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Brett Maracle
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
160 Elgin Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0H3
Via E-mail

Dear Sir:

Following are the comments of MiningWatch Canada on the Comprehensive Study Report (CSR) regarding the Victor Diamond Mine.

After careful study of the document, it is our considered position that the Victor project should be delayed until Attawapiskat First Nation and the communities in the Mushkekowuk Council region have created the capacity, land use planning and education to benefit from the profits from mine over generations. We further argue that Regulatory Authorities (RAs) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, CEAA, has a responsibility to find that there are "significant environmental effects" from the project and to address the impacts of these environmental effects on the lives of the First Nations people who depend on the environment affected by the mine. We believe that the need for an independent assessment of the mine's impacts is great enough to require a panel review.

The finding of "no significant environmental effects".

The finding of "no significant environmental effects" boggles the mind. The Victor Mine is an experiment in mining in muskeg using dewatering wells for which there is no precedent. It is like mining a sponge in a bath tub.

Although there may not be no one single environmental effect for which a theoretical mitigation measure cannot be found, it is CEAA's responsibility to look at the cumulative assault on the environment from all the different stressors occasioned by the project on "the regional study area" (defined in 1.16 of the CSR) as well as assessing the likelihood that one or more of the mitigation measures will not work.

Among many other environmental impacts, the project:

1. Will have a footprint for the cone of depression encompassing 2,575 km^2 to the limit of the 1 m draw-down contour (6.5.1.4);
2. Will have a potential area of influence of 373.4 km^2 (6.6.2.1.3);
3. Is likely to reduce flows in the Nayshkootayaow River (6.4.2), tributaries 5 and 7 (6.11.6) and North River (6.4.1.1.3) by more than 15%;
4. Will pump over 100,000 m^3/d of salinated well water into the Attawapiskat River;
5. Will create enormous hills of overburden (11Mm^3), muskeg (1.8 Mm^3) and processed kimberlite (10.4 Mm^3);
6. Will permanently infill over 19 ha of muskeg ponds which provide minnow habitat (6.62);
7. Will create a meromitic pit lake at the end of the mine (2-29), as well as large ponds where the north and central quarries were (2.10.13);
8. Will rely on the use of mixing zones, which are currently not allowed under Ontario law (6-22-4);
9. Will impact significantly on a Karst ANSI site (6.3 and 6.8.2) which may experience settlement of up to 5 m in its core area in response to well-field dewatering and pressure from an overburden-filled trench;
10. Has already led to the withdrawal of 33 km along the Attawapiskat River from the Attawapiskat River Proposed Candidate Waterway Park (6.6.1.1);
11. Will disturb the woodland caribou herd, changing their habitual use of the area (6.86), and destroying some of the lichen that is important to their survival (6-92);
12. Will rely at closure on revegetation technologies that are still being developed by Laurentian University (with no guarantee of success) (2.31);
13. Will require the truck transportation (60 trucks a day) of dangerous substances ranging from ammonia to diesel fuel to hydrochloric acid along a remote winter road for 60 days of the year, and
14. Will rely on a pit dewatering design that is experimental at best and for which contingency plans have not yet been developed (6.11.5.4).

The CSR finding of “no significant environmental effects” is particularly troubling when one recognizes that the Responsible Authorities – DFO and NRCAN - admit that: “Unless otherwise specified, the compilation and summary of data were undertaken by the Proponent and its consultants. The federal and provincial authorities relied on the accuracy of the information provided by the Proponent in providing specialist and expert information and knowledge.” (6.0) There has been no independent scientific review by the RAs, and when independent reviews have been undertaken by First Nations (Gartner Lee) and by other intervenors such as Nishnawbe Aske Nation (Pearse, Wilbur and Macdonald), they have raised troubling questions about the accuracy and thoroughness of the proponent's information. There has been inadequate independent evaluation of the proponent’s analysis of the impacts of the mine on the geology, hydrology, fish, wildlife and flora of the region.

Further, the determination of environmental effects was determined after the application of appropriate mitigation measures. Just the number and magnitude of mitigation measures required gives one pause. Many of these mitigation measures are undeveloped and untested, and will not be developed until the permitting stage. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans acknowledges that they do not have the science to know if many fisheries compensation measures work and are often unable to monitor and enforce mitigation measures agreed to in EA.

