

From: [Gover, Aubrey](#)
To: [Hunter, Karen](#)
Subject: FW: Information for AFN National Chief
Date: Monday, January 29, 2018 12:23:09 PM
Attachments: [Innu Inquiry June 27 2017 NL.pdf](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[2017-7-12 NL & IN letter to Feds.pdf](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)
[2017-9-19 Premier GC DGC letter to Canada re inquiry \(TOR removed\).pdf](#)
[ATT00003.htm](#)
[MR Labrador Innu re Trudeau Comments Innu Child Welfare.pdf](#)
[ATT00004.htm](#)
[inquiry TOR Aug 15 clean.docx](#)
[ATT00005.htm](#)
[Min Philpott Innu Inquiry Dec 8 17.pdf](#)
[ATT00006.htm](#)
[Response to Inquiry Request for partnership Innu Nation Nov..pdf](#)
[ATT00007.htm](#)

Please TRIm under Innu Inquiry

Aubrey Gover
Deputy Minister
Indigenous Affairs
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

This email is PRIVILEGED and contains confidential information intended only for the person(s) named above. Any other distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please notify us immediately by return email and delete the original message.

From: Kashkuan Communications [mailto:donna.paddon@kashkuan.ca]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 9:06 AM
To: JonThompson@afn.ca
Subject: Information for AFN National Chief

Jon,

Thank you for your email to confirm confidentiality, attached are joint letters from NL and Innu Nation to the federal government as well as the Draft TOR and additional correspondence between the Ministers' offices and Innu Nation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Innu Nation looks forward to receiving a copy of AFN's letter to the Minister and to the National Chiefs inclusion of the Inquiry in his speech this morning.

Innu leadership are very appreciative of AFN's support.

Donna



PO Box 190
Natuashish, NL
A0P 1A0
Fax: 709-478-8920



PO Box 160
Sheshatshiu, NL
A0P 1M0
Fax: 709-497-8575

June 27, 2017

The Honourable Dwight Ball
Office of the Premier
Confederation Building, East Block
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6

By Email: premier@gov.nl.ca

Dear Premier Ball,

As you know, Deputy Grand Chief Simeon Tshakapesh has called recently for an inquiry into the treatment of Innu in the Province's child welfare system. We are writing you today to stand behind this call for an inquiry, united as Innu leaders, and to provide you with further details on the importance of this initiative and its necessity.

The reasons Innu children and youth come so often into the hands of your child welfare system are complex. While we continue to dispute the legitimacy or need for apprehensions in some cases, we do not deny that there are Innu children, youth and families in need of help. But that does not, and cannot, excuse the treatment of Innu people once the child welfare system becomes involved.

The need for an inquiry is, at its core, very simple: there are too many questions that need answers, and answers are needed to find solutions.

What is causing Innu youth to die shortly after exiting child welfare care?

A few weeks ago, Thunderheart Tshakapesh died of suicide. Just a year ago, Kirby Mistenapeo died out on the ice, and only two years ago, James Poker died also on the ice. These youth had differences, but they had all lived through multiple placements far away from home, alienated from their language and culture, and had returned to Natuashish not long before their deaths. Three deaths in three years. One is too many.

It has to stop. But right now, nothing is preventing the same thing from happening again. As of May 2017, there are still 61 of our Innu children and youth living outside our communities under CSSD's system, losing their language, culture and connections. There have been additional youth suicides and other deaths in recent years beyond the three youths noted above, as the recent June 21st CBC news coverage shows, and we are very concerned that those numbers could go up.

For the youth who are apprehended and placed outside our communities, there is nothing to help them reintegrate when they return to us, searching for home and belonging, but feeling so lost. Our own independent review of James Poker's death highlighted the risks in sending youth away, and identified lack of coordination and reintegration supports as a major gap. To treat a 16 year old like an adult, essentially abandoned without any parent or plan, does not make sense to us.

What happens to Innu children and youth that are sent away? What are their experiences?

We have heard too many stories of things that are just not right. We have heard of our children being treated as "mortgage payments" for non-Innu foster families. Indeed, the community of Roddickton recently spoke openly to CBC about our children becoming the basis of their economy. Your government confirmed to CBC there are no cultural or language supports for them there. Meanwhile, we have heard of Innu foster parents in our communities having their foster parent designation removed for what seem like frivolous reasons. We have seen so many Innu children and youth become depressed, lonely and anxious when they are sent away; your system's solution is to give them anti-depressants, despite major risks. We have heard of our youth being pressured to take birth control pills and obtain abortions while in the system. We have seen children leave healthy and return addicted to drugs or alcohol.

All of us, and that certainly includes the Province, need to listen to these young people. We need to hear what they have to say.

How are Innu families treated by the system?

Too often, parents who love their children, and are in need of healing and support, are instead treated like criminals. Even extended family members who are healthy and ready to help are very often ignored or dismissed. We have heard of social workers driving around making inquiries amongst groups of Innu children, as though the whole community is under surveillance. The Innu people as a whole are often treated with suspicion by the social workers, lawyers and even judges in the system, who are almost exclusively white. Treated like we don't know anything, or like we do not feel love for our families. Like we are not really human.

And how fair and adequate is the overall level and quality of child welfare services received by the Innu?

Just a few months ago, the province's Advocate for Children and Youth wrote about the 2014 death of baby Matthew Rich from Sheshatshiu. Among other things, she found that child welfare services in Labrador are chronically worse off than those elsewhere in the province, in terms of under-staffing, failing to meet provincial standards, poor communication, and lack of due diligence. She found that this baby's death could and should have been prevented; she said his was "A Stolen Life".

When will we get answers? When will the truth be known? When will the lives of our most vulnerable no longer be stolen from us?

Truth is the first step to reconciliation. We need to get to the bottom of this, so that both Innu and the Province have a clear understanding of the changes needed to move forward.

No other process has addressed this. Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission addressed only residential schools, none of which (according to their definition) were in Newfoundland & Labrador. The recent NL residential schools settlement dealt with only a couple facilities that affected some Innu, and has not provided a reconciliation process. Other provinces are making efforts to understand what they've done in child welfare, such as Quebec's current inquiry on its treatment of Indigenous peoples. But for us, there is nothing. No process has addressed this, or provided guidance on the way forward.

