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Nunavut Maligaliurvia  
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut  
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

RELEASE

## **Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* tables its final report on elections in Nunavut**

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (October 23, 2000)** – The Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* tabled its final report, entitled: “Review of the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Nunavut: Election of the First Legislative Assembly of Nunavut – 1999: A New Beginning” in the Legislative Assembly today.

Hunter Tootoo, Chair of the Standing Committee, highlighted the importance of the report and the process of public consultations that lead up its release. "Elections are the foundation of democracy. We want to administer them in a way that encourages participation, recognizes the uniqueness of circumstances of Nunavut, and at the same time are effective and fiscally responsible."

In addition to meeting with the Chief Electoral Officer and other elections officials, the Standing Committee held a series of public consultations in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Kugaaruk, Clyde River, Cape Dorset, Kugluktuk and Chesterfield Inlet. The consultations focused on the experiences of Nunavummiut during previous elections and on their suggestions for how the elections process can be improved.

A key recommendation of the report is that territorial, municipal, federal and Inuit organizations collaborate in the establishment of a central elections office for Nunavut.

This office would potentially administer elections at all levels, and pursue such new initiatives as a permanent voters' list and joint training for elections staff, in order to streamline the administration of future elections.

The report also focuses on the need to ensure that all Nunavummiut, including Elders, students and the disabled, are better able to participate in the elections process. The report recommends a number of specific initiatives to achieve this goal.

The report presents more than 60 recommendations, including:

- That a central elections office be established to administer elections in Nunavut, called “Elections Nunavut”;
- That a working group be established, composed of representatives from the Government of Nunavut, NTI, Regional Inuit Organizations, the Nunavut Association of

Municipalities, Elections Canada and other organizations which run elections at the local level to negotiate the details of how the central elections office would best meet the needs of different organizations, how the different electoral processes could be harmonized, and where the office should be located;

- That the section on election offences in the *Elections Act* be rewritten so that it is easier to understand and that more information on what constitutes an election offence be provided to the public and to candidates;
- That a permanent voters' list be established and an elector transfer certificate be developed for use by voters who move after revision day;
- That the Government of Nunavut introduce a new *Elections Act* for Nunavut that is written in a manner that is easily understood by voters, candidates and election officials;
- That general elections be held mid-week, in October or November;
- That the election period be shortened from 45 days to 35 days and that the nomination period be shortened from 10 to 5 days; and
- That if the Legislative Assembly wishes to further consider dropping the age of voting to 16 for territorial elections, a plebiscite or formal opinion poll be used to determine the views of Nunavummiut.

Copies of the report are available from the Legislative Library. They will be distributed to all hamlet councils in the coming weeks.

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