



**Nunavik Elders' Committee
Members attending the Seniors' Parliament 2007**

**OPENING SPEECH: Monday, September 10, 2007
M. Johnny Watt Sr.**

Greetings Members of the Seniors' Parliament

I am privileged to be part of this Seniors' Parliament for the first time.

I assumed public office from 1980 to 1991 as the Mayor of Kuujjuaq, and prior to the incorporation of the municipality, I served from 1973 to 1980 as a Community Manager for the Inuit Community Council.

From 1992 for to 2001, I served as one of Nunavik Governors with Makivik Corporation.

I would like to bring to the attention of the Assembly two important and related points.

The first is the role of Nunavik elders in preserving the Inuit culture for future generations. We will not say enough about how the elders are the safe keepers of our Inuit culture in this century as they lived their lives in a unique traditional way over centuries in challenging environment. In 2007, the challenge is to keep our traditions to our children and to future generations.

This is not only important to Nunavik Inuit but also to the Quebec society, to Canada and the world.

The second point I want to speak about is the importance that correspondence from the Quebec government to Nunavimmiut elders be sent in Inuktitut to allow us to benefit from government services, and to know our rights and responsibilities. We want to be able to be active participants in the Quebec society.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.



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