



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

**Nunavut Leadership Forum:
Election of the Speaker, Premier and Ministers**

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Nunavut Leadership Forum**

November 18, 2025

Members Present:

Gwen Healey Akearok, David Akeeagok, Hannah Angootealuk, Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, George Hickes, David Joanasie, Jamie Kablutsiak, Gordon Kautuk, Simon Kuliktana, Brian Koonoo, Cecile Nelvana Lyall, John Main, Johnny Mike, Fred Pedersen, David Porter, Abraham Qammaniq, Daniel Qavvik, Craig Simailak, Alexander Sammurtok, Steven Taqtu, Annie Tattuinee

>> *Meeting commenced at 10:00*

Opening Prayer

Clerk (Mr. Stephen Innuksuk) (interpretation): Putting together the ballots. Please be patient. We'll take a brief break while put together the ballots.

(interpretation) Good morning. We can proceed with the meeting. We will call this meeting of the Nunavut Leadership Forum. And before we proceed I would like to ask the Member for Baker Lake to lead us in prayer.

>> *Prayer*

Adoption of Agenda

Clerk (interpretation): I will be chairing the meeting, the Nunavut Leadership Forum for the selection of the premier, speaker, and members of the Executive Council. All members have copies of the procedures for the leadership selection process. Do you agree to adopt the agenda?

Some Members: Agreed.

Nominations for Speaker

Clerk: I open the floor now for nominations for the position of speaker. Member Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I nominate the Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Clerk (interpretation): Member Joanasie, do you agree? Do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, I do.

Clerk (interpretation): Any other nominations for the position of speaker? Mr. Koonoo.

Mr. Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to nominate Simon Kuliktana for the position of speaker. Thank you.

Clerk (interpretation): Mr. Kuliktana, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Kuliktana (interpretation): I do.

Clerk (interpretation): Thank you. We have given out the ballots for the position of speaker. You can now proceed with any other nominations (indiscernible) from over there. Go ahead, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate Abraham Qammaniq for the position of speaker. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Clerk: Mr. Qammaniq, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Yes, I accept. Thank you.

Clerk (interpretation): Are there any other nominations for the position of speaker?

I believe that's it for nominations. We will be putting together the ballots. Please be patient. We'll take a brief break while we put together the ballots.

Thank you. We will be going to count the ballots and we will take a brief break.

>>Meeting recessed at 10:16 and resumed at 10:24

Election of Speaker

Clerk (interpretation): Thank you. We are resuming our meeting. Right now in the count of your ballots I can now say that the new Speaker-elect is Mr. Joanasie. If you can come forward.

>>Applause

Clerk: At its first sitting to confirm the selection, I will ask for the ballots to be destroyed. (interpretation) The ballots will be destroyed and now I give the chair to the newly elected speaker. Mr. Joanasie, if you can come forward.

>> *Applause*

Chairman (Mr. David Joanasie) (interpretation): Thank you. Good morning. I would like to take this opportunity first, to thank those who just ran for the speaker and also I would like to thank Ms. Brewster.

Nunavummiut, welcome. This meeting is a very important occasion, and today we are live in Nunavut on TV and internet. As Speaker-elect, I am pleased now to open the floor now to nominations for the position of premier.

I remind members that if you are nominated you must immediately accept or decline the nomination. Thank you. I now open the floor for premier nomination. MLA Sammurtok.

Nominations for Premier

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to nominate John Main for premiership.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. MLA Main, do you accept?

Mr. Main (interpretation): Yes, Mr. Chair, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. MLA Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to nominate David Akeeagok.

Chairman (interpretation): MLA Akeeagok, do you accept?

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, newly elected Speaker. Yes, I accept, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Nominations for premiership. Any more nominations? The two individuals have agreed. I believe there's no more names being called. Thank you, MLAs.

The nominations are now closed and the two individuals nominated for premiership will have an opportunity to give their speech for 20 minutes. Based on the alphabetical order, the first to speak for premiership, Iqaluit-Niaqunngu MLAs. My apologies. I will have to

practise with the buttons here. Perhaps if you can go to the witness table for your speech, Mr. Akeeagok.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you at this time I would like to welcome those visiting the legislature in the gallery. Everyone in Nunavut is welcome to our sittings. Mr. Akeeagok, you have now the floor to give your 20-minute speech.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you newly elected Speaker, and I congratulate you in the election to your role, an important role. I know you will work hard in your capacity.

I would like to thank more than 50 people who put their names forward to represent Nunavummiut. We are now 20 of us here who were elected; 21 to the House, and I hopefully anticipate that after the election in Aggu a newly elected MLA will be coming here.

