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For Immediate Release

Another Attempt by the Government of Nunavut to Avoid the Inuktitut Education Discrimination Lawsuit

(October 31, 2024 — Iqaluit, Nunavut) Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) is dismayed that the Government of Nunavut (GN) continues to attempt to dismiss the Inuktitut Education Discrimination Lawsuit (the Lawsuit) from proceeding to trial. The GN is seeking leave to appeal the August 28, 2024, Nunavut Court of Appeal decision, which had allowed the case to proceed to trial, to the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC).

Inuit are losing our language at an alarming rate. In the Lawsuit, NTI claims that the GN's failure to provide public education in Inuktitut (which is currently only delivered in English or French after Grade 3, if at all) is discriminatory against Inuit and breaches the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the *Charter*). The *Charter* guarantees the fundamental rights of Canadians and prohibits discrimination based on race and ethnicity.

For years, the GN has delayed the Lawsuit by trying to have it dismissed without a trial in court. The GN says that the *Charter* does not protect Inuit against discrimination in this way. Two levels of court have disagreed with the GN and rejected their position by agreeing with NTI that the lawsuit must proceed to trial.

On Monday, the GN filed an appeal in the SCC and is trying once again to have the Lawsuit dismissed without a trial on the evidence. The SCC must grant leave for an appeal before they agree or not agree to hear an appeal. If the SCC dismisses the leave, there is no other recourse for the GN – the Nunavut Court of Appeal decision remains.

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Meanwhile, Inuit still do not have access to Inuktut Education, which contributes to the erosion of Inuktut. Inuit experience the serious negative consequences of this discrimination and language loss as it creates barriers to the transmission of our culture, and equal opportunities to education and employment.

President Aluki Kotierk stated: "The Government of Nunavut was created through the *Nunavut Agreement* to serve a majority Inuit population. We are baffled by the actions they have taken, and despite the GN claiming that it lacks resources, they continue to use existing resources to delay a trial in court against NTI, Inuit students and families, who simply ask to be treated equally."

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