DFO is currently undertaking a major review of compensation compliance and the effectiveness of monitoring programs to achieve the conservation goal of no net loss of productive capacity of fish habitat in Canada. The first of several papers to be published based on this research appears in the February 2005 issue of *Fisheries*[1]. An analysis of 10 studies published between 1986 and 2002 revealed that in the 103 compensation projects reviewed, 493,205 m^2 of fish habitat was restored to offset habitat impacts totalling 1,142,648 m^2. More than a third of the compensation projects assessed by the 10 studies were determined NOT to have achieved "no net loss (NNL)". This review of past studies by DFO concludes that: "It is clearly difficult to achieve NNL when replacing only a fraction of the habitat lost on a project-by-project basis". The authors of the review continue: "This should be cause for concern as these results stem from only 4% of the total number of projects that have been authorized under the Fisheries Act."

Findings from this first segment of DFO's research into compensation monitoring shows that:

- half of the compensation projects assessed had compensation areas that were smaller than the HADD areas;
- of the 103 projects assessed, post-construction monitoring of the compensatory habitat was required for 52 of the projects. The mean duration of the monitoring period was 3.6 years. Harper and Quigley's article in *Fisheries* cites research from three other sources which indicates that most compensatory habitats will require 5 to 20 years of monitoring before their long-term functionality and sustainability can be ascertained;
- in the cases where compensation projects were deemed to have achieved no net loss, this assessment was based on qualitative file reviews and compliance assessments; few were based on the quantification of the net change in productive capacity. DFO concludes that this lack of quantitative studies is a cause for concern, as it "unquestionably constrains DFO's ability to adaptively manage its habitat management program".
- There is a lack of scientific studies examining the effectiveness of habitat compensation measures and habitat management decisions taken to conserve fish habitat.

[1] *A Comparison of the real extent of fish habitat gains and losses associated with selected compensation projects in Canada***,** Harper, D. J. and Quigley, J.T. February 2005. Vol. 30 No 2. Available at http://www.fisheries.org/html/fisheries/F3002/F3002p18-25.pdf

It is incumbent upon CEAA to find that there are “significant environmental effects” from this project.

The project should not proceed until adequate financial and land-use planning are undertaken and until the capacity of First Nations to benefit from the project through jobs, revenue sharing and business opportunities can be built.

The Attawapiskat First Nation fear that their only hope to gain the capital they need to provide opportunity for their community members lies in the diamonds under their lands. Once these diamonds are gone, there is no other chance.

“(The VDP) will result in very substantial overall social change”… “the project has the potential to result in increased inter and intra-community conflict and security issues, and substance(s) abuse, flowing from income disparity, inflationary pressures and potential in-migration of current non-resident community members” (Appendix F)

The affected First Nations need time to build their capacity and understanding in order to ensure that the diamonds provide a basis for sustainable economic development. They should not be rushed by a mining company that sees its responsibility as – first and foremost – to its owners. De Beers will plunder the resource in twelve years, and get out. At the end of the mine – in fifteen years or less – the people of Attawapiskat are likely to be left worse off than before the mine…damaged rivers and fishery, depleted caribou herds, people trained in skills they can only use if they move away, huge disparities in income and education, with those on fixed incomes at the bottom, young people with exaggerated expectations who no longer know the land, and a training centre they cannot afford to heat or staff.

We assert, that before the Victor Project goes ahead, a number of matters need to be addressed.

1. The affected First Nations need time to build their capacity and understanding in order to ensure that the diamonds provide a basis for sustainable economic development.
2. Land use planning needs to be completed for northern Ontario, including protected areas, forestry roads and mining projects. This planning should include resources to First Nations to enable them to look at economic and social development alternatives.
3. Mushkegowuk Council is only now finalizing its Resource Consultation Protocol, which will provide First Nations in the area with the tools to plan, monitor and enforce land use agreements. This mine should not go ahead until these tools are in place.

The Need for the Project.

We are very conscious of the need of Northern First Nations to find a source of capital to enable economic development and meet the social and economic needs of the population. We are also conscious of the challenges that face First Nations as they once again take control of their future. The wealth that lies under ground in minerals and gems should be able to generate wealth for the people who live on that land, and who have stewarded its resources for generations.

The need for the project as described in the CSR however, is based largely on the stated needs of De Beers to maintain its empire, and only secondarily on the needs of the region and First Nations. The CSR (1.3) explains the need for the project as;

- " DeBeers has a corporate responsibility to its worldwide organization, owners, shareholders, suppliers, distributors and sightholders to sustain the production of diamonds from its various operations…developing the project would therefore contribute to the Company's Canadian production and strategic goals."
- "The northern Ontario economy…as ore bodies are mined out, there is a need to locate and develop new ore bodies to help maintain the existing economy"
- " A meaningful portion of the project labour force will derive from the west James Bay area Cree communities, most notably from the community of Attawapiskat…and that the VDP will also bring training benefits and business opportunities to this area.