Some of our families are now into the third generation lost to your system. The first generation were mainly sent to institutional settings, including the dormitory at North West River, and the Mt. Cashel Orphanage in St. John's, in which horrific abuse was rampant. They emerged deeply scarred. The second generation were often sent away to non-Innu foster families and distant treatment homes. They emerged, too often, without healing, without connections, without knowledge of loving parenting. Their young children, now, are being apprehended as a matter of routine. They, too, are too often sent away.

When will it end?

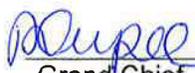
If there is one question that is the most important, this may be it.

But we know it will not end until all of us understand clearly how Innu are being treated in this system.

We are calling for a full public inquiry into the treatment of Innu in the province's child welfare system, and for your government to work in partnership with us in developing its terms of reference.

If the Province will not partner with us towards truth and reconciliation, the Innu will have to consider holding our own inquiry. We would rather proceed together. But if given no other option, we will do what we need to do. We have done so in the past when faced with decisions made by the Province and by Canada without consultation and accommodation regarding hydroelectric development, low-level flying and mining in our territory, and when faced with past tragedies in our communities. In each of those cases, we had to stand up for ourselves to protect our rights; we know we can. Full public transparency on these matters is required. We need answers so we can find solutions.

Yours sincerely,

			
Grand Chief Anastasia Qupee Innu Nation	Deputy Grand Chief Simeon Tshakapesh Innu Nation	Chief Eugene Hart Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation	Chief John Nui Mushuau Innu First Nation

CC: Hon. Sherry Gambin-Walsh, Minister of Children, Seniors & Social Development
Hon. Andrew Parsons, Attorney General & Minister of Justice and Public Safety
Natasha Hurley, Executive Director, Innu Round Table Secretariat



July 12, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6
Fax No: 613 995 0253
E-mail: Justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Hon. Carolyn Bennett
Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington, North Tower
Gatineau, Québec, K1A 0H4
Fax No: 819-953-4941
E-mail: minister@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau & Minister Bennett:

On July 5, 2017, officials from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador met with leaders of the Innu Nation, Mushuau Innu First Nation and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation to discuss very serious concerns regarding Innu children in the child protection system in this province. Innu Leadership also recently voiced these concerns to you, Minister Bennett, in person in Toronto. At that time, you recognized that the current situation with respect to child protection in Labrador is unacceptable and committed to change. Today, we write you jointly to identify an opportunity to work collaboratively to effect meaningful change.

As a result of our July 5 meeting, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and Innu Leadership have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in support of an inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the Province's child protection system (a copy of which is attached). This MOU details this shared commitment and sets out the next steps toward an inquiry, either through the *Public Inquiries Act, 2006* or another mutually agreed upon mechanism, to make recommendations for change.

To maximize the opportunity for this process to lead to positive outcomes for the Innu, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Innu Leadership ask for the federal government's full support as we move this inquiry forward.

A provincial inquiry without a federal role may face obstacles to examining matters falling within federal jurisdiction, particularly funding and the related funding agreements. The inquiry's recommendations regarding change to the child protection system for Innu

children should be meaningful and achievable, and the inquiry should have the full engagement of both the Federal Government and Provincial Government.

As of December 31, 2016 there were 1,035 children and youth in care/custody of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development; 17% (176) were Innu. This is a significant over-representation given that Innu children and youth (under 19) comprise only 1% of the Province's youth population. And 61 of these Innu children and youth in care are not living in either of the two Innu communities.

While progress is being made through the Innu Roundtable, a 2015 Working Relationship Agreement, a provincial review of the *Children and Youth Care and Protection Act* and other focused initiatives, there are still significant challenges to delivering child protection and in-care services in Innu communities. We also welcome the federal government's decision starting last fiscal year to begin funding Innu prevention services, and we hope that federal support for Innu placement capacity development continues to grow. Notwithstanding these collaborative efforts to improve services, there remain major challenges such as the persistently large number of Innu young people placed outside their culture, issues with reintegration, high and complex caseloads, challenges with staff recruitment and retention, and the availability of sufficient caregivers, specialized placement options and community resources, among others.

The federal government has committed to a full-scale reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services program and has indicated that it plans to work closely with key partners to reform the program to comply with the recent Canadian Human Rights Tribunal's decision respecting inequitable funding for child and family services on reserves. The Government of Canada has also convened an inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, which touches upon child welfare issues. In light of these existing undertakings and the federal government's overall commitment to a new relationship with Indigenous peoples, on a nation-to-nation basis – rooted in recognition, rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership – it is our shared hope that you will work with us to support this inquiry.

An inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system represents an opportunity to understand and address the significant, long-standing issues respecting Innu children and for both the Federal and Provincial Governments to build and strengthen relationships with the Indigenous peoples of Newfoundland and Labrador. We ask that officials from our respective governments meet in the very near future to discuss Canada's contributions.



Premier Dwight Ball
Government of Newfoundland & Labrador

Sincerely,



Grand Chief Anastasia Qupee
Innu Nation



September 19, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Hon. Carolyn Bennett
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and
Northern Affairs
Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington, North Tower
Gatineau, Québec K1A 0H4

Fax No: 613 995 0253
E-mail: Justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Fax: 1-866-817-3977
Email: minister@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

Hon. Jane Philpott
Minister of Indigenous Services
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould
Minister of Justice & Attorney General of Canada
Room 451S, Centre Block
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Fax: 613-992-3642
Email: Jane.Philpott@parl.gc.ca

Fax: 613-990-7255
Email: mcu@justice.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau, Ministers Bennett, Philpott & Wilson-Raybould:

On July 5, 2017, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the leaders of Innu Nation, Mushuau Innu First Nation and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in support of an inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the Province's child protection system.

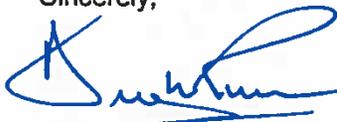
On July 12, 2017, we wrote to Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Bennett providing a copy of our MOU, and asking for the Government of Canada's collaboration and participation in the Inquiry. We have read with interest the reply of Minister Bennett to that correspondence, which was dated August 2, 2017, in which the Minister stated "I have asked departmental officials to work with you to determine how Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada can best support the process to which the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Innu leadership agree for this exercise."

