



**Nunavut Canada**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT**

**Nunavut Leadership Forum:**

Official Report

**Day 3**

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**Members Present**

Ms. Leona Aglukkaq, Mr. Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabus, Ms. Levinia Brown, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Joe Allan Evyagotailak, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Mr. Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. Paul Okalik, Mr. Keith Peterson, Mr. Edward Picco, Mr. David Simailak, Mr. Louis Tapardjuk, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

**Nunavut Leadership Forum**

**Chairman:** Thank you, members. Members before we start, I would like to open this meeting. I would like to ask Mr. Alagalak to lead us in prayer.

>>*Prayer*

**Chairman:** Do members agree with that agenda?

**Some members:** Agreed.

**Questions to Minister Akesuk**

**Chairman:** Thank you. Yesterday, Minister Akesuk was at the witness table. Can I ask that he proceed to the table.

As a reminder, all regular members have a total of 20 questions that they can ask of the remaining Members of the Cabinet as a whole. Please note, a regular member may choose to ask all of his questions to one minister or divide his questions between the number of ministers. Regular members are not required to ask all their questions consecutively. Members have a list in front of them that tells you how many questions remaining you have.

Yesterday members were asking questions to Minister Akesuk. So are there any more questions to Minister Akesuk? Thank you. Mr. Curley

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask if we could trade off the questions that members did not ask.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. We did not agree to trade off remaining questions. So you each have 20 questions to ask. Thank you. Any further questions Mr. Curley?

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): The only question I would have would be: is that since we have non-partisan system we have to cooperate? I was wondering if there could have been cooperation between that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to ask the minister a question. I was asking the minister a question before we adjourned for the day in regard to inland fishery. Do we have a strategy to address this area of our fishery? There is only one fish plant that is located in Whale Cove. Why is it so difficult to set up fish plants in Nunavut? It would help with the unemployment issues and we need infrastructure to clean sealskins, as many do not have the room to clean their skins in public housing units. Will you be prepared to help us with this? Thank you

**Chairman** (intrepretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For quite some time, those questions were posed as to how we can market; buy the fish from the hunters. I think the majority of all the communities have quota for commercial fishing. Perhaps the funding we have is always stretched to the limit.

I don't want to just review and review all these things but with this Fisheries Diversification Fund that came from the fisheries can be used to measure the progress. If the HTOs requested to get some funding they can find out the best way to deal with fish plant. The community is very familiar with each other. The commercial fishing lakes are distances that vary from community to community. So perhaps the communities HTOs can look into this.

There are three fish plants in Nunavut; one in Cambridge Bay, one in Rankin Inlet, and one in Pangnirtung. So these are the few fish plants that we have. We can look into how to ship fish at the cheapest price. We did a feasibility study. So there are various things we have to look at before we start developing it.

So I am sure once we start working on it we can progress very fast. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you. I think the minister has to clarify. I am sure there is a fish plant in Cambridge Bay, Pangnirtung, but there is no fish plant in Rankin Inlet. We have a local fish plant that was a receiving station. They have just shut it down; it was shut down by the public health. I am sure you know about that. We have no fish plant of any sort in Rankin Inlet. Inuit are going through a difficult time and we really want to see a fish plant, at least some of the members I met with in Rankin Inlet.

I do have another question. They also sell musk ox and caribou meat. I would like to know if you are in support of that. There is a market in Rankin Inlet. They receive their caribou meat from Coal Harbour and they process it in Rankin Inlet. This really benefits the hunters. In both communities there are approximately one hundred people working for over six weeks in that meat plant. They collect unemployment insurance during the wintertime for approximately six months.

I was wondering if we would continue the commercial harvesting of caribou because you as the minister provide funding for the operations of such a processing plant.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I really like these types of meat plants because they provide employment for the communities, and I would like to have a closer working relationship on this issue.

After I go to St. John's for a meeting I will make an announcement as to how much funding will be provided from the federal government for all the Nunavut meat plants. I do want to do this very carefully and I want to see it go ahead.

In the future, I would like to work with the member to look at how we can market the fish in accordance with the Federal Food Legislation. So perhaps, in the future, I would like to work closely in how we can develop these Fisheries outside of Coral Harbour. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley:** I think we have four questions left so I shall conclude with that for now. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Yes, you only have four questions left. Five questions, I am sorry. Are there any further questions to Minister Akesuk? Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like welcome the minister to the witness table and ask a question in regard to staff housing.

When government staff goes to a community they have to leave their own home in one community and cannot move into another public housing unit in another community, and it is very expensive to live in a government staff house.

Since you are holding this portfolio for the next two years, I was wondering if you could look into this.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Mr. Akesuk

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The increase in the rent of all government staff housing was intended to promote more private homeownership. After one year, we will be looking into what kind of impact this decision has made.

The government provides \$35 million that is set aside for staff housing. We should be focusing on how we can promote staff to build their own homes. After a year we will see the results and I will want to review this over the next two years that I have left in the portfolio. Thank you

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Kattuk

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The homeowners do not always know about what kind of services that the Nunavut Housing Corporation can provide.

There are two kinds of homeowners. Under the NWT Government, there used to be a program called HAP Housing, where the homeowners paid the mortgage and they don't want to particularly do what the NHC wants them to do even though they need the assistance.

I wonder if the NHC can deal with the present homeowners, or what about those interested in getting their own homes? Thank you, Mr. Chairman

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Mr. Akesuk

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we can look into this and although we are always short of funding we can look into this. In the times that I have met with the federal government, I keep bringing up the issue of not having enough funds to build or renovate the houses that we have. A lot of the homes are between 30 and 40 years old and we want to be able to spend the money in the best way we can.

I can get my senior staff to look at this and work with the homeowners in Nunavut.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Alagalak.

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The past years we have had many discussions with the Federal Fisheries and Oceans and have asked questions in regard to quotas on arctic char, Lake Trout and Grayling and how we can develop sound strategies around these areas. We were also advised that this was going to be looked into in order to see how we can market these products in and outside of Nunavut.

