



Nunavut:

A chronological history

1973 – Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) begins a study of Inuit land use and occupancy which eventually demonstrates the extent of Inuit aboriginal title in the Arctic. This study forms the geographic basis of the Nunavut Territory.

1976 – ITC proposes the creation of a Nunavut Territory as part of a comprehensive settlement of Inuit land claims in the Northwest Territories. The Nunavut Proposal calls for the Beaufort Sea and Yukon North Slope areas used by the Inuvialuit to be included in the Nunavut Territory.

That same year, due to development pressure in the Beaufort Sea area, the Inuvialuit split from ITC to negotiate a separate land claim agreement.

Also that same year, a federal electoral boundaries commission recommends dividing the Northwest Territories into two federal electoral districts: Nunatsiaq and the Western Arctic. This recommendation is put in effect for the 1979 federal election.

1980 – At its Annual General Meeting in October, ITC delegates unanimously pass a resolution calling for the creation of Nunavut.

1990 – Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN) and representatives of the federal and territorial governments sign a land claims agreement-in-principle in April. The agreement supports the division of the Northwest Territories and provides for a plebiscite on boundaries.

1992 – In January, TFN and government negotiators come to an agreement on the substantive portions of a final land claims agreement for the Nunavut region.

The agreement contains commitments for the creation of a Nunavut territory and government, subject to a boundary plebiscite and the conclusion of the Nunavut Political Accord. This Accord would detail the timetable and process for establishing Nunavut.

1992 – An overall majority of voters in the Northwest Territories and the Nunavut area approve the proposed boundary for division in a May plebiscite.

In October, TFN and government representatives sign the Nunavut Political Accord, setting the creation of Nunavut as April 1, 1999.

In November, in a Nunavut-wide vote, the Inuit of Nunavut ratify the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

1993 – The Nunavut Agreement is signed in May. In June, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act and the Nunavut Act are adopted by Parliament and receive Royal Assent.

1995 and 1996 – *Footprints in New Snow* and *Footprints II*, documents written by the Nunavut Implementation Commission, recommend that certain headquarter and regional functions of the Nunavut government be decentralized to communities. *Footprints II* is used as the blueprint for the foundation of the Government of Nunavut.

1997 – The Office of the Interim Commissioner is established to help prepare for the creation of Nunavut. It is responsible for setting up an operational government ready to function effectively on April 1, 1999.

1998 – Amendments to the Nunavut Act are adopted by Parliament and receive Royal Assent July 9th.

1999 – The Nunavut Territory and Government come into existence on April 1.