Therefore, we are providing you with a confidential draft Terms of Reference, attached, which have been agreed in principle between the Innu leadership and the Province for your review and comment. Should the Federal Government choose to participate, your input on the question of Inquiry Commissioners is also welcome. We are provisionally and confidentially agreed on using a panel of three Commissioners, one of whom would be Innu, one of whom would have child welfare and/or social work experience, and one of whom would have legal and/or judicial experience. We would welcome a meeting as soon as possible to discuss these points.

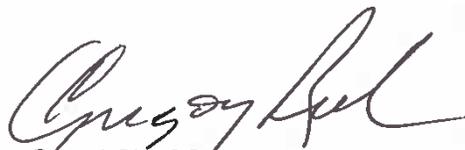
The Innu of Labrador have raised very serious concerns regarding their experiences in the child protection system. A number of these concerns were voiced personally to Minister Bennett by Innu Leaders. The Inquiry is going to play a key role in driving that change and we strongly encourage your Government to be part of it.

We feel an Inquiry with full federal participation would produce the most comprehensive examination of the issues, and the most comprehensive recommendations. As such, we ask for your Government's promptest possible attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Premier Dwight Ball
Government of Newfoundland & Labrador



Grand Chief Gregory Rich
Innu Nation



Deputy Grand Chief Etienne Rich
Innu Nation

cc: The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, P.C, M.P.

Attached:
Terms of Reference (Confidential Draft)



☐ Box 186 Natuashish, NL A0P 1A0 T 709 478 8943 F 709 478 8833
☐ Box 119 Sheshatshiu, NL A0P 1M0 T 709 497 8398 F 709 497 8396
☐ Box 1106 Stn C, Goose Bay, NL A0P 1C0 T 709 896 3883 F 709 896 1180

MEDIA RELEASE

30 June 2017

LABRADOR INNU CALL OUT CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER ON ACCURACY AND FAIRNESS OF HIS CHILD WELFARE COMMENTS, AND LACK OF ACTION BY INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

TORONTO, ON – Labrador Innu leaders met today with Minister Carolyn Bennett, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Innu leaders pressed Canada to continue support for their critical Placement Capacity Project in the child welfare sector.

“We’re extremely disappointed” said Anastasia Qupee, Grand Chief of the Innu Nation. “We came all the way to Toronto to meet with Minister Bennett and we hoped this year’s funding for our Placement Capacity Project would finally be approved. But all we got are words. There were no concrete commitments.”

The Placement Capacity Project has been developed by the Innu communities of Natuashish and Sheshatshiu to allow more Innu children to stay in their own communities, within their language and culture. The Innu proposals would set up 5 placement facilities within the Innu communities, including a group home certified to the highest standards and level of service under provincial law. Innu have been working with an experienced placement facility provider to develop capacity. The Province of Newfoundland & Labrador has expressed strong support for the project.

The project involves a one-time federal investment of \$3.7M for training and building upgrades; once operational, the Innu placement facilities would run on existing funds through provincial service agreements. INAC funded the first phase of the Project last fiscal year. It was a major success, and trained a team of Innu staff to manage the specialized group home. However, without funding confirmed for the current fiscal year, the trained staff will need to be let go, dashing Innu hopes for progress, and wasting the federal government’s previous investment.

Proposals for 2017-18 were submitted to INAC several months ago, and have been reviewed with INAC officials in several meetings. But funding remains out of reach.

Currently, 61 Innu children in the child welfare system are placed outside the two Labrador Innu communities. The main reasons for this are because a placement with the required level of service and treatment is not available in the Innu communities, or a

suitable placement in the Innu communities cannot be found on short notice. Dozens of these Innu children are on the northern peninsula on the island of Newfoundland, in places like Roddickton. Others are even farther afield, out of province. Recently, people in Roddickton spoke openly to the media about Innu children becoming the basis of their economy.

“We have seen too many Innu children lose their culture and language when they are sent away,” said Simeon Tshakapesh, Deputy Grand Chief of the Innu Nation. “Some have serious difficulties during and afterwards, and in fact some have not been able to recover or have even committed suicide. This includes my son, who died just a month ago, and I’ve lost nephews too. This project could help prevent that. Instead of feeling lost, far away, our kids would be able to stay within the Innu communities and get the services they need right at home, without leaving.”

This one-time investment in facilities and training the Innu are seeking from INAC could allow dozens of Innu children to return home to Innu communities. It would provide the necessary capacity and community-based jobs for trained Innu staff so that Innu children needing these services could get them in their own communities.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told the press that First Nations have not told him what they need or how to spend child welfare dollars. “We’re ready to invest in you,” the Prime Minister said, “You just need to tell us how you need it spent”. Trudeau said his government is working “to build capacity within communities”.

Grand Chief Qupee said, in response: “I am disappointed in INAC, with Minister Bennett, and perhaps most of all with the Prime Minister. For Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to suggest that we haven’t told them what we need is just not true. Nothing could be further from the truth. We’ve put forward a very compelling proposal, supported by the Province, and supported by experts in the field. It’s the Canadian government that hasn’t done their part. They haven’t put the money forward.”

“If the Prime Minister says that he wants to build capacity, here we are, let’s do it,” said Eugene Hart, Chief of Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation. “But frankly we’re not seeing it. I don’t know whose capacity they are building, but I guess it’s not Innu capacity.”

“We know what we need,” said John Nui, Chief of Mushuau Innu First Nation. “We’ve told them before, and we told them again today. But instead of listening and helping us, they are trying to blame us for their own failures to take responsibility, their own lack of action. Tomorrow is Canada Day. For Innu, we have nothing to celebrate about Canada Day. The federal government is celebrating, but meanwhile the Innu are still suffering.”

For more information:

Donna Paddon
Innu Nation Communications
Email: donna.paddon@kashkuan.ca
Telephone: 709-899-5799

Terms of Reference

for the inquiry on the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu
in the child protection system

Mechanism

1. The inquiry will be ordered under Part II of the *Public Inquiries Act, 2006*, SNL 2006, c P-38.1 (the “Act”), and these Terms of Reference will be incorporated in the Orders in Council issued under the Act to establish the Commission.
2. The Minister of _____ is designated as the Minister responsible for the inquiry (the “Minister”).

