2026 IQALUIT DECLARATION

On the occasion of the 15th General Assembly of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) from 22-25 July 2026 in Iqaluit, Nunavut, and in the context of the Assembly theme,

INUIT TAPIRIIT NUNARJUARMI

Reaffirming that the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is the Indigenous Peoples' Organization that represents and provides the unified voice of Inuit at the international level through our membership of representative institutions and organizations across Inuit Nunaat, our Inuit homelands across Chukotka (Russia), Alaska (United States), Canada and Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland),

Underscoring that Inuit have always been one People who share a common homeland, culture, values, language and way of life, recognizing that ICC's work is grounded in indigenous knowledge and our responsibility to one another across Inuit Nunaat. Division by state borders, colonial history, or competing regional interests cannot undermine our unity and strength,

Reaffirming that ICC is dedicated to strengthening Inuit unity; advancing Inuit rights and interests internationally; formulating long-term policies to protect the Arctic environment and ICC strives for full and effective participation and meaningful engagement of Inuit in the political, economic, cultural and social development of the Arctic,

Reaffirming ICC's commitment to international law and territorial integrity and the promotion, protection and respect for human rights, including the rights of Indigenous Peoples, **underscoring** that peace and stability in the Arctic region builds on diplomatic relations and cross-border people-to-people cooperation, and respectful and equal partnerships between Arctic States, self-governing nations and Peoples,

Celebrating ICC's forthcoming 50th anniversary in 2027, having first emerged in an era of environmental and global insecurity, **affirming** that where Inuit lead, Inuit thrive, **noting** that we again find ourselves in an unstable geopolitical time, and **reaffirming** that ICC is uniquely positioned to respond to and address new challenges across Inuit Nunaat based on our strong history of circumpolar cooperation, solidarity, and unity, and to advance true co-developed solutions in the Arctic with Inuit and states as equal partners,

Reaffirming our interdependent, interrelated, interconnected, and indivisible rights as affirmed by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), including our right to self-determination, which is the prerequisite for the exercise and enjoyment of all of our inherent human rights as Inuit, and **recognizing** the 20th anniversary of the UNDRIP in 2027, and that the UNDRIP permeates all of ICC's work,

Thanking Avannaata Kommunia for hosting the 2023 Delegates Meeting in Ilulissat, Kalaallit Nunaat, complementary to the hybrid General Assembly held in 2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic, **confirming** the importance of in person General Assemblies and **welcoming** its report,

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first Arctic Peoples' Conference commemorated through the Arctic Peoples' Conference in 2023 in Ilulissat, Kalaallit Nunaat, **affirming** the *Statement of the Arctic Peoples' Conference 2023*, including its commitment to cross-border and people-to-people cooperation in the circumpolar Arctic, and **welcoming** the publication of *Empowering Arctic Indigenous Peoples: Celebrating 50 Years of Indigenous Diplomacy*,

Welcoming the reports presented at the 15th ICC General Assembly and celebrating the work of all of the ICC offices, including ICC Chukotka's leadership in hosting the Native Language Festival in Chukotka on February 21, 2024, the International Mother Language Day, and **commending** ICC Chukotka's work to revitalize, promote, and protect the Inuit language, and

Thanking the people of Iqaluit, Nunavut, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, as hosts for ICC's 15th General Assembly, and the first in-person General Assembly since 2018,

THE DELEGATES OF THE ICC 15TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON BEHALF OF INUIT OF CHUKOTKA, ALASKA, CANADA AND KALAALLIT NUNAAT, HEREBY

1. **Welcome** and **adopt** the ICC Report on Activities 2022-2026 and **endorse** the forthcoming actions to continue and commence the work necessary to address the priorities and concerns herein identified by our People;

Indigenous Peoples' Rights, Peace, Security, and Cooperation Across Inuit Nunaat

2. **Affirm** that Inuit have occupied the Arctic since time immemorial, living and thriving across our Inuit homeland, which we call Inuit Nunaat, **direct** ICC to continue to strengthen the position of Inuit as a distinct Arctic Indigenous People, and to ensure that Inuit are recognized and meaningfully engaged in global governance and decision-making at every level;

