



**ΔοΔΓ ΚΑΙΓΓ ΚΑΤΑΜΙ**  
**INUIT TAPIRIIT KANATAMI**

**2007 - 2008**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

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## **PRESIDENT**

Another year has passed since my election in 2006 as President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

I am mindful of the great honour that attaches to the position of President of ITK, and the important contributions of those who have held this position before me, and I have gone about my work accordingly.

The work of ITK, of course, far eclipses the contributions that any single individual can make, and I am grateful for the hard work of members of the Board of Directors and staff.

Inuit have long prided ourselves on our identity as the original people of the Arctic, and as one of three Aboriginal peoples recognized by Canada's Constitution. In our network of national, regional, and community organizations we have consistently been able to act with a high level of internal unity and common purpose. That has been, and remains, a core value. It has been, and remains, one of our key strengths.

In reviewing the last year, I would like to offer a few comments on both the international and domestic contexts in which we operate.

At the international level, we have seen both positive developments and things that are more troubling.

In September 2007, after more than twenty years of hard work by a coalition of Aboriginal peoples, human rights organizations, and sympathetic states, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The vote in favour of adoption of the Declaration was 144 to 4. Sadly, Canada was one of the four states to vote against the Declaration. Notwithstanding Canada's vote, the Declaration now forms part of the international human rights regime, and the world's governments and peoples are better positioned to judge the laws, policies and behaviour of all countries against the principles and standards set out in the Declaration.

All Canadians should be pleased at the resolution adopted by the House of Commons in April expressing support for the Declaration and seeking its full implementation within Canada. History is clearly on the side of the Declaration, and I am confident that the good sense of Canadians will eventually cause the position of the Government of Canada to evolve and progress. We are already seeing a transformation of that kind in Australia, another country that voted against the Declaration at the United Nations last year.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the very valuable work in support of the Declaration by other aboriginal organizations and human rights organizations. As Inuit, we are often confronted by international animal protection groups that distort and demean hunting activities and practices. It is important to remember that we have allies as well as critics in the wider world of non-governmental organizations.

Over the last year, European anti-sealing groups have continued to threaten sealing. While their attacks have focused on sealing in Atlantic Canada, history teaches us that it is very difficult to shield Inuit communities and households from the economic damage that ensues from bans of seal pelts and products. The willingness of the federal government to now challenge European bans of seal pelts and products under international trade agreements is welcome, but such action must be only part of a larger strategy to inform international public opinion about scientific and cultural realities.

Over the last year, scientific studies have continued to underscore that global climate change is a threat to humanity as a whole. While there have been some high level efforts towards achieving world wide consensus on what needs to be done, and what will be done, we are still a long way

from a solid, reliable plan of action. ITK continues to push hard on both the central importance of an effective national project to reduce carbon emissions and the need for adaptation measures in the Arctic where the affects of climate change are already been experienced in tangible ways.

Within Canada, the past year has also been a mixed year of achievements and disappointments.

Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples continue to lag badly behind other Canadians in core measurements of economic and social well being, particularly in the key areas of health, housing and education. While ITK and other Inuit organizations are optimistic that private sector investment and creativity can generate many new jobs and opportunities for Inuit, it would be most unwise to think that the trickle down dimensions of private sector business activities can soon close stark gaps in basic living conditions and prospects.

The federal government must show more leadership, and a focused sense of its legal and political responsibilities, to make sure that social policies shaping the Arctic are adequate to equip regions, communities and families with a more confident sense of a better future. We need to invest in Inuit youth now, so that they can take on the challenge of the future. And we need to ensure that the elderly, and others who are vulnerable, are not neglected and marginalized.

The Canadian Arctic, and the broader circumpolar area, have captured a much greater amount of Canadian and international attention than many years in the past. Much of this attention has focused on climate change, the possibilities of massive natural resource development and wealth, and the legal, diplomatic and military aspects of sovereignty and of relations among Arctic states. Much less attention has been paid to crucial cultural and demographic realities of the Canadian Arctic. Inuit are the ancestral inhabitants of the Canadian Arctic; the history of the human occupation of Canadian Arctic is primarily the history of Inuit.

Inuit are, and expect to remain, the majority of the permanent population of the four regions of Inuit Nunaat, and have legitimate rights and roles built around that expectation. The only sound basis for Canadian public policy making for the Arctic must be ongoing and genuine partnership with Inuit, and such a partnership must confront and overcome fundamental social and economic problems and gaps. Put simply sovereignty begins at home; Inuit are here to stay and Inuit count; and development must help people as well as generate wealth.

Throughout the past year, I have consistently used my position as President of ITK to make these points in a great variety of places. I have put them forward to southern Canadian audiences as part of my national speaking tour. I have raised them at meetings with Ministers and senior government officials. I have discussed them with academics and researchers. These points have figured in many ITK position papers and commentaries on public events, including ITK's comments on last fall's Speech from the Throne and this spring's federal budget. ITK has expanded these points into a proposal for an integrated Arctic Strategy, offering its own ideas in early and constructive response to the federal governments announced intention to develop a northern strategy.

I won't pretend that these points, and my pressing them, have been enthusiastically greeted in all places and on all occasions. In my public speeches and exchanges with individual Canadians I have detected a great deal of understanding and support. With those holding political and bureaucratic office, the reception has been more mixed, although usually more positive as opportunities for genuine dialogue have emerged. Notwithstanding differences in response, it is an important part of the role of the head of Canada's national Inuit organization to speak truth to power.

The media work conducted during the past year has helped in communicating ITK's issues to Canadians across the country - in the Arctic, Ottawa, and across southern Canada. ITK's own media, including Inuktitut Magazine, and our web site are great vehicles to get our messages across to a wide audience. This, coupled with our ongoing work to be present in the national media have assisted in advancing issues for the Inuit of Canada. In 2007-2008 I have granted interviews for numerous articles that have figured in national newspapers and magazines, and for a great number of television, and radio programs.

The membership of ITK is the four regional land claims organizations, and ITK works as closely as it can with those members on matters of shared national and regional priority. Like other Inuit, I take as much pride in seeing Inuit agendas move forward at the regional level as at the national level. It is also important to remember that the work of ITK on a day to day basis is carried out by the three major policy divisions within ITK: the health division; the environment division; and the social and economic development division. The more detailed work of those divisions is set out in other parts of this Annual Report.

There are a few accomplishments over the last year, in addition to the things that I have already identified, that I would highlight as having particular importance for me:

- Holding the Inuit Health Summit in Kuujuaq in January 2008.
- Hosting the National Inuit Education Summit with the Governor General in attendance in Inuvik, April 2008.
- Launching the Inuit Knowledge Centre in ITK- I will have much more to say about this initiative in my 2009 report.
- Hosting the first Inuit specific meeting with the Minister of Environment on adapting to Climate Change in Iqaluit.

We plan to make sure that the voice of Inuit at the national level is heard within and beyond Canada for a long time to come.

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**ITK Executive Department:**

Mary Simon: President

Jim Moore: Executive Director

Kathleen Tagoona: Executive Assistant to the President

**Executive Secretariat:**

Political Coordination: Rosemary Cooper

Strategic Policy Support: John Merritt

Senior Science Support: Scot Nickels

Strategic Planning, Information, and Technology: Rosemary Cooper, Craig Clark, Marcel Mason

# HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

*In July 2007 the ITK Departments of Health and Environment merged into one. The links between the various issues managed by the two separate departments resulted in greater synergies when combined.*

*Highlights in 2007-2008 include the Health Summit in Kuujjuaq, signing agreement with Minister of Health, and undertaking consultations with the Minister of Environment in Iqaluit.*

## NATIONAL INUIT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (NICoH)

The National Inuit Committee on Health identifies Inuit Health priorities, provides guidance to the ITK Health Department, ITK Board of Directors, and also ensures national representation on Inuit initiatives and policy processes.

All of the health related issues in this report have been discussed at the NICoH meetings, resulting in high level consultation from an Inuit perspective, and direction that informs the ITK Board for action and approval.

