

2018 Nunavik Inuit Declaration

All-Organizations meeting Kuuujuaq, Nunavik , May 23-25, 2018

THIS DECLARATION is made on the occasion of the All-organizations meeting held May 23 to 25, 2018 in Kuuujuaq, Nunavik

Whereas the Annual General Meeting of Makivik adopted, at its 2018 meeting held in Puvirnituaq, a resolution supporting Makivik's President platform and priorities, including the review of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement; the establishment of a Nunavik Assembly and implementation of regional governance based on Inuit traditions values and culture; the official recognition of the Inuktitut language; and Arctic sovereignty.

Whereas the participants to the All-organizations meeting, who are at the front line of dealing with Nunavik issues, discussed and voiced their concerns during the meeting;

Whereas the spirit of the 2015 Nunavik Inuit Declaration *Proud, United and Determined* needs to be taken into consideration.

SELF-DETERMINATION

Whereas Article 3 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that «Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. »;

Whereas Article 4 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that «Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.»;

Whereas the inherent right of self-government is recognized as an existing Aboriginal right under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;

Whereas the Nunavik Inuit are ready to exercise their right to self-determination and to engage into negotiations in order to establish a form of indigenous government based on Inuit values, identity, culture and language;

It is therefore declared:

- THAT Makivik be mandated to negotiate with Canada and Quebec in order to establish a form of indigenous government based on Inuit values, identity, culture and language, with the contribution of the concerned Nunavik organizations who are at the front line.
- THAT: Makivik will keep Nunavik Inuit and Nunavik organizations regularly informed of the progress and status of the negotiations.

REVIEW OF JAMES BAY AND NORTHERN QUEBEC AGREEMENT

- Whereas those who negotiated the JBNQA, those who implement it, the organizations established under the JBNQA and the beneficiaries of JBNQA all agree that it does not meet all the needs of the Nunavik Inuit;
- Whereas in the spirit of reconciliation and after more than 40 years since its signing, the JBNQA and all its complementary agreements needs to be thoroughly reviewed, with a special emphasis on the Surrender of rights and the Extinguishment of rights provisions, so it can be amended and modernized to meet the needs and aspirations of the Nunavik Inuit;
- Whereas the JBNQA is an organic and living document that can be modified, and is recognized as such by the governments;
- Whereas since 1975, realities have evolved and there have been recent developments regarding indigenous inherent rights;
- Whereas there needs to be a shift of perspective leading to a full recognition of Nunavik Inuit values, identity, culture and language;
- Whereas the lands regime must be reviewed in order to increase ownership of Inuit over their lands and empower them.

It is therefore declared:

- THAT: Makivik be mandated to conduct a full review of the JBNQA, with the input of the signatories and concerned organizations;
- THAT: Makivik will keep Nunavik Inuit and Nunavik organizations regularly informed of the progress and status of the review.

INUIT VALUES, IDENTITY, CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

- Whereas the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) doesn't have a specific section on Inuit values, culture, language and identity;
- Whereas a discussion group was mandated by the All-organizations meeting to hold discussions on Nunavik Inuit values, identity, culture and language;
- Whereas Avataq Cultural Institute (Avataq) is an organization dedicated to protecting and promoting Nunavik Inuit values, identity, culture and language;
- Whereas Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated (TNI), whose mandate is to provide communications services to the Inuit of Nunavik, to strengthen language and to promote traditional and contemporary culture, is an important instrument Nunavik Inuit as they exclusively work in Inuktitut, making them unique in Canada;
- Whereas Avataq and TNI have major financial problems that prevent them from fulfilling their respective mandate.

It is therefore declared that:

- That Nunavik, as represented by Makivik, urge the governments of Canada and Quebec to recognize the Inuit values, identity, culture and language as priorities and to sufficiently fund Avataq and TNI;
- That a Trust Fund be created to secure core funding to Avataq and TNI;
- That the following major regional organizations: Makivik Corporation, Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, Kativik Regional Government and Fédération des Coopératives du Nouveau-Québec (FCNQ) consider a contribution to that Trust Fund for a maximum of 1% of their respective total annual budget;
- That developers, including mining companies and Hydro-Quebec be encouraged to financially participate to the same Trust Fund;

This Declaration is unanimously approved on this 24th day of May 2018.