

***Inuit Circumpolar Council  
wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year***

Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) represents to day about 160,000 individuals from the east coast of Greenland across the North American continent to the coasts of Chukotka at the Bering Strait. ICC is the only indigenous peoples' organisation in the Kingdom of Denmark, and the prime objective for the organisation is to work with *environment, culture, indigenous peoples' rights*, and to formulate an *Arctic Policy*.

ICC was the first organisation within the Arctic to prepare a detailed *environmental strategy*. For this work ICC has received several international awards, but the work is continuing, among other things with the "Sila-Inuk" project where we are mapping and documenting the consequences of the climate change for Greenland and its inhabitants. This project is conducted in close cooperation with the organisation of fishermen and hunters in Greenland, KNAPK. On a more general level, ICC has always advocated the rights of the indigenous peoples to utilize the living resources.

ICC operates in four countries with different national languages and several dialects of the Inuit language, as well as different writing systems, that derive from the colonisation by four different nation states and whereby the indigenous languages were repressed in advantage of the foreign languages. In order to strengthening the Inuit language and the *Inuit culture*, ICC has established a language commission that is working on the development of a common written language based on the Latin alphabet in order to ease up the access to literature written in the various dialects.

The main outcome of the many years, ICC has been working within the UN system has been that the indigenous peoples themselves defines who they are and what values they have. With the establishment of the UN Permanent Forum, we have together with the other indigenous peoples of the World created an international recognised platform, from where we can continue our work with also having *indigenous peoples' rights* recognised.

Through the preparation of a *Comprehensive Arctic Policy* we got the basic tool to gain influence on the political, economical and social development in the four Homelands of the Inuit. It has been reflected on many frontiers both nationally and internationally, amongst that our participation in the Arctic Council and the many other places where the Arctic problems are on the agenda.

The very best wishes of a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you!

Aqqaluk Lyngé,  
President, ICC-Greenland