



INUIT

Press Release

ICC Urges Countries to Respect the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the Paris Climate Agreement

December 3, 2015 – **Paris, France** – Okalik Egeesiak, Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is a delegate at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP 21 talks in Paris and has been advocating on behalf of Inuit. Currently, negotiators are working to produce a draft agreement that will be handed over to the leaders when they descend on Paris next week. These negotiations are coming down to the wire and there are some countries that are not supporting the inclusion of language that recognizes that climate change impacts human rights and the rights of Indigenous peoples. “Climate change is not just an environmental issue it is a human rights issue and the melting of the Arctic is impacting all aspects of Inuit life therefore the final text must make the rights of Indigenous peoples operative and keep it in Article 2.2. We have the right to be cold” argued Egeesiak.

Indigenous and human rights delegates have just learned that the text developed to recognize the human rights including the rights of Indigenous peoples is on the cutting floor. “I think we can all agree that every human being has a right to a safe environment and Indigenous peoples are on the frontline of climate change impacts. All of our communities from the Arctic to the Amazon are challenged by changing climates. This recognition is vitally important” stated Egeesiak.

“We urge Canada, Norway, the United States, Greenland, Russia, Sweden, Finland to support their Indigenous peoples and fight for the inclusion of human rights and the rights of Indigenous peoples language to remain in Article 2.2.,” said Egeesiak. “We need communities in these countries to mobilize and pressure their respective governments to this effect. So that pressure abroad matches the pressure Indigenous delegates are exerting on negotiators here in Paris.”

To view the COP 21 ICC Climate Change position paper see www.inuitcircumpolar.com.

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