I would like to thank the Member for Cambridge Bay for nominating me for premiership. I humbly and gratefully accept the nomination to serve as premier.

Nunavut was built by strong and visionary Inuit, and it has been our responsibility to carry out that vision forward. And we have to be committed totally as elected members using the strength of Inuit and do diligent work on our responsibilities. As a proud Inuk I have devoted my life to the Nunavut dream, and I believe deeply that representation is not only important, it is essential.

I have had the honour of representing the residents of Quttiktuq for two year terms, and it is deeply humbling now to represent the people of Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu in this 7th Legislative Assembly. Thank you to those who elected me.

Those coming from communities who have asked me that I should run for premiership and I totally accept this. Only through commitment can we do our work. We have to go through these election processes towards that. I would also like to acknowledge my colleague who will be running for this position.

You will decide who should be the premier and whoever we may vote for, we have to be committed. And I would like to join my colleague and I'm proud of you that you also want to run for this position. We have to be committed totally to this position.

Growing up in Canada's most in the morning northerly community, I wanted to understand how government worked. I joined the public service in the front lines, and over the years worked my way up to deputy minister and a chief negotiator towards devolution. I learned much from these, and I'm committed to be nominated for this position.

With the support of my family, I'm always full of gratitude, and sometimes you're in a challenging but rewarding situation. But it is what I have always wanted, to help the people of this great territory.

I have always been committed since I was young, and if, I'm going to work hard, it's to work hard for the Nunavummiut. And I'm totally committed to it.

(interpretation ends) Over the years I have formed so very strong working relationships with my cabinet colleagues, Inuit organizations, federal, provincial, territorial ministers, international colleagues, hamlet mayors and councils, and I have visited multiple times to our communities and I look forward to visiting those communities again, and continue to work together because in order for us to succeed you need a very strong voice and that voice needs to be one together, and work with each and of one of those. And let's not forget our media friends that will be promoting our, the way we're conducting ourselves here.

Nunavut was created so Nunavummiut could guide and control our own government. That dream has been taking shape, and we're on the right path. Inuit working for the government represents over 1,900 today, and we need a lot more. We need every able Inuk to participate, work, contribute, and to run programs and services that keep our territory strong. Without people we can't succeed at the work that's at task. I will be calling on you to continue in turning this dream into reality.

We may be small in population, but we are very strong and resilient. In reclaiming our identity, we have moved from living independently before colonization to navigating foreign systems and to take back our independence by incorporating Inuit societal values in all levels of government and in our workplace.

Speaker-elect, Nunavut's wealth is our health. A strong healthy territory is essential if we are to contribute fully. Government cannot do this alone. Many of us campaign on the need to improve health, and we must ensure programs and services reach those that are in need the most.

We are losing far too many of our loved ones to addictions, intergenerational trauma, suicide, and health-related illness. Let us work together to build a healthier Nunavut.

An urgent priority is food security. The abrupt end of the federal program without a replacement has left many Nunavummiut vulnerable, particularly as we enter the cold winter months while food prices continue to rise. Our government must quickly act to find immediate relief and long-term solutions with our federal partners.

(interpretation) Housing was a common theme during the campaign. We all heard that we need more housing, and our constituents told us loudly that we really need to do something about it. If I become premier I will concentrate strongly on housing with all of

you. Housing, when it's too crowded, it causes health problems and causes other problems as well. We can mitigate some of these problems with creating more housing and try to provide proper homes for all Nunavummiut and everybody else concerned.

Devolution, long in the making, and very obviously it is now within reach. This Assembly will be tasked with passing the legislation to create positions and make it reality in the 7th Assembly. I'm very, very happy to hear that, so that Nunavummiut can operate independently and about our lands and our waters.

Devolution is not just about mining. It is one of the commitments that we have made and things that we want to do, and we're going to be very proud that our cabinet will finally make decisions for Nunavut in the 7th Assembly to make decisions about our land and our waters. We have been striving for this for a very long time, and it is going to become a reality. We have to work together to create it, and I'm very proud of it.

(interpretation ends) With global changes unfolding, pressures and interests in Arctic sovereignty and security are growing. Because Nunavut spans such a vast region, we are at the centre of attention. We must be at the table for national and international discussions.

The Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated have laid out principles that affirm Inuit as central participants in the decisions affecting this region. The prime minister has started to identify critical infrastructure needs, roads, improved airstrips and better living conditions. We need a premier who will sit with the prime minister and their fellow premiers, and I am ready for that and I will seek your support for this leadership.

