



Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

Our File EA01-004

February 14, 2003

Mr. Jason E. Lepine
I.M.A. Coordinator
Northwest Territories Métis Nation
P.O. Box 720
Fort Smith, NT X0E 0P0

Dear Sir:

RE: De Beers Mining Canada Inc. (De Beers) Snap Lake Diamond Project

On behalf of the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) I acknowledge receipt of your January 20th, 2003 letter to Mr. Louie Azzolini on the above captioned topic. Mr. Azzolini is no longer with the Review Board and Ms. Glenda Fratton has taken over carriage of this file.

The Review Board met on Thursday, February 13, 2003. At this meeting, the Board decided to grant NWTMN directly affected party status in the Environmental Assessment (EA), which means that the NWTMN may participate fully in the remainder of the proceeding.

As you may be aware, your request for NWTMN participation in this proceeding was forwarded just over two months before the final public hearing dates. The EA has already been in progress since spring 2001, and the Review Board has already made a determination that the DeBeers Environmental Assessment Report is in conformity with the requirements set out in the EA Terms of Reference. The Review Board is not likely to revisit that decision at this time. The Review Board will nevertheless consider the evidence of community consultation when preparing its EA report for the Federal Minister.

In past EAs, the Review Board has treated Impact Benefit Agreements (IBA) as matters of private contract between the parties to such agreements. The presence or absence of social or economic impacts or benefits from a development on Territorial residents, including the details of such effects on communities such as Fort Resolution, is, however, a matter of interest for the Review Board in all EAs and will be considered in the Review Board's EA report.

The NWTMN may wish to seek a specific explanation of DeBeers' reasons for declining to negotiate an IBA with your organization. If you are not satisfied with this explanation,

you may raise the matter to the Review Board's attention along with any evidence you may have of the social and economic impacts of the development in Fort Resolution.

I trust that this response will be of assistance.

Yours truly,



Vern Christensen
Executive Director

cc. John McConnell,
DeBeers Canada Mining Inc.

