



Marrakech, November 14, 2016

## **Inuit Circumpolar Council UNFCCC COP 22 Position Paper**

**Inuit Call on Global Leaders at UNFCCC COP 22 in Marrakech, Morocco:  
“Building momentum through meaningful action”**

Inuit are pleased that the Paris Accord was signed on November 4, 2016. Now, we need follow-through. The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), representing Inuit in Alaska (US), Canada (CA), Greenland (DK) and Chukotka (RU) remains alarmed about the impacts of rapid climate change on Inuit. We recognize that even a limitation of global climate change to 2°C above historic levels will lead to dramatic, irreversible impacts on Arctic communities. In February 2016, the combined average temperature of global land and ocean surfaces exceeded a 1.5°C increase above pre-industrial levels for the first time since 1880. Studies indicate that global temperatures could increase above 1.5°C in the next decade or so. Inuit are deeply concerned about the actual and potential impacts of climate change on our cultural, social and economic health and corresponding human rights.

Therefore, Inuit recognize that collective action must build upon steps already taken by developing an integrated strategy for long-term mitigation of carbon pollution to the atmosphere. At the same time, leaders must also turn their attention to developing, implementing and evaluating short-term actions to prepare for and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Inuit call on the international community and governments at UNFCCC CoP 22 to take urgent, ambitious measures to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations below ~450 parts per million by volume in order to ensure that increases in global temperatures will remain below 1.5°C. Inuit also call on global leaders to work in partnership with Indigenous peoples to take action on climate change, including through adaptation, in a way that respects our human rights.

The Arctic is the barometer of the world’s environmental health. Inuit health and wellbeing are inextricably tied to the environment. We are a global Indigenous people who depend on the land and sea to sustain our culture, identity, and to feed our families. For millennia, we have been stewards of the Arctic. Inuit are once again demonstrating stewardship, leadership and vision in response to the impacts of climate change. We implore global leaders to save our planet by taking immediate and equitable action to implement the Paris Agreement. Now is the time to be bold and build on the international momentum that has been created.

Inuit are witnessing the global impact of climate change in our communities and homeland. Inuit communities that are dependent on the land and sea are facing immediate and negative consequences from climate change to our food security, community infrastructure, and both mental and physical wellness. These challenges are being felt at a time when Inuit are also living with significant social, cultural and economic disruptions. Because of the important role that the Arctic environment plays in sustaining global climate systems and the unpredictable nature of changes occurring, there are global scale impacts of climate change in the Arctic. These are the reasons for heightened and urgent action to

address climate change. Inuit are responding to climate change in our communities by reducing our carbon footprint through energy efficiency and renewable energy developments. We are adapting our infrastructure and building higher quality, durable homes to respond to permafrost melt. We are monitoring our wildlife populations and adjusting our hunting and fishing practices to adapt to changes in their availability and employing new technology to ensure our hunters are safe while travelling. And, we are monitoring the changes we are witnessing and offering our Indigenous science and knowledge to support evidence-based decision making globally. Climate change is the most monumental collective challenge of our time. It requires all hands on deck.

**To build momentum, the Inuit Circumpolar Council urges global leaders to support Inuit leadership on climate change by taking the following actions:**

**1. Recognize the role of the Arctic in sustaining global climate systems and supporting life on earth.** *ICC calls on global leaders to commit to taking concrete action to mitigate further climate change impacts on the Arctic by working to keep increases in global temperatures below 1.5°C and supporting research and monitoring on the relationship between the melting Arctic and changing global processes to inform policy direction and decisions.*

**2. Recognize the fundamental human right of Inuit to a safe and healthy environment, and respect Inuit sovereignty and the rights of Indigenous peoples to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as custodians of their homelands.** *ICC calls on the international community to respect Inuit sovereignty and our inherent right to self-determination over all decision-making processes in the Arctic by:*

- a. Establishing a working group and a programme of work on Human Rights and Climate Change.*
- b. Ensuring the effective integration of cross-cutting principles and obligations that shall guide all climate change actions including: the respect, promotion and consideration of obligations related to human rights, including the rights of Indigenous peoples.*

**3. Recognize the significant leadership efforts already demonstrated by Inuit and support, with sustained resources, the integration of Inuit and Indigenous knowledge into regional and global climate action planning by:**

- a. Supporting community-based monitoring of environmental change and developing global databases to integrate local observations and monitoring systems into regional and global scale models.*
- b. Integrating Indigenous science and Traditional Knowledge into the IPCC reports due in 2018 and other major climate related reports and support Inuit knowledge holders so that they may serve as substantive authors and contributors.*

**4. Commit to support the equitable participation of Inuit in climate change-related processes and programs at local, national, regional and international levels by:**

- a. Ensuring that the Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement includes reports from community-based monitoring and information systems (CBMIS) as well as other data and observations produced by Inuit and Indigenous peoples. The Global Stocktake should also*

- include a review of the integration of the principles and obligations of the Paris Agreement, including a specific focus on human rights and the rights of Indigenous peoples.*
- b. Providing sustainable funding for the full and effective participation of Inuit in regional and national climate action planning.*
  - c. Supporting the IIPFCC call for an Indigenous Peoples' Expert and Knowledge-Holder Advisory Body to the UNFCCC.*
  - d. Acknowledging the important role of the Arctic Council as a model for cooperation between states and Indigenous peoples and encourage states to develop similar forums for addressing environmental challenges in each respective region.*

**5. Support Inuit and Indigenous peoples with mitigation, adaption and sustainable technology development by:**

- a. Contributing to a fund that Indigenous peoples may access and recognizing that the needs of Inuit communities are similar to climate vulnerable communities in non-G20 countries with emerging economies.*
- b. Investing in Inuit-driven renewable energy development in Arctic communities using options that will increase local economic viability and decrease dependence on energy imports and outside resources.*

*Inuit Circumpolar Council: Working to Combat Human-Induced Climate Change*

*ICC recognizes the ongoing need for Inuit to engage with the circumpolar and international processes including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), and the Arctic Council to ensure that Inuit knowledge and perspectives are considered and reflected in these processes. **ICC is working to ensure that the UNFCCC COP 22 delegates recognize the unique issues and opportunities facing Indigenous peoples worldwide and those of Arctic Indigenous peoples who depend on the land and sea.***

The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an Indigenous peoples' organization, founded in 1977 to promote and celebrate the unity of 160,000 Inuit from Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka. ICC works to promote Inuit rights, safeguard the Arctic environment, and protect and promote the Inuit way of life. As the international voice of Inuit, ICC is calling upon global leaders at the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (CoP 22) in Marrakech, Morocco to listen, support and act upon climate issues identified by Inuit and other Indigenous peoples.

*Abc<sup>au</sup> ΔΓΥΔ<sup>au</sup>  
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Okalik Egeesiak, ICC Chair

Contact:

OFFICE OF THE CHAIR  
Okalik Egeesiak, ICC Chair  
75 Albert Street, Suite 1001  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5E7  
CANADA