Executive Council Meets in Greenland
By ICC Alaska Staff

The Executive Council held its first meeting since last summer’s General Assembly on September 28-29 in Nuuk, Greenland. The major topic of discussion was ICC’s work plan for the next four years based on the Nuuk Declaration adopted last summer.

The first agenda items discussed were the Chair and Country Reports. Aqqaluk Lynge, ICC Chair, reported there are staffing and funding challenges for the near term for ICC Greenland that should be solved by next year. He will attend a summit of foundations in Copenhagen in November to discuss funding possibilities. He plans to concentrate on the indigenous human rights dimension during his term, including the rights of indigenous children. He will also be involved in issues concerning the European Union such as the seal skin ban. He has begun work on Inuit pan-arctic media cooperation.

Tatiana Achkirina, Chukotka President, spoke on progress in Chukotka. The Chukotka Inuit regional organization joined the Public Chamber of the Government of Chukotka in August, which is a milestone. She discussed recent developments on the Beringia National Park and the need to allow traditional reindeer herding and hunting activities in and around the park. She announced that for the first time in 20 years Russian Inuit will be allowed to hunt polar bears. Work to revitalize marine mammal hunting in Chukotka also looks promising. Finally she mentioned continuing work on the project “Ulyuvut” (our language). This project aims to preserve language and culture and generate interest among the younger generation.

Duane Smith, Canada President, reported on developments in Canada. The Canadian Inuit lawsuit against the European Union on the seal skin ban continues. The Canadian government recently apologized to Inuit for the forced relocation of Inuit from Nunavik to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay. A new Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, John Duncan, has been appointed. The Canadian government has unveiled a new international Arctic policy. Finally there were updates on Canada’s continuing work on fundraising, Arctic languages, health issues, contaminants, biodiversity and the state of the Arctic Ocean.

continued on page 6
A Message from ICC-AK President
Jim Stotts

Two new initiatives are moving ahead with the potential to impact long-term development in the Arctic marine environment. First is the US National Ocean Council and second is the State of Alaska Northern Waters Task Force.

Other Arctic marine policy initiatives are moving ahead from the Arctic states themselves, the Arctic Council, and other international organizations that will impact our part of the world. What’s amazing is the speed with which these initiatives are moving forward. It’s important to be involved because there might not be a second chance to have our perspective heard. Decisions are being made right now, with or without us. It’s time to participate and be involved.

The National Ocean Council (NOC) was established on July 19 to oversee the implementation of a comprehensive national policy for the stewardship of U.S. oceans, coasts and the Great Lakes. The new national policy identifies nine priority objectives for the NOC to pursue for effective coastal and marine spatial planning to address conservation, economic activity, user conflict and sustainable use. The NOC was created by recommendation of the U.S. Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force and is comprised of high-level U.S. government officials.

The NOC is directed to establish an eighteen member Governance Coordinating Committee (GCC). The GCC will consist of officials from State, tribal and local governments. Three of the eighteen members will be at-large tribal officials. Hopefully, one of the three chosen will be an Alaska Native. This initiative is brand new and holds promise for a better way to manage our nation’s oceans and coastal areas.

The Northern Waters Task Force (NWTF) was established on March 26 by the Alaska State Legislature to facilitate regional coordination and State of Alaska leadership in the development of U.S. policy related to Arctic marine transportation, national security and resource development. The NWTF is comprised of legislators from northwest Alaska, Arctic community leaders and key federal agencies. Sadly there is no representation from tribal organizations. Hopefully there is a chance to once again raise our concerns. The NWTF would benefit from a tribal presence. The standards and conditions that need to be in place prior to opening Arctic waters for development need to be discussed and agreed to. The work already done by the Arctic Council needs to be considered in any review by either the NOC or NWTF. Finally, the local and indigenous citizen viewpoint must be a real part of the discussion. They are the ones most at risk if something should go wrong. The Coastal Zone Management program needs to be revisited and local government authority should be strengthened.
PAME Discusses AMSA Follow-up Work
By ICC Alaska Staff

Arctic Council’s Protection of the Marine Environment (PAME) working group met in our nation’s capital on September 14-17. ICC was represented by Duane Smith from Canada and Jim Stotts from Alaska. Other permanent participants attending were the Sami Council and Aleut International Association. The PAME meeting was preceded by a day-and-a-half workshop on the Arctic Ocean Review Project (AOR).

