



Kitigaaryuit Declaration

As declared by the Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka, on the occasion of the 12th General Assembly of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) from 21-24 July 2014 in Inuvik, Canada, and in the context of the Assembly theme,

Ukiuqta'qtumi Hivuniptingnun – One Arctic, One Future

Reaffirming that Inuit are one people living in our shared Arctic homeland of *Inuit Nunaat* since time immemorial, as declared in the *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic*;

Celebrating the rich Inuit culture that we developed through millennia of living in our Arctic homeland, in which we have subsisted and thrived, continually finding resources to adapt to environmental changes, reinforcing our identity as a strong and resilient people;

Inspired by the spirit and power of Kitigaaryuit, a traditional whaling village and meeting site that served to bring together and sustain Inuit, reminding us of the connection between past, present and future;

Recalling the first Inuit Circumpolar Conference held in Alaska in 1977 at which Eben Hopson, Sr. invited Inuit from across the Arctic to work together to share regional experiences, celebrate the strength and unity of Inuit, and pursue and coordinate collective international action;

Envisioning a future in which Inuit create successful economic, social and environmental conditions which reflect the original and central place of Inuit, Inuit culture and Inuit values throughout Inuit Nunaat;

Recognizing that Inuit children and youth are the fastest growing demographic and that healthy Inuit children and families are the foundation of healthy communities in Inuit Nunaat;

Expressing Gratitude for the rich cultural heritage passed on by our ancestors through the Inuit language, with its regional variations and dialects, and affirming our commitment to maintain, strengthen and revitalize the Inuit language in our communities;

Encouraging the development of communications across Inuit Nunaat over multiple media platforms in order to support the development and promotion of Inuit language, culture and political, social, and economic advancement.

Emphasizing that Inuit health and well-being is a matter of ongoing priority in *Inuit Nunaat*;

Recognizing that supporting mental wellness among Inuit is central to addressing a wide range of health issues;

Underscoring the urgent need to support research and policies that effectively address unacceptable rates of food insecurity, the high cost of living, transportation and doing business in Inuit communities;

Reaffirming that healthy communities and households require both a healthy environment and a thriving economy, and that social and cultural development must go hand in hand with economic development;

Recalling the *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nunaat* adopted in 2011, and reiterating the principles set out in that Declaration;

Taking into Account the increase in ship traffic in the Arctic that impacts Inuit culture, security, health, and livelihoods;

Observing with Concern the serious and growing threat to water quality and quantity in and around many Inuit communities owing to exploration and development of resources, as well as atmospheric transmission of contaminants and pollutants which threaten the health of Inuit and the entire Arctic ecosystem;

Mindful that environmental pollution of the Arctic remains critical for Inuit and, in that regard, acknowledging the adoption of the *Minamata Convention on Mercury*;

Appreciative that ICC and its partners have established a *Community Based Monitoring in a Changing Arctic* web atlas to share and exchange information on best practices;

Knowing that energy security, resulting from diverse sources and technologies are important to advance sustainable Inuit communities;

Acknowledging scientific collaboration amongst the Arctic States and Permanent Participants within the Arctic Council, and **Recognizing** that sound knowledge is required for research and policy decisions;

Reaffirming the need for Inuit knowledge, including traditional Inuit knowledge holders to participate in Arctic scientific platforms to ensure that our views are respected and reflected in decision making and research planning;

Urging the Arctic Council to focus on its demonstrated success and status as a high level forum for dialogue and cooperation between Arctic states and permanent participants, and **Trusting** that issues between Arctic states, arising from developments outside of the circumpolar world, do not detract from the Council's important work;

Recognizing ICC's leadership and important work in promoting and protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples internationally, particularly through the implementation process of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and other international fora;

Recognizing the important contributions made by ICC's outgoing Chair and members of its Executive Council since the eleventh General Assembly;

Fully Supporting the newly-elected ICC Chair and Executive Council, and thanking them for their commitment to promote energetically the rights and interests of Inuit as a people at the international level;

We hereby:

1. **Thank** the Town of Inuvik for hosting ICC's 12th General Assembly and congratulate all Inuvialuit on the thirty year anniversary of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, the signing of which was an inspiration to Inuit everywhere;
2. **Welcome and Adopt** the ICC Report on Activities 2010 – 2014;
3. **Recognize** the value of the reports and presentations made, and discussions held, by Inuit at this 12th ICC General Assembly;

