

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

NTI Applauds Supreme Court of Canada’s Decision Affirming Indigenous People’s Right of Self-Government

(February 9, 2024 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) Aluki Kotierk, President of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) applauds today’s Supreme Court of Canada decision affirming the validity of the *Act Respecting First Nations, Métis and Inuit Children Youth and Families*, which became law in 2019. The Act affirms the right of Indigenous Peoples to exercise self-government as described in the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and affirms the right of Inuit to exercise jurisdiction over their own children, youth, and families.

The Attorney General of Quebec had appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada on the basis that the Parliament of Canada had overstepped its jurisdictional limits in the passage of Bill C-92, and today’s important ruling confirmed that the Act as a whole is constitutionally valid as an effort towards reconciliation between Indigenous Peoples and governments.

“The Court’s decision is encouraging in light of our desire for self-determination for Nunavut Inuit,” said NTI President Aluki Kotierk. “Governments have continually failed vulnerable Inuit children, youth and families. Child welfare in Canada is heavily centred on responding to emergencies, with little to no support for efforts to prevent such emergencies from happening in the first place. NTI is committed to working to better the lives of Inuit children to address the effects of residential schools, colonial policies and intergenerational trauma, and the Court’s decision confirms our right to help lead these endeavours in Nunavut.”

NTI, with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Nunatsiavut Government, were one of the 27 interveners in the reference case before the Supreme Court of Canada, to ensure Inuit rights and interests to self-determination over children, youth and families were protected.

NTI is uniquely positioned to play a critical role in the development of much-needed intervention, prevention and programs and services to be developed for Inuit by Inuit, and

to make a significant positive impact in the lives of many Inuit, within and outside of Inuit Nunangat. The Court's landmark decision ensures that NTI can continue to work toward measures that will improve the lives of Inuit children, youth and families including where provincial or territorial child welfare systems have failed.

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