Topics of discussion included the working group’s follow-up efforts on the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA), namely: 1) working with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to develop a mandatory Polar Code by 2012 to address issues related to marine shipping in ice-covered waters; 2) evaluating the risks of using heavy fuel oil, with the aim of establishing appropriate international regulations; 3) exploring harmonizing shipping regulations and uniform safety and environmental regulations within Arctic state jurisdictions consistent with the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS); 4) working to strengthen passenger ship safety in Arctic waters.

Follow-up work on AMSA by Arctic Council working groups other than PAME include: 1) developing an International Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement; 2) working to identify and protect marine areas with heightened ecological and cultural significance; 3) working to further assess effects on marine mammals due to noise, disturbance and strikes and developing mitigating strategies to lessen these effects; 4) enhancing cooperation in the field of oil spill prevention; 5) developing pollution response capabilities in Arctic waters.

The follow-up work on AMSA appears to be progressing and Arctic states seem receptive to implementing the AMSA recommendations.

Another agenda item discussed was the ecosystem approach to management of the Arctic. Planning is underway for a workshop in Norway in late January 2011 to consider boundary issues for the large marine ecosystems and to review existing reporting on ecosystem status. The Arctic Council uses the large ecosystem approach to consider management regimes.

U.S.A. Reviews Visits Agreement

"In 1989, the United States and the USSR signed a Visits Agreement establishing a regime to allow essentially visa-free travel of certain native inhabitants of Russia and the United States across the Bering Strait. The purpose of the 1989 Visits Agreement was to facilitate contacts between U.S. and Russian native inhabitants of the Bering Strait region and to promote their cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing.

After more than 20 years, the United States is seeking to update and modernize agreements. First, we would like to expand the scope of the Visits Agreement both in geographic and tribal terms. Second, we seek to update the agreement to incorporate modern border management principles. Third, we are aware that the program is underutilized and would like to understand how we can improve operations so that it is more useful to participating groups. For more information and to submit comments or concerns please email: Visits_Agreement@state.gov," Information provided by the U.S. State Department.
Responsible Resource Development

By Marie N. Greene, President and CEO, NANA

As president and CEO of NANA Regional Corporation, I serve NANA’s more than 12,000 Inupiat shareholders. Our region is located in the Northwest part of Alaska. We have 11 villages spread out over this area, with about 7,400 residents living in the region, 82.5% of whom are Inupiaq and NANA shareholders.

NANA exists to improve the quality of life for our people by maximizing economic growth, protecting and enhancing the 2.2 million acres of land we received as part of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and promoting healthy communities with decisions, actions and behaviors inspired by our Inupiat Ilitquisiat values consistent with our core principles. One of the ways we do this is through responsible resource development.

In many ways, resource development has always been central to our economy as Inupiat. But when we as indigenous peoples speak of resource development, we need to clearly define what the word “resources” means to us, so that the Outside world can better understand our perspective and goals.

At NANA, our subsistence resources are the basis of our wealth and the economic base on which we will build our future; therefore the highest use of our land is for subsistence.

Any project we enter into must be consistent with this perspective, because to us, resource development means more than just extracting what is in the ground. It means the maintenance and development of our subsistence resources. It is using our cultural resources – our art, stories and dance – to strengthen and guide the next generation. It is developing the economies of our villages, so our people don’t have to choose between feeding their families and staying in their ancestral home. And it is developing the potential of our people so they have an opportunity to engage fully in the present while honoring our past.

Responsible resource development is a means to an end. It is one tool we use to create a local economy that allows our people to create a better tomorrow for themselves and for future generations. Because this is our belief, NANA supports Articles 3 and 32 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

At NANA we like to say we live in two worlds but have one spirit, meaning that we will not forsake our traditional values when participating in the modern economy. We can be Native people and bring Native values to the table when looking at business opportunities. In fact, I think it is our greatest strength.

On April 20th of this year, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for the UN met for its ninth time to discuss this very strength. This was the same day that oil started gushing into the Gulf of Mexico, serving as a reminder that responsible resource development requires our constant vigilance.

