

THE 1986 INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR CONFERENCE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN BRIEF

By

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of Canada

*Summary of resolutions passed*

The Inuit Circumpolar Conference met from July 28 to August 3, 1986 in Kotzebue, Alaska. Delegates, entertainers, translators, and staff came from Alaska, Canada, and Greenland for the meeting. Many observers also attended. It was estimated that Kotzebue, a town of 2,900; received some 2,000 visitors during the ICC gathering.

The ICC General Meeting dealt with many issues of importance to Inuit in the circumpolar region, including: adoption of principles to guide the development of a comprehensive Arctic policy by the ICC; adoption of a framework for an Inuit Regional Conservation Strategy; resolutions on a wide range of Inuit concerns; amendments to the ICC By-laws; and selection of a new ICC President and Executive Council.

Workplans for the development of the Arctic policy and Inuit Regional Conservation Strategy were agreed upon and will be pursued during the three years before the next General assembly. Workshops were held to deal with various topics of the draft Arctic policy, including one on Economic Development which was co-chaired by Les Carpenter of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. While the workshops focused on specific draft principles for various areas of Arctic policy, many participants found the opportunity to compare the situations of Inuit in Alaska, Canada and Greenland useful as well.

The resolutions of the 1986 ICC General Assembly included resolutions on: elders, youth committees, Inuit children, arctic research, Inuit rights and arctic sovereignty, marine mammals, Inuit health in relation to military installations,

Inuit communications, Indigenous Survival International, Inuit teacher hiring practices, ICC Transportation Commission, Inuit courts, Arctic haze, education, militarization, training of translators, support for Hawaiians and support for the Saami of Scandinavia in the face of fallout from Chernobyl. Of the other resolutions passed, two were of particular significance to the Inuvialuit: one supporting the creation of Nunavut which recognized that

the Inuvialuit of the Western Arctic support the creation of Nunavut, although consensus has not been reached as to which territory the Western Arctic will belong;

and a resolution triggered by the Gulf Canada tanker shipment of oil scheduled to leave the Canadian Beaufort and travel around the Alaska this summer. This resolution voiced objections to the shipping of petroleum products by sea through the Arctic and called on governments to coordinate offshore industrial activity.

In addition to the substantive work of the General Assembly, the 1986 ICC meeting provided a welcome opportunity for Inuit to share cultural performances and to celebrate their heritage. Sadly, the Soviet Inuit cultural groups did not attend, despite high expectations that this would be the year of contact between Soviet Inuit and the ICC.

During the meeting of the General Assembly, the elders held their own ICC Elders Conference. Emmanuel Felix, Kathleen Hanson and Morris Nygeah attended and Shirley Kisoun and Agnes Kuptana assisted them.