Commission of Inquiry Established

3. There is established a commission of inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu children, youth and families in the child protection system, and to identify recommendations for change (the “Commission”).
4. The following individual(s) are appointed as members of the Commission:

Reconciliation Principles

5. The inquiry is to be guided by both: a shared commitment of the Innu Nation, Mushuau Innu First Nation and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation (the “Innu Representative Organizations”), the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Canada, if the Government of Canada is a party to the inquiry, to ensure the safety and well-being of, and act in the best interests of, Innu children and youth; and the following principles, all of which have been adapted from the **Touchstones of Hope** (Blackstock, C. et al. (2006) *Reconciliation in child welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous children, youth, and families*. Ottawa, ON, Canada: First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada / Portland, OR: National Indian Child Welfare Association):
 - a. **Truth-telling** – telling the story of child welfare as it has affected Innu children, youth and families, through open exchange (listening and sharing);
 - b. **Acknowledging** – learning from the past, seeing one another with a new understanding, and embracing the need to move forward on a new path;
 - c. **Restoring** – together creating a better path for the future;
 - d. **Relating** – working respectfully together to design, implement, and monitor a child welfare system that supports the safety and well-being of Innu children and youth in order to achieve better outcomes for Innu children and youth;

- e. **Self-Determination** – reflects the fact that the Innu, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the federal government are seeking to conclude a final Innu land claims and self-government agreement, and are working in other ways to better partner and better reflect Innu traditions and language in the current child welfare system with the common objective of the Innu assuming responsibility for child welfare;
- f. **Culture and Language** – means that child welfare policy and practice need to reflect Innu traditions and make every effort for Innu children and youth to maintain their language and culture, as child welfare policy and practice are most effective when they reflect, value, preserve and promote the intrinsic and distinct aspects of Indigenous cultures;
- g. **Holistic Approaches** – are child welfare approaches that reflect the reality of the whole child, the importance of preserving the continuity of relationships and recognizing the child is shaped by her/his traditions, spirituality, and social customs, environment, social relationships, and specific abilities and traits;
- h. **Structural Interventions** – are preventive actions which aim to address risks which tend to cause Innu children and youth to be involved in the child welfare system with the objective of reducing the number of Innu children and youth that become involved with the child welfare system; and
- i. **Non-Discrimination** – means Innu children and youth receiving child welfare services should not receive inferior services because they are Indigenous, and are entitled to, in accordance with law, receive services substantively equal to services provided to non-Innu children and youth that are responsive to their needs, and the unique cultural context of their experience.

Continuance of Ongoing Processes

6. The Commission shall take note that there are ongoing processes in which the Innu Representative Organizations, the Innu Round Table Secretariat, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Government of Canada have been working collaboratively towards improvements in the child welfare system in Innu communities. These ongoing processes include but are not limited to: participation in the Innu Round Table and its subcommittee focusing on child welfare; work to set up and initiate Innu prevention services with federal funding; the Working Relationship Agreement which outlines regular communications between provincial child protection services and Innu organizations, operationalized through weekly Notification and Case Planning Meetings and quarterly Joint Committee Meetings; an Indigenous Policy Working Group coordinated by the Province; the Province's legislative review of the *Children and Youth Care and Protection Act*; and work towards increasing and enhancing placement capacity in Innu communities. These ongoing processes will continue during the inquiry. The Commission shall be mindful of the work of these ongoing processes and their value, and shall take the work achieved

through ongoing processes and the evidence provided by people engaged in such processes into account in making its recommendations.

Mandate

7. The mandate of the Commission is to examine the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu children, youth and families in the child protection system, and to identify recommendations for change.
8. Without limiting the above, the mandate of the Commission includes the following issues within its scope:
 - a. an outline of the history of the child protection system as applied to the Innu;
 - b. the roles of the federal, provincial and Innu governments in that history and in the current child protection system;
 - c. the main reasons for child protection involvement for Innu, and related recommendations on prevention and family support;
 - d. the availability and quality of specialized services (placements, mental health, addictions, medical, etc.) to Innu children and youth within the Innu communities, how that availability impacts Innu children and youth coming into care/custody and/or being placed outside of Innu communities, and what could improve that availability;
 - e. access to Innu culture, language, and community contact for Innu children and youth in care/custody, particularly those placed outside of Innu communities, and related recommendations;
 - f. the impacts, including long-term impacts, of loss of language, culture, and family and community connection where Innu children and youth are placed outside of Innu communities, and related recommendations;
 - g. access to outpost programs and other Innu land-based activities for Innu children and youth in the child protection system, particularly those in non-Innu placements;
 - h. the diagnosis for, prescription of, and use of medication on Innu children and youth in care, reasons for its use, related concerns, and related recommendations;
 - i. the cultural fit of the provincial standardized tools and assessment models used in the child protection system within Innu communities, such as risk assessment, home assessment, etc., and related recommendations;

- j. the reintegration and support of Innu children and youth exiting care, related concerns, and related recommendations;
- k. the health and wellbeing of Innu children and youth while in care and after exiting care, related concerns, and recommendations for improvement;
- l. outcomes for Innu children, youth and adults who are, or were, in care, and comparison to the extent possible to the outcomes for other Innu and for other citizens of the Province, along with recommendations for improved outcomes. Outcomes examined may include, for example: educational achievement, employment and income, housing and homelessness, health including mental health and addictions, suicide and attempted suicide, other causes of mortality and serious injury, criminalization and incarceration, and involvement as a parent with the child protection system;
- m. effects on parents and grandparents in families of origin when Innu children and youth become involved with child protection services, particularly if a child or youth is removed from home outside of traditional kinship arrangements, for example: impacts on health including mental health and addictions, criminalization and incarceration, access to job opportunities, etc.;
- n. availability and quality of legal aid for parents of Innu children and youth involved with the child protection system, barriers to effective legal representation, and related recommendations;
- o. access to court time for Innu child protection cases and the effects of court delay, difficulties for Innu with the child protection court process, alternative decision-making processes beyond court, and related recommendations;
- p. the way in which the child protection system interacts with Innu, the role of Innu versus non-Innu employment and direction/control in the system, the role of differences in language, culture, race, income, etc.;
- q. when an Innu child or youth is in need of protective intervention, the barriers to the ability for that child or youth to be supported and supervised within his or her own home or in traditional kinship arrangements, and what could reduce those barriers;
- r. the non-Innu communities in which Innu children and youth are placed in care/custody, what causes or contributes to Innu children and youth being placed outside of Innu communities, and what could reduce the number of Innu children and youth placed outside of Innu communities;
- s. the availability and nature of the opportunities for family contact and relationships to Innu children and youth in care, particularly those placed outside of their home community;

