



ICC Press Release

Inuit Delegation Heading to COP26 Climate Change Meeting - Call on Global Leaders to Take Three Critical Actions

October 28, 2021 – Anchorage, Alaska – The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is leading a delegation of Inuit to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP26 meeting in Glasgow, Scotland scheduled for October 31 – November 12, 2021. The delegation includes ICC Chair Dalee Sambo Dorough (Head of Delegation), ICC Canada Vice-President (International) Lisa Koperqualuk, National Inuit Youth Council (NIYC) President Brian Pottle, Inuit elders, community members, and youth from Alaska, Canada, and Greenland.

“Inuit are facing an existential threat and are experiencing a violation of our fundamental human right to a safe and healthy environment,” said ICC Chair Dalee Sambo Dorough. “For over 30 years Inuit have witnessed an Arctic environment eroded by climate change. At this critical climate change meeting Inuit are asking global leaders to support us in taking three important actions.”

ICC has prepared a COP26 Position Paper outlining the three actions that together would be the “tools needed to protect the Arctic”. Inuit are calling on global leaders to:

- 1) Make unprecedented and massive efforts to cap global temperature rise.**
- 2) Value Indigenous Knowledge and leadership in climate action and support Indigenous participation in climate governance.**
- 3) Recognize the oceans and cryosphere as critical ecosystems that must be protected through partnership with Inuit.**

“Living with climate change has been our reality for many years. In mid-October I was in my home community, Puvirnituq, in Northern Quebec. There was no snow, no frost yet, not even ice forming. There are usually blizzards and plenty of snow and Inuit eagerly waiting to travel on the ice,” said ICC Canada Vice-President (International) Lisa Koperqualuk. “The rest of the world is now experiencing what it means to live with climate change. This year people were hit by floods in Europe and Asia, fires in Canada, Russia, and the United States, and droughts in Brazil and Madagascar.”

Just over a decade ago in 2009 at COP15, Inuit advocate Sheila Watt-Cloutier spoke of the Arctic as a barometer for the rest of the world. The Arctic was already in a dire state and her shared words of warning, also provided guidance. She stressed that “if we protect the Arctic, we protect the planet.”

Inuit youth, like youth around the world, are now facing a precarious future. “We need more than words,” said Brian Pottle, President of the National Inuit Youth Council (NIYC). “The Arctic as we have known it for thousands of years is slipping away as permafrost thaw and ice melts. Our home is becoming unrecognizable.”

The ICC delegation at COP26 will lead side events on Marine Governance; Youth and Infrastructure; and Inuit knowledge on climate change; resiliency, adaptation and mitigation. There will also be an “Inuit Night” held on November 5th at the Cryosphere Pavilion. International Inuit Day takes place during COP26 on November 7th. An entire day of commemorative events will be held at Strathclyde University and is being supported by the Scottish Government. Documentary films “Last Ice”, and “Happening to Us” will be screened, and cultural performances are planned.

ICC leaders and members of the ICC delegation will also participate in numerous other sessions, including the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) Facilitative Working Group, Canadian Embassy, Clean Energy Alliance, WWF, and the Arctic Council’s Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group.

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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.