3. **Reaffirm** our right to our ancestral homelands across Inuit Nunaat including the right of each region and community to access and make decisions regarding the use and stewardship of our lands and waters and **direct** ICC to reject threats to Inuit rights including claims to Inuit Nunaat by outside interests as Inuit have used and occupied our homelands for thousands of years and those ties are integral to our cultural identity, food security, and intergenerational knowledge;

4. **Call** on all governments to fully implement and uphold the minimum standards affirmed in the UNDRIP as a universal human rights instrument applicable to Inuit, thereby confirming that Inuit are equal to all other Peoples and are entitled to the recognition, protection, and exercise of our inherent individual and collective rights, and **further affirm** that Inuit enjoy the full range of human rights enshrined in all human rights instruments;

5. **Direct** ICC to continue to promote, protect and advance the distinct individual and collective rights of Inuit, through continued rejection of any conflation of Indigenous Peoples with terms that risk diminishing our rights, and to promote, protect and advance Indigenous Knowledge – including our Inuit Knowledge – as a distinct and systematic way of knowing, directly connected to our sovereignty;

6. **Affirm** that ICC represents all Inuit through our members who are representative Inuit organizations and institutions, and that ICC is represented by Inuit leadership identified through our own election and appointment processes, and **call on** governments to uphold the full and effective participation and meaningful engagement of Inuit through their representative leadership and **direct** ICC to combat misrepresentation and individual and collective Inuit identity fraud;

7. **Direct** ICC leadership to ensure that ICC is a safe and inclusive space for all Inuit regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, social status, disability, degree of cultural knowledge or language;

8. **Reaffirm** the *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic*, the *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nunaat*, and *ICC Resolution 77-11 on Peaceful and Safe Uses of the Arctic Circumpolar Zone*, **instruct** ICC Executive Council to update ICC's *Inuit Arctic Policy* and **direct** ICC to advocate for the implementation of this updated policy internationally;

9. **Affirm** the co-founding role and Permanent Participant status of ICC in the Arctic Council, and **affirm** that the Arctic Council remains the preeminent body for collaboration among Arctic States and Indigenous Peoples and is committed to maintaining peace, stability and cooperation in the Arctic, **call on** states to maintain the unique character of the Arctic Council by continuing to engage with Permanent Participants as equals in decision-making, **direct** ICC to continue to fully and effectively participate and meaningfully engage at the Arctic Council and to continue cooperation with Permanent Participants on matters of shared interest and engagement in projects of the Arctic Council Working Groups that support Inuit-led and co-developed research, activities, and events, and further **direct** ICC to continue pursuing implementation of the recommendations in the 2024 ICC Position Paper Safeguarding And Strengthening The Arctic Council;

10. **Direct** ICC to continue to fully utilize ICC's UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Consultative Status to advance Inuit priorities at the UN, including the reaffirmation of the seven sociocultural regions through which Indigenous Peoples have self-organized according to our own processes, and our advocacy for full recognition and utilization of Indigenous Knowledge within processes and decision-making;

11. **Direct** ICC leadership to continue to monitor developments, strategize engagement on, and respond to emerging issues and international agreements including a UN globally binding treaty on plastics, the UN Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), engagement in the UN Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences (related to all frozen parts of the earth including ice and glaciers), governance of climate interventions and geoengineering, and future agreements related to the Central Arctic Ocean;

12. **Reaffirm** that our Indigenous Knowledge guides our understanding of and relationship to everything, is embedded in our identity, values, spirituality, and worldview, and that we continue to develop and use our distinct knowledge. **Direct** ICC to continue to advocate internationally for the recognition of Indigenous Knowledge and **direct** ICC to continue to promote the documentation and use of Indigenous Knowledge and to continue to promote its protection in light of the application of new technologies;

13. **Emphasize** that equitable and ethical engagement and utilization of Indigenous Knowledge and Inuit leadership in research is necessary to inform decision-making, policy, research, assessments, monitoring programs, and governance, **reconfirm** the *Circumpolar Inuit Protocols for Equitable and Ethical Engagement*, and **welcome** the recommendations of the *Advancing Inuit Knowledge From Theory to Practice* report, **call on** states to recognize Inuit rights to data sovereignty, and **direct** ICC to develop protocols on Indigenous data sovereignty and management including safeguards;

