

News Release

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QUELLET AND IRWIN ANNOUNCE FIRST CIRCUMPOLAR AMBASSADOR

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet and Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Ron Irwin announced today the appointment of Mary May Simon as Canada's first Circumpolar Ambassador. She will be the first Inuit to hold an ambassadorial position. The appointment is effective October 31, 1994.

"All Canadians have a stake in circumpolar affairs. Having spent the last 25 years as a strong advocate of Inuit rights and circumpolar issues, Mary Simon will be an effective and knowledgeable voice for Canada in its dealings with other circumpolar nations," said Mr. Ouellet.

"In working with Mary Simon over the last year, I have been impressed with her extensive knowledge and understanding of circumpolar issues and concerns. I am certain that the unique perspective she brings to this position, gained over the past two decades as a spokesperson for Inuit people, will make her an extremely credible and effective Circumpolar Ambassador for Canada," Mr. Irwin added.

The appointment of a Circumpolar Ambassador fulfils a foreign policy platform commitment of the new government.

Reporting to both ministers, the Ambassador will:

- represent Canada at international meetings on circumpolar issues;
- consult with interested Canadians, particularly northern governments and Aboriginal groups; and

