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Civil society urges suspension of decisions involving radioactive waste after international body finds Canada’s nuclear waste policy deficient

Ottawa – Over one hundred civil society organizations and prominent scientific experts from across Canada have called on the federal minister of Natural Resources (Hon. Seamus O’Regan) to suspend all decision-making involving radioactive waste disposal until Canada has a sufficient radioactive waste policy in place.

In February 2020, it was reported by the International Atomic Energy Agency that Canada’s Radioactive Waste Management Policy Framework “does not encompass all the needed policy elements nor a detailed strategy” necessary to provide a national strategy for long-term radioactive waste management in Canada. In the letter, signatories request that the development of Canada’s radioactive waste policy and associated strategy must be based on “meaningful consultation with Indigenous peoples and strong public engagement from the outset.”

Signatories underscored the urgency of their request as Canada’s nuclear regulator, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, presses ahead with regulatory licence decisions on a number of radioactive waste projects. Fearing Canada’s deficient radioactive waste framework will imprint itself on decisions affecting the health and safety of future generations and the environment, signees urged Canada to provide leadership, and establish sufficient guidance and federal policy.

Other commitments requested by signees included that Canada establish objectives and principles to underly a nuclear waste policy and strategy. They also requested Canada identify the problems and issues posed by existing and accumulating radioactive waste.

The full text of the letter sent to the Minister, may be found on the Nuclear Waste Watch website [HERE](#).

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