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NUNAVIK TOUR

Premier Marois Commits to Review Sustainable Solutions for Telecommunications in Nunavik

Kuujuuaq, Friday, September 13, 2013 – Québec Premier Pauline Marois took advantage of her time in Nunavik on September 12 and 13 to discuss the region's telecommunications issues with local elected representatives. She indicated her determination to negotiate a financial partnership with major stakeholders, specifically the federal government and the Kativik Regional Government (KRG), to ensure effective access to telecommunications networks. "This is an essential service for Nunavimmiut. In the digital age, access to the Internet is paramount to connect communities to the world," declared Pauline Marois.

The Premier gave a mandate to the President of the Conseil du trésor, Stéphane Bédard, to study possible telecommunications solutions based on proposals released by the KRG on September 12. These proposals could supersede the current agreement totalling \$14.9 million over five years that is funded by Industry Canada (\$7.4 million), the Ministère des Ressources naturelles (\$3 million), the KRG (\$2.5 million) and Telesat (\$2.5 million). A new financial partnership must be in place before the 2016 expiry date.

The Premier also directed the Minister for Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs, the Canadian Francophonie and Sovereignist Governance, Alexandre Cloutier, to launch discussions with the federal government on the issue of telecommunications in Nunavik.

"Access to an adequate telecommunications network adapted to the needs of the 21st century is vital for Nunavimmiut. The commitment made by the government today is encouraging and we are impatient to begin discussions on this topic. The 2016 target must be met," emphasized KRG Chairperson, Maggie Emudluk.

Over the last ten years, the KRG has expended considerable efforts to developing a reliable Internet network for businesses, organizations and residents in Nunavik. It created Tamaani Internet to deliver wireless Internet services in the 14 northern villages.

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