What is the status on this? What have you done up to date on the strategy that was going to be done? What can we expect at this time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have to work with the federal government because it's under the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. I can ask my staff to see what status we're at now. This is an area where the federal government or the GN cannot work alone and must work together.

By next week I will be able to let the member know in regard to the status of this file as the minister for fisheries. Hopefully, I will be able to give him a definite answer next week. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Alagalak.

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): I've heard that same answer before. Maybe you haven't done anything about it because we heard this from Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and there's already quota available for whitefish, grayling, arctic char and we have 75,000 pounds quota in a lake close by my community that we can use. We just need help within our communities as to where we can market our catch.

In Keewaitin waters economic development did a feasibility study on scallops and clams, and it indicated that it might be feasible and that we would be able to come up with a quota. We were told that economic development would be able to make plans with the communities of Rankin Inlet, Chesterfield Inlet, and Whale Cove to look at this.

So minister, has this been done, or what information can we get in regard to that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, we have to work with the federal government and we have to abide by their rules. We have to find buyers in regard to fishing, for our products like shellfish or clams.

We have to continue to conduct feasible studies in our waters. So we want to be able to go ahead with the fisheries and we know that we are mainly focusing on turbot and shrimp. We have to look at other things, too.

We still have to follow the rules or the legislation from the federal government and we would have to make recommendations from our government and we would have to work with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

I think I can get more information as to what status we are at now, and can inform the member that we are definitely working on this. We know there are adequate clams in Qikiqtarjuaq. We have to look at all of Nunavut as to how we can help them further and when it will benefit all of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Alagalak.

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, our government has talked about this before, and they are not aggressive enough.

If one wanted to be successful in this area, then we as the government need to be more supportive. We are the government and there is no other government responsible such as us. Our people have no one else to turn to. If we just keep looking at the rules and legislations, we cannot really go anywhere.

I also would like to discuss the need to help and support carvers in regard to marketing their carvings and making sure that the world is aware of the carvings that we have in Nunavut. There is still a lot more that can be done in this area.

In my area there is not a lot of soapstone and so carvers are relying on carving antlers. Carvers are always trying to find soapstone and do not have the tools to carve the harder rocks that are so readily available. These are some of the problems that our carvers are challenged with.

I was told in the House that a program to help carvers will be made available for residents of Nunavut. The carvers are still waiting for this opportunity where they can access funds to buy their equipment needed to carve the harder type of rock. At this time they are still expecting to access this program. What status is that now?

Thank you Mr. Chairman

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Akesuk

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have been looking after the Department of Economic Development and Transportation for the last four or five months now.

Hopefully, the carvers who need the soapstone will be assisted through the new Carving Stone Strategy that we are developing. Once this strategy is developed, it will be presented.

I want to be able to make the improvements needed and my predecessor did a good job in setting the groundwork in this within the department, and I want to be able to continue on that role. Carvers want to be able to access soapstone and we want to be able to market the carvings and artists globally.

I will definitely work hard on that strategy and will try and complete it over the next few months.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Akesuk. Mr. Alagalak

**Mr. Alagalak:** Thank you. I think I have the most questions to ask. I am sure the other members are short of questions now. Thank you. I have one more question.

Carvers in our region don't always have the opportunity to access ivory to carve with and are envious of the other regions within Nunavut where Ivory is a lot more abundant. Carvings made out of Ivory are sold for a lot more than those carved out of antler.

I wonder if there can be trade within communities, where one community who may have a lot of ivory can sell it to the government who in turn would provide it to the carvers who can not access Ivory or can not afford it. Perhaps a Carvers and Artists Association can be set up through the government as a way of dealing with this. I wonder if you can



initiate this because it would be very interesting if our government can assist the carvers within the communities who need this kind of help.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Alagalak.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association would be willing to work with us on this because they represent quite a number of artists. They have a better understanding of the situation out there and can better advise us on how we can best structure our assistance. We will definitely look into this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would also like to thank Mr. Alagalak for posting these questions. We have Mr. Arreak next.

**Mr Arreak:** For quite a number of years I have been asking questions in regard to housing. There was a change in the housing rental rates. Usually the way it is fixed is that the rental rates would be fixed according to the income of the individual. We have been hearing for many, many years that there was going to be a change in the rental scales.

Is that going to be the case, and when is it going to be? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was a change recently. I'm sure that it was beneficial to the people who rented units from the Nunavut Housing Corporation. The operation and maintenance of these units are rising every year. In order to make sure that we operate this correctly we didn't want to keep hiking up the rent scales, but we will be doing a review on what kind of impact it has had since there was changes to the rental scales about two years ago. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Akesuk. Mr. Arreak.

**Mr. Arreak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The rent scales are not the only ones that are going up; there are the food prices that are going up and other expenses that are on the rise constantly, and it is costing hardship to the individuals who are renting these units. To supplement Mr. Alagalak's comments, it is creating hardship on the individuals.

My next question is in regard to the sealskins that are sold in my riding. There was a case where the prices were going to go down, and there seems to be less demand for sealskins around the world. What's going to be happening in this case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. I want to remind members to please make sure that you keep to the point when you're asking your questions for clarity. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the seal pelts that are sold in Canada, to date each pelt costs approximately \$80 to \$100. I believe we sold about 6,500 from Nunavut alone. This program is going very well.

The Greenlanders are saying that they are willing to buy seal pelts from Canada. There has been the Greenpeace movement and we do get correspondence from around the world, but we are just going to keep this program going. We are going to make sure that there is a market out there and to keep the prices up for our people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Please be patient. I would like to thank you Mr. Arreak for asking your questions. Joe Allen Evyagotailak.

**Mr. Evyagotailak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask a question to the Minister of Housing. First of all, this was brought up to me not long ago, just recently that some of my constituents are having a hard time getting grants to upgrade their HAPs because during the time, when we got our HAP house, we were told by the government after five years you can get a grant to upgrade your house.

