



HAUDENOSAUNEE

MOHAWK – ONEIDA – ONONDAGA – CAYUGA – SENECA - TUSCARORA

MOHAWK NATION COUNCIL OF CHIEFS
VIA BOX 366 ROOSEVELTOWN NEW YORK 13683

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Prime Minister Stephen Harper
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

RE: Border Issue

Greetings Brothers:

We send you greetings and hope this letter finds you in good health. In earnest, we ask that you take urgent notice of this message informing the government of Canada and the United States of our position as the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs. As the historical national government of the Mohawk people, we have never recognized the border imposed upon us by your nations. As such, we will defend our inherent rights against any foreign policies that threaten our way of life and the future of our next seven generations.

The policies being implemented by both Canada and the United States, up to and including June 1, 2009, are in direct violation of our inherent rights as *Onkwehonwe* (Original Peoples) to live, travel, and trade freely throughout North America. As indigenous people, our ability to practice these rights has been jeopardized since the imposition of the international boundary between Canada and the U.S., which divides our community of Akwesasne. When the above mentioned colonial powers encroached upon our territory, we crafted a mutual agreement to co-exist peacefully as brothers. We call this agreement *Kahswentah*, which describes the Two-Row Wampum treaty. It records a mutual agreement of peace, friendship and respect between our nations. It also identifies a process to deal with grievances.

We agree that there is a need for security within all of our territories. However, Canadian and American policies currently in effect greatly disregard Haudenosaunee law and customs that supersede your foreign laws, because it is an international treaty. As *Onkwehonwe*, we have long defended our rights and will continue to do so in accordance with our *Kaianerenhsera'kowa*, the Great Law of Peace.

In closing, we are prepared for prompt action through the means of continued discussions and negotiations to ensure a peaceful and mutually beneficial resolution for all parties in accordance to the Great Law of Peace. We request an urgent meeting at the highest level of government to avoid any escalation of the current crisis. In the interest of peace, we expect an immediate response from you to begin this dialogue.

In Peace, Friendship & Respect,

Turtle Clan

Wolf Clan

Bear Clan