

# NUNAVUT LANGUAGE SUMMIT

our language brings us together

iqaluit, february 9-12, 2010



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## Uqausivut atausiujjutivut



On behalf of the Government of Nunavut, I would like to invite you to take part in a gathering that will help to shape the future of our territory.

The Nunavut Language Summit will provide Inuit, Anglophone and Francophone communities, as well as other stakeholders, the opportunity to set priorities for the implementation of Nunavut's new language legislation.

In 2008, the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut passed the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and the *Official Languages Act*.

Together, these two laws strive to ensure that the Inuit Language will continue to play a central role in all aspects of daily life while protecting the rights of English and French speakers in the territory.

The Government of Nunavut is now in consultation with territorial institutions and municipalities to develop a comprehensive implementation plan.

As the Minister of Languages, I am planning to table the implementation plan in the Legislative Assembly in 2010. It will be broad in its scope, covering such areas as:

- Revitalizing the Inuit Language, targeting communities or age groups where there are concerns that it is in decline;
- Inuit Language learning and training at all stages of life;
- The Inuit Language as a working language of government;
- Day-to-day services provided to the public by government and private sector organizations.

The Nunavut Language Summit will involve participants from all parts of our territory. At the summit, experts and stakeholders will share best practices in revitalizing minority and aboriginal languages. More importantly, Nunavummiut will have a better appreciation of their language rights and play an active role in a ground-breaking language planning process.

This will open a new chapter in our efforts to protect and promote all of Nunavut's official languages.

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The Honourable Louis Tapardjuk  
Minister of Languages

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## Language planning for the future of Nunavut

The creation of a new territory in 1999 opened up new possibilities for protecting and promoting the Inuit Language. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in Canada where the majority of people speak an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue, rather than English or French.

One of the Government of Nunavut's top priorities has been to ensure that, in the future, the Inuit Language plays a central role in all aspects of daily life, while remaining committed to protecting the rights of the territory's English and French speaking minorities.

Balancing the priorities and rights of three different official languages requires careful consideration.

After years of discussion and research, the Government of Nunavut took an important step in this direction with the passage of the historic *Inuit Language Protection Act* and the *Official Languages Act*.

The new *Official Languages Act* will affirm the Inuit Language, along with English, and French, as Nunavut's three Official Languages. The Legislative Assembly, the Courts, and the departments and public agencies of the Government of Nunavut are preparing to meet the new requirements of this Act. This will include providing services and communications to the public that are effective and culturally appropriate in the official language of their choice.

The *Inuit Language Protection Act*, meanwhile, seeks to ensure the Inuit Language is and will remain at the centre of education, work and daily life throughout the territory. This action is necessary in order to reverse language shift among youth, ensure respect for unilingual Inuit, and strengthen the use of the Inuit Language by all Nunavummiut. The Act sets out the positive measures which every government and private sector organization will take in order to revitalize, develop, and promote the language.

These proactive and complex laws will be implemented carefully, in stages, through careful planning and consultations.



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The Minister of Languages is currently preparing a comprehensive implementation plan. The first section of the plan will address the activities, human and financial resources and partnerships needed to implement and administer the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. A second and distinct section will do the same for the *Official Languages Act*. The plan will be presented to the Legislative Assembly in 2010.

This language planning process will be informed by research on the best ways to revitalize and promote minority, vulnerable and endangered languages. But it is the communities that speak these languages - Inuit, Anglophones and Francophones - who will be involved in setting the priorities and the activities that will be included in the plan.

Territorial institutions, Inuit organizations, municipalities and the private sector are also taking part.

This work began with a Forum on French Services in March 2009, and a series of roundtables in the Qitirmiut (Kitikmeot), Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk regions in the Fall 2009. Together, the recommendations of these consultations and the results of the Nunavut Language Summit will directly inform the implementation plan that will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Together, our new language laws and the forthcoming implementation plan will place Nunavut at the forefront of language revitalization and promotion efforts worldwide.

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## What will happen at the Summit?

Hundreds of participants from communities across Nunavut and the circumpolar world will come to Iqaluit during the second week of February 2010 to pay tribute to our achievements and chart a path for the future.

At the Nunavut Language Summit, Nunavummiut are invited to take part in a series of workshops that will inform the development of a comprehensive implementation plan for Nunavut's language legislation. Each workshop will feature a panel of speakers who will address various topics. This will be followed by an opportunity for others attending to ask questions and make recommendations.

This is in keeping with the rights of Inuit under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* to participate in the design of programs and services that impact their language and culture. Francophones, Anglophones will also participate along with other stakeholders likely to be impacted by the implementation, evaluation and maintenance of the plan.