After five years they tried, tried, and tried every year and never received anything until after ten years. After ten years they finally said, "I wonder if they're just putting applications in file 13 and not getting them to the right people." So I looked into it and I had to call one of your staff I guess. It might have been you too. I'm just wondering if the minister is looking into these to make it a lot better for people who are in HAP houses and also access houses, to get better treatment than their files being put in file 13.

I'm just wondering if the minister is looking into making it better for our people. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's important that we have our funds more accessible to the people that need it and I'm going to do my very best to make sure that we succeed in the barriers that we have towards our programs.

Again, it's very important that we, as government, make sure that our constituents are properly managed, or properly informed so that it's easier for them to access these programs. Certainly, I'll look into it in the next couple of years to see how we could make these programs more accessible to our people in Nunavut who own their own houses, or who are going to own their own houses.

I think it's important that we do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Evyagotailak.

**Mr. Evyagotailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. This is really important to a lot of people in Nunavut who have HAP and also access houses. We all know that some of the clients got grants for over \$50,000 and some never get anything for a long time.

So I'm glad that you're going to be looking into it to make sure that that money is spread out rather than giving it one person only because I think right in the beginning we all mentioned we are all going to work together and try and make things a lot better for Nunavummiut.

My other question is on the point system for people who are applying for a house. The young people who are applying for a house often come up to us and ask why the housing goes through a point system.

When they get so many points, the ones who have the most points get a house. Some of them wait for 20 years and are still on a point system. Some of the new applicants would get a house before these people who have applied 20 years ago.

I think you, as the minister, if you're going to be holding this portfolio for another two years, look into it and try and make it a lot better for the people who are applying and make it fair for everybody so that nobody...maybe the board of directors or the staff is favouring their relatives.

I'm not sure how it goes, but that's what constituents often think that maybe it's because their relatives are being favoured or looked after first. That is what usually comes to us from our constituents.

As the minister who will be holding the portfolio for a couple more years to look into it, and I am going to ask this question: have you been directing your staff to make sure that the point system is used properly rather than favouring other applicants? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we will do that. We will work closely with the local housing authorities. They are the people that appoints who is going to be in which house and I think it is important that we work very closely with them to make sure that we equally respect our clients the same way as any other clients and not favourably going to their relatives or the Chairman's son or daughter.

So we are going to do our very best to make sure that we work closely with the Nunavut Local Housing Authority and if we have staff in decentralized departments. I think it's important that we learn each other how we could do better on the point system for our people in Nunavut. Maybe the best way to do it is to have a big conference between the housing authorities of Nunavut on how we could improve this point system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Evyagotailak.

**Mr. Evyagotailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again to the minister. One of my colleagues had mentioned about fisheries. My question to the minister is: are there any training programs that will be going towards the other communities or regions to do diving because I have heard that there was training going on in Qikiqtaaluk; I am not sure in which community. Is there going to be further training in some regions to do some diving because some of us are interested in diving to check to see what kind of seafood there is in parts of our ocean. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Mr. Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Broughton Island or Qikiqtarjuaq is a perfect example because they do diving out there. We will do a review on what they have been doing and how they went about it to do provide diving programs.

It would be very beneficial if those types of programs were made available to the communities. I believe Qikiqtarjuaq is the only one that has such a program. It would be very beneficial to the other communities.

We will see how they went about it and see if there is funding available. There are the hunters and trappers organizations that we can work with and we would support it fully as a government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Evyagotailak.

**Mr. Evyagotailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister again. When I get back home to my community, I will talk to hunters and trappers to try and get the training within our community or region because some of the guys are interested in learning how to dive. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. I apologize, that was not a question. The next member is for Sanikiluaq, Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Economic development in the communities can be used to provide economic spin off's for the community, but the community economic development officers are not being supported enough by the government. Their pay is low and so they cannot afford to buy groceries for their families. The community economic development officers should be given better support.

Although they are under the umbrella of the municipalities, these municipalities do not have the full authority for these positions to make such changes and so it is your department that should do more in providing the support that is needed for these officers.

How do you view or see their role within the community as the minister? Will you provide more leadership to the community economic development officers so that more economic opportunities are developed at the community level? Do you see yourself as the minister for the next two years as the leader for the community economic development officers? Thank you

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Mr. Akesuk

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The municipalities are contracted out to take on the responsibility of the community economic development officers. There is a training program that is delivered annually in all of the three regions. Twice a year the officers meet to discuss these kinds of issues and what kinds of economic development opportunities are available in the community.

It can take two to four years to see the spin-offs when you run your own private business. We try to see the applications for business to go through, and we do like to work closely with them during the application process as a government for the next two years that we do want to work closely with them. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Akesuk. Any further questions Mr. Kattuk?

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): No thanks.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Member Kattuk. At this time, we shall move on to the High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time I would like to welcome Minister Akesuk to the witness table. While you are down there, I would like to ask you...my colleague Mr. Arreak has touched on this issue as well. It's evident now, especially in my home community, outfitters are only employed seasonally, and so for one month out of the year they make money. When their income tax return is filled out, an assessment is made, and then the housing association increases their rent according to the salary of the individuals. We are starting to see a lot of debts because of this.

How do you, as the minister, going to resolve this issue? This issue is creating a lot of problems for individuals and problems sometimes arise especially when they cannot get into unit because they owe money. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the amount of money that the individual made in one month for the whole year is not what should be done, I will promise to look into that very carefully and get my staff to review it.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that this is not the first time that we've mentioned this but just needed to mention that again because it has not been resolved yet. I am sure that I will be reminding the minister about the same issue again and I would like to ask on another topic.

As we are always short of funds, as Members of the Legislature know that since your department is always short of funding and some of the programs cannot go ahead, as the Minister of the Housing Corporation and the other portfolios that you hold, how are you going to resolve this? Would you try and request for funding from your colleagues, or would you look for funding from the federal government?