- t. implications for funding and resourcing arrangements, including federal funding agreements.
9. The mandate of the Commission also includes the following investigations of individual deaths:
- a. Investigations into the particular circumstances leading up to the deaths of the following youths:
 - i. Kirby Mistenapeo;
 - ii. James Poker; and
 - iii. Thunderheart Tshakapesh.
 - b. In addition to (a), where the parent(s) or other next of kin consent(s), the Commission may investigate particular circumstances leading up to the death of an Innu child, youth or young adult who was under 25 at the time of his or her death and who died on or after September 30, 2007, and who experienced time in care/custody, if the parent(s) or, if appropriate, other next of kin as set out in section 10, attest to their belief that the deceased's experience in care as a child or youth may have contributed to his or her death.
10. Further to the matter of individual death investigations described in section 9:
- a. In any investigation pursuant to section 9, the Commission shall give due weight to the findings of fact set out in any relevant reports, studies, research, and examinations respecting those deaths.
 - b. With respect to s. 9(a), the Commission will make a form available such that the persons interested in participating in a death investigation can identify themselves. The Commission will approve the applicable participants in the death investigation under s. 5 of the Act, under any terms specified.
 - c. With respect to s. 9(b), the Commission will make a form available for the consent and attestation referred to in that subsection within 4 weeks of the start of the inquiry and the parent(s) or other next of kin must complete and submit the required form within 8 weeks of the date the form is made available, in order for a person's death to be examined in the inquiry. The Commission must be satisfied, having regard to the circumstances of the case, that the necessary parent(s) or other next of kin have consented. If the Commission decides to investigate a death of an Innu child, youth or young adult under s. 9(b), it will approve the applicable participants in that death investigation under s. 5 of the Act, under any terms specified.
 - d. The term "parent" as used in sections 9 and 10 means a biological parent, even where the child or youth was in the continuous custody of the Manager, and any

extended family member who stood in place of a parent such as a grandparent who was a primary caregiver for the child, unless the child was legally adopted in which case the term “parent” means adoptive parent.

- e. In any investigation under section 9, the persons who consented to the death investigations under s. 9(a) and the parent(s) or other next of kin who consented to a death investigation under s. 9(b) (the “consenters”) may withdraw their consents to that investigation at any time before the commencement of, or during, the relevant death investigation. A withdrawal of all the consenters will irrevocably terminate that death investigation for the purpose of the Commission. In case of a withdrawal of some but not all of the of the consenters, the Commission will determine whether to proceed with the death investigation. A withdrawal will not affect the ability of the consenters to otherwise participate in the Commission in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

Process by which the Inquiry is to be Conducted

11. Further to s. 16(2)(b) of the Act, the inquiry shall include the following processes:

- a. *Document Exchange*: At an early stage, the Commission shall turn its attention to the production of relevant documents and records, including those maintained in an electronic form, and things, and may use its powers under s. 9(b) of the Act in doing so. The Commission shall ensure that relevant material is shared among the parties. The parties and the Commission will have an opportunity to ask follow-up questions regarding the material exchanged, to help identify any further material that may be relevant, and to identify research needs.
- b. *Specialized Research*: The Commission shall consider the need for specialized research within its mandate, and may engage research, data analysis or other services pursuant to s. 23 of the Act.
- c. *Closed Sessions*: Closed community focus groups and/or interviews shall be conducted in closed sessions in both Sheshatshiu and Natuashish in an informal sharing circle and/or discussion format, by the Commission.
 - i. The sessions will include the following groups, which may be modified as agreed by the parties:
 - Innu youth and young adults who are, or were, in care/custody in the child protection system
 - Innu parents, grandparents and great-grandparents whose children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren became involved with the child protection system
 - Innu foster parents and kinship care providers

- ii. There will be a registration process to confirm interest and eligibility to participate in these closed sessions. The Commission shall make best efforts to hear from all interested persons, but may, if needed, restrict participation based on capacity (time, space, etc.). A formal application to participate under s. 5 of the Act is not required. Participants will be required to sign a voluntary informed consent form.
 - iii. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and, if a party to the inquiry, the Government of Canada, and the Innu Nation, Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation and Mushuau Innu First Nation may each have an observer (“party observers”) at these sessions, subject to confidentiality agreements. Media and outside observers will not be permitted.
 - iv. The confidentiality of each person’s identity will be preserved, unless a person who is 16 or over has waived his or her right to confidentiality in writing.
 - v. Participants will be informed that the inquiry is directed at systemic recommendations and does not have the power to re-open individual cases or alter individual case decisions.
 - vi. Participants will have an opportunity to share their experiences. The Commission may ask questions, consistent with the reconciliation principles. Party observers will listen and will not normally be permitted to ask questions, unless a question is allowed by the Commission, consistent with the reconciliation principles.
 - vii. The information presented will be part of the record of the inquiry and may be referred to in the report as long as confidentiality (subject to any waivers of confidentiality) is maintained.
- d. *Community Hearings:* Public community hearings shall be conducted in both Sheshatshiu and Natuashish in an informal manner, by the Commission. The community hearings provide an opportunity for community members to share their experiences in a public forum.
- i. There will be a registration process to confirm interest and eligibility to participate in these public community hearings. The Commission shall make best efforts to hear from all interested persons, but may, if needed, restrict participation based on capacity (time, space, etc.). A formal application to participate under s. 5 of the Act is not required.
 - ii. Participants will be required to sign a voluntary informed consent form that indicates their understanding that the testimony is public.
 - iii. Party observers will be observers at these sessions.

