



News Release

Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq 2008

...a celebration of the Inuit Language

IQALUIT, Nunavut (January 23, 2008) - Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq, Nunavut's Inuit Language Week is taking place from February 4-11, 2008 and Nunavummiut are encouraged to celebrate and promote our language, and share it with others.

During *Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq*, Nunavummiut are encouraged to plan activities and promote the Inuit language in their own ways, such as promoting *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* terminology on community radio stations and in the schools, or by exploring literature written in the Inuit Language at local libraries. By working together we can show the world that the survival of the Inuit Language is crucial to our unique identity, our way of life and our hopes for the future as Nunavummiut.

Nunavummiut are also invited to watch a special phone-in television program with Minister Louis Tapardjuk on Nunavut's proposed language legislation, scheduled to be aired on APTN, February 13th from 9 to 10:30 pm.

"Languages matter in Nunavut", said Minister Tapardjuk. "Protecting and enhancing the Inuit Language is all our responsibility. The GN is taking action now to ensure that the Inuit Language is and remains at the center of work, education, and daily life throughout Nunavut, while respecting the rights of those who use English and French. The Language legislation I have introduced is a key step in implementing our dream."

The Inuit language has been spoken by our ancestors for many generations. It is truly the indigenous language of our territory, the spoken and preferred language of a majority of Nunavummiut, and a defining characteristic of our people's history in Nunavut, and of all Inuit as a people of the wider circumpolar world.

The United Nations has also declared that 2008 will be the International Year of Languages. Under the slogan “*Languages Matter!*”, UNESCO is encouraging governments, educators and community organizations to increase their support to linguistic and cultural diversity, empower minority and indigenous peoples with respect to education in their mother tongue and other languages, and recognize the importance of indigenous languages and knowledge, and develop sustainable cultural initiatives.

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For more information:

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