We have limited resources and we have these resources, but they're always limited to the funding available for them. How would you deal with that issue with the other departments? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Every time we meet with FMB I always try to work hard to get our budget and how we can increase the budget during federal/provincial minister's meetings. During these meetings, I try and let the federal counterparts know about the issues and concerns that we face here in Nunavut. I always request for equalization that is along side with the provinces so that we could access funds equally as the other provinces.

The funding that we've received to date from the federal government is quite low, and since I became minister, the other provincial ministers have provided support to us. Since our finances are quite scarce, especially because we can't even touch the federal aboriginal funding. So this is where our barriers are because they have on reserve and off reserve programs.

We discussed how we can work on this better and how we can tap into some of those federal programs. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The government as a whole must identify clear priorities and balance in competing public interests. Sometimes it's evident that as the minister...what does your department do when these kinds of problems occur to direct your staff? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. I think you understood his question. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I constantly work with my staff. My officials are my deputy and assistant deputy minister.

I was asked how we discuss these issues as to how we can best deal with these issues. We approach these issues how we can deal with them for the interest of Nunavut. And also, we try to discuss these matters very clearly and we try not to do it hastily. So, personally, I would suggest this way would be much better. So that's how my relationship is with my deputy ministers. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Barnabas, I think you still have four questions left.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister that he works very closely with NTI and other organizations in regard to housing. The present government has made quite a bit of money available for housing in the north.

So, even though, I would like to ask the minister; it's clear that we're building more duplexes or apartments in the communities. I wonder if his department has considered the families or people with families are not moving to new units because of a shortage of housing. I wonder if the Housing Corporation has considered building single dwelling units instead of duplexes.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): We have considered this after the \$200 million. Maybe in the second or third year we will be constructing single dwelling units from that \$200 million and we will definitely consider single dwelling units from that \$200 million. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. To make sure everybody is clear, I think he was trying to say single dwelling units. Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's clear with your department that there are some things that cannot be done at all within government, even though the ministers might be committed especially when there is a shortage of funding. How do you deal with this? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I try and talk with the Cabinet as to how we can best deal with situations like this. We try and deal with the federal government as to how best we can work with them and the Cabinet.

I would like to hear your recommendations on this. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to go to a different topic other than housing, to the other departments that you are responsible for, regarding economic development.

There are animal rights activists that put a lot of stress and hardships on people who make their living from hunting and from arts and crafts.

If a person is not working and they have to make their living from hunting or arts and crafts, we all have to make a living, how will you address this for the remainder of your two years as the minister? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Akesuk. I didn't fully understand the last part because you were cut off.

**Mr. Barnabas**: (interpretation): That is my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Now I understand. You have one question left. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We especially try to work with developing the sealskin market, we dye sealskins and with commercial fishing and as Mr. Curley stated earlier, there could be some money made with commercial fishing, and I said that I would definitely work hard to find some ways of how we can make money. I try and deal with those if it will benefit the hunters. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Akesuk. Thank you, Mr. Barnabas, for asking questions. Next one is Mr. Arreak.

**Mr. Arreak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one question.

I believe he mentioned that he is responsible under Transportation on the Transportation Strategy, especially with the airlines. It costs a lot to fly and the services are slow. You can fly for one hour or 40 minutes. Sometimes the cost is \$3,000. I wonder if the transportation by airlines can be looked into because there are some families who want to go visit their relatives in other communities.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The prices of the airlines; we can not really do anything about the rates. What we can do is talk with First Air and Canadian North, and I will communicate with those two airlines to see if they can reduce the airfare. We also spend \$500 to 600 to go to Cape Dorset and it's only an hour flight.



It is up to the airline companies, but we can definitely talk with them to see if they can reduce the airfare. We can definitely include this with the Transportation Strategy within Nunavut. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Mr. Arreak.

**Mr. Arreak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's not just the airlines and the cost of it; there have to be improvements made. Yes, we are looking at the rates, but what we see is that in some places, it takes twice as long to go there, but costs a lot less. It is very hard when it takes longer to reach your destination.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, I can definitely look into this.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. I do not have anybody else on my list. Does anybody else have any questions? If there are no more questions, we will take a 10-minute break and then we will be back.

Thank you, Minister Akesuk, for appearing before us. We will go on to a different department once we come back. Thank you.

*>>Meeting recessed 11:10 and resumed at 11:23*

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you for coming back. I'd like to ask Mr. Netser to go to the witness table. Mr. Minister you will have ten minutes to delivery your statement. I'd like to remind the regular members that you may make a statement not exceeding three minutes in response to the minister. Mr. Netser you have up to ten minutes to deliver your statement. Please proceed.

### **Opening Remarks by Minister Netser**

**Hon. Patterk Netser** (interpretation): Thank you. It is very strange to sit at the witness table. It's kind of making me nervous, Mr. Chairman. This is my very first time, and I am happy to be here as you selected me to be part of the Cabinet.

For the past couple of months, since I became the Minister of Environment and the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board I've had quite a learning curve and I would like to thank everybody for their support.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, if I may, I would like to take a few moments of your time to quickly highlight some of the things that I've been involved with at the Department of Environment, and WCB since March 2006, and some of the projects we hope to complete in the coming months.

One of the accomplishments I am most pleased with so far is the success the department has had in developing a plan to utilize funding from the Northern Strategy. With the \$5 million given to the Department of Environment under the Northern Strategy Funding, we have begun work on a number of projects. The projects include:

- Developing an inventory of contaminated sites
- Working with communities to remove empty fuel drums
- Exploring options for recycling
- Developing communication strategies to promote environmental stewardship

We will also be carrying out population surveys of the High Arctic Perry Caribou and the Davis Strait Polar Bear Population. Polar bears remain to be a contentious issue for the department. That is why I am pleased with the efforts that we've made up to date and we'll continue to make and educating people in other parts of the world on the stability and health of the polar bear populations under the protection of this government.

As my colleagues are aware the United States Fish and Wildlife Services is looking at whether or not polar bears should be put in the threatened species list. I want to assure my colleagues that I will do everything within my power to make sure that this doesn't happen, as it is not warranted. I want to assure Nunavummiut that conservation of all species is our priority.