Project Alternatives

The Proponent, in the CSR, identifies only three alternatives for the project (3.1),
- Proceed in the near term
- Delay the project until circumstances are more favourable
- Abandon the project

The Proponent based its assessment of the project alternatives on
- cost-effectiveness,
- minimizing effects to the natural environment,
- minimizing effects to the socio-economic environment and
- amenability to reclamation.

<u>De Beers deemed "delaying the project" as acceptable for all categories.</u> The only reasons given for proceeding with the project in the short-term were " the VDP is one of several DeBeers projects worldwide that compete for corporate funding", and "it would bring much needed economic opportunity to the local and regional economies".

However, in Appendix F, it is clear that the local Aboriginal communities will gain less than 12% of the project jobs and contracts, and that even these may be beyond their reach until educational levels and capacity are substantially improved. De Beers does not expect this to happen until well into the 12 year life of the project.

In fact, Appendix F to the CSR provides a compendium of the potential impacts on Attawapiskat and other northern Ontario communities which argue for a delay until the northern communities have an opportunity to organize themselves to prepare for the project.

- Of total exploration expenditures to 2003, slightly over 12% of the total was paid out for Attawapiskat labour, goods and services. Over 40% of the local workforce of 400 was employed by De Beers during the time that the company was trying to obtain its ‘social license to operate”.
- Although the Proponent estimates total cash inflow to Attawapiskat in the order of $235 million from 2005 to 2023, it does not mention that transfer payments from the federal government to Attawapiskat will be reduced in proportion to earned income
- “Large capital expenditures during construction, and education and employability constraints in the Attawapiskat population may make it difficult to achieve an overall 12% in local expenditures in the early years of the project.. With time, however, as labour becomes a more significant component with the move into the operations phase, and education and training initiatives produce results, the percentage of project expenditures is likely to increase.”
- “There are real challenges to employment of the people of Attawapiskat in jobs requiring more than limited skills.” The more educated are already working, and the unemployed are people with low and very low educational achievement. “ The jobs available during the construction phase may number up to 120, and during operations up to 75” .
- Businesses in Attawapiskat are catering to the consumption needs of residents and VDP visitors. “Uptake of direct business opportunities will depend on the degree to which new businesses are started in response to project supply requirements and on the revitalization of the Attawapiskat economic development corporation. There have been recent initiatives in Attawapiskat to start joint ventures with, for example, catering, road construction, and maintenance suppliers from outside the area”.
- There is definite concern regarding inflationary pressures, first on wages and then more broadly in the local economy. Inflation will put pressure on housing costs, energy costs and food stuffs.
- The communities have a strong interest in accessing training in areas of high value to large mines, including administration and secretarial work, computers, heavy equipment operation and trades.
- The Average wage from VDP will be $40,000. Present average income in Attawapiskat is $17,000. The total increase in community wages will be $3-4 million annually. The increase to average household income and the economy as a whole will be in the order of 20 to 25%. “Increased income can have negative effects at the individual and family level, and these can spill over into negative community effects”.
- There is an association with increased incomes and gambling, drugs and alcohol.
- There is a likelihood that there will be a greater income gap and increasing inequity
- In-migration of non-Aboriginals is not expected to occur. However, VDP may draw home some of the almost 45% of Attawapiskat First Nation members that live off reserve. These returnees may obtain jobs instead of the on-reserve population, and put pressure on supplies and services, particularly housing. They may cause “inflation, contribute to drug and alcohol problems, undermine traditional values , compromise public health and security”. They may create demands for increased social and recreational services.

- The VDP is also likely to motivate people to move out of the community into larger communities in the region.
- " At the end of the three year closure phase, all expenditures, with the exception of limited employment – related to environmental aspects and monitoring, will end. This has the potential to cause economic and associated social dislocation."

The only possibility for future economic development foreseen by DeBeers is more mines. There are at least 16 other kimberlites in De Beers portfolio. " The Proponent has stated that while these other kimberlites have not been fully evaluated, there is reasonable potential for at least a few of these other kimberlites to become mineable, and that mining these kimberlites could extend the life of the project, perhaps by as much as 2 to 4 years, as a best guess. Further, none of these other kimberlites , as currently understood, would be capable of supporting a mine on their own, because of their small size." (6-144)

If one of the key purposes for encouraging mining is to capture wealth for the sustainable development of the Aboriginal northeastern Ontario economy, then First Nations will have to be very creative to achieve this aim, and it will take time to do it.