Arctic Council and International Fora

4. **Instruct** ICC leadership to continue to use the Arctic Council and other fora, to further the interests of Inuit and, while working cooperatively with others in the Council, be vigilant about maintaining and strengthening the unique role of ICC as a Permanent Participant in the Arctic Council;
5. **Instruct** ICC leadership to call upon Arctic member states to include Inuit in all bilateral and multilateral meetings of importance to Inuit, and do so with the same direct and meaningful voice as at the Arctic Council;
6. **Instruct** ICC leadership to advance the human rights of Inuit and to do so by promoting the UNDRIP and by urging member states to fully endorse and implement the UNDRIP among other declarations and instruments, and further instruct ICC to promote meaningful and effective Inuit participation in decision-making processes consistent with the minimum standards of the UNDRIP, including the right to free, prior and informed consent;
7. Instruct ICC to actively promote the *Alta Outcome Document* from the Global Indigenous Preparatory Conference for the UN High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.
8. **Mandate** ICC leadership to continue its efforts to encourage states and Inuit self-governments to ratify and implement the International Labour Organization Convention 169 (ILO 169) concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in independent countries, and to continue to promote and protect Inuit rights through direct participation and work in UN mechanisms and agencies focused on the rights, interests and well-being of indigenous peoples;
9. **Direct** the ICC executive council and members to strengthen networks between Inuit organizations, including information sharing, connecting community-based monitoring programs, and promoting Inuit rights;

Environmental Stewardship

10. **Mandate** ICC leadership to continue addressing climate change, highlighting the human impact on Inuit, and to urgently press the international community to cooperate both on mitigation of climate change and in the development of adaptation strategies and mechanisms;
11. **Urge** members of the ICC Executive Council to retain environmental stewardship of the Inuit homeland as a key priority from 2014 – 2018 with the goal of promoting a healthy and abundant source of renewable resources for future generations of Inuit;
12. **Mandate** ICC leadership to participate in the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other organizations (such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora);
13. **Direct** ICC leadership to promote and support Inuit rights to manage migratory birds and other migratory animals in the interests of Inuit food security and to protect all Inuit customary, traditional, spiritual, social and physical uses of migratory species;

14. **Instruct** ICC leadership to maintain its efforts to reduce the worldwide emissions of contaminants that end up in the Arctic and negatively affect Inuit, and to continue to work to advance and strengthen the provisions of international instruments such as the global Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Minamata Convention on Mercury;
15. **Mandate** ICC leadership to advocate for regulatory policies that protect Arctic freshwater systems from unsustainable pollution and depletion, recognizing that clean water is a human right;
16. **Direct** the ICC leadership to continue the effort of ICC, together with local Inuit organizations, to promote those conservation measures that support the traditional culture and lifestyle of the ecologically, economically, and historically significant areas that support the traditional culture and lifestyle of Inuit;
17. **Instruct** the ICC leadership to call upon Arctic member states to strengthen efforts to include Inuit in all bilateral and multilateral meetings dealing with issues of interest across borders including environmental, economic, and social issues of importance to Inuit, and to do so with the same direct and meaningful voice as at the Arctic Council;

Safe Shipping and Fisheries

18. **Instruct** ICC leadership to increase its knowledge about security and transportation safety developments to ensure that it can assert Inuit rights and responsibilities in relation to Inuit waters, seas and passages used from time immemorial, and to do so through active participation with appropriate Inuit experts in the shipping industry and in the work of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and other relevant bodies;
19. **Mandate** ICC leadership to present Inuit perspectives and knowledge about sea ice, behaviour of marine mammals, and Arctic navigation to international bodies facilitating negotiations related to Arctic shipping, building upon the findings of *The Sea Ice Never Stops: Circumpolar Inuit Reflections on Sea Ice Use and Shipping in Inuit Nunaat*;
20. **Advocate** for the inclusion of Inuit representatives on all councils, committees, and commissions formed to address Arctic fishing issues;
21. **Direct** ICC leadership to advocate for a precautionary approach in developing commercial fishing in the international waters of the central Arctic Ocean and support a moratorium until fish stocks have been adequately assessed and a sustainable management regime is in place that fully engages and involves Inuit;
22. **Recognize** that healthy and abundant fish stocks are essential to the cultural, nutritional and economic well-being and way of life of the Inuit villages and peoples who live along river drainages and coasts;
23. **Direct** the ICC leadership to advocate for the reduction or elimination of salmon by-catch in the trawl-fisheries industry;

Sustainable Economic Development

24. **Instruct** ICC leadership to continue to build upon and implement the *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nunaat*;
25. **Recognize** Inuit hunters in their ongoing struggle to adapt to the changing Arctic, and continue to speak forcefully for ethical and fair trade for our products, fight unnecessary attempts to limit use of our marine resources by listing them as endangered, and state our

opposition to making the Arctic a wildlife preserve or any similar initiative that would undermine our wildlife economy;

26. **Direct** ICC leadership to continue to actively participate in meetings on oil spill prevention, preparedness, and response;
27. **Mandate** ICC leadership to plan and convene a Circumpolar Inuit Economic Summit which would explore potential collaborations among Inuit businesses and facilitate Inuit businesses sharing experiences amongst themselves;
28. **Mandate** ICC leadership to urge Arctic member states submitting positions on the extent of their respective continental shelves to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf under UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to involve Inuit in those submissions so as to reflect the Inuit perspective and protect Inuit rights and interests;
29. **Instruct** ICC leadership to engage in the UNCLOS processes to monitor developments to equip Inuit to promote and protect Inuit sovereignty and Inuit rights to the offshore, and take steps to participate in the decision-making of the bodies formed under the UNCLOS whose work has the potential to affect Inuit rights in the Arctic.