14. **Call on** all governments, academic and research institutions and funders to invest in Inuit-led research, governance, and data management; opportunities for intergenerational transfer of Indigenous Knowledge; and co-production of knowledge approaches, and **direct** ICC to build on the outcomes report of the Fourth International Conference on Arctic Research Planning and continue engaging with the International Polar Year 2032-2033 planning process;

15. **Direct** ICC to promote Inuit-led knowledge sharing and production about our shared culture, traditions and history, such as dog-sledding, qajaq and umiaq practises, traditional games, and medicinal use of plants and other species, including Inuit-led archaeology. **Call on** governments, academic institutions, museums, and private collections to work with Inuit to repatriate our human remains and cultural items in their possession;

Inuit Hunting and Food Security - Protection of Inuit Lands, Waters, Species, and Ice

16. **Reassert** that Inuit food security cannot exist without Inuit food sovereignty, which is not only about survival, as it is essential to our identity, cultural and spiritual wellbeing, and **recognize** the adverse impacts of environmental change, external pressures and outside interests impeding our rights and access to our traditional foods, **call on** governments to commit to true co-management with Inuit, **direct** ICC to continue to protect and advance the rights of Inuit to hunt, fish, and gather in Inuit Nunaat, including the waters and ice, to advocate for the alignment of regulatory frameworks with Inuit management practices, and to elevate our priorities and solutions in international fora for species and biodiversity conservation;

17. **Direct** ICC to facilitate the sharing of expertise and collaboration on research across Inuit Nunaat to strengthen the management of fish, wildlife and marine resources that Inuit depend upon, and improve access to locally produced or harvested foods, and **direct** the Circumpolar Inuit Wildlife Committee (CIWC) to continue their work to provide a unified pan-Arctic Inuit voice concerning access, sharing, and management of

wildlife resources, recognizing the work carried out directly by Inuit, researchers and partners in the management of these resources;

18. **Recall** the statement of the Arctic Peoples Conference 2023, **emphasize** that the Arctic is connected to the global marine ecosystem through coastal, marine and fresh water systems, migrations of mammals, fish, and birds, **reaffirm** our direct, spiritual relationship with the marine environment that sustains our People, culture, and way of life, **bear witness** to the collapse of critical marine species, including the salmon crash in the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers in Alaska, and **call on** government authorities to work in full partnership with Inuit, to adhere to sustainable management policies to restore species, ensure healthy ecosystems, and our food security;

19. **Recognize** that ICC's work at the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) has contributed to a measurable decrease in the presence of some POPs in Inuit, **direct** ICC to continue advancing a consistent international understanding of the effects of contaminants on all aspects of Arctic ecosystems including direct impacts on human health through Inuit traditional foods, through engaging in the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Stockholm Convention on POPs, and other fora;

20. **Call on** researchers, resource managers, institutions, funders, and governments to implement Inuit research priorities and co-production of knowledge, co-develop baseline data and advance community-based monitoring programs to track impacts and inform decision-making to address threats to Inuit food security;

21. **Stress** that Inuit communities continue to be adversely affected by rapid climate change and that the Arctic is warming three to four times faster than the rest of the world, **direct** ICC to continue to represent Inuit in international climate change research and policy-making spaces, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to advocate for global action to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures;

22. **Recall** climate disasters across our homelands including flooding, permafrost thaw, coastal erosion, loss of sea ice, wildfires and extreme weather events, causing impacts to our People, communities and livelihoods, including the 2017 landslide-induced tsunami which caused the relocation of Nuugaatsiaq and Illorsuit in Kalaallit Nunaat and the Arctic Typhoons Merbok (2022) and Halong (2025) which devastated Inuit communities in Alaska, **direct** ICC to continue to gather information on and communicate the broad adverse impacts of climate change on Inuit and **call on** governments to enable direct access to climate finance including for loss and damage, adaptation, and mitigation and to support Inuit-led climate responses, strategies and

policies that reflect our needs and priorities and are carried out in full partnership with Inuit;

Inuit Identity, Physical, Spiritual, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Language and Intergenerational Knowledge

23. **Call on** governments to support and expand Inuit-led education systems that empower Inuit to thrive and succeed;

