

Attention News/Assignment Editors:

Chiefs of Ontario to present forum on Aboriginal issues to Ipperwash Inquiry on March 8 and 9, 2006

TORONTO, March 6 /CNW/ - The Chiefs of Ontario, a coordinating body for 134 First Nation communities in the province, will present a two-day forum to the Ipperwash Inquiry on March 8 and 9 dealing with issues that include land claims policy, the criminal justice system, aboriginal occupations and relations between aboriginals and the police.

The Inquiry is examining the events surrounding the death of Dudley George, who was shot in 1995 during a protest by First Nations at Ipperwash Provincial Park. The Inquiry is also to make recommendations that would avoid violence in similar circumstances.

The Chiefs of Ontario forum is one of many events dealing with topics relevant to the second part of its mandate. Details are available on the Inquiry's website:

http://www.ipperwashinquiry.ca/policy_part/meetings/index.html.

The Chiefs of Ontario event will be held at Kimball Hall in Forest, the site of the evidentiary hearings. The session on March 8 will run from 9 a.m. to about 4:45 p.m. and on March 9 from 9 a.m. to about 3:45 p.m.

The purpose of the forum is for the Chiefs of Ontario to identify systemic issues affecting First Nations and government relations, and to make recommendations to address these issues. The forum will include panel discussions. Some of the panelists are:

- Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse
- Deputy Grand Council Chief Nelson Toulouse, Union of Ontario Indians
- Grand Chief Denise Stonefish, Association of Iroquois & Allied Indians
- Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler, Nishnawbe Aski Nation
- Grand Chief Arnold Gardner, Grand Council Treaty No. 3
- Chief Dr. Dean Jacobs, Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island)
- Chief William Phillips, Mohawks of Akwesasne
- Grand Chief Stan J. Louttit, Mushkegowuk Tribal Council
- Chief Dave General, Six Nations of the Grand River
- Chief Isadore Day, Serpent River First Nation
- Ron George, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, OPP

This event is the second of two special presentations to the Inquiry on issues relevant to the Inquiry's policy and research mandate. The first presentation was by the Ontario Provincial Police on January 26 and 27, 2006.

The event is open to all parties with standing at the Inquiry, to interested organizations, members of the community in and around Forest, and to the general public.

The event will be webcast live at: www.ipperwashinquiry.ca

The event is open to the media. The electronic pool feed will be available.

Information about the Inquiry is available at: www.ipperwashinquiry.ca

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