

Ontario Ministry Responds to Platinex Inc./KI Injunction Decision

SUDBURY, ON, July 29 /CNW/ - The Ontario Superior Court of Justice's recently released decision regarding a dispute between Platinex Inc. and Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) is being welcomed as an important step forward by Minister of Northern Development and Mines, Rick Bartolucci.

"My ministry is still reviewing details of the decision, however, my first impression is that everyone concerned can improve how they approach this situation," said Bartolucci. "My ministry is very pleased to move forward and work with the company and the community to achieve a common understanding and an agreement that is acceptable to all."

"I also want to stress that the decision not to grant the company's injunction application was based on the specific facts of this case, and does not impact the legitimacy of other mining claims in Ontario," Bartolucci added.

The ministry recognizes the Crown's obligation to respect and honour the Aboriginal and treaty rights of communities and that communities have a right to be appropriately consulted and accommodated as set out in recent Supreme Court decisions. In March 2006, Ontario's Mineral Development Strategy was announced. It includes a commitment to work with Aboriginal people to develop processes that will ensure mineral development occurs in a manner consistent with the Crown's constitutional obligations.

The ministry is developing an effective consultation process, for discussion with Aboriginal communities, by focusing on three important areas:

- Better sharing of information with Aboriginal communities and the minerals industry;
- Clearer internal processes that will make our administration of the Mining Act consistent and transparent for all concerned;
- Identification and adoption of minerals-related "best practices" that will provide guidance to government, industry and First Nations.

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