The National Inuit Committee on Health held the following meetings during the past fiscal year:

May 8-9, 2007 - Ottawa

June 2007 - teleconference

July 2007 - teleconference

August 2007 - teleconference

November 15-16, 2007 - Ottawa

December 2007 teleconference

January 15, 2008 - Kuujjuaq

February 2008 - teleconference

March 3, 2008 - Winnipeg

Members of the National Inuit Committee on Health for fiscal year 2007/2008:

Natan Obed- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, NICoH Chair

Larry Gordon- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation

Jeannie May- Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (Makivik delegate)

Michelle Kinney- Deputy Minister Health, Nunatsiavut Government (Nunatsiavut delegate)

Jason Tologanak- National Inuit Youth Council

Onalee Randell- ITK Director of Health

Corrine Grey - Executive Director, ICC (Canada), observer

Ulrike Komaksiutiksak, Manager Maternal and Child Health, Pauktuutit, observer

Diane Kinnon, Director Inuit Centre, NAHO, observer

## INUIT HEALTH SUMMIT

The first Inuit Health Summit took place in Kuujuaq, Nunavik, Quebec January 16-17, 2008. The event, hosted by ITK and the province of Quebec, was co-chaired by President Mary Simon, and Russell Copeman, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and Social Services from the Government of Quebec.

The summit brought together the government of Canada, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nunavut, and the NWT. Also at the table were Inuit leaders from ITK, Makivik, Government of Nunatsiavut, NTI, IRC, ICC, Pauktuutit, and NIYC. This Federal-Provincial-Territorial-Inuit (FPTI) format provided the most appropriate meeting conditions to discuss how respective jurisdictions can work collaboratively, to improve the health of Inuit.

Discussion focused on the priority issues of the Health Human Resource Shortage in Inuit communities, the challenges faced by community programs in place, and the ongoing needs for additional programming to address the health and mental wellness of Inuit communities.

The summit also provided the opportunity for President Simon and Minister Clement to report on the outcomes of the first ITK/Health Canada Task Group, including the announcement of the establishment of the Office of Inuit Health within Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch. A report was also made on funding towards a pilot project to explore new approaches to collecting Inuit Specific Data, funding for a mental wellness promotion project under the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention program, and an Inuit specific mental wellness team.

A final outcome from the Summit included a recommendation that all jurisdictions continue to meet to develop an Inuit specific Health Human Resource Strategy.

## ABORIGINAL HEALTH SUMMIT

Aboriginal leaders from across Canada as well as provincial and territorial ministers and officials gathered in Winnipeg for the National Aboriginal Health Working Summit on March 3-4, 2008. The Summit was a follow-up meeting to the 2006 National Summit on Aboriginal Health in British Columbia and the 2005 First Ministers' Meeting on Aboriginal Health in Kelowna.

The Aboriginal Health Summit was divided into three culture specific workshops (Inuit, Metis and First Nations), each of which were open to all delegates. Inuit delegates used this opportunity to build upon the work that had taken place during the Inuit Health Summit in Kuujuaq, focusing on two priorities - Health Human Resources, and support for community programs.

Delegates discussed the development of an action plan to address the Health Human Resource needs in Inuit communities, as well as to discuss how successful community programs, which are already in place in some communities, can be supported, and built upon.

The group developed guiding principles for a health human resource strategy, and identified a number of outcomes achievable within three years. These include the development of comprehensive community health care plans integrating all health and social programs into one master plan; the development of Pan Arctic curriculum for health providers; community plans that invest in children and youth staying in the school system; and the creation of a mental health centre that would serve a dual role of providing services that are needed by communities and to develop capacity and support health providers including professional development.

## ITK/HEALTH CANADA TASK GROUP

A new ITK/Health Canada Task Group was created in April, 2007. The Task Group will explore and develop approaches in areas of mutual interest for improving Inuit health. A joint work-plan was unveiled when the Task Group was announced at a joint press conference held at the ITK office in Ottawa with Health Minister Tony Clement and ITK President Mary Simon.

The joint work plan will focus on four key areas: implementation of an Office of Inuit Health at Health Canada to better address Inuit specific health issues; cross-jurisdictional collaboration; quality of and access to health services; and exploring approaches for strengthening Inuit data sharing and infrastructure, information and research through partnerships at the regional and national levels.

The six-person Task Group consists of senior officials from Health Canada: a representative from the Deputy Minister's office; Assistant Deputy Minister, FNIHB; a representative from the Office of the Minister of Health; ITK Executive Director; ITK Health and Environment Director; and the NiCoH Chair.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Increasingly, all levels of government in Canada are recognizing the importance of effective Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) management to protect the safety of their citizens.

For the Inuit communities in the Canadian north, the need for effective EPR planning is also a growing concern. As a member of the Mutual Aid Assistance Task Group from Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami has undertaken an information scan to collect provincial/territorial, regional and community level information about the state of EPR in the four Inuit regions of Canada. The data collected through the information will assist the Task Group to identify and respond to the gaps, strengths and challenges facing Inuit communities in terms of EPR.

## NATIONAL TREATMENT STRATEGY

The National Treatment Strategy Working Group was established to develop a National Treatment Strategy Framework with a mandate to develop a report with national recommendations for action to optimize health services responses to substance use problems in Canada. Working Group members were drawn from across jurisdictions and sectors and are broadly representative, with clinical, policy, government, community, Inuit, First Nations, client, and caregiver experience and expertise. The Working Group recognized the need to support cultural as well as jurisdictional considerations, and acknowledged the contribution of members from Aboriginal organizations in accessing services and supports for substance use in Canada.

The National Treatment Strategy is based on several key principles, notably collaboration, respect for diversity, and a client-based approach. The report and recommendations will be finalized and distributed in Summer 2008.

## CANCER

ITK is moving forward with initiatives to improve awareness of Inuit cancer issues within government and non-government organizations. During 2007-2008, ITK built relationships with key cancer organizations such as: The Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, Canadian Cancer Society and the Canadian Cancer Action Network. It is important that these key groups in Canadian cancer prevention, care and treatment recognize and respond to Inuit realities.

In 2007, ITK worked on developing an Inuit & Cancer Discussion Paper and fact sheets on Inuit & Cancer. These documents open the dialogue on the unique cancer needs for Inuit in Canada. It makes recommendations on how to improve Inuit access to cancer services, resources and treatment. It is intended to be used in assisting with policy with different levels of governments and used within the overall Canadian Strategy for Cancer Control.

ITK is determined to improve the knowledge about Inuit and cancer. ITK hired cancer researchers to increase the amount of Inuit-specific cancer data.

## DENTAL CARE

In response to dental issues identified by the four Inuit regions, ITK, as directed by the National Inuit Committee on Health, developed a Dental Expert Advisory Committee. This committee examines and provides input to NiCoH on possible strategies and solutions that would lead to improved dental health outcomes for Inuit.

NiCoH identified an absence of comparable data related to oral health status of Inuit to that of mainstream Canadians. ITK has been collaborating with the Office of the Chief Dental Officer and Statistics Canada on the implementation of an oral health survey which would gather data on the oral health status of Inuit adults and children in three of the Inuit regions. This information will then be included with Nunavik's existing data to form a national picture. It will then be compared to what is available for southern Canada to develop a plan of action for addressing any disparities.

## ABORIGINAL HEALTH TRANSITION FUND

As part of ITK's work on the Aboriginal Health Transition Fund, (AHTF) ITK staff have supported and facilitated the work and effective communication of four Regional Engagement Coordinators (REC), as well as the holding of two meetings of the AHTF Inuit working group. ITK staff have further administered contribution agreements for the REC, facilitated Inuit participation on the national AHTF Integration and Adaptation Committees, provided secretariat support for the meetings of the AHTF Working Group, and acted as a liaison between the REC and the AHTF Secretariat.

