



INUIT

Press Release

ICC Welcomes the World to Celebrate 40 years of Arctic Advocacy on Behalf of Inuit: For Inuit, by Inuit, with Inuit

Oulu, Finland - June 15, 2017 – ICC Chair, Okalik Egeesiak, today invites everyone to join the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) in celebration of its 40th Anniversary. Egeesiak, who is attending the conference “*A Sustainable Arctic – Innovative Approaches*” hosted by the European Commission, calls on the global community to work together with Inuit to ensure a viable future for the Arctic.

“ICC was initially envisioned by the respected Inupiat leader, Eben Hopson, to protect the rights of Inuit to sustainably harvest marine mammals critical to Inuit food security in the face of pending oil and gas development” offered Egeesiak. “He understood that the Inuit voice was stronger through circumpolar solidarity. He also knew that together, Inuit would make certain no Inuit community would be left behind,” stated Tatiana Achirgina, Vice Chair, Chukotka.

“As Inuit, we are intimately connected to the past, both distant and recent. We are one people living in Greenland, Canada, Alaska and Russia, spanning more than 5 million square kilometers globally,” reflected Jim Stotts, Vice Chair, Alaska.

ICC is a Permanent Participant at the Arctic Council and holds Consultative Status II at the United Nations. ICC is a representative voice and speaks on behalf of all Circumpolar Inuit on matters of international importance. “Over the past 40 years, ICC has achieved a global reputation by defending and advocating for Indigenous Rights, including rights related to culture, food security, Indigenous Knowledge and preservation of language. ICC has been instrumental in negotiations for international agreements to reduce contaminants reaching the Arctic, defended the Inuit right to be cold in a changing climate, and advocated for improved Inuit health, wellness and socio-economic status,” stated Hjalmar Dahl, Vice Chair, Greenland.

ICC will convene the 13th General Assembly in Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow), Alaska on July 16-19, 2018. This celebration of Inuit culture and solidarity remains the most important planning meeting for Circumpolar Inuit, which form the roadmap for the next four year term. “We welcome the world to join the ICC family in Utqiagvik in 2018 to discuss common solutions to the challenges and opportunities and recreate a sustainable path forward with our communities,” said Stotts.

“As the world looks to the Arctic for shipping, resources, fisheries and sovereignty, Inuit are celebrating the advances ICC has made over the past 40 years building upon vision of the Arctic that we want for our children and grandchildren in the next 40 years,” Egeesiak said.

ICC has created a commemorative video that highlights ICC’s inception and accomplishments. [Click here to view video.](#)

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