24. **Celebrate** our language and dialects as foundational to our Inuit identity, culture, and knowledge and **recognize** the International Decade on Indigenous Languages, **instruct** ICC to protect, promote, revitalize, and celebrate our Inuit language by seeking investment in language revitalization, and supporting the development of long-term strategies to sustain our language, including by promoting the use of the Inuit language in ICC proceedings;

25. **Direct** ICC to advance the promotion and protection of the rights of Inuit children and families, to continue to support best practices and knowledge sharing on Inuit child-rearing, and work to preserve Inuit culture and to ensure that it is handed to the next generation;

26. **Call on** governments to invest and work in partnership with Inuit to promote and protect the human right to affordable and adequate housing and access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and **instruct** ICC to advance Inuit priorities related to critical needs and infrastructure development;

27. **Instruct** ICC to support investment in and continued development of Inuit-led, community-based public safety, including law enforcement, judicial systems, search and rescue and first responders to improve safety in Inuit communities and directly address the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons;

28. **Recall** *ICC Resolution 77-13*, calling upon States to provide for free and unrestricted movement for all Inuit across our Arctic homeland and **direct** ICC to continue to engage with their respective states to remove obstacles to the freedom of movement of Inuit across Inuit Nunaat, for work, family, or other pursuits;

29. **Affirm** that Inuit success relies on our health and wellbeing, **recognize** that Inuit health and wellbeing are holistic, encompassing physical and mental health, the health of our children and families, the use of our language, and a strong culture and sense of identity, and **call on** governments to recognize the significant impact of social and

economic factors affecting Inuit health and wellbeing, and invest in Inuit-led and -designed frameworks, programs, and services that are rooted in Inuit values to address the distinct challenges, faced by Inuit, and expand access to these critical services and systems centered on Inuit-defined models of care;

30. **Instruct** ICC and the Circumpolar Inuit Health Steering Committee to expand their work and knowledge-sharing on culturally grounded mental health programs for Inuit youth, especially on suicide prevention, including mentorship opportunities, language programs, and strengthening elder and youth connections;

31. **Welcome** the Inuit Counsellors' Gathering 2024 Report and **request** that ICC create opportunities for knowledge exchange of best practices across Inuit Nunaat on Inuit solutions for health and wellbeing, and to promote initiatives which foster healing to address physical, psychological, and lateral violence, including intergenerational trauma;

32. **Celebrate** the historic first Inuit Women's Summit hosted in Kalaallit Nunaat in October 2025, and **welcome** the Inuit Women's Summit Report and **support** and **promote** the Inuit Women's Summit Declaration as an advocacy tool for the advancement and protection of the rights of Inuit women and girls and **direct** ICC to explore possibilities to convene a second Inuit Women's Summit;

Inuit-Centered Business and Economic Development

33. **Affirm** our inherent right to self-determination and **instruct** ICC to assert our rights to natural resources within Inuit Nunaat and advance Inuit-defined requirements for responsible resource development and **call on** governments to pursue responsible resource development in partnership with Inuit to ensure it is balanced and contributes to stronger economic, social, and cultural development and enhances community resilience;

34. **Direct** ICC to continue to explore actionable opportunities to promote and protect the right of Inuit to freely sell, trade, barter and transport items made from our traditional food resources across borders, as a fundamental aspect of our identity, culture, food sovereignty, and economic sustainability; to combat disinformation; and address national and international laws and policies that do not recognize and support Inuit rights and priorities, and call on states to remove barriers to Inuit trade consistent with our rights to these resources;

35. **Direct** ICC to facilitate continued knowledge sharing among Inuit businesses, promoting cooperation among Inuit business associations and development corporations and

ensuring that investments and benefits stay with Inuit, **recognize** the work undertaken during the 2022-2026 term to map barriers to Inuit-to-Inuit business cooperation and direct ICC Executive Council to produce and promote a report on this topic, including recommendations, and encourage the International Inuit Business Association to continue its work to support Inuit-to-Inuit business cooperation;

36. **Direct** ICC to support Inuit-led workforce development initiatives, address systemic inequities and advance the promotion and protection of the workers' rights of Inuit including by calling for equitable opportunities, treatment and pay, and encourage ICC to call attention to the unique challenges faced by our People who move away from their home communities for work, education, or other reasons;