ITK staff have also identified and communicated regional Inuit health indicators, needs, gaps, priorities, and areas that could benefit from integration to AHTF stakeholders. Further work included the support of community based Inuit organizations in the development of AHTF implementation strategies and evaluation frameworks. Research and document reviews were also completed as directed by the REC to support the integration and adaptation of health services for Aboriginal Peoples.

## ARCTIC NET

ArcticNet is a Network of Centres of Excellence of Canada bringing together scientists and managers in the natural, human health and social sciences with their partners in Inuit organizations, northern communities, federal and provincial agencies and the private sector to study the impacts of climate change in the coastal Canadian Arctic. ArcticNet is hosted by Laval University and was awarded \$25.7-million for research undertaken from 2003 - 2008.

ITK and ICC occupy four seats on the ArcticNet Board of Directors. The BOD is responsible for the overall governance of ArcticNet. Inuit Board members ensure that ArcticNet incorporates traditional

knowledge in the design of projects and that community involvement includes a long-term vision of training and capacity building for Inuit. Current members of the ArcticNet BOD are Mary Simon (ITK), Duane Smith (ICC), Pita Aatami (Makivik), and James Eetoolook (NTI).

Inuit are also involved in the Research Management Committee (RMC) of ArcticNet. The RMC reviews projects, identifies research priorities, and recommends budget allocations. Current members of the RMC are Larry Carpenter (IRC), Scot Nickels (ITK), and Stephanie Meakin (ICC).

There are currently three Northern co-led scientific projects funded by ArcticNet:

1. Climate impacts on the sentinel species arctic char in northern Canada, co-led by Michael Power and Bill Doidge of Makivik Corporation.
2. Climate Change in Northern Quebec and Nunavik: Access to Territory and Resources, co-led by Chris Furgal and Martin Tremblay of the Kativik Regional Government.
3. Nunatsiavut Nuluak: Baseline Inventory and Comparative Assessment of Three Northern Labrador Fiord-based Marine Ecosystems, co-led by Ken Reimer and Marina Biasutti of the Nunatsiavut Government.

## WASTEWATER

During 2007-2008, ITK in coordination the four Inuit regions completed a review of the Canada-wide Strategy for Management of Municipal Wastewater Effluent. Also conducted was a review of Environment Canada's Proposed Regulatory Framework for Wastewater that aims to address the harmful impacts of wastewater discharges on public health and the environment.

Representatives from ITK and the regional Inuit organizations were invited by Environment Canada to consultation meetings in various locations. Participation by the Inuit regional representatives and ITK at several of the meetings may be considered adequate by Environment Canada. However, the overall consultation process was found to be highly deficient regarding the representation, timelines, community representation and financial support allocated.

As a result of these deficiencies ITK, the regional Inuit land claims organizations, and the Inuit communities have reserved the right to change conclusions at any time, particularly after the draft regulations have been made public. In addition, ITK and the representatives of the four Inuit land claims regions found this recently completed consultation process as carried out by Environment Canada to be inadequate and did not consider it to have fulfilled the Crown's duty to consult. ITK has written to the Minister of the Environment regarding this matter

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Mary Simon has made this issue her priority as ITK President. During this period two major presentations were made in this area. The first was at the 2nd International Meeting on Indigenous Child Health in Montreal. The second was at the Canadian Medical Association's Child Health Summit held in Ottawa.

At these forums, the unacceptable gaps in living conditions between Inuit youth and children in the Arctic and the same age groups in southern Canada were exposed. The actions ITK is pursuing to close the gaps for Inuit children and youth include the following:

- ▶ Develop a joint strategy on Inuit children and youth to address social and economic development issues. This will result in an integrated strategy linking matters such as housing, education, and economic development to address the demographic reality of Inuit communities.
- ▶ Build a public/private sector partnership leading to the construction of an addictions treatment centre in the Arctic and treatment programs developed to address the specific circumstances of Inuit children and youth. This will represent a commitment to tackling the unacceptable rates of substance abuse and suicide, which is up to 11 times higher than the Canadian average in some Inuit communities.
- ▶ Call on the government of Canada to create an Aboriginal children and youth ombudsperson.

## FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT TOBACCO CONTROL STRATEGY

In the fall of 2007 funds under the First Nations and Inuit Tobacco Control Strategy were cut from the federal budget. The NiCoH subsequently decided to pursue the development of an advocacy strategy. In early 2008 the NiCoH Committee approved the Inuit Tobacco Reduction Strategy.

The Inuit Tobacco Reduction Strategy was developed by the National Inuit Tobacco Task Group, plus additional representatives from all four Inuit regions of Canada and the national Inuit organizations.

The need for an Inuit-specific tobacco reduction strategy is based on a number of important factors. These include the extraordinarily high prevalence of smoking among Inuit compared to other Canadians. For example 70% of Inuit adults and youth are smokers, while the equivalent rate for Canadians in the south is only about 20%. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) also outlines a specific approach with respect to Indigenous Peoples. The strategy is inspired by the knowledge that traditional Inuit society was tobacco-free and a vision of Inuit and Inuit communities taking the lead to become tobacco-free again.

ITK will take steps to implement the strategy beginning in 2008-2009.

ITK has been an active participant in the development of the Canadian Lung Framework which is expected to be finalized in the fall of 2008. Working with a Steering Committee the strategy recognizes the disparities in lung health between southern Canadians and Inuit in the area of respiratory health. A key success in this strategy is its acknowledgement that the determinants of health such as environment, poverty, housing and nutrition must be addressed in order to have real outcomes.

## MENTAL WELLNESS

As the number one Inuit health priority, mental wellness has made important progress in the past year. The “Alianait” Inuit Mental Wellness Task Group presented its Strategic Action Plan together with the First Nations and Inuit Mental Wellness Advisory Committee (MWAC) to the National Inuit Committee on Health (NICoH) in May 2007. The plans were approved in principle. These were subsequently presented to national and international conferences and meetings, including the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

ITK continues to work with Inuit regions through Alianait and NICoH to highlight the need for improved and enhanced addictions programs and services. Currently Inuit regions are reviewing a proposed National Addictions Treatment Strategy.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Global Warming continues to maintain its position at the top of the world’s agenda. The past year has been noteworthy for ITK’s involvement at high level meetings. These include the COP-13 Climate Change conference in Bali Indonesia, and Climate Change discussions with Inuit in Nunavut in February 2008.

ITK President Mary Simon was selected as an independent advisor to Canada’s Environment Minister John Baird at the COP-13 Climate Change conference in December 2007 in Bali, Indonesia. While in Bali, Minister Baird requested that ITK facilitate a meeting to be held in Iqaluit to provide input into funding announced by Canada in Bali. These included funding for Northern and Aboriginal Communities to assess Key vulnerabilities and opportunities, and to address health adaptation in northern Inuit communities.

The Iqaluit consultation meeting was held with Minister Baird on February 8, 2008. ITK and all Regional Inuit Organizations were present, as well as representatives from the Athabasca Arctic Council, Yukon First Nations, and Gwitch’in International. The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to communicate with the Minister directly regarding the impacts climate change is having at a regional, national and international level.

ITK continues to work with Inuit regions to develop processes that will result in Inuit communities benefitting from the financial resources that were announced in Bali. ITK will be proceeding with the development of an Inuit Climate Change working group in the upcoming fiscal year.

## CONTAMINANTS

ITK plays a key role in the Northern Contaminants Program (NCP) by collaborating with ICC (Canada) and the Inuit regions. The department focused this year on the development of a new Education and Communication blueprint to guide the program in addressing issues and concerns of Inuit.

The NCP marked its 15th anniversary by presenting a general overview of the state of the health of the Arctic over the past 15 years from a contaminants perspective. Northern leaders continue to showcase the NCP as a unique and innovative research program. The NCP incorporates Inuit into research projects as equal partners.

Contaminant levels in Inuit have been declining, as reported at the 15th anniversary meeting, and researchers recommended that Inuit do not need to change from their healthy traditional diet. The main concern for many researchers was the issue of increased mercury and new Persistent Organic Pollutant style contaminants in the Arctic. The NCP will continue to monitor these contaminants over

the next several years with a long term monitoring program to keep an eye on the level of various contaminants in the wildlife of the Arctic.