As a result of the forum, the U.N. Department of Public Information issued a press release entitled “Speakers Highlight the Devastating Impact of Logging, Mining, Other Mega Development Projects on Indigenous Lands, as the United Nations Permanent Forum Debate Continues.” I take issue with the title of this release, because it does not reflect NANA’s decades of positive experience in regards to mining. But many of the comments made during the forum by people from around the world spoke to me on a personal level, and they hint at universal truths that should guide us as indigenous peoples into the future.

Sandrea Creamer from the Global Women’s Caucus stated, “Development projects must be the result of having obtained the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous people.” Chief Karl Hill of the Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus said, “Indigenous development must be based on environmental and cultural sustainability that safeguards the needs of future generations.” And Jacquelyn Carino of the Asia Indigenous Peoples’ Caucus said that “development with culture and identity” meant that, throughout the development process, indigenous peoples’ rights to land, territories and self-determination were recognized, including the right to free, prior and informed consent for any projects that affected them.

We support these statements because, at NANA, we know firsthand the importance of “free, prior and informed consent.” We know the importance of holding the scales as we balance our traditional way of life with responsible resource development. And while we all watch the news and our hearts go out to the communities on the Gulf dealing with this tragic spill, we must also remember that in the midst of this development horror story, there are good stories to tell… and Red Dog Mine is such a story.

As we worked to develop resources in our region, NANA was blessed to have had the leadership that brought our Inupiaq values to the table when developing Red Dog Mine. As you may know, NANA owns Red Dog, a mine that for more than 30 years has had a direct positive impact on the lives of our shareholders by protecting the environment, providing jobs and economic opportunities for our people, and allowing us to invest in sustaining our cultural identity.

But the path to develop Red Dog was not easy. Before the mine was approved by our people, it took years of work, outreach, soul-searching and prayerful reflection. As we began down the road to development, NANA and our then-partner Cominco worked very hard to ensure that our consultation with key stakeholders was thorough.

In fact, consulting our people was the single most important step we took. As Native people, we know that our idea of consultation is very different from the rest of the corporate world’s idea of consultation. Our consultations are not necessarily your average corporate discussions. They are

continued on page 6
Chair’s Message
By Aqqaluk Lynge, ICC Chair

Sustainable and Inclusive Development
It is with great pleasure that I am able to represent ICC as Chair over the course of 2010-2014. I am honored to act on behalf of an organization that has successfully advocated for Inuit and indigenous rights for the past 30 years and will continue to do so well into the future.

The recent General Assembly held in Nuuk, Greenland this past July provided an important venue for Inuit delegates from Alaska, Canada, Russia and Greenland to come together and discuss many political, environmental and social matters facing our communities. It also provided an opportunity to celebrate our culture and demonstrate our talent. Conversely, the discussions at the general assembly highlighted many of the challenges Inuit will face now and into the future.

Looking ahead over the next several years it is clear that Inuit will have to act collectively, through such bodies as ICC, to proactively counteract the future hurdles and opportunities in front of us. We are already conscious of our changing climate and the associated challenges that it presents including increased Arctic transportation, increased oil and gas exploration, increased pollution, new tourism opportunities and ongoing Arctic research, among many others. The Arctic is receiving unprecedented attention and we, the Inuit, must find ways to make sure we are included in all activities taking place in the Arctic.

Today, we are faced with the difficult challenge of finding balance; balance between sustainable development and economic opportunity without sacrificing our resources and way of life. An important issue for ICC is to fight for sustainability. The main risk for the Inuit culture is if we fracture and do not act collectively. Under my leadership, ICC will act on behalf of all Inuit and without borders to keep industry, resource development, and politicians on track in support of sustainable and inclusive development from the bottom up.

Arctic Indigenous Leaders Sign Moscow Declaration
By ICC Alaska Staff

The Fifth Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit was held April 14-15 in Moscow, Russia. The Summit was organized and hosted by the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON). The theme of the Summit was Industrial Development of the Arctic under Climate Change-New Challenges for Indigenous Peoples.

Summit presentations and discussions focused on how climate change and increasing resource development are impacting the lives of Arctic indigenous peoples, a familiar story for those who live in the north. It was interesting to compare and contrast the situation in various Arctic countries.

ICC was represented by Carl Christian Olsen (Puju) from Greenland, Tatiana Achirgina from Chukotka and Jim Stotts from Alaska. Representatives from the Sami Council and the Arctic Athabaskan Council also attended, as well as government representatives from the Arctic states, the Arctic Council, the United Nations and several non-governmental organizations. Approximately 300 persons attended.

