

IROQUOIS CAUCUS | ANISHINABEK NATION

Iroquois Caucus, Anishinabek Nation issue Declaration, send letter to Trudeau regarding Radioactive Liquid Shipments from Chalk River

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – April 21, 2017) The Iroquois Caucus and the Anishinabek Nation wish to announce that they have issued a Joint Declaration regarding their serious concerns regarding the transportation of highly-radioactive liquid waste on their respective territories (see attached).

Additionally, a joint letter to Prime Minister (see attached) was sent to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau yesterday advising Canada of our concerns in these matters. The letter was signed by Kahnawà:ke Grand Chief Joseph Tokwiwo Norton on behalf of the Iroquois Caucus and by Grand Council Chief Patrick Wedaseh Madahbee on behalf of the Anishinabek Nation.

A proposal to transport over 100 truckloads of highly-radioactive liquid material from Chalk River, Ontario to the Savannah River Site in South Carolina is being condemned as extremely dangerous and ill-advised.

“We understand that a small amount of this radioactive liquid, just a fraction of a liter, can contaminate hundreds of millions of liters of water to levels far exceeding the current drinking water limits,” the letter states. “We have unified and strongly opposed this proposal as these shipments would, of necessity, enter the U.S. along roads and bridges on or adjacent to some of our traditional territories.”

“We draw on our sacred law, traditional law, customary laws – we need to protect the lands, waters and all living things for future generations,” the Joint Declaration states. “We remain collective and unified in our decisions and that radioactive waste will not be transported, exported or imported throughout our territories by road, rail, water or other means on transportation.”

The Anishinabek Nation and Iroquois Caucus wish to remind the government and various authorities that there is an alternative to eliminate the weapons-grade uranium on the Chalk River site, called down-blending, which is a much safer alternative.

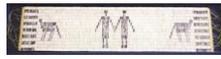
The shipments from Chalk River are scheduled to begin in the spring. A prompt reply is expected.

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IROQUOIS CAUCUS | ANISHINABEK NATION

Radioactive Waste Joint Declaration of the Iroquois Caucus and Anishinabek Nation

Preamble

The Anishinabek Nation and Iroquois Caucus have renewed their relationship and commitment of unity by smoking the sacred pipe. The two nations met to discuss radioactive waste matters that are within their traditional and treaty territories. Central to the discussions were ceremony, and spirituality as reflected in the inherent responsibilities and intimate relationship to the land, waters, and all our relations.

The 5 starting point that was all agreed on includes:

1. No abandonment
2. Better containment, more packaging
3. Monitored and retrievable storage
4. Away from Major Water Bodies
5. No imports or exports

The Anishinabek Nation and Iroquois Caucus declare that:

We have our own territories and exercise our jurisdiction on a Nation-to-Nation basis.

We draw on sacred law, traditional law, customary laws – we need to protect the lands, waters and all living things for future generations.

We will not let the Government of Canada or the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec abandon radioactive waste in our territories

We must consider future generations, as they are the ones that will be affected by our decisions.

We remain collective and unified in our decisions that radioactive waste is kept away from all water bodies, as the risks are uncertain and too great.

We remain unified in our decisions that radioactive waste will not be transported, exported or imported throughout our territories by road, rail, water or other means of transportation.

We maintain our rights to our lands, waters, and to all our resources and that radioactive waste be better contained, and be in retrievable and monitored storage.



IROQUOIS CAUCUS | ANISHINABEK NATION

April 20, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
 Prime Minister of Canada
 Office of the Prime Minister
 80 Wellington Street
 Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

The Anishinabek Nation and the Iroquois Caucus recently met in Toronto to discuss a proposal to transport highly radioactive liquid material from Chalk River, Ontario, to the Savannah River Site in South Carolina in a series of over 100 truckloads. We have unified and strongly opposed this proposal as these shipments would of necessity enter the US along roads and bridges on or adjacent to some of our traditional territories.

We understand that a small amount of this radioactive liquid, just a fraction of a litre, can contaminate hundreds of millions of litres of water to levels far exceeding the current drinking water limits. As we have never relinquished our ongoing commitment to protect the lands and waters of our traditional territories, we are naturally concerned.

We have seen accidents such as the pile-up of tractor-trailers near the 1000 Island Bridge on March 14, 2017. That accident involved the spill of a highly toxic liquid, requiring decontamination of first responders. Had the spill involved a radioactive liquid shipment from Chalk River, the consequences could have been much worse.

These unprecedented radioactive liquid shipments were agreed to by then President Obama and then Prime Minister Harper in 2012, as part of an effort to eliminate foreign stocks of weapons-grade uranium of US origin. We are accordingly writing to you as the current Prime Minister of Canada to reconsider this option, as the Government of Canada has failed to consult our Nations.

Down-blending is a procedure for eliminating weapons-grade uranium on the Chalk River site, thereby making the liquid transports unnecessary. Has down-blending been considered as a safer alternative? If so, why has this alternative been dropped?

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It has also come to our attention that the same type of radioactive liquid has routinely been solidified at Chalk River since 2003. Why has solidification not been required for all radioactive liquids at Chalk River?

As these shipments from Chalk River are scheduled to begin this spring, we would appreciate a prompt response to our concerns.

Sincerely,



Patrick Wedaseh Madahbee
Grand Council Chief
Anishinabek Nation



Joe Tokwiro Norton
Grand Chief
Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke
On behalf of Iroquois Caucus

Cc. Chief Troy Thompson
Chief Clinton Phillips
Chief R. Donald Maracle
Chief Paul Eshkakogan
Chief James Marsden
Chief Pierre Pelletier
Chief Joe Miskokomon
Anishinabek Nation
Regional Chief Isadore Day, Ontario
Regional Chief Ghislain Picard, Quebec