News Release

Government of Nunavut welcomes report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food

IQALUIT, NU (March 5, 2013) – The Honourable Peter Taptuna, Minister responsible for the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, welcomed the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, which was released yesterday in Geneva at a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council.

“On behalf of the Government of Nunavut, I welcome the report of Olivier De Schutter, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food,” said Minister Taptuna. “This report makes strong recommendations on how to address the issue of food insecurity, many of which would complement efforts made by the Government of Nunavut and our partners in the Nunavut Food Security Coalition.”

The Government of Nunavut has made food security a priority. Over the past year the government has initiated a sustained effort to address the issue with our partners, including the formation of the Nunavut Food Security Coalition with Inuit organizations, convening the Nunavut Food Security Symposium in January, and the preparation of the Nunavut Food Security Strategy, to be released this spring.

In the 2013 budget, the Government of Nunavut allocated $900 thousand in additional support for the Country Food Distribution Program. That is in addition to the $1.7 million dedicated to fight poverty and homelessness.

In his report, the Special Rapporteur notes that the Inuit Health Survey states that 70 per cent of adults living in Nunavut are food insecure. This is six times the national average and represents the highest documented food insecurity rate for any aboriginal population in a developed country.

“We understand the seriousness of this issue, and will carefully consider the recommendations in this document,” said Minister Taptuna. “We are working to mobilize our partners and resources in Nunavut and will welcome the collaboration and support of the federal government.”

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