



INUIT

PRESS RELEASE

November 7th - Inuit Day

November 7, 2016 – **Iqaluit, Nunavut** - Okalik Eegeesiak, ICC Chair, invites you to celebrate the Arctic and those who call it home on November 7th for “Inuit Day”. The 2006 Utqiagvik Declaration instructed ICC to annually proclaim November 7th, the birth date of ICC visionary, Eben Hopson Sr., as “Inuit Day”. Eben Hopson was one of the great historic political leaders of the Arctic and the founder of the Inuit Circumpolar Council.

This year, “Inuit Day” also marks the opening of the first day of the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Marrakech, Morocco. *“We are a long way from the Arctic, but strengthened by Eben Hopson’s courage and the belief that global leaders will find the courage to do what is right and equitable, we will address one of the most significant issues that face Inuit today – climate change in the Arctic”*, offered Okalik Eegeesiak.



ICC Founder Eben Hopson
Artist: Moses Wassilie

In 1978, Eben Hopson also travelled to Europe to address the London Press Corps., stating *“our entire North American Arctic homeland is a vast wildlife habitat nourishing a very fragile food chain in which we Inuit are but an important link. We Inuit are hunters. There aren't many subsistence hunting societies left in the world, but our Inuit Circumpolar community is one of them.”* This was a time when Inuit needed the support of the world to face the challenges of large-scale oil exploration in the Arctic and the potential impacts on Arctic marine mammals.

Similar to 1978, Inuit today are once again urging the global community to act. The Arctic continues to face unprecedented and unpredictable change. Through their knowledge and leadership in responding and adapting to climate change, however, Inuit are sending a critical message to the world - through meaningful partnership, real solutions can be found. The Inuit Circumpolar Council commits to continued work with Indigenous peoples, governments, NGOs, and others to realize the value of our place in the world and the rights of all Indigenous peoples.

Our language contains the memory of four thousand years of human survival through the conservation and good managing of our Arctic wealth. – Eben Hopson – June 13, 1977

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