RAIPON celebrated its 25th Anniversary during the Summit. There was a traditional food feast, arts and crafts trade fair and spectacular cultural performances throughout the meeting and in the evenings. Thanks to RAIPON for being such a kind and generous host.

At the conclusion of the Summit, leaders signed the Moscow Declaration. To read the Moscow Declaration and presentation given by ICC Chair, Jim Stotts, please go to our website at www.iccalaska.org.
more like family meetings. We move forward cautiously and deliberately, because we know that the business decisions we make affect much more than just a stock price – they affect every aspect of our lives.

At our consultations we involve our Elders. They are our history keepers. They remind us of our values, of who we are and where we came from – they guide us to where we are going. Our Elders remind us that the choices we make today are promises to future generations, that we are entrusted with their lives and the lives of their grandchildren.

It is this type of consultation we conducted as we worked to develop Red Dog Mine. We traveled to each of our 11 villages many times over a period of about ten years to consult with our shareholders. And while we and our partners at Cominco provided information, the most important activity we engaged in was listening. We listened to the views and concerns of our people, and it was only after our shareholders agreed, that we entered into a long-term partnership that resulted in the development of the mine. And, I believe, that is the reason behind its success.

The world has changed a great deal since we began the process to develop Red Dog Mine more than 30 years ago. Today, our area of the globe is in much dispute. As we observe changes in the Arctic, we see that the world is looking to us, not only for answers and opportunities, but also as their battleground.

In our region, we are being pulled on all sides by the politics of global warming, development and conservation. NGOs and people from all parts of the political spectrum are coming to our region. Their message is the same: “We know what is best for this place; we know what is best for your people.”

We must tread carefully in our engagement with these groups. Our ICC Chair, Jimmy Stotts, has also counseled us in this regard. He points out: “the Inuit are being told to scale back our industrial development when we did not contribute to global warming.” He has warned us against forming partnerships with environmental activists because they are also opposed to subsistence activities, like whaling, seal and caribou hunting, and fishing, which form the cornerstone of our cultural identity.

We must heed his words and proceed with caution. Any mistake we make in this engagement can be costly and may – in the long run – limit our ability to make decisions about our lands – to determine our destiny.

I am concerned that these groups are working to create a political and economic environment where we must turn to them for permission, approval or partnership. They insist that we need to be protected from ourselves (pause) and they are dividing us.

As the Arctic becomes more accessible to the Outside world, as the world moves closer to our borders, into our waters, over our lands – we must stand together to protect them. We face strong Outside influences and we will need each other when this storm comes. If we are united, we will succeed. I urge all Inuit peoples of the North to make a pledge to consult not only with our own people but with each other, to work through our differences so we can face the world in the strength of unity.

We must remind the rest of the world who we are. We must remind them of our strength, resilience and adaptability. We must remind them that we are the original environmentalists and resource developers. We will determine – together – how to use our lands to benefit our people and protect our subsistence resources and cultures. We will have a place at the table in all decisions that affect our lands. We will show the world that though we speak our different languages, we are one people, we are the Inuit, and this land is ours. 

Jim Stotts, Alaska President, reported on events in Alaska. He provided a report on ICC Alaska operation and administrative matters, important meetings and travel, and ICC Alaska’s strategic planning process. He provided information on recent elections in Alaska, Tim Towarak’s appointment as Chairman of the U.S. Partners Subsistence Board, and workings of the U.S. Federal Ocean Policy Task Force and the State of Alaska Northern Waters Task Force.

Carl Christian Olsen (Puju), Greenland President, gave the Greenland country report. Within Greenland ICC has been active in the public debate on resource development in aluminum refining, offshore oil and gas exploration, uranium mining and commercial fishing. Cairn Energy announced that it has discovered oil and natural gas from its exploratory drilling program in Davis Strait. Other activities highlighted in the report include work with Arctic Council working groups on indigenous language and biodiversity issues. ICC Greenland is also a plaintiff in the European Union lawsuit on banning seal skin products.

Following the reports there were discussions on finances, Charter by Bylaw amendments, and the draft proceedings from the General Assembly.

The second day was devoted to analyzing the Nuuk Declaration to create an action plan for the next four years. The Council spent the day prioritizing the many initiatives and mandates contained in the Declaration to decide how to divide the work between the different offices and the office of the Chair.

