

## **The situation of Nunavik's children**

### **THE COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE ET DES DROITS DE LA JEUNESSE RELEASES ITS FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON YOUTH PROTECTION SERVICES**

**Kuujuaq, September, 20, 2010** – The Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse today released its follow-up report on youth protection services in Nunavik.

At a news conference held in Kuujuaq, with Pita Aatami, president of Makivik Corporation, the vice-president of the Commission, Sylvie Godin, said that it is crucial for the Inuit community to continue the work arising from the Commission's investigation.

She also welcomed the efforts of local stakeholders who have worked to address the plight of children, and to improve the services they are entitled to receive under the Youth Protection Act (YPA).

In 2002, the Commission conducted a systemic investigation into youth protection services for children in Nunavik, as authorized by law and by virtue of its mandate to protect the rights of children and youth. It had received complaints alluding to major problems in the delivery of social services at every stage of applying the YPA.

The Commission's investigation uncovered several deficiencies, notably inadequate knowledge of the YPA, shortcomings in the organization of services, inability to maintain adequate staffing levels, and lack of supervision, training, and working tools. Moreover, the investigation pointed to the lack of involvement and cooperation among organizations and local community to make the needs of their children a key priority.

The Commission recognizes that since it released its recommendations, the implementation of a number of initiatives, coupled with the efforts of community stakeholders, have allowed to satisfactorily address the requirements of the YPA.

However, the issue of housing overcrowding continues to preoccupy the Commission, as this major problem exacerbates social problems such as drug and alcohol abuse, suicide, and family violence.

The Commission urges the federal government to heed the calls of local community leaders who have petitioned Ottawa to act without delay in order resolve this serious housing problem.

While it is concluding its investigation, the Commission has no intention of abandoning its mandate of ensuring that the rights of children are respected. The Commission could invoke its power under the YPA and intervene of its own initiative if this proves necessary, concluded Ms. Godin.

The follow-up report into youth protection services in Ungava Bay and Hudson Bay is available in French and English at [www.cdpdj.qc.ca](http://www.cdpdj.qc.ca)

Ms. Godin will be available for phone interviews from Kuujjuaq after 3 p.m. today.

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