37. **Instruct** ICC to advocate for all development and investment in Inuit Nunaat, including defense, search and rescue, emergency preparedness and response and other public investments, to fully respect the right of Inuit to self-determination and self-governance, be informed by Indigenous Knowledge, provide tangible benefits to Inuit communities, and support our way of life;

Inuit-Led Marine Governance

38. **Recognize** that Inuit are a marine People, and that the Arctic marine environment is vital to our health, well-being, connectivity, and overall existence, and **direct** ICC to continue to develop a coordinated approach to protect and promote Inuit rights, self-determination, and the use of Indigenous Knowledge in key marine governance forums, and assert Inuit leadership in all aspects of marine governance, including by developing an ICC international marine governance strategy;

39. **Celebrate** that ICC has achieved Permanent Consultative Status in the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and is the first Indigenous Peoples' Organization to do so, **direct** ICC leadership to develop a workplan for the most effective utilization of this status at the IMO and **direct** ICC to support Inuit-led strategies to monitor and limit the impacts of increasing ship traffic, including from tourism, on Inuit communities and traditional use areas, and to ensure Inuit are not adversely affected by changing shipping and vessel regulations, through advocacy at the IMO and other relevant fora;

40. **Instruct** ICC to advocate for shipping corridors and other mitigation measures co-developed with Inuit and informed by Indigenous Knowledge, and advocate for Inuit access to and full participation in vessel tracking and monitoring systems, including real time communication tools, and Inuit-led approaches for navigational management and maritime safety;

41. **Instruct** ICC to continue to promote the full and effective participation and meaningful engagement of Inuit in shaping the future of Arctic marine and fisheries governance, including policy-setting, decision-making, research, and management, including by advancing Inuit leadership and Indigenous Knowledge through the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean;

42. **Direct** ICC to develop priorities for the future of the Central Arctic Ocean (CAO) through engagement of Inuit; advance an Inuit-led process for its governance; promote a precautionary approach; call for any development to uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the right to fully and effectively participate and meaningfully engage in decision making, with full utilization of Indigenous Knowledge; and to proactively explore and remain responsive to the implications of activities such as transpolar shipping and seabed mining in the CAO;

43. **Celebrate** progress on the Pikialasorsuaq Initiative, including the 2023 Letter of Intent between the Governments of Canada and Kalaallit Nunaat, **welcome** the recommendations of the 2024 Inuit-led Pikialasorsuaq Meeting of the Parties and ICC Kalaallit Nunaat's *Pikialasorsuaq Oceans and Inuit Knowledge Report* and **instruct** ICC to continue advocating for the implementation of all three recommendations of the Pikialasorsuaq Commission;

44. **Approve that** ICC will apply for Observer status at the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention), to promote full and effective participation and meaningful engagement of Inuit in decision making on the marine protection of the North East Atlantic Ocean;

Capacity-Building Activities

45. **Affirm** the strength of our future generations and **express appreciation** for the Inuit Youth Engagement Programme (IYEP), **welcome** the recommendations of the IYEP report, and **instruct** ICC to explore opportunities for Inuit youth to connect across our homelands including the development of a youth capacity-building program, with the aim of preparing and involving Inuit youth in the world of international diplomacy and policy, and to explore holding an Inuit Youth Summit;

46. **Reaffirm** that ICC history is part of Inuit history, **reaffirm** the vision for an international ICC archival initiative, **welcome** the establishment of the ICC Archives hosted by ICC Canada as an expression of Inuit self-determination and Inuit data sovereignty by recording our own history with the intent of making it accessible to all Inuit, and **direct**

ICC to develop agreements for the management of the ICC Archives and explore further opportunities to document and archive ICC history;

47. **Instruct** ICC to continue to improve and strengthen communication, collaboration, and coordination between all ICC branches by using established communications protocols, a shared document repository, position or policy papers, workplans and other tools;

48. **Encourage** ICC to continue to communicate its work and its activities to Inuit and the public through all types of media outlets, in the Inuit language and dialects and other appropriate languages.

The Chair and Executive Council of the Inuit Circumpolar Council hereby confirm that the 2026 Iqaluit Declaration was unanimously adopted by delegates to the 15th General Assembly of the Inuit Circumpolar Council on 25 July 2026

Sara Olsvig
ICC Chair

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