



For Immediate Release

Inuit Circumpolar Council Alaska welcomes the United States' decision to endorse the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

December 17, 2010—The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Alaska, applauds and welcomes U.S. President Obama's announcement that the United States government will endorse the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

ICC Alaska is pleased that the United States government will join with the other nation states that have already ratified this important United Nations Declaration. ICC Alaska is waiting to see the detailed statement concerning U.S. support for the UNDRIP and hopes that the U.S. support is without qualifications or conditions. ICC Alaska looks forward to continued relationships with the United States government and indigenous peoples in the implementation of UNDRIP.

Founded in 1977, the Inuit Circumpolar Council is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) that represents approximately 160,000 Inuit from Chukotka (Russia), Alaska, Canada and Greenland. ICC holds Consultative Status II at the United Nations and played a key role during the more than twenty years of discussions and negotiations that lead to the adoption of the Declaration. Within the United States, ICC Alaska works on behalf the Inupiat of the North Slope, Northwest and Bering Straits; the Siberian Yupik of St. Lawrence Island; and the Central Yupik of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in Southwest Alaska to advance Inuit culture and society at the international level.

The Declaration represents the minimum moral standard for the treatment of indigenous peoples throughout the world. It is also a useful framework to guide government policies regarding indigenous communities and promotes the participation of indigenous peoples in the political processes and decisions that affect them. We firmly believe that the decision of the United States government to endorse the Declaration shows the rest of the world that it supports indigenous peoples worldwide.

“We have now achieved global consensus on this human rights instrument. Not a single State in the world opposes the *UN Declaration*. We know that the challenge is in the ongoing implementation and creating the "actions to match" the words of the Declaration. The instrument provides crucial guidelines for all political, economic, social, cultural rights of Indigenous peoples, including the Inuit of the circumpolar region. This is an important milestone in the history of our people and hopefully, the Arctic rim nations will embrace these standards in the context of our individual and collective human rights,” said Jim Stotts, ICC-Alaska President.

ICC ALASKA

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