



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE EXPRESSES SORROW FOR EIGHT LIVES LOST

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is devastated to share the update that a total of eight individuals including a toddler and infant have passed away in the waters of Akwesasne.

The eight individuals were from two families of Romanian and Indian descent, with the two children having Canadian citizenship. The tragic circumstances of their deaths remain under investigation by our police department. However, it is known that these families were attempting to enter the United States illegally from Canada.

Our hearts are with the families of these victims as we try to work through our own grief for precious lives lost in our territory. Our culture and traditions are based heavily around family and it is difficult for us all to imagine the dreams these families had and the sadness of their deaths. This heart-wrenching event profoundly demonstrates the human qualities we all share.

“Securing our territory’s borders and ensuring Akwesasne is not exploited has been a priority heightened in recent years,” said Grand Chief Abram Benedict. “We are committed to understanding how this tragedy occurred and how we can work with our police department and partners to prevent it from ever happening again.”

We would like to extend our appreciation to our first responders, volunteers, community organizations, our Mohawk Council staff, mental health supporters, and those who have had any small part in assisting in this search or supporting those who need it.

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