(interpretation) Our strength lies in working together, and we're going to have to have partnerships with Inuit organizations, hamlets and other governments, industry, non-profit organizations, and also everyone who shares the vision of a stronger Nunavut. I have worked across our sectors, and I believe the time has come for me to lead as your premier.

(interpretation ends) Legislative committees play a vital role in achieving our mandate, and we can strengthen the roles of regular members in decision making, and I am committed to working closely with you to reinforce our consensus democracy. Regular members should be active participants in shaping legislation, policies, and regulations. I look forward to your input as we develop the government's mandate, a mandate that is not only about responding to challenges, it's about shaping the future.

Over the coming weeks, I will be asking each of you to contribute your ideas so we can reflect them clearly and early as we develop the mandate together.

(interpretation) Today you will choose the premier, and next we will select eight ministers. Looking through this room I see great potential, and I know we're going to do some very good work. I know we have very powerful women and men from young to old. I am ready to work with those that you have selected. We're all different, but we have to come up with agreements, and only you can make this happen. And I ask for your trust. I am deeply committed to serving Nunavummiut with the ministers selected and all members, ensuring that we support one another in our unique roles and the people of Nunavut.

When the ministers are selected all regular members have to work together properly and understand each other and support one another in our unique roles, so that the Nunavut government runs well.

In my past two terms, for the past eight years I have been fortunate to serve as a minister, as a deputy premier for more than three years, and I also held 16 portfolios across eight departments have been part of my responsibilities. I have also taken on acting roles when ministers suddenly have to leave town for different reasons, so I have taken on their roles when needed. These experiences have prepared me and given me the confidence to seek your support as the next premier.

I thank my late parents, who brought me up in the high Arctic. I'm extremely grateful to them. I was just a little boy, and they looked at my adulthood and they brought me up that way. And my wife, as my partner, shares our commitment with our children and grandchildren. And my *sakikuluk*, I can't wait to see her come in.

Our elders in Nunavut and all the people of Nunavut, let's not forget our elders and always thank them and listen properly to what they want.

Everybody in Nunavut, I would like to thank you for electing me to the 7th Assembly. I will be given a mandate by all of you, so I commit myself.

Vote the way you want to vote, and thank you very much for this opportunity. I didn't know I would have this opportunity, and I'm glad to have this opportunity. And thank you for allowing me to speak in front of you. Speaker-elect, thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Member Akeeagok. You may return to your seat. The next candidate can move to the witness table. Member Main, you may start. You may proceed with your speech.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Speaker-elect. I congratulate you as the new speaker.

I'm very glad to take part in the forum this morning, and I'm very grateful that I was elected by Arviatmuit and Qikitaruakmuit. I thank my electors. They wanted me to come here and that's why I'm able to sit here.

My past members in the 6th Assembly, fellow members in the 6th Assembly and the new members, looking at you all this morning, I'm very glad that we have experienced, our veteran members and new members. Our former speaker Akoak used to tell us "welcome to your House," because it is your House. He would tell everybody that came here to be welcomed in their House. The House is owned by everyone in Nunavut.

We have been appointed to represent Nunavummiut in the next four years, and we will all work together to build a path, build a road as to where we want our government to go and all the things that will be occurring in Nunavut. We will create paths for them, and we will have to make decisions as to who the ministers will be, where the money will go, and what priorities that we're going to have and what should we do about the legislation, different kinds of legislation. Let me speak in English.

(interpretation ends) Today we're here for our first set of decisions. Okay, we've chosen a speaker and now we're going to choose a premier. Following that we will choose a cabinet. That's what the next four years is going to be about. It's about decisions. And they are not easy decisions; they are very hard decisions. I'm not going to sugar-coat it. We have limited money. Where do we want to spend it? We have limited time. Where do we want to put it?

Regardless of who is chosen today as premier and to go into cabinet, I want you all to know that I really am hopeful and optimistic as I look at you all in this Assembly. I believe that Nunavummiut have chosen well, in terms of electing you all.

I'm really excited about the next four years. There's some big things coming. Devolution is happening. We have nation-building projects coming. We have a new mine operating in the Kitikmeot. We have major projects happening.

(interpretation) I have been in this House for the past eight years, and I have been thinking about the position of the premier in the past eight years. I have worked with three different premiers. So what is a premier?

(interpretation ends) What is a premier? Here are my thoughts, okay? To be made premier is to be called to serve. To be called to serve Nunavut. The premier is not a king.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Main: The premier is not a dictator. The premier is not a spiritual leader. We have spiritual leaders. The premier is not a visionary expert on everything who can solve all the problems and knows all the answers, okay. Whoever becomes premier, they are going

to need ministers to work alongside them. They are going to need regular members to collaborate with them. They are going to need skilled staff. They can't do it alone. So what is a premier? What is the premier?

