

Speaking Notes

Item: *Presentation to the Special Senate Committee the Arctic - Study of themes raised in the Arctic Policy Framework Discussion Guide*

Date: Monday September 10, 2018 at 4:15pm

Location: Explorer Hotel – Janvier Board Room, Yellowknife NT

1. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson, Chair
The Hon. Patricia Bovey, Deputy Chair
The Hon. Mary Coyle, member
The Hon. Joseph A. Day, member
The Hon. Nicole Eaton, member
The Hon. Victor Oh, member

2. OPENING REMARKS

- Uvluumi. Good afternoon Mister Chair and Members of the Committee.
- We are pleased to come 1100 kms to meet you here in Yellowknife, although we do regret that we are not able to host you in Inuvik this time around.
- For those of you I have not yet met, my English name is Duane Smith and I am the Chair & CEO of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. I have with me, Bob Simpson, Director of Governmental Affairs.
- I will give you a brief background on our organization and on our broader Inuit Homeland so that you understand our context and then I will address the topic of this study.

3. BACKGROUND

- The Inuvialuit Settlement Region is located in the Western Arctic segment of *Inuit Nunangat* - or Inuit Homeland - which includes the lands, ice and waters of the Mackenzie

Delta, the Beaufort Sea and the Arctic Ocean. There are six communities within the settlement region: Aklavik and Inuvik are located along the banks of the Mackenzie River, and Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk and Ulukhaktok are located along on the coast of the Beaufort Sea. This region represents nearly one(1) million square KMs of Canada.

- All four Inuit regions within Inuit Nunangat represents close to 40 percent of Canada.
- There are currently nearly 6000 Inuvialuit beneficiaries that reside in the ISR, all over Canada and beyond.
- Inuvialuit, through the Committee for Original People's Entitlement initiated land claim negotiations with the Government of Canada in 1970. This came in response to increasing development activity in our lands and waters over which we had little influence. The *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* (IFA) was eventually signed and given effect by the *Western Arctic (Inuvialuit) Claims Settlement Act* on June 25, 1984. The IFA was the first comprehensive land claim agreement settled north of the 60th parallel and only the second settled in Canada's history.
- This Agreement is not just ours. It belongs to both Inuvialuit *and* to Canada. Under it, we each have responsibility to ensure its full implementation.
- The structure of our relationships between our regions is integral to how we have been approaching the Arctic Policy Framework discussions.

4. ARCTIC POLICY FRAMEWORK THEMES

- As an overarching statement, we believe that the distinctions-based approach to which Canada committed in Principle 10 *Principles respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous peoples* is within the APF to ensure that the unique rights, interests and circumstances of Inuit are acknowledged, affirmed, and implemented.
- A distinction-based approach needs to apply both to the structure of the policy as well as its application. Effective program design must respect distinctions on how programs and services are delivered in each region to ensure policies and programs are effective and consistently applied across Inuit Nunangat and optimized to provide maximum benefit to Inuit. This allows each Inuit region to take advantage of their unique legal, jurisdictional and policy contexts to maximize federal investments.
- Our Inuit working group has made good progress on the Inuit Chapter.

Comprehensive Arctic infrastructure

- The Arctic is behind, though, when it comes to certain key pieces of infrastructure. Canada's policy should be to close the infrastructure deficit between Inuit Nunangat and the rest of Canada.
- On December 22, 2016, the CRTC declared Internet a basic service. According to CRTC Chairman Blais, "The future of our economy, our prosperity and our society" require even our remote Arctic communities to be connected for the 21st Century. We need high speed Internet with built-in redundancy in our communities. This will make available online education and e-health services in our coastal communities. This has already found success in Ulukhaktok where 3 students graduated from high school by accessing online instruction.
- We also need a secure and affordable source of cleaner energy than the imported fuels we are still using in our communities today. Given our common objectives of mitigating the immediate impacts of climate change and releasing families from the crippling cost of imported energy, Canada needs to come to the table with us to plan a way out of this cycle of pollution and poverty. This cannot be achieved through small disconnected pots of funding. It needs commitment, a common vision which can only be done through partnership.
- The third piece that Arctic Indigenous communities need to graduate from 'outpost' to Canada's North is marine infrastructure. We know that our arctic coast is unprepared and vulnerable from a national security perspective. The APF must give priority to our national security on our Arctic frontier and involve Inuit in the planning.
- We also know that a functioning deep-water port is a key to supporting a variety of industries including natural resources and tourism. Not to mention sovereignty and emergency response preparedness. Another is airstrips and the lack of quality. Due to the condition of one communities airstrip at this time, only certain aircraft are able to land which creates concern if a medivac were required as the airstrip is so soft.