The Department of Environment has made a well-argued submission to the USFWS on the status of our polar bear population, which I will be tabling during this sitting. We've also been proactive in talking to the media about our position on polar bears, including being part of stories published in the Globe and Mail, the National Post, and the New York Times.

Over the past days you've heard through the media that the Committee of the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, that's a coherent group, has designated walrus as a special concern. While the GN has no jurisdiction over walruses, I want to assure Nunavummiut that we will be following up on this issue with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to ensure that Nunavummiut are protected.

Mr. Chairman, from the environmental perspective one of our big goals at this time is to develop a plan to dealing with the end of life vehicles. We are working in conjunction with other departments to complete an implementation strategy for the removal of all vehicles in Nunavut and repatriate them in the south.

As my colleagues know, the *Wildlife Act* was proclaimed into law on July 9, 2005. Regulations under the *Wildlife Act* are near completion. I was hoping to proclaim the regulations on July 9, 2006. However, this will not be possible, as there are still a few outstanding issues with our partners that require attention. I will be holding talks in the near future with all involved in hopes of achieving a positive outcome as soon as possible.

The Harvesters' Support Program review was completed earlier this year. The report identifies a number of areas for improvement of programs and delivery mechanisms. Later in this session I will be tabling the revisions of the Disaster Compensation Program recommended in the review.

Several communities are in line for wildlife officers. Due to high costs of tenders from contractor government could not proceed as planned. I have an encouraging progress on this front as it is of utmost importance to the communities involved, and I understand that progress is being made. Conservation officers are very important in Nunavut communities. That is why we hope to increase the number of officers in the future, with the majority of the positions being filled by well-trained beneficiaries.

To date, we have three Nunavummiut well on their way through a customized training program within the department.

As minister I have been very pleased to learn about how the Workers' Compensation Board works. While WCB is a non-strength organization, that does not receive any operating funding from the Government of Nunavut, it does play a very important role in protecting the welfare of our employees from a health and safety perspective, as well as in the case of accidents, which sometimes happen in the work place.

I will be tabling the annual report for 2005 as soon as it's available, hopefully before the House rises from this session.

Finally, as I promised in the end of March that during the lead up to my election as minister, I will also strive to make sure that all communities, especially non-decentralized communities share in government employment opportunities.

Mr. Chairman, colleagues, I'm sure we have many challenges ahead of us in this coming year, however I'm positive that I can provide the necessary leadership as a member of the executive council coupled with the hard work of the dedicated staff I'll move forward in a positive and productive manner to handle these challenges. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. I'd like to remind the members that regular members may make a statement not exceeding three minutes in response to the minister. Do any of the regular members wish to make a statement? Thank you. Mr. Curley.

### **Members' Replies to Minister Netser's Opening Remarks**

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to welcome Mr. Netser.

First of all, I would like to make a few comments on the opening remarks that you just made. The Inuit are looking forward to hearing on the issues of wildlife and environment.

Your department is not just to give support, but we do have to look at the environment and global warming.

Some of us don't mind if it gets a little bit warmer in some of the communities because it's pretty cold over here in the winter and it's very hard to keep up with heating bills and so, a few degrees warmer. It's perfectly fine with some of us.

There are quite a number of people I think who have that same view. There is also wildlife like seals and walrus that enjoy the sunshine. These are just a few comments. But as Inuit, we should just be making responses for the future.

We, as Inuit, and with Inuit traditional values should be directing your department to implement *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, and you could also be using Inuit as advisors in regard to wildlife and to the environment, and also to the wildlife population.

But in the Inuit lifestyle, the wildlife that we do utilize, and for some of us, we used to harvest a lot more wildlife than today. We used to harvest any wildlife that was out there, walrus included. In fact, just our family alone used to get about 100 walruses over that season because we also had to feed not only the family, but the dogs who had very large consumption.

We hunted year round, and I think it's up to your department to document what used to be in the past, not just for the information of the people out there. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. I have no other names on my list. I apologize. Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to make a few comments on the issue of environment and wildlife.

Possibly, what I could start out with is I remember my grandmother saying that they had traditional laws or common laws for everything, including wildlife, the environment, the lifestyle of the people, orphans and anything touching on the lifestyle of the people.

We did not have to worry about contaminants in the environments, but it is totally in today's lifestyle. We have issues or concerns in regard to the environment and also to the wildlife. They Government of Nunavut or you, as the Minister of Environment will have to deal with this and I do agree with you completely in the comments that you made in your opening.

We have our own government now and I think it is up to us to make sure that the people out there or the world out there knows exactly where we are. We want an environment that is contaminant free, we want our wildlife to be contaminant free. We do not farm animals, we harvest wildlife and it has been our diet in the past. It is still going to be diet in the future. So it is very important that we deal with the environmental and wildlife issues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. I have no other names on my list. Would any other members like to make opening comments? Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Department of Environment and Wildlife, you know you look at one of the biggest issues that are going face us in our lifetime and in our children's lifetime is global warming.

I would like to see the minister and his department take a very proactive approach to trying to tackle it and document the negative affects of global warming they will have on Nunavummiut.

I think that is something that we cannot afford to overlook and just let pass because it could destroy our way of life that we have lived by for thousands of years, and it will affect the animals and hunters.

We see in instances now that down the bay it is open not that far down already. I have seen people that go out and go where they usually go and end going through the ice because of different issues like that.

It is something that we cannot afford to not try and tackle head on and be looking for the minister and the department to again be very proactive and work with the federal colleagues to try and address some of those issues.

This will be affecting us more here more than anyone else who lives in Southern Canada or in the United States. It will not have a big impact on them; it will have a big impact on us first. I think that is something that I have been looking for the department to pursue over the remainder of our term. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Next we have Mr. Arreak.

**Mr. Arreak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to also thank and welcome Mr. Netser. Under the minister's portfolio, we are very much affected by the condition of the environment and the wildlife. It is something that's very close to us.

