

# **News Release**

For Immediate Release

## **Changes to Senior Level of Government**

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (March 24, 2014)** – With an unexpected resignation, Premier Peter Taptuna today announced changes to the Government of Nunavut's senior level of staffing, effective immediately.

Ms. Aluki Rojas, Deputy Minister, Department of Family Services has resigned after serving more than six years as a deputy minister and 10 years with the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Simon Awa, Deputy Minister, Culture and Heritage, is now appointed Deputy Minister, Family Services.

"Ms. Rojas has served in this government for a number of years and it is with reluctance that I accept her resignation for personal reasons," said Premier Taptuna. "The Department of Family Services is critical within this government, and I feel that Mr. Awa, who has a tremendous amount of experience, is well suited to take on his new role."

Mr. Joe Adla Kunuk, Associate Deputy Minister, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs is now appointed Deputy Minister, Culture and Heritage. While leading the Department of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Kunuk also remains as Chief Negotiator, Nunavut Land Claims Implementation Contract for the Government of Nunavut.

"Mr. Kunuk's vast experience working with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated is very appropriate and positions him well to lead the Department of Culture and Heritage," said Premier Taptuna.

In line with *Sivumut Abluqta*'s priority to strengthen accountability, an open competition for various vacancies at the deputy and assistant deputy head level within the government is expected to commence at a later date.

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#### Communications

### Backgrounder

Mr. Simon Awa recently celebrated his 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a deputy minister with the government. In 2010, he was appointed deputy head for the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, now the Department of Culture and Heritage. He has also served as deputy head for Environment and for Intergovernmental Affairs. Since 2000, Mr. Awa has worked in various senior management positions for the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Joe Adla Kunuk was appointed Associate Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs in 2013. He has held a number of senior positions within the government, including deputy minister of the former Department of Human Resources, and principal secretary in the last government. He brings over 30 years of experience in government, Inuit organizations and the private sector.

Ms. Aluki Rojas has been instrumental in establishing the Department of Family Services. She has also served as deputy head for the departments of Environment, Human Resources, and Intergovernmental Affairs. She holds a master's degree in Canadian and Indigenous studies.