The next Council meeting will be held in Canada in mid-February in conjunction with an Inuit Leaders Summit on Resource Development.
From Greenland, Hjalmar Dahl

Hjalmar Dahl is originally from the community of Qaqortoq in Southern Greenland. He has a long history with ICC. From 1981-2007, Hjalmar served as the Special Assistant to the first President of ICC and as head of the ICC Greenland office. He has been a member of the ICC Advisory Committee on United Nations issues, and has specialized on the rights of indigenous peoples for several years. He was directly involved in creation of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and was on the ICC negotiating team that worked for the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. For many years he was politically active at the grassroots level and was involved in creating the Inuit Ataqatigiit political party in Greenland. One of the main objectives of the party is to strengthen Inuit unity across the Arctic and to create closer cooperation and exchanges on educational and cultural issues. He received a degree from the Danish School of Pedagogy in 1974. In 2007, he received a degree from the Danish School of Journalism on communication.

From Canada, Kirt Kootoo Ejesiak

Born and raised in Iqaluit, Nunavut, Kirt Ejesiak has extensive experience in the public and private sector and is committed to solutions for improving the lives of Inuit. Kirt has an extensive background with the Nunavut Government and has represented Nunavut in many capacities at the regional, national and international level. He has been Chairman of the Board of the Iqaluit Museum; he served as deputy mayor of the city; and he was appointed Vice-Chair of Nunavut Trust. He has also worked for NTI, Kakivak, ITK, Paukturuit, and he served as President of the Inuit Non-Profit Housing Board in Ottawa. In 2005, Kirt became Nunavut’s first student at Harvard University when he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to attend the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. He completed his Masters of Public Administration there. Prior to his MPA, Kirt was Chief of Staff and Principal Secretary to the Premier of Nunavut. Kirt is currently working in Iqaluit and is Creative Director and CEO of Uqsiq Communications, a multi-media communications firm, and is managing partner of Gallery by the Red Boat.

From Chukotka, Elvira Tyunikova

Elvira Tyunikova comes from the Avatmit Eskimo clan, belongs to the Ankalin family, and was born in the village of Sireniki in the Chukotka region. Elvira first chose a career as an educator and studied at a pedagogical institute, but later found that she was more interested in administration and management. She changed career paths and completed her education at the Saint Petersburg Institute of Engineering and Economics, specializing in municipal and public administration. Elvira Tyunikova was a delegate to the 10th ICC General Assembly and became the Director for ICC Chukotka in the Provideniye Region. The region is recognized as the most diverse group of Russia’s Inuit, and they have already entrusted Elvira to represent their interests at General Assemblies of the ICC for the second time.

From Alaska, Vera Metcalf

Vera Kingeekuk Metcalf was born and raised in Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island, Alaska. She now lives in Nome and has been the Director of the Eskimo Walrus commission (EWC) with Kawerak, Inc. since 2002. She continues to promote local community participation in research that involves a community’s natural and cultural resources. As the EWC Director and with support of the nineteen commissioners representing coastal Alaska Native communities, she began several community-based projects documenting local traditional ecological knowledge and resource management practices, which she proposes as effective Pacific walrus management tools. As EWC Director, Vera is currently chair of the Pacific Walrus Conservation Fund and serves as the Special Advisor on Native Affairs on the Marine Mammal Commission. She also represents EWC on the Indigenous People’s Council for Marine Mammals, which was formed to “identify and address marine mammal issues of common concerns.” Vera is also currently on the steering committee of UAF’s Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy and recently served as a member on the US Arctic Research Commission (USARC). The USARC develops Arctic research plans and policy recommendations for the President of the United States. Finally, Vera served as a member of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Review Committee, which recommends and advises the Secretary of the Interior on regulations and disputes. During these years, she documented and presented the results of community-based research used for repatriation purposes.
The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) representing the Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka. ICC Alaska, along with other members, strives to strengthen, protect, and develop Inuit rights in the circumpolar region.

Newsletter Distribution

Please feel free to make copies and distribute our newsletter to others.

Save money, save time, save trees by signing up for e-mail delivery of the DRUM. Join our e-mail list and receive the newsletter within moments of its publication. Send a message to icc@iccalaska.org if you want to receive the newsletter by e-mail.

Past issues of our newsletter are posted online at www.iccalaska.org.