

## **WE ARE THE LAND**

### **Anishinaabek, Mushkegowuk, Onkwehonwe Declaration**

#### **Preamble**

The Nuclear Energy Sessions were hosted by the Chiefs in Ontario office in Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation, Whitefish River First Nation, Six Nations, Moose Factory, and Batchewana First Nation in 2009. A Chiefs Gathering on Nuclear Energy was hosted in Obashkaandagaang First Nation (November 17 – 19, 2009)

The Anishinaabek, the Mushkegowuk, and the Onkwehonwe (AMO) met to discuss nuclear energy and nuclear waste. Central to the discussions were ceremony and spirituality as the AMO reflected on their inherent responsibilities and intimate relationship to the land and all our relations.

#### **Declaration**

We, the Anishinaabek, the Mushkegowuk, and the Onkwehonwe, are the land. Our ancestors were the land, we are the land and our youth and future generations will be the land.

We have heard the voices of our youth, of our women and men, of our spiritual advisors, of our Elders – they have told us “WE ARE THE LAND.”

What we do to the land – we do to ourselves, and to our future generations.

We were placed here on Turtle Island to be a part of creation.

We were given our instructions, our jurisdiction, our laws – by the Creator. These instructions were followed by our ancestors.

We have already established our own laws such as the Great Law and the Thanksgiving Address that guides us in our decision making.

We exercise our jurisdiction on a Nation to Nation basis.

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

The Treaties were made to share with the newcomers – we were and are not giving up anything – surrender was not included in the treaties.

We must remember our ancestors, honour our ancestors, honour our treaties, honour the future generations, honour the lands, honour all gifts given to us and take our rightful place as the First Peoples of Turtle Island.

We have the right to decide our own forms of government, to use our own laws to raise and educate our children, and to have our own cultural identity without interference.

We maintain our inalienable rights to our lands and territories, to all our resources — above and below — and to our waters. We assert our ongoing responsibility to pass these on to the future generations.

We, the Anishinaabek, the Mushkegowuk and the Onkwehonwe walk to the future in the footprints of our ancestors.

## **GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

We must become and remain collective in our decisions about the land – and think only of the future generations – allow them to guide our decision-making.

We must follow our original instructions given to us by the Creator – like our ancestors did when they made treaties to protect the land and all living things for future generations.

We must reconcile with Mother Earth through our original instructions

We cannot poison the land as we are poisoning ourselves - we cannot allow others to poison the land.

We must exercise our exclusive jurisdiction to our lands.

We must respect each other as nations

We must involve the youth in our decisions.

## **NUCLEAR ENERGY**

The Anishinaabek, the Mushkegowuk, and the Onkwehonwe call on and remind governments, industries, corporations, organizations, communities and individuals

1. Government and industries to place a moratorium on the development of nuclear energy
2. To recognize and respect the inherent rights, treaty rights, and our jurisdiction
3. To recognize and respect the laws of our peoples – the First Peoples
4. To recognize and respect our knowledge systems given to us by the Creator through our Ancestors
5. To work on a true nation to nation basis
6. To provide resources for research capacity to our peoples for our views, our knowledge and our research – we must create our own research to provide to our peoples
7. To make our peoples part of the solutions
8. To involve youth

To empower and support our leadership