Health and Well-Being

30. **Instruct** ICC leadership to continue building its knowledge of Inuit health and well-being issues, and to advocate for Inuit on these issues through relevant bodies such as the Arctic Council, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization, and the Food and Agricultural Organization;
31. **Direct** ICC leadership to advance Inuit health and well-being by reviewing the progress of the 2010-2014 Circumpolar Inuit Health Strategy, continuing to identify emerging health issues and gaps, and promoting strategic initiatives through the 2014-2018 Implementation Plan for Inuit Nunaat in partnership with national, circumpolar, and international partners;
32. **Instruct** ICC leadership to advocate for the establishment, maintenance and improvement of core infrastructure that is necessary to sustain healthy Inuit communities, including housing, education, health care and social service delivery infrastructure, and core transportation and communication networks that facilitate both public sector activities and private sector entrepreneurship;
33. **Direct** ICC to advocate for a continuum of culturally relevant mental wellness and substance abuse programs and supports across Inuit Nunaat, including traditional/cultural and clinical approaches, which engage at the individual and community level;
34. **Direct** ICC to advocate approaches that address Inuit public health needs through the design, development and delivery of Inuit-specific policies, programs and services that foster, promote and protect Inuit health;
35. **Urge** ICC to encourage health research, education, and training for Inuit health care providers.

Food Security

36. **Urge** ICC leadership to promote the development of circumpolar, community-based monitoring (CBM) programs and research activities that adopt a food security lens within the Arctic Council working groups, and to promote Inuit food security in all aspects of ICC's work, including community health and wellness, retention and transmission of Inuit traditional knowledge, use of Inuit management methodologies, improved co-management

activities, sustainable utilization of wildlife, contaminants, biological diversity, climate change, and the availability of nutritious foods;

37. **Direct** ICC leadership to advocate for improved access to sufficient Inuit traditional food sources, communicating the impacts of the nutrition transition on Inuit food security resulting from changing economic and social conditions, contaminants, climate change, and regulatory decisions taken by others on polar bears, seals, and other marine and terrestrial mammals;
38. **Specifically Urge** ICC leadership to speak out about the implications of food insecurity on Inuit health;
39. **Direct** ICC leadership to advocate for the empowerment of Inuit in creating a political, social, and economic environment, grounded in Inuit way of life, that sets optimal conditions for Inuit food security;
40. **Direct** ICC to plan and host an Inuit summit on wildlife management;

Communication

41. **Encourage** ICC to work with Inuit and other media companies and organizations to promote effective communications, sharing of information and the development of pan-Arctic and Inuit communications initiatives that promote increasing Inuit to Inuit communication and interaction;
42. **Mandate** ICC to continuously communicate its work and results of its activities between countries, ICC offices and to Inuit through media and other communications channels;

Education and Language

43. **Mandate** ICC leadership to promote educational exchanges, share best educational practices, and host a summit of experts and practitioners from across the circumpolar Arctic to recommend ways to develop or enhance culturally-appropriate curriculum;
44. **Support** training, recruitment, and retention programs for Inuit in all professions;
45. **Mandate** ICC leadership to continue its promotion and leadership of projects and initiatives to strengthen the Inuit language, including the *Assessing, Monitoring, and Promoting Arctic Indigenous Languages* project through the Arctic Council;

Traditional Knowledge and Science

46. **Direct** ICC leadership to insist upon the utilization of Traditional Knowledge in scientific programs/reports and at all levels of relevant decision-making processes;
47. **Mandate** ICC leadership to direct, participate and engage effectively in all aspects of Arctic science and research, promoting and contributing to activities that reflect a participatory approach of both Inuit knowledge and scientific methodologies;
48. **Direct** ICC leadership to promote awareness of community-based monitoring activities rooted in Traditional Knowledge, and to work with its partners to develop a strategy and tools to implement the proper utilization of community-based monitoring and research;
49. **Direct** ICC leadership to work towards the creation of ethical and responsible research guidelines/policies that emphasize bringing knowledge back to Inuit communities;
50. **Instruct** ICC leadership to engage in activities that promote the protection of Inuit intellectual property and cultural heritage at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and other bodies;

51. **Promote** initiatives for sharing information/knowledge and data in/from the Arctic, and **Hold to Account** those responsible for the proper communication and dissemination of Inuit information/knowledge and data in accordance with Inuit governance structures and agreements.

The Chair and Executive Council of the Inuit Circumpolar Council hereby confirm that the Kitigaaryuit 2014 Declaration was unanimously passed by delegates at the 12th General Assembly of the Inuit Circumpolar Council on 24 July 2014.



Aqqaluk Lyngø
ICC Chair


Duane Smith
Vice-Chair, Canada


Carl Christian Olsen, Puju
Vice-Chair, Greenland


Kirt Ejesiak
Executive Council Member, Canada


Hjalmar Dahl
Executive Council Member, Greenland


James Stotts
Vice-Chair, Alaska


Tatiana Achirgina
Vice-Chair, Russia


Vera Metcalf
Executive Council Member, Alaska


Elvira Tyunikova
Executive Council Member, Russia