

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

NTI STANDS IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE SIPEKNE'KATIK FIRST NATION

(September 22, 2020, Iqaluit) Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) stands in solidarity with the Sipekne'katik fisherman, and all the Indigenous nations supporting them for their inherent right to fish for a moderate livelihood and condemns the unlawful acts of violence and hostility against Mi'kmaq Fishers. The Mi'kmaq right to earn a moderate livelihood from fishing is supported by the 1999 Supreme Court of Canada's decision to allow for fishing and trade activities, as recognized in the Mik'maq Treaties and protected by s.35 of the Canadian Constitution.

NTI calls on Bernadette Jordan, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, and the RCMP to uphold the rule of law regarding the unlawful interference of Mi'kmaq fishers in exercising their fishing rights, and to prosecute any illegal acts or criminal behavior from non-Indigenous fishers. Government inaction and indecision must not bolster and condone the infringement of Mik'maq rights and further acts of vigilantism, hostility and violence.

As a constitutionally protected land claim holder, we are watching this escalating situation very closely. Like the Mi'kmaq, NTI has worked for 21 years to ensure Inuit fishing rights recognized and protected under the *Nunavut Agreement* are formally implemented through the draft Nunavut Fishery Regulations. The Government of Canada has spoken loudly in favour of reconciliation, but the essence of reconciliation is respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples. NTI calls on the Government of Canada to take immediate actions to protect the right of Mi'kmaq Fishers and to uphold the rule of law, and to continue to build trust and sustainable partnerships and to further the goal of reconciliation between the Government and Indigenous Peoples.

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