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FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS PLEDGE TO WORK CO-OPERATIVELY WITH INNU COMMUNITIES

HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY (November 26, 2000) - Today, Premier Beaton Tulk, Industry Minister Brian Tobin, Ernest McLean, Minister responsible for Labrador, Lawrence O'Brien, Labrador M.P., Wally Anderson, M.H.A. for Torngat Mountains, Innu Nation President, Peter Penashue and Sheshatshiu Chief, Paul Rich along with federal, provincial and band officials, met in Happy Valley-Goose Bay to explore short and long term solutions to the social and cultural challenges facing Innu children at Sheshatshiu.

All parties agreed that the first and foremost priority is for the protection and well-being of the children in the Innu communities affected by the gas sniffing problem. Federal and provincial governments have agreed to work co-operatively with the community to seek appropriate treatment options for the affected children as quickly as possible. They agreed to commit all necessary resources to this end.

In addition, the federal government confirmed its commitment to register the Innu under the Indian Act pursuant to the November 24, 1999 Agreement.

At the Sheshatshiu Innu's request, the federal and provincial governments agreed to establish a regional detoxification centre with the appropriate staff and programming resources in Labrador.

As requested by Innu leadership in Sheshatshiu, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has agreed to fund a social services co-ordinator to co-ordinate activities between and among federal, provincial and Innu agencies at Sheshatshiu and replace the community van.

The provincial government agreed to provide a recreation director in the community of Sheshatshiu to develop and co-ordinate recreational programming for children. The parties agreed in principle to the development of a family-centred treatment program for parents and children.

The Innu presented a detailed document outlining many other long term initiatives needed to repair the cultural and social fabric of the community. The federal and provincial governments agreed to work together with the Innu to fully explore these initiatives.

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Ce document est également disponible en français.

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