



PRESS RELEASE

ICC Presents Case for Consultative Status to IMO Council

March 1, 2021 – Ottawa, Canada – The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) presented its case for consultative status to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and took questions from the international Council during a virtual session on February 22nd.

The IMO is also now an Observer at the Arctic Council, and coordination of Inuit shipping positions between these organizations is important to ensuring Inuit have a rightful say in Arctic marine governance. “Article 9 of the Utqiaġvik Declaration encouraged ICC to engage more fully in international organizations,” said ICC Chair Dalee Sambo Dorough. “Though presently active in a diverse range of intergovernmental organizations, the IMO is of particular interest because of our reliance upon the marine environment and the fact that Arctic shipping is increasing. Inuit must have a seat in organizations where decisions are being made that directly impact us. This has been a lengthy process and we hope that all IMO states will support our application.”

Lisa Koperqualuk, ICC Canada Vice President International has attended IMO meetings over the past three years. She is contributing the unique knowledge Inuit hold of the Arctic marine environment and the importance of this region to our food security and as major transportation routes for our communities. “As an IMO member of consultative status ICC will support the responsible management and sustainable development of Arctic waterways to ensure safe passage for vessels and crews while preserving the unique and now vulnerable ecosystem. Moreover, the health of the Arctic marine ecosystem ensures food security, continued hunting, fishing, and harvesting activities, ways of life, culture and language preservation, and continued Inuit health and stability.”

“Using Inuit perspectives and knowledge in discussions and framework development will provide the IMO with an extraordinary tool in which to inform its policy and work. Understanding this and bringing it to the table in discussions and responsive to their mandate, will provide the IMO with an extraordinary tool in which to inform its policy and work,” Lisa Koperqualuk added.

ICC brings together a united Inuit voice and offers IMO Inuit expertise and knowledge in a broad array of matters from the impacts of climate change, sustainable use of Arctic waters, and the importance of shipping to Inuit communities as a major means of resupply and for economic development. ICC is in the position to offer great insight and Inuit knowledge in many areas of the IMO’s strategic directions by informing the IMO on critical marine ecosystem functions.

ICC looks forward to the support from IMO member states which include the eight Arctic Council states of Canada, USA, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, and Russia. A decision by the IMO is expected in July, 2021.

-30-

Contact:

Kelly Eningowuk
ICC (Alaska)
kelly@iccalaska.org

Carole Simon
ICC (Canada)
csimon@inuitcircumpolar.com

The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an Indigenous Peoples’ Organization (IPO), founded in 1977 to promote and celebrate the unity of 180,000 Inuit from Alaska (USA), Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia). ICC works to promote Inuit rights, safeguard the Arctic environment, and protect and promote the Inuit way of life. In regard to climate change, we believe that it is crucial for world leaders and governments to recognize, respect and fully implement the human rights of Inuit and all other Indigenous peoples across the globe.