Usually, if there's going to be any changes in the environment or in the weather, the people from the north are the ones who feel the impact first of all before anybody else notices. They also notice whether there is a decline or an increase in any species' population. We've been told that the ivory gull population is decreasing. We're the first ones to feel the impact. We're the first ones to see the increases and the decreases in the wildlife population.

Some of the Inuit are very knowledgeable; especially the elders are very knowledgeable about the wildlife and their habits. I think that we have to start utilizing the elders more so that species that are found be abnormal by the elders can be studied. I think we have to

utilize our elders more. There are questions out there about why we don't utilize elders enough in regard to the environment and wildlife.

I am very proud of the minister for doing work around my community and in the remediation sites around our community.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. I have no other names on my list. I am asking the regular members if they have any general comments. Since there are no other names on my list and I would also like to remind the members that you're going to be limited in the number of questions that you're going to ask. Are there any questions? Mr. Curley.

### Questions to Minister Netser

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In reference to the opening comments that you made, on something that I was very pleased about was in regard to the walrus and the threatened species that you mentioned in your opening comments. In your capacity as the minister you stated that you would be working extremely hard to make sure that those are dealt with.

As you know, we don't have anything written. As an oral society, it has impacted us because we don't have anything documented in regard to wildlife and so on. When we do have concerns we tell the government this or that department, or that agency is responsible for that so we just leave it at that. We have to document what used to be in the past. We should be asking the elders before they die off on wildlife why there has been a decrease, or an increase, and what has had happened over the years.

I do know that the walrus is not a threatened species through hunting. As the scientists are saying that due to over-hunting, the walrus population is depleting. So I tried to respond to them right away and told them that we do not over-hunt as we don't have any dogs, since the fur trade is down, and snowmobiles don't eat wildlife.

With that, using your mandate and your responsibility, is it possible for your department to put a database together?

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Netser.

**Hon. Patterk Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, when you're on the other side listening to the regular members we would like to continue listening to them because they came up with very wise suggestions and we learned a great deal from this side, and I agree with my colleague in regard to this, perhaps we should.

We traveled to Repulse Bay through North of Coral Harbour and we had seen many polar bears and walrus on our way there. So I believe that words of Inuit and I believe in their knowledge. I, too, am a hunter and I, too, believe that they're not decreasing in population. So I could work on his suggestions that he suggested.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you. My questions are depleting. I believe that we need to get that because we don't have enough adequate information from our Inuit people and this is inadequate.

Sometimes when we talk about this, sometimes the public people believe us that we're just complaining. So these are the wildlife species such as walrus, seals, caribou, we need database on that in Inuktitut when all of our elders pass away, for those of us who are a younger generation will have some proof and the scientists will be able to believe us. So we need that information with our database and I would like to thank you for that.

And secondly, as the minister, I wish you well and I wish you to proceed well and I hope as the minister, you continue to work hard on such issues that you mentioned earlier like sports hunting, caribou harvesting and commercial hunting.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Netser.

**Hon. Patterk Netser** (interpretation): Commercial caribou harvesting is quite difficult to deal with. I think he's talking about commercial caribou harvesting in Coral Harbour. This is also the request of Coral Harbour and that's my constituency, and I would like to see the commercial caribou to go ahead.

I believe the operation needs to be improved because the current operation is not properly set up. Perhaps that's why there had been requests coming from the public to improve the operation of the commercial caribou harvesting. As the minister responsible for that, I would like to see this go ahead as Minister Akesuk said that he would like to work closely with me and I, too, would like to work closely with Minister Akesuk so that commercial caribou harvesting can go well.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): I want some help, perhaps I had asked the question but he didn't respond to the question. Perhaps some of the market will be stopped. So I would like that to respond.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. It won't be counted as your question. Mr. Netser if you can respond.

**Hon. Patterk Netser** (interpretation): I would like to see commercial caribou continue, but I believe that this needs to be improved. Minister Akesuk said that he would like to work closely with me and I, too, would like to work closely on that. I cannot go beyond that.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): My next question will be...employees from Coal Harbour; the quota is not just for Coal Harbour. Some of the communities get the quota and that's how they need to help each other to market.

The managers for 2006 have operated for the best time. Three or four years ago it was not operating well, Revenue Canada...taxes were not deducted and the group was mismanaged. That is not the case now.

If the minister is stating...(interpretation ends)...don't shut the operation down until something better comes up. (interpretation) Quota and markets of Coal harbour and Rankin Inlet benefit from that. In Rankin Inlet there's over \$200,000 worth of wages. In Coal Harbour those 45-70 people should not be stopped. Before we find anything better, if the whole operation is stopped, I believe that it's going to create problems by the people.

So without stopping that, continue the operation and do a comprehensive review. I believe that it would be better that way. Would you be able to do that?

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Nester.

**Hon. Patterk Netser**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I will commit to the member that until we find a better solution to how the harvest is operated, then I will do everything in my power to make sure that the harvest is continued. I want to make it clear that we will do what is best for both communities, not just one community. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Minister Nester. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you. Since this is an accountability session, and for the quota operation, if I talk about Pangnirtung and if I say there will be no fishing in one year until we find a better system or before the study is completed, for example, if Pangnirtung Fisheries stops, if the minister states it would not be good because that's not the actual practice because the economic impact would be quite scary. They will not be able to get unemployment insurance and they will not be able to get their wages.

They have fewer talks; would not go ahead. Economic studies and market studies don't necessarily have to go through that. As a minister, if the minister states that we would ask the minister to step down, if you ever considered that.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. If you understand his question, Minister Netser, go ahead.

**Hon. Patterk Netser**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I didn't understand his question, maybe (interpretation ends) he can rephrase his question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Curley, can you please rephrase your question.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): I could say if there was someone requesting to stop, a few staff or employees, or perhaps, maybe due to being stingy because when there's no economic study, there is no community negative impact. They stop working until they come up with a better solution. If the government does that, I don't believe it's a responsible government response.

Wouldn't it be better for you as minister to step down rather than do that? Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. I think that's clear. Minister Netser.

