

Media Release

FSIN Communication Unit



May 10, 2006

FSIN DETERMINED TO FORGE AHEAD WITH THE FIRST NATIONS AGENDA IN THE WAKE OF MP MAURICE VELLACOTT'S RESIGNATION

We see major upheaval occurring in the sudden resignation of Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott as chair of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. From the beginning of this ordeal, we clearly expressed our lack of confidence in Mr. Vellacott as a champion of First Nations issues. However, our highest priority now is to get to work on the pressing needs of First Nations and Aboriginal people through the Aboriginal Affairs Committee and by informing and educating the new Conservative MPs.

"We are deeply concerned about the distance we perceive between our First Nations leaders and the new federal government. It is our position that only by communicating in good faith can we close the gap for First Nations people on many fronts. We must ensure our people have affordable housing, safe water, learning opportunities, jobs and cultural freedom," Chief Alphonse Bird says.

The FSIN is not interested in wasting time bickering about committee chairs and other positions of power within the new government; we only want to begin the work of addressing the needs we see in the lives of First Nations people every single day.

"It is crucial that this work begins immediately. We want to spend time talking with our Conservative MPs from Saskatchewan and the rest of the cabinet in order to make a plan for the future," Chief Bird added.

-30-

For more information contact:

Bonny Braden
FSIN Communications
Direct: (306) 956-1026
Cell: (306) 260-4706
Fax: (306) 665-0115