

News Release

For Immediate Release

Environment Deputy Minister addresses Parliament Standing Committee on Bill C-47

Iqaluit, NU (December 6, 2012) – The Government of Nunavut (GN) expressed its support for Bill C-47, the *Northern Growth and Jobs Act* before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development yesterday in Ottawa.

Bill C-47 includes the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, which is designed to strengthen Nunavut's regime for reviewing and approving development projects.

"This Bill fulfils a major commitment that Canada made under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement," said David Akeeagok, Deputy Minister of Environment. "The Agreement requires that new federal Legislation be created to set forth powers and functions of the resource management boards created under the agreement – in this case, the Nunavut Impact Review Board and the Nunavut Planning Commission."

The GN believes the new Act will make a number of improvements to the regulatory regime in Nunavut: Specifically the Bill:

- Supports the work of the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) and the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) with solid federal legislation.
- Creates a clear regulatory process with predictable timelines to the benefit of Nunavummiut, stakeholders and industry.
- Integrates the process of approving project proposals by NIRB and NPC.

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- Establishes three-party approval of land use plans by Inuit, Canada and the GN.
- Further clarifies the role of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in Nunavut and thus eliminates the overlapping jurisdiction.
- Makes clear what projects are subject to assessment.
- Allows for enforcement of land use plans and project certificates on Inuit owned lands, crown lands and commissioner's lands.
- Requires public hearings to be conducted in Inuktitut if requested by a member, proponent or intervener.

The Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act marks an important achievement in the efforts by Canada, the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik together to strengthen land and resource management for the territory. All three parties worked closely to craft this legislation over a number of years. The close collaboration and the certainty created by the legislation will support the smooth devolution of authority over lands and resources from the federal government to the Government of Nunavut.

"Bill C-47 will make an important contribution to the economic development of Nunavut," said Akeeagok. "This legislation is an important achievement in terms of strengthening Nunavut's institutions and enabling Nunavummiut to advance along the path towards greater self-reliance."

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