**Hon. Patterk Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to caribou harvesting, many people don't look at it as a whole. As an individual from Coral Harbour you look at it from different side.

I would want to resign if it's not going to operate smoothly. I would like to ask the member: would you like to go to Coral Harbour to ask questions to Coral Harbour residents to see what kinds of difficulties they face in regard to harvesting caribou commercially? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. I will remind my colleagues that this opportunity that we now have is for regular members to ask questions of the ministers. And, the issue at hand I know is one with a lot of details and in depth information that we may not have available to us at the immediate time.

So in respect of that I will ask that the issues and details of the matter we were discussing from both sides of the party be carried in and out of the assembly unless we have further questions to the minister from the member that have not been responded to.

So with that, Mr. Curley, you have one more question available to you.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I were invited, I would attend a public meeting whether it is with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss these matters. I would attend.

For when I'm no longer employed and also the Nunavut caribou quota (interpretation ends) doesn't belong to one community. They benefit the whole territory. So, in that regard Mr. Chairman, my last question is, I have a copy with the minister's hand, for the operational plan for the next two to three years that was agreed to with the community, and the current markets that they have.

So I'm asking the minister: will that plan that was agreed to remain for at least another year or so until the new agreement to operate the caribou commercial harvest continue? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Netser.

**Hon. Patterk Netser:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. That's one of the clearest responses we've had yet. Thank you. I have no more names with questions for the minister. I will ask one last time; do any members have any more questions for the minister at the witness table?

There being none, thank you Mr. Netser. You may proceed back to your chair. Members, the Nunavut Leadership Forum has now concluded with the statements by ministers and questions from members.

The next item on our agenda is a recess. The forum will reconvene at 1:30, at which point each regular member will have the opportunity to offer closing remarks on the deliberations of this week.

Members are notified of a meeting of the full caucus and a meeting of the standing committee on Health and Education for this afternoon. Times will be announced at the conclusion of the leadership forum.

So the forum is now in recess until 1:30. Thank you very much.

*>>Meeting recessed at 12:00 and resumed at 13:27*

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, members, for returning. We're on Item 7. Closing Remarks by Regular Members. You have up to three minutes to make your closing remarks. Is there anybody? Mr. Alagalak.

### **Closing Remarks by Members**

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): I didn't even let you finish. I am very happy that we will benefit from this forum and that all the ministers participated in appearing at the witness table.

We all know what needs to be done, and what has to be done. There are questions that arise from our communities and we trust that you will work harder for the duration of your term as members of the Legislative Assembly.

What we wish to see in Nunavut and for our communities, when we were elected we agreed to work for the people and they put their trust in us, and so, I will be expecting the things that you have forgotten about that were brought up again, and we are hopeful, and I'm pretty sure that you will work to take a step forward.

We all know that, so for that reason I wanted to say that because we're not hiding anything. We don't have anything to be ashamed of because those things have to be dealt

with. I trust that we will work hard and you will work hard to do your job. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. I don't have anybody else on my list for closing remarks. Mr. Curley.

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): I'm sure there was a bit of anticipation for this forum, but we've passed it and the ministers are open if the communities ask them.

I would like to remind the ministers that if they are asked by the community to come and visit the communities, then I would urge you to do so. Organizations or groups are anxious to meet with you and Nunavummiut would be so happy to meet with you. If you go on the local radio's or meet and speak with the elders.

When Aglukkaq first became the Minister of Health and Social Services, she was asked if she could come over to an elders' home because she couldn't walk anymore. Don't just wait to be invited, but make an initiative to go and visit communities even without being asked because you are hard working and we wish you best of luck for the remainder of your terms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Next one is Mr. Arreak.

**Mr. Arreak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We know that the people who elected us are proud of us and they are proud especially of the ministers of this House, not only are they proud but they also believe in what we are doing. Nunavummiut want the government to go and visit Nunavut communities. Many Nunavummiut view the ministers as their bosses. If you go into the communities, then the public will have a better understanding of the role of the minister and create a more open relationship with the public.

I was very happy to hear from the Premier that the deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers must be fluent in Inuktitut by 2008. If I'm re-elected by 2008, this is what I would want to see by that time, not just for the deputy minister or assistant deputy minister to be able to speak Inuktitut, but also the ministers so that they can have a closer working relationship with the people, and I expect to see that in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Next one is Mr. Joe Allen Evyagotailak.

**Mr. Evyagotailak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is very good to have all of this midterm review. It is almost like cleaning your ears.

I'm sure that a lot of people who are watching think that's what it is because they need ways of everybody and that is the best way to tune everybody up so that we all can work together because I remember at the beginning of our elections, in our first meeting I

remember we all said that we have to work together towards a better Nunavut, to make better things for all Nunavummiut, not only our communities.

As ministers across the House, you guys have to try and help all the communities, not only your communities because you are put there from the whole of Nunavut and that's the only way to do it: work for everybody and not just your community, but for the whole of Nunavut and try and make it a lot better. That's the best way to do it.

Otherwise, when you are not working for the whole of Nunavut or our constituents saying that they are just favouring their communities and you know, that's when our constituents start raising their voice to us on this side of the table. Then we have to in return bring it back here in the House. So that's how it works. So lets all work together to try and help shape up Nunavummiut and help Nunavummiut out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. I do not have anybody else on my list for closing remarks. Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the ministers and the Premier for all being here this week and taking the time to answer our questions and respond to issues and challenges that have been thrown our way in the last two years.

At the start of this hearing, or exercise, I didn't know what to expect. I think after two and a half days, I can conclude in my mind that it has been a good opportunity for me on behalf of my constituents; I got a chance to find out from the Premier and from the ministers, they know and understand their departmental responsibilities. I think that they do.

I had a chance, not with all ministers, but I had a chance...I ran out of questions unfortunately for Mr. Netser, I didn't get a chance to ask him this morning. I think they understand the challenges ahead for the next two years; challenging issues that confront our government, all Nunavummiut, and MLAs. It's going to be a very difficult period for us. I think we are at a critical juncture in our term as ministers and MLAs and we have to work together and support each other to improve upon what we have already been able to do this far.