The workshops that are planned are organized around seven themes:

### Language Learning

Over centuries, each generation of Inuit developed their language skills through a lifetime of interactions with those in their family and community. With the introduction of formal school-based education, this model of teaching and learning was undermined. In this series of workshops, we will explore new ways for Nunavummiut of all ages to acquire and enhance their abilities in the Inuit Language.

### Language Revitalization & Promotion

This series of workshops will look at the role of community-based initiatives in supporting the Inuit Language in Nunavut. Participants will discuss some of the innovative initiatives that are enabling people to use the language as a regular part of daily life in their communities.



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## Writing & Language Standardization

Inuit have long grappled with how to preserve the rich forms of the language that make each of their dialects unique. At the same time, they have sought ways to ease communication across dialectal differences. Many Inuit are also concerned that the quality of their language is eroding among younger generations. This series of workshops will examine the challenges of preserving dialects, promoting greater unity of the Inuit language and maintaining its quality for future generations.

## Language of Work

Given that most Nunavummiut speak the Inuit Language as their mother tongue, enabling employees to use their first language in the workplace is key to removing the barriers to Inuit employment. Through this series of workshops, participants will look at ways to make it easier for Nunavummiut to use the Inuit Language on the job.



## Media & Music

English has assumed a predominant role in many aspects of daily life in Nunavut, including in television, film, music and book publishing. High quality productions in the Inuit Language can be an excellent way to promote its use, especially among younger generations. This series of workshops will explore the possibilities.

## Daily Services in the Inuit Language

Many Inuit, particularly those who speak only the Inuit Language, encounter great difficulty in accessing basic services from government, health care providers and the private sector. Participants in this series of workshops will explore ways in which all organizations might improve and expand the current delivery of services in the Inuit Language.



## Programs & Services in the French Language

The francophone community in Nunavut faces its own challenges in maintaining the vitality of the French language and accessing government programs and services. This series of workshops will explore the issues from a French-speaking perspective and discuss ways to safeguard and strengthen community and cultural life while improving the government's delivery of services.

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## Registration

You have the option to submit your registration either by email or by fax. If you are from Nunavut, and need assistance with your travel arrangements, please submit a completed registration form no later than **January 15, 2010**. Travel assistance is limited to a maximum of three individuals per community.

**By e-mail:** Complete the registration form electronically and e-mail it to [uqausivut@gov.nu.ca](mailto:uqausivut@gov.nu.ca)

**By fax:** Print the registration form and fax it to **1.867.975.5504**

name: e-mail:  
organization: daytime phone:  
mailing address: fax:  
community:

Language of correspondence:  
(If Inuit Language, please specify Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun)

Do you need travel assistance? (please indicate yes or no):

If yes, provide your date of birth:  
social insurance number:

### Workshop Selection

Please select the six workshops from the list below that you are most interested in attending. This will help us to ensure there is enough space at each workshop for those wishing to attend.

#### Workshops on Inuit Language Learning

- The Inuit Language in the home
- The Inuit Language in early childhood education
- Achieving full Inuit Language proficiency in the schools
- Adult language learning

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## **Workshops on Language Revitalization & Promotion**

- Building community capacity toward language planning
- Staging community-based initiatives on language and culture
- Language leaders and role models in our communities

## **Workshops on Writing and Standardization**

- The future of our written language
- Preserving and respecting our ways of speaking
- Dictionaries, grammars and language competencies

## **Workshops on the Language of Work**

- Removing barriers to the Inuit Language in the workplace
- A working environment conducive to the use of the Inuit Language
- Advancement opportunities through language training
- Computing and working tools in the Inuit Language



## **Workshops on Media and Music**

- Publishing in the Inuit Language
- Music in the Inuit Language
- The Inuit language in film, television and new media
- Radio broadcasting in the Inuit Language

## **Workshops on Daily Services in the Inuit Language**

- Recognizing achievements and best practices
- Improving Government Services in the Inuit Language
- Providing essential services in the Inuit Language
- Planning Inuit language services in the private sector



## **The Vitality of the French Language Community**

- Nunavut's Language Policy Framework
- Improving Government Services in French
- French Services in the Health Care System
- Economic Community Development
- Arts, Media & Youth
- Education in the French Language

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## Qanuq isumavit?

What do you think? We'd like to hear about you, as an individual or as an organization, and your interest or actions with regard to Nunavut's languages. What are your hopes and expectations of the Nunavut Language Summit?

If you wish, you can also write to us with your views on how Nunavut's new language legislation should be implemented. We will post your comments on the Nunavut Language Summit website as part of a forum on the hopes and concerns of Nunavummiut with regard to language.



Send your comments to us:

### **Nunavut Language Summit**

Department of Culture, Language, Elders & Youth



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