

compensation to these high Arctic exiles. The pain and suffering of these Inuit families is further compounded by the Canadian government's attempt to deny this injustice.

The indigenous peoples in Quebec are now threatened by the possible secession of Quebec from Canada. The indigenous right of self-determination must take precedence under these circumstances.

On a more positive note, the Inuit of Nunavut have moved closer to controlling their own lives through a recent comprehensive land claims agreement and political accord on division of the North West Territories. And the Metis Nation has agreed to a legislative accord with governments, the Metis Nation Accord.

During the Canadian constitutional negotiations, the recognition of the inherent right to self government for all Aboriginal peoples by governments was an historic breakthrough. Although the combined provisions of the Charlottetown Accord were not ratified, the self government provisions gained broad support among Canadians.

Today Rigoberta Menchu, an indigenous person from Guatemala, is receiving the Nobel Prize for her courage and determination. We add our heartfelt tribute to her remarkable and on going efforts.

In closing, our presence today before the General Assembly is not an isolated event. We call upon the General Assembly to go beyond the relatively insubstantial resolution which has been proposed, and to endorse a Plan of Action which will address indigenous issues for the next decade.

Thank You.