



## **TUNGASUVVINGAT INUIT STATEMENT - TRUCKER PROTEST EFFECT ON VULNERABLE COMMUNITY IN DOWNTOWN OTTAWA**

February 3, 2022

OTTAWA, ON - [Tungasuvvingat Inuit \(TI\)](#) recognizes the unceded traditional territory of the [Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation](#) that allows us to provide programming and services to the urban Inuit community. TI has worked on behalf of the urban Inuit community for nearly 35 years in Ottawa and today, we add our support to the [Algonquins of Pikwaknagan](#), [Kitigan Zibi](#) and the [Algonquin Nation Tribal Council](#) in [opposition to the “Freedom Convoy Protest”](#) using cultural practices of Indigenous people in ceremonies.

TI believes in the right to peaceful protests however, the protest in downtown Ottawa have introduced a high-level anxiety and increased fear for the vulnerable Indigenous communities in the area. By virtue of the ongoing blockades and volume of protestors and trucks, this demonstration has impeded TI’s ability to provide critical programming and services to urban Inuit. In a period with recent extreme cold warnings, the ongoing health crisis, the emergency housing crisis and food security issues, the protest is negatively impacting those vulnerable members of our community.

The protest was positioned as a peaceful but, has turned into large intimidating crowds threatening the safety of vulnerable individuals that require supports from service and program providers in downtown Ottawa. There is an increased level of concern shared amongst service providers and clients following incidents that included [harassment of shelter services workers](#), demand for food intended for food-insecure individuals, the inability to reach vulnerable community members requiring urgent supports, blocking access for services providers to help the vulnerable, impacting the [sheltering system for women](#) and homeless and the intimidating presence and ongoing noise. As we approach another weekend and rumours of a second weekend of protests, we respectfully ask that the protestors remove themselves from Ottawa. It is time to go home and allow for our vulnerable urban Indigenous communities to feel safe again and regain access to cultural programming and essential services.

TI wishes to thank the members of our Indigenous community and specifically the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation for the reminder of respect of land, culture, and traditions. Furthermore, we ask for ongoing support of the overall well-being of our urban Inuit community.

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For more information, please contact Tungasuvvingat Inuit Communications Manager Joël Lamoureux.

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