The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau Prime Minister justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson Minister of Environment and Climate Change ec.ministre-minister.ec@canada.ca

The Honourable Doug Ford Premier of Ontario premier@ontario.ca

The Honourable Jeff Yurek Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks <u>minister.mecp@ontario.ca</u>

February 24, 2021

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We, the undersigned environmental, Indigenous, and civil society organizations call on the governments of Canada and Ontario to establish an immediate moratorium in the Ring of Fire for all mineral exploration, assessments for proposed road projects, and other potential developments including the Northern Road link. It is critical the moratorium remain in effect until:

1. Protection plans for the region's sensitive wetlands and watersheds are in place, and

2. P<br/>  $P \Delta C \cdot b` \sigma \Lambda' \nabla < 4b` \cdot d^b \Delta b \sigma`_x \Gamma_{D} \Lambda L \Pi r \cdot \Delta d \Box^n 9 \cdot \Delta \sigma \sigma^o b d \Box^b C \Gamma` d \si' PP \Lambda \Gamma C \cdot d` T r \cdot \nabla c^n C L \Gamma` \Delta U 9 r \Lambda` b \Delta s \Delta C \cdot b \sigma \sigma` J a \Delta 9 \cdot \Delta d < \Pi r \cdot \Delta \sigma \sigma^o a^{c} d' < 5^{c} b \Delta \Gamma b U \sigma`_x$ 

2. Access to clean water, housing, and health services have been secured for all upstream and downstream communities from the proposed Ring of Fire

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This call to action is in support of the <u>request</u> by Mushkegowuk Council and Neskantaga First Nation of Treaty 9 that a moratorium be put in place until a proper protection plan is implemented. As requested, a protection plan must be comprehensive, based on best available science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and reflect the global significance of the carbon rich Hudson Bay-James Bay Lowland, including the Attawapiskat, Kapiskau, Albany, Ekwan, Opinnagau and Winisk Rivers and the thousands of streams that flow into Hudson Bay and James Bay.

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We call on Canada and Ontario to honour and protect Indigenous and treaty rights, and to take immediate actions to address the urgent health, housing, and water crises facing communities. Mining interests cannot continue to be prioritized over the health, lands, and natural laws of Indigenous communities.

Living up to the promise of reconciliation means action is required now to prevent further violations of Indigenous rights. To fulfill this duty, we call on Canada and Ontario to enact a moratorium to sustain the lands and waters that, since time immemorial, have been relied upon by region's First Nations.

The ancient peatlands of this region continue to serve as significant carbon sinks and have been cooling the whole earth for millennia. An immediate moratorium safeguards one of the few remaining intact boreal peatlands and protects both us and the generations that follow.

Sincerely,



**Canadian Environmental Law Association** Theresa McClenaghan, Executive Director & Legal Counsel



**East Coast Environmental Law** Lisa Mitchell, Executive Director & Senior Lawyer



**Friends of the Attawapiskat River** Mike Koostachin, Director



MiningWatch Canada Jamie Kneen, Co-Manager

Mining Injustice Solidary Network Kate Klein, Organizer



Northwatch Brennain Lloyd, Project Coordinator



**Ontarians for a Just Accountable Mineral Strategy** Joan Kuyek, Chair **Sierra Club Canada Foundation** Gretchen Fitzgerald, National Programs Director



West Coast Environmental Law Anna Johnston, Staff Lawyer



Wildlands League Anna Baggio, Conservation Director



## **World Wildlife Fund Canada** Megan Leslie, President & CEO

 cc. Grand Chief Jonathan Solomon, Mushkegowuk Council Chief David Nakogee, Attawapiskat First Nation Chief Leo Friday, Kashechewan First Nation Chief Robert Nakogee, Fort Albany First Nation Charlie Angus, MP Timmins – James Bay Guy Bourgouin, MPP Mushkegowuk – James Bay Jerry V. DeMarco, Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development Bonnie Lysyk, Office of the Auditor General of Ontario