



# News Release

## Premier Okalik continues to raise Nunavut priorities with federal ministers

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (February 11, 2002)** – Premier Paul Okalik continued to make progress on raising Nunavut’s profile with the federal government in discussing the territory’s priorities with four federal Cabinet ministers last Friday.

Premier Okalik said when he met with Deputy Prime Minister John Manley, Minister Responsible for Infrastructure, he identified Nunavut’s pressing infrastructure needs.

“I reinforced that per capita funding is ineffective in addressing Nunavut’s infrastructure needs and Minister Manley was understanding of that,” Premier Okalik said. “We also talked about the new fund that will be available for large-scale, strategic infrastructure projects and Nunavut’s interest in tapping into those resources.”

Premier Okalik, along with Health Minister Ed Picco, met with Health Minister Anne McLellan to discuss a number of Nunavut’s health care needs, in particular the need for new health care facilities.

“It was a positive meeting. Minister McLellan said she would raise the possibility of funding for these facilities with her federal colleagues,” Premier Okalik said. “We also touched on Nunavut’s nursing program and the work the Government is doing to train, recruit and retain long-term nurses.”

Premier Okalik also met with DIAND Minister Robert Nault and discussed the impending closure of the mine at Nanisivik.

“Minister Nault acknowledged the federal government’s responsibility for environmental cleanup of the area,” Premier Okalik said. He added Minister Nault also expressed interest in working cooperatively to identify human resources programs or economic development opportunities for the area.

While in Ottawa, Premier Okalik met with Justice Minister Martin Cauchon.

“It was an initial meeting, and I was very pleased with Minister Cauchon’s reception to our ideas,” Premier Okalik said. “We spoke about the Young Offenders’ Act and touched on some elements of its implementation. Minister Cauchon was also receptive to Nunavut’s need for another federal Judge and I hoping to see that develop in the coming months.”

Premier Okalik also explained to Minister Cauchon Nunavut’s position on firearms legislation and spoke of his hope to resolve the issues in the interest of all parties.

He added that Nunavut is in the process of developing human rights legislation and that he welcomes the federal co-operation in that initiative.

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### **For further information, contact:**

Annette Bourgeois  
Press Secretary  
Office of the Premier  
Government of Nunavut

☎ (867) 975-5059  
☎ (867) 975-5051  
Email: [abourgeois@gov.nu.ca](mailto:abourgeois@gov.nu.ca)