We, the Inuit of Inuit Nunaat, declare as follows:

1. Inuit and the Arctic

1.2 Inuit live in the Arctic. Inuit live in the vast, circumpolar region of land, sea and air known as the Arctic. We depend on the marine and terrestrial plants and animals unique to the Arctic – the Arctic Ocean, the tundra and the sea – as our home.

1.2 Inuit have been living in the Arctic from time immemorial. From time immemorial, Inuit have been living in the common spaces and territories of the Inuit of Inuit Nunaat, stretched from Greenland to Canada, Alaska and the coastal regions of Chukotka, Russia. Our use and recognition of Arctic lands and waters pre-dates recorded history. Our unique knowledge, experience, skills and abilities are critical in developing innovative and creative jurisdictional arrangements that appropriately reflect our rights, responsibilities and interests. Our unique knowledge and experience are critical in developing innovative and creative jurisdictional arrangements that appropriately reflect our rights, responsibilities and interests.

2. The Evolving Nature of Sovereignty in the Arctic

2.1 Sovereignty is a term that has been used to refer to the absolute and independent authority of a community to sustain itself internally and externally. Sovereignty is a contested concept, however, and does not have a fixed meaning. Old ideas of sovereignty are breaking down as different governance models, such as the European Union, are increasingly being asked to provide leadership in its internal development, and technological and economic development, it is a term that has been used to refer to the absolute and independent authority of a community to sustain itself internally and externally. Sovereignty is a contested concept, however, and does not have a fixed meaning. Old ideas of sovereignty are breaking down as different governance models, such as the European Union, are increasingly being asked to provide leadership in its internal.

2.2 Recognition and respect for our right to self-determination is developing in various ways and in various forms in the Arctic states in which we live. Following a declaration in November 2008, the areas of self-government in Greenland will expand greatly and, among other things, Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat), will become Greenland's native official language in Canada. Four land claims agreements are some of the key building blocks of Inuit rights, while there are conflicts over the implementation of these agreements, which are relevant to sovereignty and self-determination in the Arctic. Inuit have the right to determine our political status, freely pursue our economic, social, cultural and linguistic development, and freely dispose of our natural resources and economic systems.

2.3 In exercising our right to self-determination in the circumpolar Arctic, we continue to participate in the development of new partnerships with states for the protection of Inuit sovereignty and environmental security. In this sense, “sovereignty begins at home.” Healthy Arctic communities

3.1 In the pursuit of economic opportunities in a warming Arctic, states must act so as to (1) put economic activity on a sustainable footing, (2) avoid harmful resource exploitation, (3) achieve standards of living for Inuit that most national and international norms and minimums, and (4) reflect what is necessary for Inuit self-determination in a changing Arctic.

3.2 Inuit are the holders of the rights and responsibilities of states. In exercising our right to self-determination in the circumpolar Arctic, we will benefit both the Inuit community and the international community.

3.3 The environmental impact of Inuit in the circumpolar region and to the need for appropriate emphasis on sustainability in the selection of resource development proposals, provide practical advantages to conducting international relations in the Arctic in partnership with Inuit.

3.4 Inuit consent, expertise and perspectives are critical to progress on issues of sovereignty and sovereign rights in the Arctic, particularly issues of sovereign rights all require healthy and sustainable communities in the Arctic. In this sense, “sovereignty begins at home.”

3.5 Inuit and the Arctic

3.5 Inuit are indigenous people with the right to self-determination and responsibility of states. In seeking to exercise our rights in the Arctic, we continue to participate in the development of new partnerships with states for the protection of Inuit sovereignty and environmental security. In this sense, “sovereignty begins at home.”

3.6 Inuit are indigenous people with the right to self-determination and responsibility of states. In seeking to exercise our rights in the Arctic, we continue to participate in the development of new partnerships with states for the protection of Inuit sovereignty and environmental security.

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