



GREAT LAKES UNITED

NEWS RELEASE

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**ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS APPEAL TO UNITED NATIONS:
CHARGE FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS WITH BREAKING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT**

BUFFALO, N.Y.--"We are calling on the United Nations to undertake an investigation to determine why the Federal Governments of the United States and Canada are breaking the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement," said John Jackson, president of Great Lakes United.

Great Lakes United and other environmental organizations across the Great Lakes Basin today released "Broken Agreement," charging the Federal Governments of the United States and Canada with breaking an international agreement pertaining to the environment--The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

"The governments are breaking their pledges to each other and to the 45 million people of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin," declares the report.

The groups are appealing to Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar of the United Nations to undertake an investigation of the

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governments' failure to implement the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

"The Agreement is a precedent-setting international agreement on the environment that should serve as a model for the rest of the world's nations that are struggling with pollution," said Sarah Miller of the Canadian Environmental Law Association. "The world community needs to carefully scrutinize and assess its implementation."

Great Lakes United has prepared a letter to be sent to de Cuellar detailing environmentalists' concerns. The letter will be circulated to Great Lakes groups attending the 6th Biennial Meeting of the International Joint Commission, being held in Traverse City, Michigan, from September 25 to October 1, 1991. The letter will then be transmitted to de Cuellar.

"Broken Agreement" outlines key Agreement commitments and International Joint Commission recommendations that the governments have ignored, in some cases for as long as ten years. Among other neglected commitments and recommendations, the Federal Governments have failed to:

- * Develop a binational "toxics substances management strategy";
- * Develop uniform environmental protection standards;
- * Develop a comprehensive strategy to achieve zero discharge and virtual elimination of persistent toxic substances;

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- * Compile basic information and inventories critical to regulating toxic chemicals and to prioritizing regulatory actions;
- * Develop comprehensive management programs for contaminated sediments;
- * Protect and restore wetlands;
- * Take special measures to protect Lake Superior, the most pristine of the Lakes.

According to the report's conclusion, "While the Governments develop news releases to announce non-actions, evidence of the damage to the Great Lakes is mounting: cormorants born with club feet, missing eyes and no brains; bald eagles unable to reproduce; fish populations riddled with tumors; and children with behavioral abnormalities, below-normal memory function, and lower IQs."

"We are witnessing a slow destruction of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem," said Karen Murphy, field co-ordinator of Great Lakes United. "The governments need to take aggressive action now to arrest this process and protect these international waters."