



NIRB File No.: 22MN025
NPC File No.: 149747

November 14, 2022

The Honourable Dan Vandal
Minister of Northern Affairs
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Sent via email: dan.vandal@parl.gc.ca

Re: Screening Decision for De Beers Canada Inc's "Chidliak Diamond Mine" Project Proposal, Qikiqtani Region

Dear Honourable Minister:

On May 5, 2022 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received a referral to screen De Beers Canada Inc's (De Beers or Proponent) "Chidliak Diamond Mine" project proposal (Proposal) from the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC or Commission), which noted that the Proposal is located outside the area of an applicable regional land use plan.

Pursuant to Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*), the NIRB commenced screening of the Proposal, and assigned file number 22MN025.

Following the assessment of all material information, taking into account the information the Proponent and parties have provided to date, and taking into account the Board's determination of the significance of potential adverse ecosystemic or socio-economic impacts of the project¹ it is the opinion of the NIRB that as set out in Article 12, Section 12.4.4(b) of the *Nunavut Agreement* and ss. 89(1)(a)(i) and (ii) of the *NuPPAA*, the "Chidliak Diamond Mine" project proposal **requires a Review** under Article 12, Part 5 or Part 6 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and Part 3 of the *NuPPAA*.

Accordingly, the NIRB is issuing the attached Screening Decision Report dated November 17, 2022 to the responsible Ministers for consideration pursuant to s. 92 of the *NuPPAA*. The Screening Decision Report provides, among other things, the regulatory framework, project overview and the NIRB's assessment process, factors relevant for the determining significance of impacts, the Board's views, determination and conclusions.

¹Significance was assessed by the Board with regard to the factors outlined in s. 90 of the *NuPPAA*.

Please note that the Proposal is not attached due to the size of the electronic document and the limited bandwidth. An electronic copy of the Proposal is accessible online from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125714.

As a result of feedback provided through the screening process, the NIRB has identified that the following issues may also need to be addressed by the responsible Ministers:

- Parties indicated specific concern regarding caribou including herd population, migration, and calving, and potential negative effects on Inuit traditional harvesting and other related activities. Given the documented low caribou populations on Baffin Island, this is a subject that is likely to be of special importance to local communities;
- The Proposal proposes the use of novel technologies including remote mining, remote operation of vehicles and equipment, construction and use of modular buildings and processing facilities, as well as the potential use of a modular nuclear reactor for power generation. The use of these technologies has not yet been well demonstrated in an Arctic environment and is likely to arouse public concern; and
- It is the NIRB's opinion that there are several important factors associated with the further review of the Proposal that highlight the need for participant funding during the assessment, including: the range and scope of the potential impacts of the Proposal; the high level of community interest and concern, and the capacity issues of participants identified during the Board's recent assessments in the region.

The NIRB remains available for consultation with the Minister regarding this report as necessary. If you have any questions or require clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the NIRB's Executive Director, Karen Costello at (867) 983-4608 or kcostello@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Marjorie Kaviq Kaluraq, Chairperson
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Enclosure: Screening Decision Report, NIRB File No.: 22MN025 (November 14, 2022).

cc: Chidliak Project Distribution List
Sarah McLean, De Beers Canada Inc.
The Honourable David Akeeagok, Department of Environment - Government of Nunavut
Lootie Toomasie, Chairperson, Nunavut Water Board
Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Olayuk Akesuk, President, Qikiqtani Inuit Association