



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anishnawbe Business Professional Association Partners with University of Toronto Law Clinic for Ring of Fire Mining Study

January 8, 2024 - Robinson-Superior Treaty, Fort William First Nation Territory, Thunder Bay, Ontario: The Anishnawbe Business Professional Association (ABPA) is proud to announce a new partnership with the International Human Rights Program (IHRP) at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law. This collaboration will conduct critical research on the human rights impacts of mining operations on First Nations communities in Northern Ontario.

The research aims to improve the business case for corporate adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and ensuring Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). By showcasing successful examples and developing clear guidelines, the project will provide insight to create a stronger benchmark for Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Action Plans. Other outcomes include the development of a sustainability reporting framework on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues, particularly those related to First Nations' rights.

"The Ring of Fire presents a unique challenge and transformational opportunity," says ABPA President Jason Rasevych, a member of Ginoogaming First Nation. "It holds immense potential for critical mineral extraction, crucial for the transition to a green economy. Yet, this development must not come at the expense of First Nations rights, lands, or traditional ways of life."

The research project will involve:

- Documenting the impacts of mining operations on First Nations communities in Northern Ontario.
- Examining whether mining companies have engaged in meaningful consultation
- Assessment of the companies operating in the area and their Indigenous relations policies.
- Developing case studies and recommendations to guide future development in the region.

The Ring of Fire, located in Treaty 9 territory, is a mineral-rich region that has seen a recent surge in mining claims. The ABPA and the IHRP are inviting First Nation leaders impacted by mining to provide input into the research.

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"Our partnership with the IHRP will shed light on the critical need for mining companies and the Crown to uphold their legal obligations to First Nations," Rasevych states. "The report will provide progressive recommendations of what companies should be doing to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action #92 and to hold them accountable."

Waawoono Consultancy, under Rasevych's guidance, emerges as a leading provider of Indigenous relations and sustainability advisory services. The firm specializes in assisting corporations with navigating the complexities of the new Canadian Sustainability Standards requirements and developing comprehensive and impactful Indigenous relations frameworks.

About the ABPA:

The Anishnawbe Business Professional Association (www.anishnawbebusiness.com) is a non-profit, member-based organization based in Thunder Bay, Ontario. ABPA serves the First Nation business community within Treaty #3, Treaty#5, Treaty #9 and Robinson Huron and Superior Treaty Areas. The ABPA develops and expresses positions on business issues and other public issues relevant to First Nation business, on behalf of its members.

About the IHRP:

The International Human Rights Program at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law is an international human rights clinic that works with and provides legal services to individuals, communities, non-governmental organizations, and lawyers to protect and promote international human rights. The IHRP is committed to upholding Canada's international human rights obligations and advocating for justice for those harmed by human rights abuses.

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