



August 29, 2024

Decision not to participate in Northern Lights difficult, but necessary

Following is a statement issued today by Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe:

The Nunatsiavut Government stands in unity with Canada's other Inuit treaty organizations, as well as Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, in the decision not to participate in the 2025 Northern Lights Conference. This decision was not made lightly, but was deemed necessary in order to uphold our commitment to protecting the rights and interests of Labrador Inuit and, indeed, Canada's true Indigenous governments, organizations, groups and entities.



The Nunatsiavut Government has always been committed to fostering unity and collaboration among Indigenous communities. However, the inclusion of the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) in Northern Lights presents significant challenges to our principles and the integrity of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.

The Nunatsiavut Government has been fully transparent about its position regarding the NCC, and it should not have come as a surprise to organizers of Northern Lights that none of Canada's Inuit regions would participate in the 2025 event.

We believe the Northern Lights Conference should be a platform for genuine and recognized Indigenous representation. The participation of the NCC, which does not represent an Inuit collective capable of holding section 35 rights under Canada's Constitution, undermines this objective, leading to conflict. In fact, at the last Northern Lights held in 2023, many Nunatsiavut delegates and participants were confronted and questioned by members of NCC regarding the stance taken towards the unrecognized self-proclaimed Indigenous group.

We would welcome the opportunity to be involved in an Indigenous and Northern conference/showcase that does not include organizations claiming to be Indigenous when they are not recognized or accepted as such.

We look forward to contributing to and participating in gatherings and events that honour and reflect the true diversity and legitimacy of Indigenous representation within Newfoundland and Labrador, the rest of Canada and beyond.