

Honorable Commissioners Louis-Gilles Francoeur, Joseph Zayed, and Michèle Goyer,

my name is Dr. Alex Rosen, I am a pediatrician from Berlin, Germany, and Vice-President of the German affiliate of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). We were informed by the *Coalition pour que le Québec ait meilleure mine* that the government of Quebec is planning to end the moratorium on uranium mining on its territory and were asked to contribute our knowledge and expertise from Germany. As an organization of physicians and scientists concerned about the impacts of the nuclear chain, we have been researching into and educating the public on the environmental and medical effects of uranium mining for several decades. Our organization has affiliates in more than 60 countries around the world, many of whom are working on the subject of uranium mining, amongst others in Canada, the United States, Germany, Switzerland, India, Nigeria, Tanzania and Australia.

In Germany, the joint Soviet-German Wismut mining company ran one of the world's largest uranium mining regions from 1946 until 1991 following German reunification. During this time, many tens of thousands people were exposed to increased levels of radioactivity and subsequently developed diseases such as lung cancer. More than 7,000 radiation-induced deaths were confirmed in a study published in the British Journal of Cancer in 2006 and more than 7,900 former miners had their lung cancer officially recognized as an occupational disease by the German Federation of Institutions for Statutory Accident Insurance and Prevention. At the same time, more than 3,700 hectares of good agricultural land were radioactively contaminated by mine tailings and waste rock.

In the last 24 years, the German government has spent more than 7 billion Euros (approximately 10 billion Canadian dollars) on renaturalization, treatment of radioactively contaminated ground water and tailings management – tasks which are likely to continue for decades if not centuries. Germany closed down the vast uranium mines after reunification, when it became clear that it would not be economically viable to extract uranium if costs for adequate working safety measures, miner's health follow-ups and treatment costs, environmental protection activities and renaturalization were to be taken into account. German tax payers will be paying the bill for the uranium mining industry in the Wismut region for generations to come.

For more information on the Wismut region and the studies done on 59,000 former Wismut miners, please refer to the informative case-study we have put together at www.nuclear-risks.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pdfs/HBWW_EN/Wismut-Region_EN_web.pdf. On the website www.hibakusha-worldwide.org you can find more informative posters with all the relevant new scientific information on some of the world's most important uranium mining regions:

- Olympic Dam, Australia
- Ranger, Australia
- Radium Hill, Australia
- Saskatchewan, Canada
- Elliot Lake, Canada
- Diebu, China
- Church Rock, USA
- Spokane Reservation, USA
- Black Hills, USA
- Shiprock, USA
- Wismut region, Germany
- Jachymov, Czech Republic
- Witwatersrand, South Africa
- Mounana, Gabon
- Rössing, Namibia
- Arlit and Akokan, Niger
- Jadugoda, India
- Mailuu-Suu, Kyrgyzstan

All of these posters were created by local physicians and scientists, using the most current epidemiological data. We hope that the information contained in these brief case-studies from all over the world is of use to you in your decision whether to add Quebec's name to this list of uranium mining regions. As doctors and scientists who know the health effects of ionizing radiation and who have been working together with miners and the local populations of uranium mining regions for many years, we strongly urge you not to make short-sighted calculations in Quebec, but to take into consideration the enormous costs in terms of public health and environmental effects. If we can help you with additional background information, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. med. Alex Rosen
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