- iv. Video link to the non-host Innu community or other electronic means intended to allow other Innu to witness and/or listen to the proceedings, will be made available.
 - v. Media and outside observers are permitted, however media will be warned of the risk of participants making inadvertent disclosures of names or identifying information that cannot be legally be published under s. 52 of the *Children and Youth Care and Protection Act*. Live public broadcast will therefore not be permitted. Publishing of other testimony (without breach of the publication ban) is permitted.
 - vi. Participants will be informed that the inquiry is directed at systemic recommendations and that the inquiry does not have the power to re-open individual cases or alter individual case decisions.
 - vii. Participants will have an opportunity to share experiences. The Commission may ask questions, consistent with the reconciliation principles. Other parties will not normally ask questions of the person sharing their experiences unless an exception is allowed by the Commission, consistent with the reconciliation principles.
 - viii. The information presented will be part of the record of the inquiry and may be referred to in the report as long as the publication ban required by s. 52 of the *Children and Youth Care and Protection Act* is upheld.
- e. *Incarcerated People*: The Commission may also make arrangements to have Innu inmates of jails and penitentiaries share their experiences with the Commission, and shall coordinate the logistics of such arrangements with the authorities of the applicable institutions.
- a. There will be a registration process to confirm interest and eligibility. The Commission shall make best efforts to hear from all interested persons, but may, if needed, restrict participation based on capacity (time, space, etc.). A formal application to participate under s. 5 of the Act is not required.
 - b. Participants will be required to sign a voluntary informed consent form, and will be able to choose whether their identity will be public (if they are over 16 years of age) or confidential.
 - c. Party observers will be observers at these sessions, subject to applicable confidentiality agreements. Media and outside observers will not be permitted.
 - d. Participants will be informed that the inquiry is directed at systemic recommendations and that the inquiry does not have the power to re-open individual cases or alter individual case decisions.

- e. Participants will have an opportunity to share experiences. The Commission may ask questions, consistent with the reconciliation principles. Other parties will not normally ask questions of the person sharing their experiences unless an exception is allowed by the Commission, consistent with the reconciliation principles.
- f. The information presented will be part of the record of the inquiry and may be referred to in the report as long as confidentiality is maintained where applicable and the publication ban required by s. 52 of the *Children and Youth Care and Protection Act* is upheld.
- f. *Formal hearings*: The Commission shall determine where formal hearings will be held, with the intention that where practicable these hearings shall be divided between Sheshatshiu and Natuashish, but if not practicable, the Commission shall make arrangements that permit interested Innu and the parties to attend in person or to witness the proceedings. They will be conducted in the usual manner for oral hearings, subject to any changes or exceptions allowed by the Commission. These formal hearings provide an opportunity for the parties to call witnesses and for each party to ask questions of witnesses called by other parties.
 - i. On a schedule determined by the Commission, each party will identify persons who have factual, institutional or expert knowledge relevant to the inquiry who may be appropriate witnesses at the formal hearings. The parties will confirm who each intends to call as witnesses in formal hearings.
 - ii. Each party will have an observer at these sessions.
 - iii. Video link to the non-host Innu community (if the formal hearing is in the other Innu community), or to both Innu communities (if the location of the formal hearings is not in Sheshatshiu or Natuashish), or other electronic means intended to allow other Innu to witness and/or listen to the proceedings will be made available.
 - iv. Media and outside observers are permitted.
- g. *Written submissions*: Written submissions may be made by the parties and, at the discretion of the Commission by any other individual or entity. The Commission will establish a deadline or deadlines for submissions.
- h. *Investigations into deaths under section 9*: The Commission shall determine the timing of these investigations relative to the other parts of the inquiry, subject to section 12. The Commission shall determine where the oral hearings that form part of the investigations into deaths will be held, provided that the location(s) shall be in places where the families of the deceased are able to participate

fully. These investigations will be conducted in the usual manner for oral hearings, subject to any changes or exceptions allowed by the Commission.

12. The Commission may undertake the various components of the inquiry concurrently or sequentially, as the Commission determines, provided that the formal hearings and death inquires shall be preceded by the closed community sessions and public community hearings.
13. Participation in sharing experiences with the Commission by any individual will normally be limited to *either* a confidential session described in s. 11 (c), a public community hearing described in s. 11(d), or a session with incarcerated persons in s. 11 (e). Participation in more than one of these components will not normally be permitted, unless specifically allowed by the Commission. Community members will be encouraged to choose whether to participate confidentially or publicly.
14. If it can be arranged, one or more sessions may be scheduled to occur in a country setting, in Innu traditional territory outside of the Innu communities.
15. Translation to and from Innu-aimun shall be available at all sessions (closed sessions, public community hearings, sessions with Innu inmates of jails or penitentiaries, formal hearings, and oral hearings that are part of the individual death investigations).

Powers & Legal Matters

16. The inquiry will not express any conclusion or recommendation regarding the civil or criminal responsibility of any person or organization.
17. The Commission has all the powers referred to in section 18 of the Act.

Capacity Support

18. Sections 19, 20, 21 and 22 are included here for ease of reference but will also be included in an Order in Council under section 29 of the Act.
19. Each of the Innu Representative Organizations shall be provided with funding by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and by the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party, in order to facilitate their participation in the inquiry. The funding shall be sufficient to cover:
 - a. preparation for the inquiry, including the preparation of these Terms of Reference;
 - b. other inter-governmental matters relating to the establishment and ongoing conduct of the inquiry;
 - c. the presentation of witnesses, documents and other submissions to the inquiry;
 - d. attendance of party representatives as observers at hearings to listen to the evidence;
 - e. follow-up to the inquiry report; and

- f. legal counsel to assist with the above.
20. Each family with a deceased child or youth whose case will be examined pursuant to section 9 shall be offered funding by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and by the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party, in order to facilitate their participation in the inquiry. The funding shall be sufficient to cover, particular to the topic of that case:
- a. preparation for the inquiry;
 - b. the presentation of witnesses, documents and other submissions to the inquiry, and listening and responding to the evidence of other parties;
 - c. follow-up to the inquiry report; and
 - d. legal counsel to assist with the above.
21. With regard to funding for this inquiry:
- a. The Innu Representative Organizations will provide proposals for funding to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and to the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party, for:
 - i. participation of the Innu Representative Organizations in the inquiry;
 - ii. translation services referred to in section 15 to be contracted for by the Innu parties; and
 - iii. the healing services referred to in section 22 to be contracted for by the Innu Representative Organizations; andas soon as practicable and before the start of the inquiry. The Innu Representative Organizations and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party, will negotiate these funding proposals prior to the start of the inquiry.
 - b. Best efforts will be made to negotiate, before the start of the inquiry, sufficient funding for participation in the inquiry by the families of the individuals referred to in s. 9(a) but if funding has not been agreed on before the start of the inquiry, the Commission shall provide their views to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, to the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party, and to the families on the sufficiency of the funding offered.
 - c. Families of individuals referred to in s. 9(b) whose cases are accepted shall also be provided with sufficient funding for their participation, and if funding cannot be agreed on within 2 weeks of the start of negotiations for that purpose, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Commission by any of the relevant parties. The Commission shall provide their views on the issue of funding to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, to the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party, and to the families on the sufficiency of the funding offered.

