

Backgrounder - Nunavut Leaders Agree to Work Together to Protect and Promote the Inuit Language

Goals of the Meeting

- To secure a common commitment to action for the effective implementation of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and the *Official Languages Act* by key Nunavut leaders;
- To clarify the roles of participant organizations in the upcoming regional roundtables and Language Summit, and related consultation activities;
- To discuss common strategies to promote better understanding and appreciation of the Inuit Language and rights.

Nunavut Leaders

Premier Eva Aariak

Louis Tapardjuk, Minister of Languages

Ron Elliot, MLA for Quttiktuq

Alexina Kublu, Nunavut's Languages
Commissioner

Raymond Ningeocheak, Vice-President of
Finance, Nunavut Tunngavik, Inc.

Jose Kusugak, President, Kivalliq Inuit
Association

Joe Attaguttaluk, Secretary Treasurer,
Qikiqtani Inuit Association

Julia Ogina, Kitikmeot Inuit Associatio

Moving Forward to Implement the Dream

- More than three decades ago Inuit of Nunavut took the first steps toward achieving their dream of self-determination and autonomy. After years of consultation, research and development since the creation of Nunavut, new language legislation was adopted in 2008 to protect and promote the Inuit language.
- The *Official Languages Act* was approved by the Nunavut Legislative Assembly in June 2008. It will establish the Inuit language, English, and French as the official languages of Nunavut. It requires further federal parliamentary concurrence, and has been forwarded accordingly
- The Inuit Language Protection Act was approved by the Nunavut Legislative Assembly and proclaimed in September 2008. The Act gives the Inuit language new prominence in education, work and daily life in Nunavut, and sets out the measures by which governments and private sector organizations can take positive action to protect and promote it.
- The Minister of Languages is now preparing a Comprehensive Plan to coordinate all the activities and government resources needed to implement and administer both the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.
- The Minister of Languages will collaboratively host regional roundtables and a Language Summit later in 2009, along with other consultation activities, to seek input from Nunavummiut and stakeholders on ways to implement the provisions of the legislation.