



June 14, 2011

***Message from Makivik Corporation to Inuit, Beneficiaries of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement and Members of the Makivik Corporation***

Subject: Referendum on the Nunavik Regional Government

Ai,

As Makivik Corporation, we would like to inform you of the steps being taken to follow up on the creation of a new form of government for Nunavik, in light of the referendum held on April 27.

In the month following the referendum, the reasons and the consequences of the result have been carefully reviewed and concrete follow-up actions carefully thought out in consultation with Makivik's board of directors. In fact, the board of directors met on May 24, making it now possible to share with you the outcome of these reflections.

We want to begin by stating clearly that we fully accept and understand the referendum result as expressed by Nunavimmiut. Your decision has been humbly received.

Through the referendum, Nunavimmiut called for the protection and enrichment of our culture and language, as well as more substantial powers from both Québec and Canada that will allow us to better manage our development and consolidate our efforts with the imminent implementation of the Plan Nord and other large-scale projects. Nunavik Inuit must be at centre of any change in our territory and the form of governance that we choose must reflect our concerns.

Never will we permit our culture and language to be sacrificed to change and evolution. We should be proud of who we are and promote our differences in a manner that is respectful and understanding of other peoples. As well, our ancestral and traditional rights won with so much hard work through treaties and nation-to-nation agreements with the governments of Canada and Québec will never be altered or weakened. No president of the Makivik Corporation who would accept to cede these rights could go on claiming to be the spokesperson of Nunavik Inuit. Let there be no misunderstanding for once and for all.

The proposition submitted to you on April 27 involved only the amalgamation of three existing organisations under one roof and the creation of a legislative assembly with a universally elected leader. A second phase held the promise of negotiations for further powers. The People of Nunavik decided that this proposition was too little. You must moreover know that this two-stage approach was proposed by the governments of Canada and Québec.

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**Notwithstanding, the right to self-determination –our right to choose how we will be governed– is ours alone. Together, and I repeat together, we must make sure that everyone has his and her own place in this process and in the form of government that we eventually choose.**

Right after the results of the referendum were known, Makivik started to take the necessary steps to hold a special general assembly to be organized this fall, probably in October, to discuss how Nunavik Inuit want to follow up with the Nunavik regional government and what will be the foundations of future discussions with the governments and our conditions. This event is a possibility for now as we have to receive answers from the Government of Canada and from the Government of Quebec to our financial assistance requests. We are confident in our great capacity to think through problems and our common desire to improve our shared living conditions. We will call on your support and solidarity to ensure that the debate is sound, respectful and constructive.

Each community will be asked to delegate four representatives. These representatives must be able to express their thoughts on a form of government for Nunavik. Every voice will be listened to and, at the end of our assembly, we will have a clearer idea of the direction we must take, of our future.

We would like all Inuit and beneficiaries of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* to be active participants. Saputiit on behalf of the Youth, the Kativik Regional Government, the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services and the Kativik School Board and others that might have an interest must also be given an opportunity to make their views known. Finally, we want to emphasize our desire to see the leaders of the referendum's no-camp be truly involved in this discussion. Every point of view must be heard.

As Makivik said many times in different public forum, the ultimate goal of the Inuit of Nunavik is to gain autonomy from the governments. There are for sure many ways to achieve this and we want to do it with respect, understanding and open-mind.

At certain important times in history, it is necessary to stop and take one's bearings for the benefit of all. We are now at one such crossroads. The time has come to decide which route we will choose next.

Thank you.



Pita Aatami  
President, Makivik Corporation