



INUIT

## ICC Press Release Post-COP27

### One Step Forward, Two Steps Back – Gains and losses at COP 27

It took nearly two extra days, but this year's UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, were saved by a landmark agreement to establish a Loss and Damage fund that will see the world's most vulnerable peoples compensated for their losses due to climate change.

"The Loss and Damage fund is a first step to ensuring climate justice. In the further development of the fund, we will work hard to ensure that Inuit, who have been on the front lines of climate changes for decades, will have equitable access to the fund," said Sara Olsvig, ICC's International Chair. "Despite the severe urgency of climate change and the increased extreme weather events, parties failed to agree on adding strong language to phase out fossil fuels."

"Other concerns for Inuit in the Sharm El-Sheikh final agreement include the fact that there are fewer references to Indigenous Peoples and human rights than in the 2021 COP26 statement in Glasgow", she said, "or the kinds of emissions reduction commitments needed to keep the target of holding global average temperature increases to 1.5C or less."

"The lack of human rights language is also a major concern." said Lisa Koperqualuk, President of ICC Canada.

"Language on human rights was on and off the table during the COP27, and the end result is a step back as the language included last year in the Glasgow Pact is now gone, which shows that human rights are not seen as fundamental principles by states, unfortunately."

"It's one step forward, two steps back," Koperqualuk added. "But we don't give up."

Both Olsvig and Koperqualuk pointed to a number of positive outcomes for the Inuit delegation this year.

"Our message and recommendations were heard everywhere," said Olsvig. "Our delegates spoke on many platforms and interacted with many world leaders, other Indigenous Peoples and government delegations."

For COP 27, Inuit produced a strong position paper with five clear recommendations that highlighted Inuit requests to international leaders, the science community, private industry and others (see annex below). A number of high-level meetings took place including with Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Canada and Canada's Ambassador for Climate Change, Catherine Stewart. National Inuit Youth Council President, Brian Pottle, met with the President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, together with Indigenous representatives from the other regions of the world. ICC International Chair Sara Olsvig took part in a roundtable with US Special Presidential Envoy on Climate Change John Kerry and met the Danish Minister for Climate Dan Jørgensen.

ICC participated in numerous side events and co-organized events together with the Saami Council on Arctic Governance and Climate Change and the Quaker UN Office on Arctic Climate Justice.

Inuit worked with the Arctic Caucus as well as with the larger Indigenous Peoples Caucus and were involved in the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform Facilitative Working Group knowledge sharing events with elders and youth.

"I want to commend our youth and elder delegates at the COP27," said ICC Chair Sara Olsvig. "They all provided important insights to our reality as an Arctic Indigenous People, and their participation was extremely valuable."

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Founded in 1977 by the late Eben Hopson of Sr. of Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow), Alaska, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) has flourished and grown into a major international non-governmental organization representing approximately 180,000 Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia). ICC works to promote Inuit rights, safeguard the Arctic environment, and protect and promote the Inuit way of life.

## Annex: ICC's Recommendations to COP 27

**Recommendation 1:** Inuit led adaptation and mitigation to climate change remain priorities, and we call upon the world to take immediate action necessary to address the inequity of climate impacts by respecting our inherent right of self-determination in decision-making.

**Recommendation 2:** Inuit knowledge and experience have a key role to play in determining the future. Inuit experience, approaches and leadership must be at the forefront of national and global discussions and decisions to support the adaptive and holistic approaches and decision-making needed in today's rapidly changing environment.

**Recommendation 3:** Any engagement with Inuit must be equitable and ethical and guided by the protocols for engagement put forward by Inuit internationally and locally. ICC recently developed the Circumpolar Inuit Protocols for *Equitable, Ethical Engagement* and aims at ensuring a paradigm shift within institutions and forums that engage with the Arctic and Inuit, to guarantee that *nothing about us is done without us*. There was a lot of interest in this and Sara focussed on it in her presentation on the final day of the Canadian Pavilion. Mentioned in all presentations.

**Recommendation 4:** Inuit are an integral part of the Arctic environment. The global community must recognize that our environment, especially our ocean and ice, plays a critical role in global temperature regulation, biodiversity and overall health and wellbeing of the world. The Arctic environment must be protected through partnership with Inuit. Consistently reinforced this message, especially at cryosphere pavilion session

**Recommendation 5:** We urge governments to recognize the false dichotomy between the developing and developed world, and advocate for and pursue opportunities to establish a fund that Inuit may equitably access similar to climate vulnerable communities in non-G20 countries. We also seek an Indigenous focal point within the Global Environment Facility for financial assistance.