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February 6, 2020

Hon. Marc Miller
Minister of Indigenous Services
Government of Canada
By email to: marc.miller@canada.ca
And by email to: sac.sefreforme-cfsreform.isc@canada.ca

Hon. Lisa Dempster
Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development
Government of Newfoundland & Labrador
By email to: LisaDempster@gov.nl.ca

Preliminary Notice of Intent to Exercise Innu Jurisdiction

Dear Minister Miller and Minister Dempster,

On January 28, 2020, Innu leaders came together with our staff and advisors in an Innu CYFS Summit, and we made an important decision. We will be starting work on an Innu law in child, youth and family services, under our own jurisdiction. Under our own law, we will transition to an Innu approach to CYFS.

The colonial, misguided destruction of our families is going to stop. The process of ending it starts now, and it starts with us. We have no time to waste.

Minister Miller, I want to thank your government for its landmark legislation recognizing and affirming our jurisdiction, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. I also thank you for your Department's support for our Innu CYFS Summit.

We have assigned the IRT Secretariat as our technical lead in developing the Innu law. They will be in touch with ISC Atlantic Region about funding support for our work on our law through the development stage. We are informed by the Region that some funding is available for this purpose, and we appreciate that indication of support.

This letter is not yet a formal notice or request under section 20 of the *Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. It is a preliminary notice of our intention, to keep your governments fully informed, and to seek your governments' input and partnership as we chart this new path. Once our law has been finalized, we will provide you with a formal notice and a request to negotiate a Coordination Agreement. We hope that your governments will work with us on such an agreement when we are ready to do so.

- 2 -

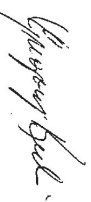
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Minister Dempster, I want to acknowledge that your government will have an important role in this process in order to ensure this significant transition is smooth and successful for everyone involved, particularly our Innu families.

Finally, I want to reiterate the importance of starting the Inquiry as soon as possible. The Inquiry is not less important because of this decision, it is more important. Hearing from our citizens first hand is a crucial step in this process, for all of us. For us, as Innu governments, we need to hear from our people to know in full detail what they have experienced, what is not working, what is in fact working, and what changes they want to see made. For you, as our partner governments, it is important for you to hear what has been happening in the system you have funded and operated to date. And equally important to help you understand the changes we are making and why we are making them, particularly as we work together on a Coordination Agreement and beyond.

I look forward to working together as we navigate this important change.

Nin,



Grand Chief Gregory Rich



Deputy Grand Chief Etienne Rich

Cc:

Chief Eugene Hart, Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation
Chief John Nui, Mushuau Innu First Nation
Germaine Bennen, Innu Round Table Secretariat
Mary Jane Edmonds (MIFN),
Edward Nuna (SIFN)
Susan Walsh, Deputy Minister, Child Seniors and Social Development NL
Rory O'Connor, Indigenous Services Canada
Tom Keagan, Indigenous Services Canada
Annie Randell, Indigenous Services Canada
Eric Maldoff, Federal Special Representative