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NEWS RELEASE

# TŁICHQ LEADERSHIP SUPPORTS TŁICHQ WORKERS IN POTENTIAL LAYOFF

**Tłichq Leadership supports Tłichq workers in potential Ekati Layoff dispute.**

**Behchokò, NT (May 24, 2018)** - The Tłichq Government is aware that Dominion Diamond is preparing plans to lay off up to 150 workers from the Ekati mine site. The company suggests they will then contract these positions out. We are very concerned that contracted out positions will bring lower benefits, protections and wages to Tłichq workers. The Tłichq Government is asking the company to reverse this decision.

The Tłichq Government is working to understand options for protection of these positions. The Tłichq Government signed an Impact and Benefit Agreement with the company, which sets employment obligations. Dominion must respect our Impact and Benefit agreement and maximise Tłichq people on site. Our government will not accept a reduction in the number of Tłichq employees at Ekati.

Grand Chief George Mackenzie, in hearing of Dominion Diamond plans says:  
*"We consider this matter urgent. Our IBA requires that the company hire and retain the Tłichq people. We are meeting with the company and the union about this issue, and we will update our people regularly. Our people, our way of life and our livelihoods are at stake. We cannot accept any reduction in the number of Tłichq at this project site. The company has a duty through all of the agreements they hold with partners – the IBA, the Collective Agreement with the union, and through the Socio-Economic Agreement with the GNWT – to hire and retain northern workers. Their proposed approach strikes at the heart of all of these agreements."*

The company's complaint is that worker absenteeism is too high a cost, however the company has never brought this concern to the Tłichq. Currently, the Tłichq Government is developing plans to address this issue and ask the company for the information we need. We will meet with employees at site and in our communities, and support the union to do so as well.

For interviews, contact our Tłichq Government contact point, Henry Zoe, Senior Director, Governance at 867-766-4003.