



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inuit Leader says Minister Cannon Prorogued the Arctic

Inuvik - 30 March 2010 - The Canadian President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Canada says that by shutting out Inuit at yesterday's 5-nation Arctic Ocean summit, Canada's Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon has essentially done to the Arctic what Prime Minister did to parliament last month.

"He prorogued the Arctic Council and essentially shut down meaningful dialogue on the whole Arctic", said Duane Smith from his home in Inuvik.

Mr. Smith stated that the reasons Inuit should have been at the table are many. "We should have been there because it is our right to be there and because we have a lot to contribute".

ICC has a seat at the 8-nation Arctic Council ministerial summits where it contributes to Arctic Council goal-setting, and at the Arctic Council working groups where it works collaboratively with Arctic states and scientists on substantive and pressing Arctic matters.

"By taking the summit out of the Arctic Council, Minister Cannon found a deft way of turning his back on inclusion", added Mr. Smith. Minister Cannon shrunk the size of the Arctic Council to focus only on the ocean and its coastline, "but that is exactly where Inuit live".

ICC had requested to speak to the Oceans 5 group on substantive issues like responsible resource development and the updating of ICC's groundbreaking "Principles & Elements for a Comprehensive Arctic Policy", but was denied.

ICC represents 160,000 Inuit from Russia, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. ICC Canada is mandated by the Inuit Land Claims regions to speak out on international matters of importance to Canadian Inuit.

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