



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Era of Action campaign to renew relationships

NIPISSING FIRST NATION (July 4, 2007) -- Grand Council Chief John Beaucage hopes to receive 35,000 pieces of mail by the end of August.

"There's nothing that would give me more pleasure than to hand the Premier of Ontario 35,000 postcards that demonstrate public support for First Nation issues," said the Anishinabek Nation leader, referring to an "Era of Action" public education campaign launched by the Union of Ontario Indians June 29, designated as a National Day of Action by First Nations across Canada.

"We are launching the first phase of what will be an ongoing strategy to forge new relationships with our fellow Canadians," Beaucage said. "It will take more than one day to rebuild relationships and eradicate First Nations poverty."

The Era of Action campaign produced an initial print run of 35,000 postcards asking individuals and organizations to indicate their support for major recommendations among 98 made by Ipperwash Inquiry commissioner Sidney Linden, including one calling for establishment of a Treaty Commission of Ontario – a permanent, independent, and impartial agency to expedite resolution of land and treaty claims in the province.

Cards have already been distributed to all 42 Anishinabek Nation chiefs, and organizations that have pledged support include the United Church of Canada, the Ontario Environment Network, and the Metis Nation of Ontario. Signed cards are to be returned to the Union of Ontario Indians for presentation to the Ontario premier on Sept. 6, the 12th anniversary of the shooting death of Dudley George by an OPP sniper at Ipperwash Provincial Park.

Dudley's brother Sam George was one of 100 guests – including members of provincial and federal parliaments and regional mayors -- who attended the campaign launch at the Union of Ontario Indians head office on Nipissing First Nation near North Bay, Ont. "We are starting a new era here today," he said, "and this postcard campaign, if you look at the picture on the front, is of friendship."

The postcard bears an image of an Anishinabek man passing a traditional pipe to a non-Native. A pipe ceremony opened the June 29 gathering, which launched the Era of Action campaign.

The Anishinabek Nation's summer-long public education campaign includes establishment of a website at www.era-of-action.com.

The Anishinabek Nation incorporated the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 42 member First Nations across Ontario. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.

- 30 -

For more information: Marci Becking, Communications Officer

Phone: (705) 497-9127 (Ext. 2290) or cell: (705) 494-0735

Email: becmar@anishinabek.ca