The question of measuring economic benefits

The introduction to the CSR (1-2) states that "mining generates a considerable amount of spin-off and trickle-down employment. It is estimated that development of the VDP will create 390 direct employment positions during operation, together with construction jobs for a period of nearly 3 years peaking at approximately 600, and additional employment opportunities associated with the closure and post-closure phases of the project. The project is estimated to add $6.7 billion to the Ontario economy." [2]

The $6.7 billion figure is based on an estimated increase in the provincial GDP. GDP has serious limitations as an indicator of benefits….especially where the changes are transforming the uncounted services of nature and subsistence/unwaged economic activity into currency based transactions. As François Lequiller*, head of national accounts at the OECD[3] says:

" First, GDP… captures at least the well-being that results from the production of goods and services. Indeed, when statisticians quantify the goods and services produced, they take into account their utility to the consumer. Nevertheless, it is true that there are other dimensions to well being which GDP misses. And it is often said, sometimes

[2] DeBeers estimates the following average annual increase in key indicators over project life for the region
Real GDP (in 2003$) 245,400,000 (1.6%)
Consumer expenditures $35 million (0.4%)
Government investment $1,200,000 (0.8%)
Government expenditures on goods and services 20,800,000 (0.8%)
Jobs 1,500 (0.8%)

[3](http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/1518/Is_GDP_a_satisfactory_measure_of_growth_.html)

cynically, that GDP increases when there are car accidents, or that while the terrible destruction of the recent tsunami in Asia undermined GDP by wiping out communities and their economic activities, it would at the same time lead to a boost in GDP, thanks to rebuilding, new investment and so on! However, this should not be held as a criticism of GDP, which is simply a measure of production…Neither GDP nor this balance sheet takes account of environmental degradation, insecurity or inequality. The main obstacle to overcome in deriving a single measure for all these dimensions is finding a convincing proxy price – or imputed price – for each and every component, on top of goods and services. Without such imputed prices, it is impossible to combine the various indicators that contribute to our wellbeing. …We prefer instead to produce a suite of indicators…An example is the Australian Bureau of Statistics' publication, Measuring Australia's Progress, whose indicators cover health, education, environment, crime and social attachment.... GDP is a beacon, but it is not the only one."

Mining is an activity with a short-term life and long-term consequences. The contribution of mining to GDP is often a result of the transformation of unvalued natural capital and services into valued "ore", and the unvalued services of traditional methods of food provision, family and community life into waged labour. GDP is not a useful instrument for measuring progress in the north.

The long-term economic consequences of dependence on mining for development

Although in the past, some mining communities like Sudbury and Timmins were built around ore bodies that might last for over a hundred years, the depletion of reserves and new mining technologies – like open pit mining– mean that most new mines last less than 15 years. Minerals are non-renewable resources: when an ore body is depleted or becomes uneconomic to mine, the mine shuts down.

Global prices for mineral commodities are the major determinant of whether a mine continues to operate; Canada has little control over these prices.

A large and growing body of literature establishes a link, on a macro economic level for national economies in developing countries, between a predominantly resource extraction based economy and economic stagnation – even decline – from prior levels of economic growth. This pattern has been called "Dutch disease". A wider set of detrimental effects related to natural resource dependency, particularly in the developing world, is commonly captured by the term the "resource curse."

While "Dutch disease" literature deals predominantly with impacts on national economies of developing countries, there is also evidence that mining has negatively affected regional economies. Indeed, the literature points to the fact that 'persistent poverty' is common to several other historically mined regions around the world, including mining regions in wealthy countries like Canada.

In 1994, the World Bank, the United Nations Environment Program and others specifically recognized the dangerous effects of mining on Lesser Developed Countries' (LDC) economies and called it a case of "Dutch Disease".

This condition occurs when a new mineral discovery or an increase in mineral prices creates a mineral boom. In this situation, the exchange rate tends to appreciate, causing other tradable sectors of the economy – notably agriculture and manufacturing – to become uncompetitive and eventually to decline; mineral wealth is dissipated and the outcome over the longer term, in the absence of an effective policy response by government, is stagnating and even negative growth for the economy as a whole

The term "Dutch Disease" derives from the history of how a discovery of a large reservoir of natural gas in 1959 affected the Dutch national economy over subsequent decades. In brief, reliance on income from natural resource extraction caused gross national investment to fall by 15%, employment in manufacturing to decline by 16%, unemployment to rise from 1.1% to 5.1%, share of profits in national income to drop from an average of 16.8% to 3.5% by the mid-1970s (O'Toole 1998). The process of de-industrialization of the existing manufacturing base was attributable to the upward pressure that the energy discovery placed on the Guilder and the wage rate.

