Whapmagoostui ·ÁΛLd°⊃Δ

Chisasibi Cらさん

Wemindji ·ÅΓ° Ċ

Eastmain ∆`7°

Waskaganish Ϥ՝ b"∆bσ"

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Waswanipi ዻ፞፞፞ዻ፞፞፞ፚ፞ለ

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

## The Cree Nation applauds the Supreme Court of Canada's refusal to consider Strateco's appeal

**Nemaska, Eeyou Istchee (October 22, 2020)** – The Supreme Court of Canada has refused to consider Strateco Resources' request to appeal from the Quebec Court of Appeal's dismissal of the company's claim against Quebec. Strateco claimed \$200M in damages for Quebec's refusal to authorize its Matoush Project, an advanced uranium exploration project on Cree territory.

This decision by Canada's highest court brings to a close a long-running legal battle in which the Cree Nation played a central role. The proposed Matoush Project – the most advanced uranium development project in Quebec – was located on the traditional family hunting grounds of the Cree Nation of Mistissini. In August 2012, the Cree Nation declared a permanent moratorium on all uranium activities in its traditional territory of Eeyou Istchee. In November 2013, the Quebec Minister of the Environment refused to grant a certificate of authorization for the Matoush Project, citing a lack of social acceptability amongst the Cree Nation of Mistissini, the population most directly impacted by the project.

In its decision issued in January 2020, the Quebec Court of Appeal held that in deciding whether or not to authorize the project, the Minister was not only permitted but required to consider the Cree Nation's position on the Matoush Project.

"We are pleased that the Supreme Court has decided not to hear Strateco's proposed appeal," said Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum. "For the Cree Nation, this case has always been about more than just the Matoush Project. It is a significant affirmation of our treaty rights. It upholds the integrity of the unique environmental and social impact review process established by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement."

"The Strateco case has confirmed the Cree Nation's right to participate in development on our territory of Eeyou Istchee," noted Bill Namagoose, Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government. "The Quebec government and the courts have recognized that the social acceptability of proposed projects is an essential requirement for development in Eeyou Istchee."

"We are committed to protecting our environment and our way of life from the unacceptable risks that uranium mining presents, now and for future generations," said former Grand Chief Dr. Matthew Coon Come, who was also a witness in the 2017 trial. "The Cree Nation supports development in Eeyou Istchee that is consistent with our values, our way of life and our rights under the JBNQA."

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Strateco's claim against Quebec was dismissed at trial in 2017 and the trial decision was upheld by the Court of Appeal in January 2020. Strateco sought leave to appeal from the Supreme Court, which released its decision denying leave on October 15, 2020. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/ Cree Nation Government and Cree Nation of Mistissini participated in the case as interveners at all levels of court.

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