



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oneida Nation Leader Invited to Meet on Friday with the UN Human Rights Office Regarding the Washington NFL Team's Racially Insensitive Mascot

In Advance of the Super Bowl, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović and Oneida Leader Ray Halbritter Will Discuss the Campaign to Persuade the NFL's Washington, D.C. Team to Change its "R-Word" Name and Mascot

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (January 24, 2014) The Oneida Indian Nation announced that it will meet with officials from the United Nations today to discuss the human rights issues raised by the Washington NFL team's usage of the racially insensitive R-word slur as its name and mascot.

Ray Halbritter, leader of the national Change the Mascot campaign, is scheduled to meet with Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović. The Assistant Secretary-General assists the High Commissioner for Human Rights in advancing the human rights agenda among policy-making bodies, permanent missions of Member States, United Nations departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional groups and the media.

"I am both humbled and heartened by the opportunity to have a dialogue with the UN regarding the important moral, human, and civil rights issues raised by the Washington NFL team's continued use of the R-word racial slur," said Halbritter. "It is extremely encouraging to see people across the country, as well as national and international leaders, recognizing the harmful impacts of using this term that denigrates Native peoples."

Since the launch of the Oneida Indian Nation's Change the Mascot campaign, the derogatory name of Washington's NFL team has become a prominent civil rights issue. Members of Congress from both parties, city councils across America, top sports icons, leading journalists, faith leaders and even President Obama have spoken out against the continued use of the harmful epithet.

Last month, America's premier human and civil rights coalition The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights unanimously passed a resolution urging Washington NFL team owner Dan Snyder to change the team's offensive R-word mascot.

A grassroots movement led by the Oneida Indian Nation, Change the Mascot has aired radio advertisements throughout the entire NFL season in Washington and all cities where the D.C. team has played road games. The movement plans to continue its push for a name change through the end of this season and into the 2014 NFL season as well.

"This issue is not going away until the offensive name is retired," said Halbritter. "It's time for the NFL and Washington's team to stop profiting from the continued use of a dictionary-defined racial slur and to place themselves on the right side of history by changing this offensive name."

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