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Nunavut Maligaliurvia
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

RELEASE

Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* holds successful meeting with Elections Canada

IQALUIT, Nunavut (July 6, 2000) - Members of the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* returned home from Ottawa last weekend following three days of successful meetings with the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, Jean-Pierre Kingsley, and Elections Canada officials.

The meetings continued the Standing Committee's work on reviewing the electoral process in Nunavut and the recommendations contained in the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, entitled *Election of the First Legislative Assembly of Nunavut - 1999: A New Beginning*.

"While our first priority is to hear from the people of Nunavut, we are very interested in sharing information with other jurisdictions in Canada as to how they have addressed some of the challenges faced in running elections," said Hunter Tootoo, MLA for Iqaluit Centre and Chair of the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit*.

The Standing Committee discussed a number of issues with Elections Canada, including the Registry of Electors, election financing, electoral boundary redistribution, geographic information systems electoral mapping, special voting procedures, voter education and outreach.

"We were very pleased that two representatives from Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), Solomon Awa and Helen Klengenberg, also joined the delegation from Nunavut," said Hunter Tootoo.

"This follows on our suggestion to NTI that we work together towards creating a central office to administer elections in Nunavut, a suggestion that Paul Quassa, President of NTI, also supported in his presentation to the Standing Committee earlier this year. While we are very much at the exploratory stage, it was exciting that Mr. Kingsley also supported the idea as one which will allow different levels of government to efficiently share and train electoral staff, maintain up-to-date electors' lists and prepare materials that are in Inuktitut, along with many more possibilities."

"Some of the challenges facing elections staff at all levels in Nunavut include the preparation of materials in Inuktitut, voting maps for our communities, which do not usually have street names, enabling electors in outpost camps to vote, and ensuring that the registry of electors is complete and updated with Nunavut source data," said Hunter Tootoo. "We shared a commitment to continue working together with Elections Canada and NTI on some of these issues in the hopes of developing solutions that will better meet the needs of Nunavummiut."

The Standing Committee also met with Mrs. Marlene Catterall, Member of Parliament and Vice-Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. "This was very useful for us, given that the federal Standing Committee just completed its own review of elections issues at the federal level," said Hunter Tootoo.

The Standing Committee has already held community meetings in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Kugaaruk. It will be holding additional community meetings in September, and hopes to continue to receive input from Nunavut residents about their concerns and ideas for changing Nunavut's electoral processes before tabling their report in the House this fall.

Members of the public are encouraged to send their views to the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* at the Legislative Assembly, or contact their MLA.

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