Strong Arctic people and communities

- **Long Term Care Facility.** At the policy level, it must be acknowledged that moving our seniors south to get access to appropriate care is robbing them of their later years and robbing the next generation of the wisdom they have to share. Our elders are not pieces that can be moved around – keeping our families and communities whole is an essential aspect of our strength, our culture and wellbeing.
- **Education** – Pre-Trades and Science Labs in each school – e-Learning

- Women (victim of family violence) Shelters
- **Housing Strategy.** Our Inuit organizations have demonstrated our ability to construct quality affordable and culturally appropriate housing for our residents. The APF should set housing and the local benefits that emanate from these projects as a constant priority for the federal government.
- **Children in Care and keeping Indigenous kids connected with their communities and culture.** The APF should drive the development of further Children in Care legislation that authorizes openness and transparency with respect to the location and condition of children removed from Arctic communities.
- **Eliminate Tuberculosis**
- **Reduce the rate of suicide**

Strong, sustainable and diversified Arctic economies

- The Arctic Policy Framework must reflect the obligations included in our settled land claims agreement regarding economic development and opportunity. These provisions were included because negotiators acknowledged that one of the main drivers of capacity-building is the opportunity to self reliance and meaningful contributors to Canada's society.
- After years of battling with a procurement department that applies a one-size fits all approach, it has become clear that a new land claim-specific approach to procurement is necessary in the Arctic. The APF should provide authority to engage in modern procurement policies within our regions that are also reflective of OUR land claim obligations.
- The APF should provide direction to Canada to engage with our land claim organizations in an economic stimulus analysis that will form the foundation of long-term economic development planning. This way, Canada, territories, provinces and Indigenous organizations can align our respective priorities and efficiently allocate our respective resources. Ad hoc funding is not sufficient.
- As I have noted above, key pieces of infrastructure are required to support the development of sustainability businesses in the Arctic. Having the economic stimulus analysis and the long-term economic development plan in hand will ensure that we are able to maximize these major investments in infrastructure in a way that promotes local economic development and capacity-building in the near term.
- The APF should further acknowledge that if conservation is a priority for Canada, it cannot be achieved through the sacrifice of the few opportunities that exist in the Arctic. On the

contrary, this policy should require the federal government to create economic benefits through their conservation initiatives. Further, in international venues, conservation commitments must be tied to tangible local benefits including through monetization.

Arctic science and Indigenous knowledge

- We have been working with Canada on various baseline environmental studies for the Beaufort Delta Region for more than a decade. We are currently working on the Beaufort Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment, which Canada wants to use as a basis for its resource development planning. This is important work and the stakes are very high.
- For the work to stand the test of time and continue to be useful, the initial investment has to be adequate (which it isn't), and a process to establish a database that contributes to long term vision planning.
- The APF should provide direction to Canada's representatives on how both Indigenous Knowledge and western science can be better synergized to reflect a all-inclusive approach.

Protecting the environment and conserving Arctic biodiversity

- Careful, efficient and sustainable uses of natural resources have been necessary to Inuit survival for centuries. As Inuit continue to rely on biological diversity, advancing into the 21st century, Inuit will rely on other environmental resources across the Arctic as well.
- A rapidly changing Arctic means that Canada and Inuit must take aggressive and innovative action to conserve and manage environmental resources, both for current and future generations. This applies to traditional activities such as harvesting and also the infrastructure that was built to separate waste from the environment.
- Sustainable management of environmental resources requires an integrated approach between Inuit and federal agencies responsible for terrestrial and marine biodiversity conservation and management. Sustainable management also requires that Inuit and Inuit traditional knowledge receives equal weight with western scientific principles.
- The principle of Inuit self-determination means that environment and biodiversity conservation initiatives should only proceed in areas and on issues defined by Inuit. Self-determination also means that Inuit priorities for economic development which impact on environmental resources will be respected and advanced as joint Inuit-Crown priorities.

The Arctic in a global context

- The APF must direct Canada to assert the utmost care in the granting of access to foreign-owned companies in our national resources. We sit on trillions of cubic feet of natural gas at a time when other heavily populated countries need energy and are willing to go to great lengths to get it. The Arctic must not be for sale to companies that have not demonstrated the requisite level of commitment to the Canadian Arctic and a good corporate social responsibility track record.
- The APF must also acknowledge the vulnerability of the Arctic region geopolitical forces. Inuit are literally on the edge of Canada's jurisdiction and the high seas. This policy should provide direction to Canada to engage directly with Inuit in the management of our national security assets on a long-term basis (NWS).
- In the interest of Arctic Sovereignty, the policy must provide for the inclusion of Inuit in planning and operations.
- Canada must continue its participation in the work of the Arctic Council and collaborate with the Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada) in this work.
- Inuit must be invited to participate in the next (non-technical) states of dialogue on Canada's submission to UNCLOS.

5. CONCLUSION

- Thanks for listening to our submission today.
- I am happy to take questions.