Healing Services During Inquiry

22. The subject of the inquiry brings up very difficult issues and feelings for many Innu, and without support, there is a risk that some Innu may experience significant distress, traumatic memories, relapse and so on as a result of the inquiry. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party, will provide resources to the Innu Representative Organizations to ensure that healing services are available during the inquiry, including at all inquiry sessions, in order to help avoid and mitigate these risks. These services are required over and above existing healing services available within Innu communities.

Report

23. The Commission shall prepare a full report to be delivered to the Minister and to the Grand Chief of Innu Nation no less than 12 months but no more than 15 months after the start of the Inquiry. This date may be extended by the Lieutenant Governor in Council following consultation with the Grand Chief of the Innu Nation. The report shall contain:

- a. an executive summary;
- b. an outline of the inquiry process;
- c. findings of fact and what was learned during the inquiry;
- d. clear recommendations, with each recommendation specifying who is responsible for its implementation.

24. The Commission shall also prepare a plain language summary in English and Innu-aimun, to be delivered to the Minister and the Grand Chief of Innu Nation as soon as possible following the date of the full report.

25. Findings of fact shall be limited to evidence given in formal hearings, however, the Commission shall be entitled to report on, rely and utilize any information gathered through the sharing of experiences in s. 11(c), (d) and (e) to inform their review of the child protection system and make recommendations for change.

Follow-up

26. The inquiry process includes the following post-report activities:

- a. Community meetings in each of Sheshatshiu and Natuashish, in which the Commission will attend to present the report.
- b. An initial working meeting between the Commission, leadership of the Innu Representative Organizations, Innu Round Table Secretariat staff, senior representatives of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador including the Minister, and senior representatives of the Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party or agrees to participate in the post-report activities, focused on ensuring full understanding of the lessons learned and the recommendations.

- c. 6-month, 1-year, and 2-year follow-up working meetings between the commission, leadership of the Innu Representative Organizations, Innu Round Table Secretariat staff, senior representatives of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador including the Minister, and senior representatives of Government of Canada if Canada becomes a party or agrees to participate in the post-report activities to follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations.

Additional Definitions

27. Where the term “in care/custody” is used in these Terms of Reference, it means circumstances where an Innu child or youth is or was in the care or custody of a manager pursuant to ss. 20 or 21 of the *Children and Youth Care and Protection Act*, SNL 2010, c c-12.2, including any custody orders made arising therefrom to place or continue a child or youth in the custody of the manager under Part IV of that Act. It also includes protective care agreements entered into with the parents of an Innu child or youth made in accordance with s. 12 of that Act. Where the circumstances of an Innu child or youth were governed by prior legislation, this definition shall apply to the equivalent provisions of that prior legislation.
28. For greater certainty, references to Innu in these terms of reference are to the Innu of Labrador.
29. “Parties” and “party” as used in section 11 means:
 - a. the Innu Representative Organizations;
 - b. the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador;
 - c. [the Government of Canada, if it participates in the inquiry]; and
 - d. any other parties, other than individual participants referred to in section 29(e) and s. 30, that may be approved by the Commission with participation rights under s. 5 of the Act,but does not include:
 - e. subject to section 30, individual participants who may participate in closed sessions or community hearings under s. 11(c) or (d), who are Innu inmates of jails and penitentiaries and may participate under section 11(e).
30. Individual participants who may participate in closed sessions or community hearings under s. 11(c) or (d) or who are Innu inmates of jails and penitentiaries and may participate under s. 11(e) may, at the discretion of the Commission, be made parties for the purposes of s. 11(a), if they apply in writing and justify why they should participate in the documentary exchange referred to in s. 11(a), in which case that individual shall be a party for the purposes of section 11(a).



www.innu.ca

☐ Box 186 Natuashish NL A0P 1A0 T 709 478 8943 F 709 478 8833
☐ Box 119 Sheshatshiu NL A0P 1M0 T 709 497 8398 F 709 497 8396
☐ Box 1106 Stn C, Goose Bay NL A0P 1C0 T 709 896 3883 F 709 896 1180

December 8, 2017

Hon. Jane Philpott
Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
North Tower, 10 Wellington Street
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0H4

By Email: InfoPubs@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

Dear Minister Philpott,

Re: Innu Child Welfare Inquiry

We received your letter of November 12, 2017, regarding the inquiry now being organized into the experiences, treatment and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system. Thank you for offering some funding to support activities related to the inquiry.

However as you know, and as I indicated to you in our phone call on November 21, 2017, we are disappointed in the federal government's response on this matter. Fundamentally, we do not agree with your position that the federal government could not or should not join this inquiry because child welfare is a matter under provincial jurisdiction or because the inquiry is planned to be called under provincial law.

Canada shares responsibility with the Province for the child protection services we receive. You are the funder; that has enormous consequences for us. As you know, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found nearly two years ago that Canada is indeed involved in these services and is responsible for the consequences of its funding decisions. People in the Innu communities feel that Canada is not taking responsibility in this matter, and should.

Additionally, it is misleading to suggest that the federal government cannot be a partner in this initiative because it is a provincial inquiry; the reason that is the case is precisely because of Canada's non-involvement. Canada had every opportunity to join this inquiry as a full partner.

Our July 5th MOU with the Province stated that the inquiry could be called under the provincial inquiries act "or through another mechanism as mutually agreed", and spoke to our joint commitment to seek federal involvement. On July 12th, we wrote jointly with the Premier to Minister Bennett and the Prime Minister to send them that MOU, and we invited Canada to be a full partner in the negotiation of the Terms of Reference. Canada could have made any suggestions it wished as to the mechanism for calling the inquiry, but it gave no timely response, and did not participate in discussions of the Terms of Reference

- 2 -

despite our invitation. No letter, phone call, or other communication was received until Minister Bennett's letter of August 28, 2017, which stated that "officials" would be following up. They did not.