The merger of the Health and Environment Departments within ITK had a positive effect in the communication of contaminants information in a more holistic manner. There are many health issues in the Arctic that are seen to be more urgent than the presence and effects of long-range contaminants. Much of the discussion ITK had with the regions regarding messaging was about the desire for messages about contaminants to be contextualized in various ways. The consensus was that contaminant messaging alone (i.e. messages about contaminant levels in air, food, water, wildlife or people) does more harm than good. Given this situation, it may not be prudent to continue bombarding Inuit communities with information about contaminants, for fear of increasing anxiety around the issue. If the messaging does not take into account issues such as nutrition, food security, and cultural practices, then it can be considered counter-productive.

ITK played an important role in working with the research programs such as NCP, International Polar Year (IPY), the Northern Ecosystem Initiative (NEI), ArcticNet, and the Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments to develop more holistic communications, and capacity building proposals that help ultimately to place communications efforts within the broader context of research throughout the Arctic.

## RESEARCH

ITK plays an important co-ordinating role in ensuring research involving Inuit is conducted in the four regions. To this end ITK co-ordinates the regional Inuit Research Advisor (IRA) program, funded by ArcticNet, the Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments, and the Northern Contaminants Program.

The IRA positions were established to facilitate research in Inuit regions on contaminants, climate change and environmental health and to engage Inuit in undertaking research activities of importance to their communities.

During 2007-2008 ITK has recommended that a review of the IRA positions from an Inuit perspective be undertaken to identify ways the program could be improved, to improve capacity, and address problem areas.

ITK has communicated with the funding agencies regarding this review. Based on the outcomes of the review, ITK hopes to articulate to the funding programs the most appropriate ways to: increase capacity; enhance the research community connection; and improve research co-ordination.

## RESEARCH AND DATA INITIATIVES

The Health Canada / ITK Task Group was formed in April, 2007 with a six-month work plan to further developments in the area of Inuit Health. One of the components identified as a mutual area of interest was Inuit data, information and research. Specifically, the task group identified the need to explore approaches for facilitating data sharing and strengthening information management infrastructure. One of the short-term deliverables identified as part of the data/information/research component is to initiate discussions on the potential for development of Inuit health data and information.

Health Canada has prepared a document outlining available Inuit data sources and where the expansion of Inuit health and determinants of health can take place. During the Inuit Health Summit held in Kuujuaq in January, Minister Clement announced funding for a pilot project to explore new approaches for collecting Inuit health information. Four potential joint projects have been outlined, and will be discussed by the National Inuit Committee on Health to determine next steps.

### **NATIONAL ABORIGINAL COUNCIL ON SPECIES AT RISK**

2007-2008 was the last of a two-year term for all NACOSAR members with the exception of Mr. Larry Carpenter, who was nominated by ITK for appointment approximately a year after the other Council members were given their appointments by the Minister of Environment. As of March 1, 2008, four new NACOSAR members were appointed, replacing four former members, with Larry Carpenter and Beverly Jacobs remaining on for their two-year appointments.

ITK is pleased to have Mr. Carpenter continue his valued role as an Inuit representative on the Council. His knowledge of wildlife, land claims, traditional knowledge, and co-management processes is valuable to issues related the administration of the Species at Risk Act (SARA). With the new members, ITK will ensure that Inuit continue to have a voice at the national level on SARA and to continue to monitor issues of Aboriginal engagement and the decisions that surround important species such as Barren Land and Peary Caribou, Bowhead and Beluga Whales, Seals, Walrus, and Polar Bears.

### **E-HEALTH**

A report titled, The e-Health Status in Inuit Regions: Environmental Scan, has been completed. The report maps out regional Inuit e-Health status. It also provides a high-level analysis of priority areas, identifies concrete steps in the development of a comprehensive Inuit e-Health transformation plan, and critical success factors and opportunities to feed into a future e-Health business plan.

The report identifies several key findings that are relevant to all regions. Connectivity is the number one issue which includes broadband, cost, installation and repair services. This is a major hurdle to overcome before envisioning a full deployment of the e-Health technology.

Also identified is the Human Resource capacity to support deployment of e-Health technology, let alone to sustain its usage. Integration within Provincial and Territorial agendas remains an important component of the e-Health strategy however; work needs to be done to make this an Inuit specific e-Health agenda. All regions are engaged in various e-Health activities though Nunavik has an e-Health model which had been in development for over six years and is ready to implement.

### **SEALING AND POLAR BEAR**

ITK has been active in advocating for Inuit harvesting rights on the issues of sealing, and the polar bear. The 2007-2008 period has seen both of these iconic species garner banner headlines, while issues pertaining to the health of Inuit fail utterly to capture media attention.

During the past fiscal year Inuit leaders have again lobbied the European Union against imposing a ban on the import of Canadian seal products. While ITK was not a participant in the 2008 European mission to lobby European parliamentarians against imposing a ban, we kept abreast of the debate,

and know Inuit were well represented by Nunavut Premier Paul Okalik, in the company of the Canadian Ambassador for Fisheries Conservation Loyola Sullivan.

Earlier in 2007, ITK issued several media releases urging Canada to take trade action against European countries that had passed bans on the import of seal products, notably Belgium and The Netherlands. Canada responded in July, 2007, by declaring its intention to take any country imposing such bans to the World Trade Organization (WTO). ITK praised the government of Canada for taking this strong stand. Canada filed at the WTO in September, 2007.

Animal rights groups, perennially unrelenting in their fundraising campaigns, continue to lobby in an unregulated arena in Brussels to have the European Union legislate a European-wide ban on the import of Canadian seal products. Inuit have maintained a staunch opposition to any such bans, despite promises of exemptions for Inuit seal products, as the same promises were made in the 1980s and the markets were decimated for everyone, included Inuit.

Similarly, during this period in the United States, environmental groups lobbied the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to have the polar bear listed as “threatened” under the US Endangered Species Act. Again, Inuit have taken a unified position against doing so, as it is clearly viewed as using the polar bear as a pawn in the lobbying efforts of US environmental groups to pressure the United States into taking stronger action on climate change.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami worked with Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada) to issue a joint position, communicated in press releases, and a written submission to the US Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, which held hearings on the issue. ITK and ICC (Canada) sent a written submission to the committee in February, 2008.

ITK President Mary Simon has granted numerous media interviews on the issue of the status of the polar bear domestically, and with American media. She has also met with the Canadian Minister of the Environment, John Baird, and has been present in meetings between Minister Baird and American officials on this issue.

On May 14, 2008 the United States announced it would list the polar bear as “threatened” under the US Endangered Species Act. ITK responded jointly with ICC in denouncing the move.

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#### **Health and Environment Department Staff**

Director: Onalee Randell

Senior Health Policy Coordinator: Elizabeth Ford

Senior Environment Policy Coordinator: John Cheechoo

Senior Policy Advisor/ Researchers: Catherine Dallas, Isabelle Champagne-Shields, Eric Loring, Soha Kneen

Senior Project Coordinators: Gwen Thirlwall-Wiebe, Tracy Brown

Project Coordinators: Selma Ford, Looee Okalik, Jim Cincotta

Technical Advisor- Health: Jennifer Forsyth

Project Advisor – Inuit Information: Heather Tait

Arctic Net Coordinator: Meghan McKenna

Administration Assistant: Leanna Steen

## ***Socio-Economic Development Department***

*The 2007-2008 period was characterized by a transformation of the department into a young, dynamic, and powerful team, lead by new Director Belinda Webb. The team grew from a staff of four to eight in a short span of time. By year's end a new departmental Operations Plan, with a strong vision for the next five years was in place, based on the ITK Strategic Objectives.*

### **HOUSING**

In October of 2007, ITK presented to the United Nations Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur on Housing, Miloon Kothari. Rapporteur Kothari visited Canada with the aim of reviewing the status of the right to adequate housing, paying special attention to homelessness in Canada, women, and indigenous peoples.