Premier is a team leader. The premier is a support to people who need help. The premier is a bridge builder, build bridges outside of government, with Inuit organizations, with the private sector. The premier has to be a communicator. They have to be able to speak. But as a husband I'll say we also need to know how to listen.

(interpretation) Us men many have to be more quiet and listen more.

And while I have the opportunity this morning, I want to talk about where I come from and what I have worked on and also what I have done and worked on in here at the Legislative Assembly and also what my campaigns were.

(interpretation ends) In terms of my background, in a nutshell, I grew up in beautiful Arviat and I can't say, you know, enough good things about my beautiful home community. I went to elementary school and high school in Arviat, graduated in 1998, NWT days, if it sounds a bit old school.

I was very fortunate as a Qallunaat kid to learn Inuktitut from my peers, from the school system, and that has been a skill that has opened a lot of doors for me. I also learned how to hunt and fish in Arviat. I can't say that I'm very good at either, but I do like to try. Following schooling in Arviat I went off to university, got my bachelor's degree in economics and commerce. I attended international business school for a short period of time.

I came back to Arviat. I came back to Nunavut. I was successful in working in a variety of different fields over the years. I worked within the media -- shout out to our friends at CBC and other media organizations. I worked at municipal government. I worked within the Nunavut government. I've worked within an Inuit organization, over in beautiful Kitikmeot. I also worked in private sector for a while as a consultant, self-employed.

And then following that I became an MLA. I worked for four years on this side of the House as a regular member, and I worked for four years on this side of the House as a minister.

And in so looking at the experience I've gained, I feel like I have a balanced perspective. I don't have all the answers, but I do have a perspective that is balanced. I've lived in all three regions of Nunavut.

I've sat on both sides of this House, and I feel that as I sit here as a candidate for premier that the perspective that I've gained on this side of the House as a regular member is one that will never leave me. Regular members always have the balance of power in the

Nunavut Legislative Assembly, and whoever is sitting on this side of the House, premier and cabinet, needs to remember that. And if I was selected as premier that would be something that would stay with me.

(interpretation) I have a wife and we have three children, and they are my foundation. My family is my foundation. I know that we work very hard in the House, and sometimes it's very hard. And I know that there's Nunavummiut, they work very strongly. It also helps us, and I always have my foundation on my wife and my children. I love my, love them.

(interpretation ends) That is a little bit about my background, in terms of what I've done. So the next part of my speech will be about the last eight years here in the House.

When I was a regular member (interpretation) sitting on that side, I was representing for Arviat West, and I worked very hard to be their voice and I became the chair of the regular members council, and also was a chair of the legislative committee and also for the government operations committee. I learned a lot from that while I was sitting on this side, where regular members sit how the government and the ministers have to work with the regular members. And after I learned that, also I learned a great deal from the older members by asking the questions to the members.

I learned as well sometimes you can't talk all the time, so I had to learn to listen. And I know that the campaign, during the campaign I listened to my people over there when I became a member of the Legislative Assembly. After being a regular member I was very pleased, and then we passed mental health legislation and also we passed, education legislation was passed as well. During the COVID the government worked very hard, and the regular members also gave support to us when we were going through difficult time during COVID.

In 2021, after the election I was selected to be a minister. I was quite nervous. I remember that very well. Our premier had appointed me to be the Minister of Health. He gave me the portfolio. During that time the COVID issues were coming, and we had to talk about that on daily basis, and this was quite heavy.

But as the government from 2021 to 2025, not all good things came, and I am aware and you have heard about it, but there were good things that came out during that time.

Briefly I'll say (interpretation ends) just a few highlights from my last four years as a minister.

I was also tasked with being Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation a bit farther into our mandate. Some of the highlights for me was Department of Health securing federal health infrastructure in Nunavut.

We got more federal dollars than we have ever will in terms of health infrastructure; increasing investment in more Inuit working in mental health roles across Nunavut.

Qulliq Energy Corporation moving forward on four new power plants across Nunavut. As we speak those are now in the construction phase, and I'm very happy to see that.

We opened up three new medical boarding homes, one in Edmonton, one in Iqaluit, one in Winnipeg. That was a huge highlight for me.

I'm also really proud that we opened up the new 24-bed long term care facility in Rankin Inlet. That was something that started with the 5th Assembly and has carried on through the 6th, and we will start projects during this government that the next government will inherit.

I'm also proud that we moved the next 24-bed facility in Cambridge Bay into the construction phase with strong federal support in terms of capital dollars.

