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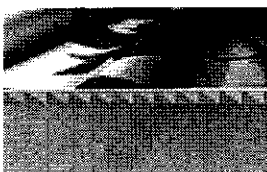
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## News Release Communiqué

2-02820

### SIGNING OF LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT WITH THE INUIT OF NUNAVIK

**Kuujuuaq, Quebec (December 1, 2006)** – The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Canada and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, along with Pita Aatami, President of the Makivik Corporation, representing about 10,000 Inuit from Nunavik, and Paul Okalik, Premier of Nunavut, today signed the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement.

"Today's agreement is a remarkable achievement that illustrates what can be attained by negotiating in good faith," said Minister Prentice. "Canada's new government and the Inuit decided, in a climate of co-operation and respect, to resolve the issues that had been dragging on for some time."

The agreement covers the offshore region of Quebec, and some of the islands and waters along the shores of James Bay, Hudson Bay, Hudson Strait and Ungava Bay, as well as a portion of northern Labrador and an offshore area adjacent to Labrador.

"After 13 years of negotiations on our land claim in the offshore area, Inuit of Nunavik can be proud of its conclusion," said Mr. Aatami. "This agreement affirms our right to these islands, which we have long claimed and recognized to be ours. These are the islands where our ancestors were born and lived, maintaining traditional activities, and where we remain active to this day."

The Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Okalik said: "I congratulate all the men and women whose hard work has resulted in us being able to gather here today to celebrate this happy occasion."

The agreement addresses land and resource issues, and does not include a self-government component as there are no permanent residents on the islands being claimed.

The agreement settles unresolved issues stemming from the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, to which the Inuit of Nunavik are signatories. They will receive roughly \$54.8 million over nine years in the form of capital transfers, as well as \$39.8 to implement the agreement over 10 years, and receive a share of resource royalties accrued by the federal government in the Nunavik Marine Region. All funds are calculated in 2005 dollars.

The Nunavik Inuit will now own about 80 per cent of the islands in this region, with a surface area of more than 5,000 square kilometres. They also have overlap agreements with their neighbours the Eeyou Istchee Cree, the Labrador Inuit and the Nunavut Inuit.

In addition, the agreement, once brought into effect following legislation, will give national park status to the Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve of Canada, creating a new national park of approximately 9,700 square kilometres in the Arctic wilderness of Labrador.

In October 2006, a ratification vote was held in 15 Inuit communities across Nunavik. An overwhelming 78 per cent Inuit endorsed the agreement, with voter turnout at 81 per cent.

**For more information, please contact:**

Deirdra McCracken  
Press Secretary  
Minister Prentice's Office  
(613) 997-0002

Lisa Koperqualuk  
Communications Officer  
Makivik Corporation  
(514) 386-0669

Bill Clay  
Director of Communications  
Premier Okalik's Office (867) 975-5050

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