IMPACTS on DECISION-MAKING in Nunavut

Our future is not yet set, nor is our journey complete.
"We have gone through a lot in a short time. Among those who have left their mark on us are whalers, Christian ministers, traders, police, teachers, scientists, and southern politicians. Some of these people had good intentions, and our ancestors welcomed them because tradition and belief ruled them with good manners, kindness, and curiosity. Inuit today inherited both the good and bad effects of these influences."

- Ann Meekjuk Hanson

"It is important that we continue through the challenges... the potential for Nunavut is something new and cannot solely come from the outside world, but must also grow from within the territory."

- Miali-Elise Coley

"The creation of Nunavut will not shelter us from problems, but will allow us to make our own decisions about how best to confront and take on those problems."

- Jose Amaujaq Kusugak (1950-2011)

"When Inuit were out in their seasonal camps they were in complete control of their lives, but once they moved to the communities where the RCMP, the missionaries, and the Hudson’s Bay were, they had no more say. The qallunaat decided what was going to happen in those communities, and nobody else had an input."

- John Amagoalik

"We felt we’ve been forgotten by the universe, and betrayed by the people who had brought us here, with false promises of a better life or the possibility of returning home."

- Martha Flaherty
“The idea of Nunavut was first proposed in the 1960s. At the time, the majority of Inuit had only recently left behind life in their seasonal camps for a new one in permanent communities. This transition was not an easy one. It disrupted our local economies, our methods of educating our young people and, in some cases the relationships between family members.

Our families were suddenly dependent on government for housing, health care, and employment. Government officials exercised direct control over the forces that were transforming our way of life.

Our leaders started to take back some control over our lives. New political organizations were established at the national, regional and local levels. Inuit all over the Arctic started talking and building a common sense of purpose. There were years filled with negotiations, political strategizing, legal action, and consultations with communities.

In 1993, we settled our land claim with Canada. The agreement gave Inuit ownership over 18 percent of the land in Nunavut. It also created the Government of Nunavut. Despite the settlement of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the public Government of Nunavut does not have direct control over the Crown Lands and waters of our territory.

This authority remains with the federal government. This is why we need devolution. Devolution is about equality. Canada’s constitution guarantees that the lands, internal waters and resources within a province belong to the people who live there.

Devolution is about ensuring Nunavummiut have the same economic opportunities as other Canadians. It is the next step in integrating the north as equal partners into the Canadian federation.”

Premier Eva Aariak

“Reflecting on our past – looking to our future”