



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Katimavik is granted Special Consultative Status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**

Montréal, February 13, 2008 - The United Nations Economic and Social Council – ECOSOC (of the Division for Social Policy and Development), recently granted Special Consultative Status to Katimavik-Opcan.

The mission of ECOSOC, which consists of 54 member governments, is to strengthen international cooperation for social development, with a special focus on issues of poverty, employment and social integration. It is particularly interested in how these issues relate to older persons, persons with disabilities, families, persons in situations of conflict, indigenous and other marginalized or vulnerable groups, and youth – this last group representing Katimavik’s primary area of interest and experience.

The designation of Special Consultative status signifies for Katimavik an acknowledgement of the organization’s contributions, expertise and international leadership in issues affecting youth in general, and in the area of national youth service in particular. Over the past 30 years, Katimavik has enabled thousands of Canadian youth to discover their country, while simultaneously learning about the value of community, leadership and the appreciation of their own capabilities. Each year, Katimavik partners with over 700 non-profit community organizations across Canada, who benefit from the volunteer services provided by more than 1,000 youth participating in the program.

As an NGO with Special Consultative status, Katimavik will be entitled to send representatives to attend the annual meeting of the Commission for Social Development (and of its various subsidiary bodies) and provide written statements to the assembly relating to the theme being discussed. In addition to its contributions to such meetings, the organization may also be asked to participate in, and be privy to findings of the most recent international studies and research relating to youth issues. “It is our desire to serve as a representative for our partners and other like-minded organizations in Canada, and in so doing, fulfill our leadership role in the area of mentoring and promoting solid values for the youth of today and tomorrow”, stated Jean-Guy Bigeau, Executive Director.

“We intend to take this new responsibility seriously”, he continued. “Many countries around the world have looked to Katimavik as a model in developing their own youth volunteer service programs over the years; with this consultative status, we can now share our knowledge in a more concrete manner, with potentially more far-reaching applications.”

ECOSOC was established under the UN Charter as the principal organ, under the authority of the General Assembly, to coordinate economic, social and related work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions and five regional commissions.

The current formal meeting of the Commission for Social Development (the forty-sixth session of the Commission), held in New York City, began on February 6<sup>th</sup> and will end on the 15<sup>th</sup>. This year's priority theme will be ***Full employment and decent work for all***. The session also includes a review of relevant United Nations plans and programs of action pertaining to previously mentioned groups of interest, including youth.

- 30 -

For more details concerning Katimavik's Special Consultative status with ECOSOC, please refer to the [background document](#).

**Media contact**

Geneviève D'Au-ray Tarte, Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Tel.: (514) 868-0898, ext. 2224

Email: [gdauraytarte@katimavik.org](mailto:gdauraytarte@katimavik.org)

[www.katimavik.org](http://www.katimavik.org)