

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***  
**INUVIK. January 17, 2012**

**Gwich'in Tribal Council Leaders Host Annual GTC/GNWT Leadership Meeting**

Richard Nerysoo, President of the Gwich'in Tribal Council, Vice-President Mary Ann Ross, the Designated Gwich'in Organization Presidents, Gwich'in Chiefs and Elders gathered in Inuvik, NT, on January 10 and 11, 2012, to provide input into the GNWT's *Seven Point Plan* for the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

President Nerysoo reminded the Premier that the Town of Inuvik is located in the Gwich'in Settlement Region and that the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement must be adhered to in all respects. The Gwich'in Leadership raised numerous key matters with the Premier and Ministers:

- Re-establishing Government to Government relationships
- Claims Implementation – fulfilling Governments' objectives and obligations
- Investment in Transportation and Capital Infrastructure
- Stimulate the private sector, job creation and capacity building
- Moving away from a Government supported economy
- Gwich'in Self-Government – Agreement in Principle by December 2012
- Necessity of quality Education and improved results
- Recognizing the relationship of Health and Justice
- Devolution – restating the Gwich'in position and recommendations from the 2011 Fiscal Analysis Report and 2011 Leadership Principles

There was significant and encouraging discussion about Large Infrastructure Projects:

- Implement the MacKenzie Valley Highway - Wrigley to Inuvik
- Alternatives to Mackenze Gas Project
- Inuvik – Tuk Highway – Fair Contracting Provisions and Access to Private Lands
- Develop a Beaufort Delta Tourism Strategy
- Develop an Economic Strategy for the NWT

In his closing remarks, President Nerysoo, Gwich'in Tribal Council addressed the audience with a summary of the Leadership Meetings:

“Repairing relations, rebuilding trust and developing a collaborative working relationship are all necessary to improve the lives of the Gwich'in and all peoples of the NWT. We recognize the fiscal challenges faced by Federal and Territorial Governments and all orders must work together to establish priorities and utilize resources in an efficient and responsible manner.”

President Nerysoo was encouraged by the tone of the Premier's remarks, and positive discussion with Ministers, and said, “We look forward to what the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly brings.”

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