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For Immediate Release

National Indigenous Peoples Day a time for hope and renewal

As Inuit, we have lived on this land for millennia, long before the arrival of European settlers. We have always been a strong and resilient people, always adapting to the harsh environment and thriving in harmony with the land and the sea. Our traditional way of life was built around hunting, fishing, and gathering, and it was a way of life that was deeply connected to our ancestors and the world around them.

As Labrador Inuit, we are one of the original peoples of Canada. Our journey has been marked by resilience, determination, and achievement.

New cultures and languages were forced upon us, and many of our traditional practices and customs were suppressed. We were forced to relocate from our traditional homelands, taken away to residential schools, and led to believe we were inferior to those who looked upon us as being primitive or barbaric.

Despite facing such adversity, Labrador Inuit persevered. Our traditions continue, and we are passing them down from generation to generation. We fought to protect Inuktitut and traditional ways, demanding recognition of our rights and self-government; and we continue to work tirelessly to revitalize our identity.

As we celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day, we acknowledge the progress we have made, and recognize the hard work and dedication of our ancestors who fought to protect our way of life.

I think it's also important to also acknowledge that there are those who would seek to claim false indigenous identity and challenge our right to self-determination. The NunatuKavut Community Council is a prime example of this.

As true Inuit, it is our responsibility to protect our culture, lands, and way of life from those who would seek to undermine them. We must stand strong against those who would try to erase our history and replace it with their own false narratives. We must also work together with other Indigenous peoples across Canada to build a strong foundation for reconciliation and self-determination.

So, let us celebrate today as a day of hope and renewal. Let us honor the struggles and sacrifices of our ancestors, and let us look forward to a brighter future for all Indigenous peoples in Canada - one where our cultures are respected and our rights are protected.