



INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE

A peaceful Arctic through mutually respectful cooperation

January 27, 2025 - Many words and ideas about the future of Greenland and Arctic cooperation have been expressed in the past few weeks. Inuit Circumpolar Council have closely followed the debates and events. The attention to the self-governing nation Kalaallit Nunaat – Greenland showcases how increased self-determination of Inuit through various agreements and arrangements across our region is affecting not only Arctic cooperation, but also world politics. The past weeks also showcase how important the Arctic is for the international agenda. Through deliberate efforts and engagement in dialogue across state border we must continue to keep our region peaceful.

There is no such thing as the better colonizer

For almost five decades, Inuit Circumpolar Council have paved the way for Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia) to work together. In our endeavor for mutually respectful coexistence, ICC has garnered the support of changing governments and heads of states, and we have always cherished their cooperation and support. On the road ahead, we call for a continued mutual respect for our differences and rights.

We do not wish to debate which state is better or worse to live in or is a better or worse colonizer. Rather we want to debate how we improve Inuit lives, livelihoods, wellbeing, and self-determination across all our regions. Not least, we welcome truthful focus and reflection on the inequities Inuit continue to face through colonization. The progress towards decolonization can only occur by working in full partnership with Inuit.

We make deals the Inuit way

Inuit have occupied our vast lands and seas across the Arctic for millennia, well before colonization, and we will be here in the future. The Arctic is our traditional homeland, the resources of the Arctic sustain our communities, and have done so for time immemorial. For decades, we have exercised peaceful dialogues to increase our self-determination, we

have made good deals on trade and development. Across our regions we have seen changing levels of military presence over time, and we are acutely aware of the significance of our homelands to geopolitical interests of many states.

We recognize and are acutely aware, that the current geopolitical situation is challenging, but times have changed since Inuit lands were mere commodities that could be bought and sold. In today's world, we are active participants in decision-making about our lands and resources. We are beyond the times of typical colonial attitudes of superiority. The arrangements Inuit have negotiated with governments and states are deals done the Inuit way, and we will continue to support each other in each of our endeavors for greater freedom.

ICC welcomes Greenland's leading role in the Arctic Council

An important body that has supported peaceful Arctic coexistence and cooperation since the mid-1990s is the Arctic Council. Since its establishment, the Arctic Council has not only brought together the eight Arctic states; the US, Russian Federation, Canada, Kingdom of Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, but also Arctic Indigenous Peoples, through the Indigenous Peoples' Organizations that are Permanent Participants in the Council.

Inuit Circumpolar Council is a co-founder of the Arctic Council. We call on all governments of the Arctic states to continue engaging in and strengthening the Arctic Council. The Arctic Council is a space for people-to-people and cross-border cooperation based on international agreements. A space that we must continue to safeguard and strengthen, as a depoliticized room for cooperation in the Arctic.

We warmly welcome the announcement of the governments of Denmark and Greenland, that Greenland will appoint an Arctic Ambassador on behalf of the Kingdom of Denmark and take the role as Arctic Council Chair, when the Kingdom of Denmark takes over the Chairship in the Arctic Council in May. The stewardship of the Council is showcased by the appointment an Arctic Indigenous leadership is timely and an important message to the world.

Above all, Inuit stand together and call for a continued peaceful Arctic cooperation. We will not let ourselves be divided by state interests. On the contrary, we stand together in cherishing our diversities and our pragmatic and decades-long relationships with states.

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ICC is an international Indigenous Peoples' Organization, founded in 1977 to strengthen unity among Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka. ICC promotes Inuit rights and interests at the international level, develops and encourages long term policies that safeguard the Arctic environment, and seeks full and effective participation and meaningful engagement in the political, economic, and social development of the Arctic region.

ICC holds Consultative Status II at the United Nations Economic and Social Council, is a co-founder and Permanent Participant at the Arctic Council, an Observer at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and holds Provisional Consultative Status at the International Maritime Organization alongside other advisory and consultative roles across numerous international fora.