ITK used the opportunity to highlight that Inuit live in the most crowded homes in the country and the problems that arise from these conditions, such as increased risk of exposure to communicable diseases, risks associated with exposure to "indoor" toxins, and the exacerbation of social problems in such close living conditions.

Examples from across Inuit Nunaat were used to demonstrate the extent of housing need, the state of housing, and conditions that would not be tolerated in other parts of Canada. ITK's overarching message was a call for action on Inuit housing and the need to resume discussions between Inuit, the Federal Government, and relevant Territorial and Provincial jurisdictions. Following the conclusion of the Rapporteur's visit to Canada, a number of preliminary recommendations were tabled, perhaps most significant was a call for the Canadian Government to develop comprehensive strategies to end "Canada's housing crisis", with special attention paid to Canada's indigenous peoples.

The Canadian Medical Association Journal published in July 2007 a paper titled Indoor air quality and the risk of lower respiratory tract infections in young Canadian Inuit children, which garnered considerable media interest. As a follow up ITK has met with the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS) as well as the lead researcher Dr Thomas Kovesi MD. Dr. Kovesi is a lung specialist working at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) where Baffin Paediatric patients have been referred since the late 80s.

Both groups, as well as the Many Hands One Dream Initiative that is linked to the CPS, are interested in participating in a joint advocacy initiative. We have been working with these partners to develop a position statement which will be jointly published in the CPS journal Paediatrics and Child Health. This statement will link indoor air quality and housing to health outcomes including Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), pneumonia and Tuberculosis.

Issues include:

- ▶ The high rates of RSV (the Baffin rate is 40 times the Ottawa rate)
- ▶ The link between childhood infection and chronic lung disease
- ▶ The role of indoor air quality and air exchange on infection rates
- ▶ Solutions including more housing and better air exchange systems in new and present housing

## 2010 VANCOUVER WINTER OLYMPICS

ITK has been working in co-ordination with the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games (VANOC) during 2007-2008 to ensure an Inuit presence at the 2010 winter Olympics. Of significance, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami secured funding in October 2007 to work on the Vancouver 2010 Olympics file. This was further supported by the ITK Board of Directors through the adoption of a resolution directing ITK to take a lead role with regard to Inuit and the 2010 Olympics. The main premise of the resolution is to ensure that each Inuit region has equitable access and opportunities associated with the games and that the participation is meaningful. ITK has begun its role as a facilitator for the Inuit regions.

In addition, VANOC has a goal of achieving unprecedented Aboriginal participation in the 2010 Olympics. VANOC's key partner on the ground in Vancouver is the Four Host First Nations (FHFN). This organization has been instrumental in engaging Aboriginal people from across Canada in 2010 activities. As a result of outreach and partnership, ITK and FHFN have entered into an MOU. As a result, ITK with VANOC and FHFN have begun developing a shared Workplan. Stemming from the workplan, ITK has also contributed to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games by providing an Inuit drum which will be displayed in the "Drum Experience Area" at the BC Canada Pavilion during the summer games. It is hoped that the entire drum exhibit will return to Vancouver for display at the 2010 Commerce Centre during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

ITK has also facilitated the establishment of the National Inuit Committee on the Vancouver Olympics (NICoVO), the aim of which is ensure Inuit regions are aware of opportunities associated with the 2010 Olympics and are in a position to take advantage of them. The committee consists of representatives from the four Inuit regions in Canada, and it is anticipated during the period leading up to and during 2010, NICoVO will play a key role in facilitating Inuit engagement.

## EDUCATION

The National Inuit Committee on Education (NICE) that exists informally has served throughout the year as a contact point for distributing education and other relevant information, such as research, scholarships and grants to the regions.

ITK continued its role as a part-time Northern Coordinator for the Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre (ABLKC), with the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) under a two-year 2007-2009 service agreement signed between ABLKC and ITK. ITK's office in Ottawa continues to house the part-time position and serve as an information distribution, events coordination and facilitation centre. ITK was involved in planning of an Inuit-specific workshop to develop an Inuit Lifelong Learning model. The workshop took place in Iqaluit on May 2-3, 2007.

The highlight of ABLKC activities in 2007-2008 was its second annual conference on Aboriginal Learning held in Vancouver, B.C. February 27-March 1, 2008. The conference report can be found on [www.ccl-cca.ca](http://www.ccl-cca.ca). Information on other work accomplished by the Knowledge Centre throughout the year can also be found on the CCL website.

2007-2008 marked the implementation of ITK's Initiative on Inuit Education, under the direction of ITK's Education Advisory Group. This three phased project was launched with the commissioning of four background papers on Inuit education. Research for these background papers was made possible through funding from the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation.

The background research served as the foundation for discussions at the Inuit Education Summit. Prior to the summit, six working groups including education specialists from all four regions, provinces, and territories, examined the issues surrounding the six Summit themes: 1) Capacity Building, 2)

Graduating Bilingual Students, 3) Mobilizing Our Partners in Education, 4) Building Our Curriculum and Teaching Practices, 5) Building Post-Secondary Success and 6) The Importance of Collecting and Sharing Information.

Through funding provided by the Canada Millennium Foundation, the Canadian Council on Learning, the Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre, and Inuit Relations Secretariat, the Education Summit focused on action plans for each of the six Summit themes.

The Summit attracted over 85 delegates from the four provinces and territories, regional Inuit organizations, federal government representatives, and other organizations. Among the participants were education ministers, educators, administrators, policy makers, other provincial, territorial and federal government representatives, Regional Inuit Association representatives, and observers. The highlight of the Summit was the address to the delegates by the Governor-General of Canada, Her Excellency Michaëlle Jean, and her participation in the breakout session on bilingual education.

During the Summit, ITK President Mary Simon held bilateral meetings with the Ministers of Education of Nunavut and NWT, senior officials of Indian and Northern Affairs, as well as representatives of Makivik Corporation, Kativik School Board, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Labrador School Board and Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada to discuss a collective vision for Inuit education and support for an Inuit Education Accord and National Inuit Education Strategy.

Discussions at the Summit confirmed an urgent need to improve learning outcomes for Inuit. A draft Inuit Education Accord was proposed and it is anticipated that this agreement will be formally ratified in the summer of 2008.

The next phase of the ITK Education Initiative, will involve the establishment of a National Committee on Inuit Education that will work on the development and release of a National Inuit Education Strategy.

*“Can we allow another year, another month, another minute to slip by without saying...it is time... it is time to make a fundamental difference in the educational outcomes of our children.”*

-ITK President Mary Simon, Closing Remarks, to delegates at the ITK Education Summit.

## YOUTH

The Youth Intervenor position is funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). Through this contribution agreement the Youth Intervenor is able to coordinate and facilitate youth issues working closely with the National Inuit Youth Council (NIYC). After meeting with NIYC on February 19, 2008, the youth joined the Inuit Human Resource Technical Committee (IHRTC) on February 20 to explore ways Inuit youth can link with Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement holders within their regions. It was hoped this session would help foster a working relationship between youth and service providers. Efforts are also being made to identify gaps that could improve the employment, training and educational outcomes of youth and moreover, the social and economic conditions of Inuit overall.

The Youth Intervenor engaged in the planning phase for their Excellencies visit to three Inuit regions (Kuuujuaq, QC; Iqaluit, NU; and Inuvik, NWT) and meet with youth from those areas. These plans coincided with the Education Summit ITK spearheaded in April 2008 in Inuvik. The Youth Intervenor attended both the Inuit Education Summit and Youth Town Hall in Inuvik.

The Youth Intervenor travelled to Inuvik to attend the conference held Feb. 12-14, 2008 and helped to give youth perspectives into the discussions. In addition, there were a handful of other youth from across the Arctic who participated.

During the fiscal year a second printing of the Life Book, initially released in 2005-2006 was produced, in Inuktitut and English. As well, work continued on the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between NIYC and ITK to formalize relations between the two groups.

## YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION

In recognition of the high priority that Inuit Organizations have placed on the prevention of suicide, ITK has negotiated funding for two positions through Health Canada. In the Socio-Economic Development Department, the Youth Suicide Prevention Coordinator (YSPC) works closely with the National Inuit Youth Council and other Inuit organizations to ensure they are informed and involved in the implementation of the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (NAYSPS). “Inusiqatsiarniq” is the name of the Inuit-specific component. In the Department of Health and Environment, a Senior Policy Advisor works closely with the YSPC to ensure the federal government is aware of the need to engage Inuit in all activity related to suicide prevention.

One of main activities of the YSPC is to directly involve youth in the caring professions and help to address the suicide problem through encouraging community youth groups to participate in promoting healthy lifestyles, i.e. role-modeling, cultural activities, language, art, music & drama. The YSPC provides training to assist youth in becoming actively involved in: suicide prevention, early intervention with their friends and peers by providing workshops that address topics such as; Building Self-Esteem; Peer Counseling; and Minimizing Peer Pressure.

In the spring of 2007, FNIHB developed an evaluation framework for the NAYSPS. A review of the framework, from an Inuit perspective that was conducted during the autumn of 2007, led to recommendations for an Inuit Steering Committee to ensure evaluations have relevance to Inuit. The National Inuit Committee on Health has accepted the recommendations, and ITK is now working with FNIHB to address them.

On September 10, 2007 during World Suicide Prevention Day, a joint press release and backgrounder was issued by: ITK, Pauktuutit, the National Inuit Youth Council and NAHO Ajunnginiq Centre. The backgrounder has been translated and is posted on all websites. Over 150 people attended a “brown bag” luncheon on Parliament Hill, hosted by Nunavut MP Nancy Karetak-Lindell, and, thanks to students and staff of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program and other volunteers. The event featured Inuit drum dancing, throat singing, high kick, leg wrestling and political speeches.

During February/March 2008, Hazel Harrison, the newly-hired Youth Suicide Prevention Coordinator, attended workshops on ‘Addressing Social Impacts of Non-Renewable Resource Extraction in Northern Canada’; ‘Homelessness and Housing Realities for Inuit’; ‘Knowledge and Support Network for Suicide Prevention’.

Hazel also participated in the 2008 ITK Arctic Tour which was held in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories. While on the Arctic Tour, she facilitated three youth focus groups, one in each community: Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk. The focus was on “LIFE”, the joys and disappointments of it. The key purpose of the focus group, was to obtain information, directly from Inuit youth, in order to determine the areas of concern that need to be addressed. Similar focus groups are planned in the three remaining Inuit Regions during the 2008/2009 fiscal year.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Since 2001 ITK has enabled early childhood educators to play a fundamental role in developing a plan for the future benefit of Inuit children. ITK continues to provide guidance and feedback to the federal government on the Inuit perspective of ECD. In October 2007 the Inuit Early Childhood Development Working Group (IECDWG) held its annual meeting in Ottawa. Topics for the meeting included:

- Review the Special Needs Research Plan.
- Aboriginal Children’s Circle of Learning Website;
- Aboriginal Children’s Survey;
- Inuit Early Childhood Development Strategy;
- Child Care Human Resources Sector Council
- Overview of the Inuit Education Summit.

ITK has also been involved in a Special Needs Research Plan. Since the Aboriginal Round Table on Special Needs in February 2007, a draft survey on special needs has been developed. The IECDWG was assigned to review the survey and provide direction. The group consists of representatives from regional Inuit organizations, urban and northern alike, who work and have a keen interest in Inuit ECD. The draft survey was discussed at the ECDWG meeting in October 2007.

## INUIT HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (IHRDTC)

Throughout the year the Employment and Training Coordinator continued to inform the IHRDTC members of various programs, activities and research initiatives as it pertains to employment and training for Inuit. Labour market information was provided regarding the Aboriginal Human Resource Council (AHRDC) initiatives and programs, Building Aboriginal Environmental Human Resources (BEAHR) programs, the Department of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) research initiatives, policies and programs, and other relevant information.

The Training and Development Coordinator worked closely with the Aboriginal Affairs Directorate (AAD) at HRSDC through phone calls, emails and face-to-face meetings. In May 2007 at a meeting between AAD representatives and ITK it was suggested that AHRDA coordination and Youth Intervener workplans be combined into one and submitted as a Policy Collaboration Workplan. The workplan was developed and submitted covering the period from April 2007 to March 2009.

The Inuit Accord was finalized and after receiving approval from the IHRDTC and ITK management it was submitted to HRSDC. The Accord signing ceremony between Mary Simon, ITK President and HRSDC Minister Monte Solberg, took place on November 26, 2007. The Accord covers a two year period from April 2007 to March 2009 and serves as an umbrella policy agreement for the regional AHRDA/HRSDC agreements under the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy (AHRDS).

Work is already underway to plan for a successor agreement post 2009. IHRDTC members met in December 2007 regarding this initiative. Representatives of Service Canada and the Aboriginal Affairs Directorate, HRSDC, participated in the meeting.

The second annual 2007-2008 IHRDTC meeting took place at the end of February, 2008 in Ottawa. Inuit AHRDA holders, Aboriginal Affairs Directorate, Service Canada and the Inuit Relations Secretariat took part in the meeting. On the policy side discussions focused on the post 2009 AHRDS Strategy and how the Inuit specific position needs to be reflected and applied in the post 2009 developments. On the program delivery side a constructive dialogue took place between Inuit AHRDAs and Service

Canada representatives. The main issues included a standard approach to reporting requirements across the regions and the technical problems with uploading data onto the Service Canada computerized reporting system.

A major innovative approach to this annual meeting was inviting members of the Steering Committee of the National Inuit Youth Council (NIYC) to speak to AHRDAs about the employment and training issues faced by Inuit youth and how to find ways to solve them. Both parties benefited from the dialogue and it was agreed unanimously that from now on NIYC members will take part in IHRDTC meetings.

The workplan developed for the fiscal year of 2007-2008 included a few research projects with participation of Inuit youth to collect information and create database on employment and training programs and services available to the youth throughout the regions. Due to delays in receiving financial contribution the research projects have been delayed and will hopefully be conducted in the new fiscal year. Research is important in order to have a clear picture of the labour market situation for Inuit youth in the regions and for input into the post 2009 AHRDS successor strategy.

Inuit AHRDAs took part in the Northern and Remote Costing Study initiated by HRSDC. The cost of delivering services and programs in the Arctic has been a major concern for Inuit AHRDAs and it is encouraging to see that HRSDC is undertaking research into this specific issue.

As part of the human development policy review HRSDC launched a two stage evaluation process of the randomly selected Aboriginal AHRDA holders. Two Inuit organizations have been evaluated. The Employment and Training Coordinator at ITK sat on the Evaluation Committee of the Formative Evaluation Process and provided Inuit AHRDA holders with the updates received from the HRSDC Strategic Analysis, Audit and Evaluation branch. The Training and Development Coordinator also took part in the research by giving an interview.

The Employment and Training Coordinator participated in the following events and shared information with the IHRDTC:

- ▶ Focus Group on the strategic evaluation of the federal Workplace Equity Programs, April 2007;
- ▶ Urban Aboriginal Forum, Vancouver, June 2007;
- ▶ Aboriginal Human Resource Council Board of Directors meeting, July 2007; Board of Directors teleconference, in August, November 2007;
- ▶ The RFP Evaluation Committee of the AAD/HRSDC for a research project initiated by the AAD “Northern and Remote Costing Study”;
- ▶ Mining Human Resource Council (MiHRC) Advisory Committee, RFP on the development of MiHR HR Guide for Aboriginal communities.

## **URBAN INUIT HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH PROJECT**

Access to employment and training by urban Inuit remains an ongoing issue and is usually a topic of discussion at the Inuit AHRDAs meetings. In addition to coordinating research and the submission of a position paper on the issue to HRSDC in December 2006, the Employment and Training Coordinator kept an ongoing communication with the Inuit Relations Secretariat and the Urban Inuit Committee.