In the Netherlands the primary impact was on manufacturing. It has since been realized that "Dutch disease" has a particularly strong impact on the economies of Lesser Developed Countries (LDC), as these countries tend to have a large dependence on a very limited range of primary, mainly agricultural, products, whose prices can be highly volatile. These countries tend to have small open economies They are "price takers" in international markets, and they cannot influence world terms of trade..

Some of the negative effects of the "Dutch disease" which will also take place in northern Ontario, particularly Attawapiskat are:

a) *The spending effect*. This occurs when part of the additional income generated – thanks to the mineral boom – is spent in the region on non-traded goods and services such as education, health, welfare, construction, other services. The spending leads to excess demand for these since domestic supply constraints exist and new businesses cannot start up in time. Prices for food, housing, fuel, air travel and energy go up precipitously.

b) The resource-movement effect. The boom in the minerals sector draws labour and capital investment out of other businesses and sectors into minerals because they anticipate higher returns. This drains resources from other economic activities, and makes it hard for other businesses to find employees, and over the long run, increase the problems for more sustainable businesses (this is also called the "intrusive rentier syndrome")

c) *The technology substitution effect.* The cost of labour is likely to rise relative to the cost of capital as wages are bid up in a booming economy, so the company and its suppliers will replace workers with machinery wherever possible.

d) *The enclave effect.* More sector revenues are invested outside the region than locally. Of those invested locally, the majority of revenues are ploughed into welfare, not into manufacturing, and so the value-added opportunities that might create a long-term sustainable economy are thwarted.

e) *The dependency effect*. Regional economic development becomes dependent on mineral exploitation. Government and private sector activities measurable in GDP, which appear to have grown, are financed by mineral revenues, leaving the whole regional economy vulnerable to the ups and downs of one sector. The growth of the sector does not take account of the informal economy, and treats environment and subsistence activity as "externalities" – without value. Eventually the only hope for the communities become discovering more ore bodies and building more mines.

Evolving trends in mining do not provide hope that the negative impacts associated with mineral dependency will be reversed. In fact, trends in mining are more likely to deepen the economic and social costs to national economies and to local communities.

Revenues to Government

The CSR asserts that "during the life of the mine, project related revenues that are expected to accrue directly or indirectly to provincial and federal governments are expected to be in the order of $255 million and $285 million respectively."

The basis for arriving at these figures is not explained. Certainly, it is not based on a realistic analysis of tax revenues from the operation. DeBeers Canada is eligible for a ten year mining tax holiday for remote mines as well as the 65% processing allowance before that tax is calculated. Given that the sale of product will be to other DeBeers companies, it is highly unlikely that the company will show a profit, and therefore will pay little if any income tax on the mining operation. Federally, the company will be able to take advantage of the Resource Allowance, Canadian Exploration and Development tax pools, as well as the Investment Tax Credit.

This leads to the conclusion that the figure is largely composed of the income taxes and sales taxes paid by employees and Canadian based suppliers to the company, as well as payroll, Health tax and Workers Compensation. Considering that the company also expects the government to increase its expenditures on goods and services by over $20 million annually (or $240 million over the life of the mine), the net gain to government is considerably less than it would appear.

The Proponent: DeBeers Canada Inc.

We are concerned that the proponent is DeBeers Canada, a corporate entity that is separately incorporated from its transnational parent. Liability will therefore rest with a company that has only the Victor operation as an asset. Further, both are private companies, so access to their financial statements by the public is very limited. We respectfully request that the government make every effort to have the parent company guarantee the commitments made by DeBeers Canada, and that a reclamation security in cash be taken up front to fully cover the costs of reclamation and closure of the project.

"DeBeers has a corporate responsibility to its worldwide organization, owners, shareholders, suppliers, distributors and sight-holders to sustain the production of diamonds from its various operations…developing the project would therefore contribute to the Company's Canadian production and strategic goals". The company goes on to argue that " the VDP is one of several DeBeers projects worldwide that compete for corporate funding". Since they have raised the issue of their international presence, we believe it is useful to provide some information about recent actions of the parent company.

