



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OUR WATER IS NOT FOR SALE

OTTAWA—The Common Front to protect water, calls on the Chrétien Government to deliver the goods on legislation designed to prohibit the export of Canadian Water and to safeguard public control of this resource.

The Council of Canadians, the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) are part of this broad-based group.

"This government promised it would table legislation this session that would prohibit the export of water. Corporations are planning to turn our water resources into an export commodity – yet the Chrétien government remains silent," stated Maude Barlow, chairperson of the Council of Canadians.

"Should water be treated like any other commodity? Will Canadians continue to have affordable publicly controlled access to clean water? These questions are especially important given free trade agreements like NAFTA. Until legislation is passed, Parliament must enact a moratorium on the export of water immediately," added Barlow.

"There is no forum examining the many environmental impacts of taking water from its natural setting. The Great Lakes are experiencing the lowest water levels in 34 years thanks to the growing impact of climate change," stated Sarah Miller spokesperson for CELA. "Less water will mean more conflict in the next century among users and countries. Big business is banking on water becoming the oil of the next century and Canadians need to say no," said Miller.

"What is more fundamental to democracy than control over the water we drink? asked Judy Darcy, CUPE national president. "Access for all Canadians to a basic source of life is what's at stake. Water resources and services must be publicly and democratically controlled." CUPE represents over 460,000 workers in communities across Canada and is establishing Water Watch committees in cooperation with concerned citizens and environmental activists in many of these communities.

"Multinational corporations are trying to privatize water services in hundreds of Canadian municipalities and turn our water resources into an export commodity. They can't buy the air we breathe, so now they want to buy and control the water we drink. What we are saying is simple – no water for profit," concluded Darcy.

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