At the May, 2008 teleconference the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) launched by INAC was discussed, notably how urban Inuit could participate and benefit from the strategy. The Urban Inuit Committee members met with the UAS National Caucus at the Urban Aboriginal Forum in Vancouver in June 2007. Prior to that an official meeting took place between ITK and the Office of the Federal

Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, INAC to discuss how urban Inuit centres could benefit from the UAS. To date, urban Inuit communities are starting to get formally organized and participate in the UAS regional committees. It is hoped that the post 2009 AHRDS successor strategy will have policies and programs directed at assisting urban Inuit in accessing training and skills upgrading programs and services, and in obtaining employment.

Overall 2007-2008 has been a year full of positive developments. The Project Coordinator's participation in various human resource development events, boards and committees has helped to advance and represent Inuit interests. Inuit AHRDAs Technical Committee and NIYC initiated a dialogue directed at improving working relationships. It is hoped that the post 2009 AHRD successor strategy will present ways to meet the needs of urban Inuit populations so that talent and skills are not lost but put to work to the benefit of the people and the country's economy. There are still issues in terms of the costs of delivering services in the Arctic requiring research and consideration. Other issues include reporting, cultural training for government employees working with regions, service access for disabled Inuit, financing of childcare spaces and providing meaningful employment opportunities in the northern context. Inuit AHRDA holders are looking forward to the ongoing policy consultations with HRSDC in regards to the post 2009 AHRDS successor strategy. It is hoped that the direction HRSDC takes post 2009 will serve the interests of Inuit, people living, representing and protecting the Arctic.

## LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

ITK's Language and Culture Project Coordinator manages the activities of the National Inuit Language Committee. The committee is comprised of members from seven Inuit organizations. The members organize regional language projects funded by the Aboriginal Languages Initiative of the Department of Canadian Heritage. The committee also consults with ITK on matters related to Inuit languages such as the upcoming Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium to be held in Norway in 2008 initiated by Canadian Heritage and presented to the Arctic Council.

A National Inuit Language Symposium was held in September 2007 and included participants from all Inuit regions as well as experts from the Arctic College, York University, Nunatsiavut Government, Avataq Cultural Institute, Inuit Relations Secretariat, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, National Inuit Youth Council, Nunavut Sivuniksavut, and Canadian Heritage. A draft National Inuit Language Strategy was created and presented to the ITK Executive and Canadian Heritage as requested in October 2007. A number of revisions were made and presented again in January.

Members of the National Inuit Language Committee also attended the National Aboriginal Languages Initiative Conference organized by Canadian Heritage in Quebec City, in February 2008. The National Inuit Language Committee held its national meeting immediately following this meeting. A Terms of Reference was drafted which will be presented to the ITK BOD in 2008-2009.

ITK's Language and Culture Coordinator also took part in a Nunavut Specific language meeting in February, 2008 organized by Canadian Heritage. Other participants included the Government of Nunavut, Inuit Broadcasting Corporation, Kitikmeot Inuit Association, and Qikiqtani Inuit Association. The purpose of the meeting was for strategic planning for ALI funds and the Territorial Language Accord funds. Significant progress was made during 2007-2008 towards formalizing the committee and increasing collaboration both regionally and nationally on the protection, revitalization, and maintenance of the Inuit language within Inuit Nunaat.

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**NATIONAL ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SUMMIT**

The Native Women's Association of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, with funding support from the Government of Canada, were pleased to partner as hosts for the first ever National Aboriginal Women's Summit from June 20-22, 2007 at the Pepsi Centre in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador. The Honourable Danny Williams, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, co-chaired the event with Beverley Jacobs, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC).

ITK and Pauktuutit collaborated on this initiative to represent the concerns of Inuit women. ITK submitted a number of policy papers including: Protecting the Environment, Inuit Health and Wellness, Law and Justice, Revitalizing and Strengthening Culture and Language, Poverty and Child Welfare. Pauktuutit submitted 13 papers which were more specific to Inuit women. At the end of the Summit 137 recommendations were made by First Nations, Inuit and Métis women. 59 of the recommendations were identified as priorities. 29 recommendations were highlighted by theme for more immediate action. The three main themes were: Health, Safety and Wellness; Equality and Empowerment; and Strength Balance and Honour. A final report is available upon request or at: [www.nwac-hq.org](http://www.nwac-hq.org)

ITK is now working closely with Pauktuutit in preparation for NAWS II which will be held in Yellowknife in July, 2008. ITK President Mary Simon will give opening remarks at the inaugural reception, and will also be a key speaker during the Equality and Empowerment seminar.

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**ITK Socio-Economic Development Staff:**

Belinda Webb: Director

Sharon Edmunds: Senior Policy Adviser

Maria Wilson: Senior Project Coordinator

Andrea Carter: Administrative Assistant

Heather Campbell: Language and Culture Coordinator

Mishael Gordon: Early Childhood Development Coordinator

Tommy Akulukjuk: Youth Intervener

Hazel Harrison: Suicide Prevention Coordinator

## COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

*The department is responsible for communicating newsworthy activities about ITK to the media, as well as the creation of key corporate documents such as our Annual Report, Inuktitut Magazine, and Inuit Today. We respond to inquiries about the Inuit of Canada, and ensure ITK Departments and leaders are equipped with documents and media support to inform target audiences about the Inuit of Canada. Key developments are noted below.*

### MEDIA SUPPORT

Support was provided for numerous initiatives, announcements, and conferences Mary Simon has been involved in. A cross-Canada President's speaking tour was launched on October 23, 2007 at the Canadian Club of Ottawa. The tour included presentations in over 6 venues, 6 cities, and 5 provinces during the 2007-2008 period. ITK is very pleased with the national sponsorship of First Air, which will permit the tour to visit the three territories in 2008 and 2009.

During the course of the fiscal year the department issued over three dozen press releases, statements, and media advisories, and wrote numerous op-eds and commentaries which appeared in The National Post, Globe and Mail, Hill Times, Nunatsiaq News, News North, The Labradorian, Inuvik Drum, and Above & Beyond. Communications staff also coordinated numerous media interviews, notably for CBC Northern Service, Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated, Okalakatiget Society, Inuit Broadcasting Corporation, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, CBC, CTV, CPAC, and increasingly international media such as the BBC, the Fox network, and CBS.

There is a measurable increase in media interest of Arctic issues, undoubtedly caused by climate change, but also because of its consequential links to Arctic Sovereignty and the potential opening of the Northwest Passage for a more economical shipping route.

### INUIT LECTURE SERIES

ITK has partnered with Carleton University and the Inuit Relations Secretariat of INAC to launch an Inuit Lecture Series. The evening lectures are designed to bring together experts on specific topics to raise awareness among a young audience as well as the general public. The first in the series of lectures took place at Carleton University on March 27, 2008. It was titled "Canada's Hidden Language Crisis: Inuit Language in the Arctic". The presenters were Jose Kusugak, Eva Aariak, and Brad Morse. The proceedings were moderated by CBC Radio's Kathleen Petty.

### INUIT ARCTIC TOUR

In 2003 ITK developed the "Inuit Arctic Tour" to raise awareness among senior federal bureaucrats about Inuit specific issues, and to bring high level public servants to the Arctic.

The 2008 Inuit Arctic Tour was held April 6-11, 2008 in the Inuvialuit Region of the Northwest Territories. 20 senior bureaucrats covering 13 federal departments participated in the 2008 tour. Highlights included substantial briefings by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation in Inuvik, and Community presentations in Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk. Tour participants greatly enjoyed being

transported from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk on the ice highway, eating lunch at a drill site en route, and taking part in a fishing derby in Paulatuk on a frozen lake. ITK is grateful to Capital Health and Larga Edmonton for stellar tour support, and to Norterra for a magnificent briefing on the economic development initiatives in the Inuvialuit Region on behalf of Inuvialuit beneficiaries.

