Mark A. Emmert  
President  
University of Washington  

Mr. President:  

From January 24-31, 2009, took place in Ottawa Canada, a Fact-Finding Mission organized by Nadine C. Fabbi, Associate Professor, Canadian Studies Centre, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, and by Vincent F. Galluci, Wakefield Professor, College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences.  

The purpose of this fact-finding mission (SIS 495C Arctic Sovereignty Task Force - Winter Quarter 2009) was to introduce students of your University, to major stakeholders and perspectives in the discussion regarding Arctic Sovereignty, top legal experts in the field, and scientific research.  

Both Professors Fabbi and Galluci had called on me for advice and support in organizing this unique initiative, as I had the pleasure to be invited to Seattle twice in the last years, by the Canadian Studies Centre of the University of Washington.  

The purpose of these visits was to make presentations to professors and students on issues and challenges taking presently place in the Canadian Arctic, including the sovereignty issue, and also on the place of Inuit in Canada.  

On this latter matter, the Canadian Studies Centre was particularly interested in the recent tripartite governance agreement signed by the Inuit of the region of Nunavik, Northern Quebec, Canada, and the governments of Canada and Quebec, which will see the establishment of a public Nunavik government and of a Nunavik representative assembly. Until my recent retirement from the Public Service of Canada, I was the Chief Federal (Canada) Negotiator for this unique and innovative governance project.  

I was very pleased by the program that was put together due to the hard work and dedication of Professors Fabbi and Galluci. Myself, I had the pleasure to meet the students on January 28th and make a presentation on the Nunavik self-government Project, and also on the history of the arrival of governments in Arctic Canada and its impact on Canadian population and the Inuit. I added a circumpolar dimension to my presentation given the fact that Canadian nearest neighbours in the Arctic are Alaska, Russia and Greenland.  

I also had the occasion to talk directly to several students at the reception and at the Student Presentation for the week they had spent in Ottawa. To all those I spoke to, it was an eye-opener and I believe these students went back to Seattle with a better knowledge of Canada, of Canadian politics and of the importance of the Arctic not only in Canada, but in the circumpolar world.
During that week, several Inuit organizations had been invited to meet the students, including Makivik Corporation, which is the organization that represents the Inuit of Nunavik, Northern Quebec. A major snow storm in Montreal prevented Makivik's representative, Me Jean-François Arteau, Legal Counsel and Executive Assistant to the President of Makivik, Pita Aatami, to come to Ottawa for this event. However, Me Arteau had asked me to offer to the students the regards and wishes from Makivik Corporation.

In closing, I believe these kinds of initiatives can only enrich students and professors on issues like sovereignty, presently taking place in a changing international Arctic, which is transforming very rapidly.

Yours sincerely,

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