

*THE ELDERS' RETREAT DECLARATION*

As declared by Inuit Elders of Nunavik

On the occasion of the Katimajit Conference

August 23 and 24<sup>th</sup> 2007

## THE ELDERS'S RETREAT DECLARATION

on the occasion of the Katimajit Conference

Nunavik Inuit Elders participating to an Elders and Regional Leaders' Retreat at the Old Chimo held on August 15 and 16, 2007,

**RECALLING** the early vision of our Inuit Ancestors to found and maintain a strong Inuit Community;

**FURTHER RECALLING** that the deepest roots of our Inuit culture should guide our action and should be highly considered when building our modern society;

**HAVING DISCUSSED** what type of society would Nunavik like to have in 20-30 years from now;

**HAVING HEARD** the deliberations of delegates and input from leaders and observers at this Elders' Retreat on several important matters, including those relating to the role of an individual, the family, the Elders, the Youth and the Nunavik Regional Government in building a modern and strong society,

**HAVING HEARD FURTHER** the Inuit values and principles that should form the basis of our action;

**HAVING DISCUSSED** very important social issues such as Youth Protection, Alcohol and Drugs Addictions, Family Violence, Poverty and Housing;

**RECOGNIZING WITH GRATITUDE** the enormous efforts of Makivik and other Nunavik organizations over the past years in their dedication to find appropriate solutions to these social issues;

**GREATLY AFFECTED** by the Report on Youth Protection in Nunavik issued by the Human Rights Commission and dated April 2007;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that new known and unknown challenges are facing Inuit over the next years;

**HEREBY:**

1. **STRONGLY WELCOME** the recommendations contained in the above-mentioned Report on Youth Protection in Nunavik;
2. **REAFFIRM THE COMMITMENT** of the Elders of Nunavik to developing and maintaining a strong Inuit Society based on principles and characteristics that define our culture;
3. **URGE** the Organizations of Nunavik, the Government of Québec and the Government of Canada to make every effort possible to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our Youth to live in;
4. **CALL UPON** federal and provincial governments to recognize the inherent rights of Inuit with respect to sustainable hunting, co-management, and other subsistence activities;
5. **RECEIVE WITH APPRECIATION** the important involvement from Nunavik Inuit youth;
6. **WELCOME WITH GRATITUDE** the guidance received from Inuit elders at this Retreat;
7. **REQUEST** the Nunavik Organizations, the Government of Québec and the Government of Canada to accurately determine the nature and scope of required changes to enhance our well-being while protecting our own identity and culture;

The Elders of Nunavik