Botswana

Since 1997, the government of Botswana has been systematically removing the Gana and Gwi Bushmen from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR), claiming that this is required for development and conservation purposes and has nothing to do with diamonds. But the government acknowledges that people have been relocated in the past for "projects of national interest" – in Jwaneng and Orapa, for example, locations of diamond mines. De Beers has a mine (which it has declared to be 'uneconomical', although this is challengeable) on the edge of the CKGR and has acquired numerous additional concessions in the area since 2001 and the more recent Bushmen evictions.

While technically, it is the government which is evicting the Gana and Gwi, there is a very tight relationship between the government and De Beers, the only major player in the diamond industry in Botswana. The president of Botswana, Festus Mogae describes the relationship between De Beers and Botswana as being like Siamese twins.

De Beers is the joint-owner, with the Government of Botswana, of Debswana, the only diamond-mining company in the country and operates four mines which contribute 60% of total government tax revenue. In turn, Botswanan mines accounted for 69% of De Beers overall production in 2003. There's a question of whose interests are being met by removing the Gana and Gwi from their land.

In a letter to Survival International *in 2002, De Beers put forward its position on indigenous rights. It explained that it supported the abolition of apartheid in South Africa but not the rights of indigenous communities. "[South Africa's] new constitution made it quite clear that never again would [its] people be classified by ethnicity. A policy to cover indigenous rights would head straight down that path once again. Which is* *something that no one in southern Africa could, or should, contemplate. ….. Leading anthropologists, such as Tim Ingold, Adam Kuper, Carl Wilmsen and James Suzman oppose in principle the granting of any group special privileges or status on the basis of ethnic identity."*

Namibia

Prior to independence in 1990, De Beers relied on a contract labour system to recruit workers, mainly from northern Namibia. Workers had a contract, signed between an individual and a labour-recruiting organization which was owned by the mining company. The worker had no say in the terms and conditions of the contract, could not change jobs in pursuit of better wages or conditions, and if they left before the expiry of the contract, they could be jailed or forcibly returned to their employer. It was virtually impossible to challenge the contract labour system or the treatment of workers, because De Beers ruled the company towns, with the support of the colonial regime.

The Mineworkers Union of Namibia (MUN) was formed in 1986, but the attitude of De Beers towards organized labour remained hostile until shortly before independence in 1990. De Beers became more accommodating after independence – and recognized the union as the collective bargaining representative and agreed not to victimize, intimidate or unlawfully interfere with MUN activities, its officials and members. Even after independence, the union continued to battle the contract labour system and fight against poor wages for black workers and job reservations for whites, examples of ongoing racial discrimination.

MUN currently represents 70% of workers at Namdeb. In June 2005, they signed a two-year agreement giving employees a 7.5% salary increase. Namdeb has several social responsibility programs – including a Social Fund, HIV/AIDS program and bursary program.

South Africa

As recently as the beginning of the 21st century, black workers at De Beer's diamond mine in the Northern Cape, continued to live in single-sex hostels and were allowed to visit their families only three weeks every year. In 1995, three women who were demanding the right to live with their husbands were imprisoned for trespassing on De Beer's property when they failed to reach an agreement with the company. "De Beers' actions were draconian, racist and discriminatory, said a representative of the National Union of Mineworkers. He said the company was refusing to let the wives of black mineworkers stay in several empty houses at Kleinzee mine near Springbok. Eastern Cape women were no longer prepared to tolerate the old apartheid ways." (Weekly Mail & Guardian)

Conclusions

It is our considered position that the Victor project should be delayed until Attawapiskat First Nation and the communities in the Mushkekowuk Council region have created the capacity, land use planning and education to benefit from the profits from mine over generations. We further argue that Regulatory Authorities (RAs) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, CEAA, has a responsibility to find that there are "significant environmental effects" from the project and to address the impacts of these environmental effects on the lives of the First Nations people who depend on the environment affected by the mine. This is a project that will affect not only the people of Attawapiskat but the environment and economy in all of northeastern Ontario.

We ask that the project be delayed and submitted to a joint panel review.

Yours truly,

Joan Kuyek, National Co-ordinator

cc. Chief Mike Carpenter, Attawapiskat First Nation
Chief Stan Louttit, Mushkegowuk Tribal Council
David Peerla, Mining Co-ordinator, Nishnawbe Aski Nation
Job Moellins-Koehn, Mushkegowuk Tribal Council
Honourable Stephane Dion, Minister of the Environment
Nathan Cullen, MP CDP Environment Critic
others