

## Resolution Applauding Canada's Decision to Ratify the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and Calling on the US Senate to Ratify the Convention in this Session

**Whereas**, Great Lakes United has a long history of concern about persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other persistent toxic substances that enter the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River food chain; become concentrated in fish, birds and mammals; and cause significant injury to both our ecosystem and to the health of its people; and

**Whereas**, indigenous peoples and others who subsist on wild fish and game often suffer the greatest health injury from POPs in the environment; and that this in turn can also undermine traditional ways of life; and

**Recalling**, that Great Lakes United, at its Annual General Meeting in 2000, adopted a resolution in which GLU called upon the US and Canadian Federal Governments to reaffirm their commitments to a strong, effective, legally binding global treaty addressing persistent organic pollutants (POPs); and

**Recalling further**, that the GLU resolution of 2000 called for:

- 1) Treaty provisions incorporating a clear commitment to eliminate POPs;
- 2) Avoiding loopholes and broad exemptions;
- 3) Incorporating the Precautionary Principle into provisions for adding additional POPs to the treaty; and
- 4) Establishing provisions for providing needed financial and technical assistance to countries that would be unable to meet their obligations under the treaty without such assistance;

**Noting**, that in December 2000, with one hundred and twenty governments participating, negotiations were successfully completed on a POPs Treaty that met the main concerns expressed by GLU in its resolution, and that also satisfied the main concerns of most other non-governmental organizations associated with the International POPs Elimination Network;

**Noting further**, that the POPs Treaty was adopted on May 22, 2001 at a Diplomatic Conference held in Stockholm, Sweden; that the new Treaty will now be called the Stockholm Convention on POPs; and that 91 countries as well as the European Commission have already signed it;

**Noting with applause**, that Canada is the first country to have ratified the Stockholm Convention; but noting further that the Stockholm Convention will not enter into force until after ratification by at least fifty countries;

**Noting also**, the positive statement of US President George W. Bush who said on April 19 in a Rose Garden announcement on the POPs Treaty;

*"I am pleased to announce my support for the treaty and the intention of our government to sign and submit it for approval by the United States Senate. This convention is*

*significant in several respects. First, concerns over the hazards of PCBs, DDT, and the other toxic chemicals covered by the agreement are based on solid scientific information. These pollutants are linked to developmental defects, cancer, and other grave problems in humans and animals. The risks are great, and the need for action is clear.”*

**Noting further**, that also on April 19, a statement on POPs was issued by the CEO of the American Chemistry Council (ACC), a trade organization of the leading American companies that are “*engaged in the business of chemistry.*” In this statement, ACC “*congratulates and supports President Bush on his decision to sign the United Nations Environment Program’s Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Treaty.*”

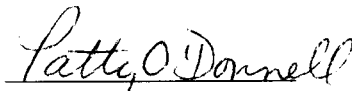
**Therefore be it resolved** that Great Lakes United:

- Congratulates Canada and applauds its action to become the first country to ratify the Stockholm Convention on POPs;
- Urges President Bush, through his staff and advisors, to expeditiously transmit the POPs Treaty to the US Senate for its “advice and consent” to ratification;
- Urges the United States Senate to ratify the Stockholm Convention in this first session of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress so that the United States will also be one of the early countries to ratify the Convention and set an example of leadership for other countries to follow;
- Suggests that US ratification be undertaken:
  - On a bipartisan basis and with a multi-stakeholder engagement;
  - With every effort made to maintain broad support for Stockholm Convention ratification by public interest groups including environmental advocates, health advocates and others; by indigenous peoples and also support from the chemical and other industries and their trade associations; and by others;
  - With all interest groups refraining from attempting to use the ratification process as an opportunity to revise US laws governing toxic chemicals, pollutants and wastes beyond those minimal changes, if any, that may be required to bring US law into conformity with the provisions of the Stockholm Convention.

**Be it further resolved** that Great Lakes United will:

- Convey this resolution to members of Canadian Parliamentary and United States Congressional Delegations representing constituencies in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Region; and
- Assist its member organizations, other Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Institutions, and other organizations in efforts to secure early US ratification of the Stockholm Convention on POPs.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE COPY OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF GREAT LAKES UNITED ON JUNE 10, 2001.

  
Patty O'Donnell, Secretary