## PUBLISHING

Inuktitut Magazine was published twice during the year, ably managed by Editor Melissa Irwin. The magazine is published in Inuktitut, English, and French. It has been published for over 40 years, and is the oldest Inuktitut language publication in Canada.

## TECHNOLOGY

The ITK web site continued to greet cyber surfers from around the world with information on ITK, the Inuit of Canada, and the issues germane to Inuit in 2007 and 2008. ITK has also kept with the times, and used the ubiquitous services of YouTube to communicate key messages in one of the most engaging visual mediums of our times. Blogs are surely our next stop.

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Stephen Hendrie: Senior Communications Officer

Melissa Irwin: Communications Officer

**THANK YOU ITK DONORS**

ITK is a national, non-profit charitable organization which preserves Inuit identity, culture and way of life. Your donation to ITK supported specific initiatives that were our greatest need, such as environmental work on mitigating the effects of climate change, developing means to improve Inuit health, and children and youth issues. ITK is grateful to all of our donors who have renewed their support this year for ITK. We would like to acknowledge our donors for their ongoing support of the work done at ITK. For information on how to donate to ITK please contact Natalia Haldorsen at 613.238.8181 ext 299.

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Rhoda Abbey	Mary Corneille	David & Rosi Jory
Rex Barger	Madeline Crilley	Catherine Kohlsmith
David Boag	Beverly Daniels	Sylvia Lenard
Helen & Peter Bourchier	Dr. Michael & Mrs. B. Kim	Bonnie Maclachlan
Doris Bradley	Davidman	Joyce Mathieson
Dr. Lewis & Dr Elisabeth Brandt	Shirley Emery	Evan Melnyk
Sheila Brown	Dononald Ferguson	Donald Micks
Qennefer Browne	Gerald Foord	Donald Moors
Varunee Buerkle	Shirley Fyles	Nielson-Jones
Rebecca Burke	Catherine Gillies	Robert Paine
Bernard Burton	Marion Handcock	Ron Philipp
Verna Caskey	Joseph Hatton	Ian Pringle
Louise Chevalier	Lucinda & Gordon Hayden	Jerold Rothstein
Todd Christensen	Phyllis Head	Wendy Russell
George Clark	Barbara Hinds	Burdett Sisler
Coghlan Coghlan	Dr. T. and Mrs D.T Hofman	Grace Street
Rod Cohen	Robert Howard	CPS Taylor
Wilhelm Coljee	M.L. Jayne	Helen Turbett
Milo Connelley	Eunice Johnston	Sofia & Pierre Walder
	Guy Jones	

## ***FINANCE DEPARTMENT***

The ITK Finance, Administration and Human Resources Department include staff who ensure the organization functions smoothly. The department uses systems and controls to ensure ITK operations are transparent, and accountable. We ensure all departments receive timely and precise financial information and support. We also support the hiring process, complete travel arrangements and maintain the ITK donor list.

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**Staff List:**

Carol Jattan: Director

Jennifer Bradley: Human Resources / Finance Officer

Koomook McLister: Finance Clerk

Irina Appa: Travel / Admin Coordinator

Natalia Haldorsen: Finance Officer

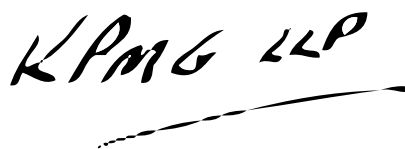
**AUDITORS REPORT**

The accompanying summarized statement of financial position and summarized statement of operations and changes in net assets are derived from the complete financial statements of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami as at March 31, 2008 on which we expressed an opinion without reservation in our report dated May 23, 2008. The fair summarization of the complete financial statements is the responsibility of management. Our responsibility, in accordance with the applicable Assurance Guideline of The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, is to report on the summarized financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements fairly summarize, in all material respects, the related complete financial statements in accordance with the criteria described in the Guideline referred to above.

These summarized financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the entity's financial position, results of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows, reference should be made to the related complete financial statements.

Chartered Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants



*KPMG LLP*

Ottawa, Canada

**SUMMARIZED ACCOUNT BALANCE SHEET**

March 31, 2008 with comparative figures for 2007

	2008	2007
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets:</b>		
Cash	\$ 738,007	\$ 173,515
Amounts Receivable	250,611	229,236
Contributions Receivable	1,406,518	2,260,555
Prepaid Expenses	23,945	-
	2,419,081	2,663,306
<b>Capital assets</b>		
	162,187	187,424
	<b>\$ 2,581,268</b>	<b>\$ 2,850,730</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current liabilities:</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 1,124,710	\$ 1,871,929
Deferred revenue	531,989	253,420
	1,656,699	2,125,349
Deferred capital contribution	7,378	14,660
<b>Net assets:</b>		
Invested in capital assets	154,809	172,764
Internally restricted	299,437	299,437
Unrestricted – general operation and funded projects	462,945	238,520
	917,191	710,721
	<b>\$ 2,581,268</b>	<b>\$ 2,850,730</b>

On behalf of the Board



Director



Director

**SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

March 31, 2008 with comparative figures for 2007

	GENERAL OPERATIONS	FUNDED ACTIVITIES	2008 TOTAL	2007 TOTAL
<b>REVENUE:</b>				
Contributions	-	\$ 6,360,719	\$ 6,360,719	\$ 6,129,862
Other	433,219	-	433,219	341,031
	433,219	6,360,719	6,793,938	6,470,893
Deferred revenue, beginning of year	116,998	126,977	243,975	116,998
Deferred revenue, end of year	(116,998)	(414,991)	(531,989)	(253,420)
	433,219	6,072,705	6,505,924	6,334,471
<b>EXPENSES:</b>				
Administration	223	423	646	10,756
Advertising	38,953	9,885	48,838	24,957
Bank charges	5,228	-	5,228	7,729
Communications	21,093	129,640	150,733	98,015
Distribution	24,840	18,270	43,110	41,144
Equipment rental	317	8,102	8,419	6,427
Furniture/equipment	51,567	-	51,567	49,317
Insurance	11,775	-	11,775	11,991
Office expenses	30,951	48,257	79,208	85,616
Printing	12,060	91,434	103,494	126,369
Production costs	1,055	10,816	11,871	29,422
Professional fees	65,815	889,194	955,009	739,099
Rent	231,785	85,000	316,785	317,961
Repairs and maintenance	-	-	-	19,160
Salaries and benefits	61,147	2,288,953	2,350,100	2,674,858
Translation	3,779	55,967	59,746	68,628
Travel	208,852	940,051	1,148,903	1,139,872
<b>Affiliated organizations participation:</b>				
Project activities		928,785	928,785	853,988
	769,440	5,504,777	6,274,217	6,305,309
<b>CAPITAL AND ADMINISTRATION CHARGES</b>	(567,928)	567,928	-	-
	201,512	6,072,705	6,274,217	6,305,309
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES BEFORE INTERNAL TRANSFERS AND AMORTIZATION</b>	231,707	-	231,707	29,162
Amortization of capital assets	(76,804)	-	(76,804)	(77,184)
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES BEFORE INTERNAL TRANSFERS</b>	154,903	-	154,903	(48,022)
Transfers invested in capital assets	51,567	-	51,567	49,317
Deferred capital contributions			-	-
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	\$ 206,470	-	\$ 206,470	\$ 1,295

**SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**

March 31, 2008 with comparative figures for 2007

	INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS	RESTRICTED	UNRESTRICTED	2008	2007
<b>BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b> As previously reported	\$ 172,764	\$ 299,437	\$ 238,520	\$ 710,721	\$ 709,426
Excess of revenue over expenses	-	-	206,470	206,470	1,295
Amortization of capital assets	(76,804)	-	76,804	-	-
Additions to capital assets	51,567	-	(51,567)	-	-
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	7,282	-	(7,282)	-	-
<b>BALANCE, END OF YEAR</b>	\$ 154,809	\$ 299,437	\$ 462,945	\$ 917,191	\$ 710,721