



Mineral exploration and prosperous communities

By Philip Bousquet, PDAC

Mineral exploration and mining can act as a catalyst in developing healthy, prosperous communities. This message was delivered by a range of speakers to an audience of over 250 Canadian and international delegates at the March 2007 annual convention of the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC).

In a follow-up to the inaugural session at the 2006 convention, the PDAC organized a session on Aboriginal Participation in the Mineral Industry: Canada and international that brought together speakers and delegates representing companies and communities around the world. In response to delegate requests from last year, the 2007 session included international speakers and a panel discussion that encouraged audience participation. The event was a great success with delegates staying well into the afternoon to engage in the discussion.

The first speakers offered the audience their first-hand experience of mineral exploration and mining in Nunavut. Paul Kaludjak, President, and James Eetoolook, 1st Vice President, of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) explained the role of NTI in fostering Inuit economic, social and cultural well-being through the implementation of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

With offices in Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet and Ottawa, Nunavut

Tunngavik Inc. is responsible for the management of all Inuit-owned lands in Nunavut and it acts as the advocate of Inuit interests in Nunavut. The organization also provides a number of pro-

grams, including support to Inuit development corporations and community economic development organizations, an Elders pension plan, a harvester support program, and a bereavement travel program.

James Eetoolook spoke of the need to ensure that mineral exploration and mining brings benefits such as good

jobs and improved social, health and economic standards while minimizing any environmental impacts that could affect traditional activities on the land.

One area that Mr. Eetoolook says must be addressed is the state of the territory's geological mapping. Nunavut's mapping is incomplete and until its coverage and quality is brought up to standard, the territory cannot fully take advantage of the benefits that come with mineral exploration. Paul Kaludjak repeated this message, stating that the federal government needs to invest in geoscience mapping in the North.

Overall, the NTI speakers were very hopeful about Nunavut's prospects, saying that Nunavut can be a model to the world in its approach to sustainable development, education and maintaining traditions. The 2007 PDAC convention session on Aboriginal participation in the mineral industry also featured speakers from Alaska, Australia, and the Northwest Territories, as well as a panel discussion involving lawyers representing the various parties to a legal case in northwestern Ontario that raises issues of land claims, engagement and constitutional rights. For copies of these presentations, please go to the Aboriginal Affairs page on the PDAC website at www.pdac.ca

As the national voice of the mineral exploration sector, the PDAC can serve a role in improving our members' understanding of aboriginal issues, and helping communities work with the exploration industry. Through our work with PDAC volunteers and other organizations, we develop information resources and promote opportunities that encourage cooperation and sustainable development.

The next PDAC Convention will be held March 2 to 5, 2008 in Toronto. For further information, please contact Philip Bousquet, PDAC Director, Sustainability at 416-362-1969 or email pbousquet@pdac.ca ▲



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The PDAC's annual convention (held in March 2007 in Toronto) featured a session on **Aboriginal participation in the mineral industry: Canada and international.**

The session attracted delegates from across Canada and around the world. It featured speakers who discussed examples of aboriginal, community-driven initiatives to build local capacity and become active participants in the industry as mineral prospectors, service providers and project generators.

The PDAC would like to thank the session co-Chairs and speakers for organizing and conducting a highly successful event that demonstrates the variety of perspectives and approaches to increasing Aboriginal participation in the mineral industry.

SESSION CHAIRS:

Don Bubar, Avalon Ventures Ltd.

Hans Matthews, Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association

SESSION CHAIRS:

Paul Kaludjak and James Eetoolook, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Iqaluit, Canada
Jim Kulas, Teck Cominco Alaska, Anchorage & Walter Sampson, NANA Regional Corporation, Alaska, USA

Parry Agius, ALRM Native Title Unit, Adelaide, Australia

Robin Goad, Fortune Minerals Limited, London & Ted Blondin, BehCho Ko Development Corporation, BehCo, Canada

Kate Kempton, Olthuis, Kleer, Townshend, Toronto, Canada

Neal Smitheman, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP, Toronto, Canada

Owen Young, Ontario Ministry of the Attorney-General, Toronto, Canada



For further information on the session or the work of the PDAC, please contact:

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