe Aski Nation and indigenous people across this country support her efforts to bring our treaty partners to the table," said Grand Chief Yesno. "It is time to open the books on resource development in our treaty territory and to protect the aboriginal and treaty rights of our people."

It is the position of Nishnawbe Aski Nation that our treaty partners, Canada and Ontario, must not be the sole beneficiaries of the resources and revenue from the lands and resources in the James Bay Treaty # 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty # 5; a land mass covering 2/3 of Ontario.

"Treaty issues are fundamental to the People of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, the treaties set the basis for our First Nations relationship to Canada and Ontario," said Darius Ferris, Councillor for Constance Lake First Nation. "There is no expiration date on the treaties, and the dialogue with our treaty partners must continue."

"Chiefs and Councils are working hard at the community level, to plan for development and meet the needs of our members," said Darcy Beardy, Councillor Muskrat Dam First Nation. "Chiefs and Councils are working to ensure that there is a future for all of our children."

"Bill C-45 is only one of many different pieces of legislation and policies that First Nations and tribal councils are contending with from the federal and provincial governments," said Margaret Kenequanash, Executive Director Shibogama First Nations Council. "It is time for the Crown, represented by the Governor-General of Canada, to intervene on behalf of Chief Theresa Spence and our First Nations, to bring Canada and Ontario to the treaty table. Prime Minister Harper and his

government can make all the legislation and funding cut backs that will have devastating impacts and erode our treaty rights. The legislation will not be recognized without our free and prior informed consent and will be met with strong opposition."

"The Chiefs of Nishnawbe Aski Nation expect a response and commitment from Canada and Ontario to end Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike; the silence cannot continue," said Grand Chief Harvey Yesno.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario in Canada.

For more information please contact: Jamie Monastyrski, A/Director of Communications – Nishnawbe Aski Nation (807) 625-4978 or cell (807) 630-7087 or by email jmonastyrski@nan.on.ca