Meanwhile, we were hard at work creating draft Terms of Reference with the Province. These were sent to you and other federal leaders on September 19, 2017. The letter clearly indicated you were being provided a *confidential draft*, on which your input was welcome. Canada provided no input. A month later, on October 20, 2017, I heard verbally from the RDG Chris McDonnell that Canada would provide some funding and documents, but would not formally join the inquiry. I note that your letter of November 13, 2017, is silent on the matter.

From your phone call to me on November 21, 2017, and despite the opportunities described above, I gather that Canada has decided it is not *partnering* on this inquiry, i.e. will not jointly call the inquiry or help appoint commissioners. That much is clear to us. We are, therefore, proceeding with the Province to arrange those matters and proceed.

You have, however, repeatedly stated that Canada will be participating in some manner. But it remains **unclear** to us what Canada intends to do in participating in the inquiry. To that end, I respectfully ask for your Ministry's written response to the following specific questions:

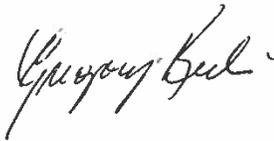
1. *Will Canada apply to participate as a party in the inquiry?* We strongly encourage you to do so. Canada has every right to participate as a party, given its funding role. You would then be able to make submissions, lead evidence, hear all proceedings, and otherwise join discussions through your lawyers and officials.
2. *Will Canada ensure that it has at least one senior representative present at all inquiry sessions?* We strongly encourage you to do so. Your Ministry needs to hear what we have to say. The proceedings are relevant to your responsibilities as a funder. I also note that you said, on national radio, that while you personally would not attend, federal representatives would be there. However, I note that some sessions will be confidential to parties only, which makes question #1 all the more important.
3. *Will Canada provide all documents requested by the inquiry parties, which are in Canada's possession or control, in a timely manner, to facilitate inquiry proceedings?* We strongly encourage you to do so. The federal government has evidence, particularly about its funding, that is relevant.
4. *Will Canada identify current and former federal officials who hold knowledge of the federal role in our child protection services, to be considered by the inquiry parties as potential witnesses?* We strongly encourage you to do so. We need to be able to ask questions, and get answers.
5. *Will Canada commit to participating in the follow-up to the inquiry, in responding to the inquiry's recommendations and joining the work to implement solutions?* This is essential. It will not be possible to meaningfully reform Innu child protection services without Canada's involvement. That is, obviously, the whole point to holding an inquiry.

- 3 -

Minister, I hope we can re-set the relationship with you and with your new department. We have a lot to accomplish for the sake of our children and families. I hope we can turn a new page and work together on this and other matters in a spirit of collaboration, accountability and respect.

I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Grand Chief Gregory Rich



Deputy Grand Chief Etienne Rich

CC: Premier Dwight Ball, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Aubrey Gover and Tarraceta Galgay, NL Ministry of Indigenous Affairs
Yvonne Jones, MP (Labrador)
Hon. Seamus O'Regan, Regional Minister NL
Chief Eugene Hart, Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation
Chief John Nui, Mushuau Innu First Nation
Deputy Grand Chief Etienne Rich, Innu Nation
Natasha Hurley, Executive Director, Innu Round Table Secretariat

Ministre des Services
aux Autochtones



Minister of
Indigenous Services

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

NOV 12 2017

The Honourable Dwight Ball, M.H.A.
Premier
Government of Newfoundland
and Labrador
Confederation Building, East Block
PO Box 8700
ST. JOHN'S NL A1B 4J6

Grand Chief Gregory Rich
Innu Nation
PO Box 1106 Stn C
GOOSE BAY NL A0P 1C0

Deputy Grand Chief Etienne Rich
Innu Nation
PO Box 1106 Stn C
GOOSE BAY NL A0P 1C0

Dear Premier, Grand Chief Rich, and Deputy Grand Chief Rich:

Thank you for your co-signed correspondence of September 19, 2017, and for the draft terms of reference for a provincial inquiry on the treatment, experiences, and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system. It is an important step for the Province to inquire into the experiences of the Innu with the Newfoundland and Labrador child protection system.

Further to Minister Bennett's correspondence, the Department would like to support activities related to child and family services that would complement the inquiry's work. Up to \$250,000 is immediately available for these activities, and I encourage you to work with departmental officials from the Atlantic Regional Office to develop a proposal to access this funding.

The Government of Canada is committed to supporting the Innu Round Table and the Mushuau and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nations and appreciates the efforts undertaken by all parties to keep Innu children in their communities. Starting last year, the Department provided funding to support a number of activities for the Innu Round Table and both Innu communities, including:

- \$352,253 for the Sheshatshiu Transition Group Home;
- \$100,000 for the framework to create placement opportunities;

.../2

- 2 -

- \$100,000 for the Innu Care Approach;
- \$50,000 to reimburse the Child Welfare League of Canada and Bluesky costs; and
- \$356,120 for front-line social worker positions in both communities.

The Department has supported this ongoing work this year by providing the Innu Round Table Secretariat \$1,149,152 for the continuity of prevention work, \$478,403 to the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation to carry on the enhancement of the terms of the Working Relationship Agreement between the Innu and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador for the delivery of protection services, and \$60,000 to complete Phase 2 of the Sheshatshiu Transition Group Home.

Furthermore, the Department recently committed \$998,524 to complete the Sheshatshiu Transition Group Home, and officials are reviewing a proposal received on October 12, 2017, regarding a phased approach for an emergency placement home in the Mushuau Innu First Nation. The successful establishment of these two facilities will constitute an important step as we continue working together on the plan for more placements in both communities to ensure that Innu children remain closer to home.

The Government of Canada is committed to working with all Indigenous and provincial/Yukon partners on the reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services program.

We are equally committed to supporting the Innu Nation in keeping children within their communities and I look forward to learning from the recommendations stemming from the provincial inquiry.

Sincerely,



Hon. Jane Philpott, M.D., P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Seamus O'Reagan, P.C., M.P.