



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oneida Indian Nation and National Congress of American Indians Applaud the UN for Condemning the Hurtful Name of Washington's NFL Team

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (April 11, 2014) Human rights expert and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples James Anaya today called the Washington NFL team's current R-word team name a "hurtful reminder of past suffering of Native American." The Oneida Indian Nation and its Change the Mascot campaign, as well as the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), are praising the UN for its powerful statement, which comes on the heels of Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter's January meeting with the UN on the topic.

"The United Nations is the latest to dispel the absurd claim by Washington's football team and its owner Dan Snyder that the term 'redskins' honors Native Americans," said Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter and NCAI Executive Director Jackie Pata. "This word is widely recognized throughout the globe as a racial slur. If the NFL wants to be a global brand that

contributes to the positive image of the United States across the world, it needs to stop promoting this slur and change the name.”

“I urge the team owners to consider that the term ‘redskin’ for many is inextricably linked to a history of suffering and dispossession, and that it is understood to be a pejorative and disparaging term that fails to respect and honour the historical and cultural legacy of the Native Americans in the U.S.,” said Anaya, who also contributed to a 2012 report on the situation of indigenous peoples in the U.S. “Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations... Private actors also have responsibilities independently of the States’ obligation to promote and protect human rights.”

The UN has taken a strong stand globally to combat racism in sports and played an important role in highlighting the damaging impacts of racism against Indigenous peoples.

NCAI is the nation’s oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving the broad interests of tribal governments and communities. It has played a key role in opposing the Washington team’s continued use of the R-word racial epithet.

Since the Oneida Nation’s launch of the Change the Mascot campaign last year, the derogatory name of Washington’s NFL team has become a prominent civil rights issue garnering support from top leaders across the country and internationally. Bi-partisan Members of Congress, city councils, leading civil rights organizations, top sports icons, prominent journalists and even President Obama have all spoken out against the team’s continued use of the harmful epithet.

The growing Change the Mascot movement continues to gain support from top leaders and organizations. Following a nationwide radio campaign during the past NFL season, Change the Mascot plans to continue their push into the 2014 NFL season and beyond.

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