



THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA  
LE CONSEIL NATIONAL DES FEMMES DU CANADA

February 20, 2017

The Hon. Jim Carr, MP, PC  
Minister of Natural Resources,  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

Dear Minister:

As President of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), I am responding to your October 6, 2016, letter which discounted our grave concerns with the risks posed by the unprecedented transport of extremely dangerous liquid nuclear waste containing Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) close to 2,000 kilometres from Chalk River Ontario to Savannah River, South Carolina.

Further to the very strong evidence in our June 11, 2016, letter, may I respectfully bring to your attention additional scientific information which challenges your department's assumption that such shipments have undergone stringent testing that meets the "highest standards to ensure that the environment and the health, safety and security of Canadians are protected."

To this end, attached please find a February 1, 2017, background paper regarding the insufficiencies of the casks to be used for transport which highlights very important differences between the testing for solid and liquid nuclear waste, the latter containing a plethora of deadly, mobile and long-lasting, radioactive isotopes, including HEU, which when released into the environment are impossible to contain. (1)

This is particularly important, as local "first responders" are not experts in this area, and those at CNSC who handled last spring's dry uranium spill in Saskatchewan would not necessarily be on hand to deal with what would be immediate and disastrous results. Nor could either group prevent deadly releases into the air, soil, or nearby waterways from an accidental tank rupture or high-temperature fire.

The main author of the report, Dr. Marvin Resnikoff, is a recognised nuclear transportation and waste disposal expert, who works as a nuclear waste consultant for many U.S. states and the U.S. Government. (2) In this report he provides strong evidence to challenge the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and U.S. Department of Energy views that testing for the transport of solid HEU waste is the same as that for liquid, and that there is no need for Canadians to worry.

NCWC also notes that Indonesia, another signatory to the International Repatriation Agreement, with the help of the United States, is currently down-blending their HEU in-country, rather than sending it, as agreed, to the Savannah river site, to be treated similarly. (3)

With all of this very recent information in hand, on behalf of NCWC I thank you for your attention to this vital matter and respectfully request that you, as the responsible Minister, step beyond the usual CNSC nuclear waste protocol and urge the Government of Canada to halt the shipments, and instead to either solidify the waste, as was planned pre-2008, and has been done with all new liquid nuclear waste produced at its operations since that time, or, like Indonesia, down-blend it and store safely.

At the very least we ask that you, in co-operation with the Minister of Environment, ensure that there is an independent Environmental Assessment of this HEU project, in order to reassure Canadians that this ground transportation is necessary, safe, and in the interest of the environment, health, safety and wellbeing of the public.

Sincerely,

*Karen Monnon Dempsey*  
*President*  
*National Council of Women of Canada*

[Text prepared by Gracia Janes, NCWC Environment Convenor]

Attachments:

- (1) Report from Dr. Marvin Resnikoff
- (2) Link to Dr. Marvin Resnikoff's CV <http://www.rwma.com/mr.htm>
- (3) Fact sheet: Eliminating all highly enriched uranium from Indonesia, August 29, 2016;  
<https://nnsa.energy.gov/.../nnsa-announces-elimination-highly-enriched-uranium-heu->

cc: The Hon. Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness  
The Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment  
The Hon. Marc Garneau, Minister of Transport  
The Hon. Lawrence MacAulay Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food