I think it is important for the ministers that they listen to the regular MLAs and to Nunavummiut. I often hear from my constituents that they think the ministers don't listen. I believe that ministers do, it's just that they are so busy. Sometimes travel gets in the way, there are 25 communities that you have to listen to. Then there are all of the meetings in Ottawa and across Canada.

I brought this up with the Premier. I think the ministers and the Premier have to work even harder to bring the Kitikmeot in and make them feel apart of Nunavut. I would like

to see the ministers travel more to the Kitikmeot region. I think that some of my colleagues said, "Get out there, you don't need to be invited." I appreciate the ministers who have made a very serious effort to come to the Kitikmeot already.

I brought this up to several ministers and the Premier. You know Ottawa is very important to us. I think you have to continue to work hard in Ottawa to lobby for help in Nunavut. Don't be ashamed to ask for help on behalf of Nunavummiut. It's very important that Ottawa understands our great needs up here.

And in closing, I know that we put the ministers on the hot seat, but through them, we have also have put the Government of Nunavut employees on the hot seat to some extent. I would like to thank the Government of Nunavut employees for their hard work to date and I encourage them to continue the hard work on behalf of Nunavummiut and to support all the ministers on behalf of the Legislative Assembly to make this a better territory to live in. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Next we have Mr. Barnabas.

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also would like to thank the ministers for responding to the many questions that we pose to them. As regular MLAs we keep asking the same questions over and over again because that's what our constituents want.

When we had the government in Yellowknife they wouldn't have a Leadership Forum but they would visit the communities to figure out what they need in the communities. What I'm urging the ministers to do is collectively go to the communities to see firsthand what they need and what the hardships that we are going through in different communities. That really opens your eyes when you actually see something; when you actually go to the communities.

Even though we will keep corresponding and raising our concerns, it would still be beneficial for the ministers to visit the communities because in some cases, some communities are way behind in infrastructure, and some communities are more advanced.

Non-decentralized communities especially their assets or properties are not being renewed. We're going to try and split \$5 million for the non-decentralized communities; maybe it can build one community centre.

For that reason, as a group, I encourage you to visit the communities to make sure that they are not left behind because when we try to split the money between the communities, it's too small. I know that within your department you have to prioritize different things. I just wanted to mention that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

**Chairman** (Interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. I have no other names on my list. This is your last call. Mr. Tootoo.

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could probably use one word to sum up this moment of the week; it is probably, relief. I think all members on both sides of the House are relieved that this is done. This is a process that I think we need to continue to do this for the future; we need to take a look at it and format. It is called a Leadership Forum, or Leadership Review. I think that lead to some expectations by the public and by the members that didn't really pan out that way. I think we should take a look at it for the future and maybe look at changing the name, or calling it something else, or if it's even required.

I know that it's been three days that we've been here. I'd like to ask you Mr. Chairman if you could provide in the House at the earliest opportunity the costs involved in this process so that we can have an idea of what it cost for us to do this.

As far as the Leadership Review, I think for myself, I'm going to reserve my judgment for now, not ruling out and bringing forward or entertaining a motion, we'll have to wait.

I really think for our benefit, for the future Assembly's benefit and for the benefit of the public, to avoid confusion, that this whole process should be looked at a little more thoroughly to determine one; if it's necessary, and two; whether it should be in this format, or a different more appropriate format in the future.

So with that, I thank everyone for participating although we really didn't have much choice. With that, that's it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. I think the costing of the review will be done anyway, so that will be provided.

I did succeed in getting a couple more names. With that, I would like to recognize Mr. Mapsalak.

**Mr. Mapsalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Cabinet for being involved in this Leadership Forum. As of course we all work very hard to properly represent the people in our constituencies, and since this is not the first election, or this is not the first position that I've held, I do know that it's very hard to make something of substance in only one year.

You have to wait at least a few years in order to see the results of the work that you have done and I do know that you work extremely hard to properly represent the people of Nunavut, and also the communities in the territory.

I know that we can't show results over night. Also, one of the things that we worked extremely hard on, and keep urging the government on is the non-decentralized communities, the have not communities.

I'm very pleased that we're starting to see results, and something of substance going into the smaller non-decentralized communities. I'm sure that there is going improvement over the years so that all of the Nunavut communities benefit.

We have to focus on the communities that have the highest unemployment and so on. It is something that I will keep working for, and during this leadership forum I didn't ask very many questions.

I think I asked two or three questions during the three days because of course we would have other opportunities to question the ministers during question period and through other avenues.

We will continue to focus on the communities that we represent. I will leave it at that, and I would like to thank the ministers for responding to our questions during that time. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. The last person on my list is Mr. Kattuk.

**Mr. Kattuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I want to state that back in November and I am sure that since November, we grew many more grey hairs, but I'm glad that we've gotten over it.

The public has concerns in regard to the minister's work, but next week perhaps when we sit during the session I think one hour will be too long to ask all questions. Perhaps we have to shorten the Oral Question Period because the regular members have stated all their concerns during the Nunavut Leadership Forum to the ministers. I am sure that the Cabinet members will be looking into the issues that they've just heard.

So please keep the concerns that we had and don't just forget about them because we did not create those questions; those questions were coming from the people that we represent. We are representative of the people.

Please take our comments very seriously. We've been reminded about not being worried about what you have heard this week. Just consider them very well and take them as constructive criticism. For that reason, I would like to thank all my colleagues for making their very good statements. Thank you.

>>*Applause*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Those were very good comments, members, for the closing of this session. I have no more names on my list I hereby adjourn this meeting of the Nunavut Leadership Forum.

Before we leave, please note that a meeting of the full caucus will take place at 3 p.m. today in the Nanuq Boardroom, at which time a time for the meeting of the Standing Committee of Health and Education for today, later today, will be announced after the full caucus meeting.

With that, thank you very much, and the meeting is adjourned.

>>*Applause*

>>*Meeting adjourned at 13:52*



