



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Failure to consult with Status and non-Status Indians and Métis concerning the H1N1 Flu Pandemic**

**Ottawa, ON (September 21, 2009) –**

The pandemic of the H1N1 Flu Virus is of grave concern to the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP). This pandemic is one of the most urgent health challenges we face, and it highlights the vulnerability of our communities. Uncertainties and anxieties are being felt in our communities over the lack of involvement in strategic planning, and in the action plan to deal with the pandemic.

The Pandemic Vaccine Task Group has developed preliminary advice to Canada's Ministers of Health for the rollout of the H1N1 vaccine. Despite the fact that epidemiology reveals that Aboriginal populations are at high risk, there has been no consultation or accommodation with the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

CAP represents Status and non-Status Indians living off-reserve and Métis. This is the largest constituency of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. In 2006, the Census reported that over 60% of the ancestry based population now resides in urban areas. The migration of Aboriginal peoples into the urban centres represents the most significant Aboriginal demographic for consideration by policy makers.

The Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan does not consider the potential for H1N1 to impact communities of Status and non-Status Indians living off-reserve and Métis. Currently there is no strategic plan to involve this sector in the distribution of information or to involve CAP in the campaign to prevent the spread of the H1N1 virus.

For more information contact Gilles at CAP Communications:  
[gilles@abo-peoples.org](mailto:gilles@abo-peoples.org)