I'm not going to say that everything is perfect with Qulliq Energy Corporation and with the Department of Health because I was the minister for four years. There's a lot of work that's still needed in health care. There's a lot of work that is needed everywhere across Nunavut. I just wanted to mention a few of the highlights.

(interpretation) Although I will be completing my speech, but (interpretation ends) the single biggest highlight for me of the last four years was the relationships that I was able to build with different organizations.

Looking at the Department of Health, the relationship that we have with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated is one that I'm incredibly grateful for. Whether it's on tuberculosis, whether it's on mental health and suicide prevention, whether it's on elder care, those relationships that we build outside of the Nunavut government with federal partners, with Inuit organizations, with the private sector, those are the relationships that pay off for Nunavummiut. Those are how we get things done. So looking at the past four years, that's what I'm the most proud of, is the relationships.

And why am I talking about all this stuff that's in the past? Why don't I talk more about the future? I'm talking about what has happened in the last four, eight years because I'm trying to explain to you, trying to help you see what I would like to do if I'm put into a role of leadership.

I want to get to work. We've got lots of work to do. Nunavummiut want change. They want us to move things forward. Not everything needs to change, but things that don't work right now for Nunavummiut, those need to change.

Earlier I did mention that I am feeling very hopeful and optimistic. (interpretation) I'm looking at you. I feel strongly what we will be working on and our mandate in four years on behalf of Nunavut, I know that it will be beneficial for Nunavut. We will continue to improve, because when I became a member on the 5th Assembly, and 6th, and now it's the 7th Legislative Assembly, we keep improving. And also the members that were elected, I believe that we're all improving.

(interpretation ends) So in terms of the forward-looking part of the speech, I know we'll get into this with some of the question and answer today. I don't have all the answers. I don't have a master plan, okay? I have some ideas that I would like to put into our mandate. I'll mention some of those today, okay, just a few. Food for thought.

(interpretation) But it's within our mandate and we will make, all of us with make a mandate of the 7th Assembly. And we want to provide support and help. That's why we ran. And we have to work very hard towards our goal.

After the election we have to work harder and work closer with Inuit entities, their ideas, and also their position.

(interpretation ends) Here's a few ideas, okay? Government needs more money. We have to look at how to develop more sources of revenue, including potential for petroleum resources in Nunavut, particularly natural gas.

We also need to look at embarking on a program of detailed investigation on cost benefit of current programs and services across the government. Why can a government minister such as myself apply for free solar panels from the Nunavut government? I can buy my own. That's an example of where we could find ways to target funding to those who need help, not to those who don't.

We need to look at, in terms of health care, implementing virtual first approach for all health services across Nunavut, right from the smallest to the largest communities.

I would also like us to look at establishing on-the-land treatment programs in of community. This is doable. This is doable in the next four years. I truly believe it.

And I believe in our mandate we should set out to finish the elder van initiative, make sure there's an elder van, a mobility van in every community operating.

I have lot of ideas. I don't have a lot of time left. I'll mention a few others.

We need to look at decentralizing Nunavut government jobs through remote means. Every Nunavut government job can support a household. Unemployment is a crisis. Unemployment is a scourge in our territory. Kids are not eating because of

unemployment. People are not in good housing situations because of unemployment. I would like to see unemployment, adult education, ways to support child care, ways to support employment right across Nunavut as being a focus in our mandate.

(interpretation) In conclusion, if elected to the premier I will work closely with you and with each and of one of you supporting each other and feeling for each other respect. It will always be better than fighting against each other, working together at the Legislative Assembly. If we work together within the coming four years, it's going to be very beneficial to Nunavummiut.

Thank you for listening, and I will be available for your questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): (no interpretation).

>>Meeting recessed at 11:09 and resumed at 11:27

Questioning of Candidates for Premier

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you for coming back. The Nunavut Leadership Forum has reconvened. I will now review the procedures for the question period for candidates for the position of premier.

Each member not standing for the position of premier, as you know, may ask up to two questions to the person standing for the position of premier. Each candidate will then respond in turn to the question. That will be our procedure. Questions do not need to be asked consecutively.

As chair, I will exercise discretion with respect to the order in which candidates are invited to respond to questions. I will exercise discretion whether to cut you off when your time is up. It will be at my discretion, as of course there will be other members who will be waiting to ask questions.

Candidates are seated in the witness area during this process. We have two candidates sitting in front of you. Do any members have questions for the candidates? Member Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman. I'm from the Amittuq area, and my question is: How will you treat the smaller communities or the larger communities and also the communities that are decentralized? Are you going to treat them equally? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. I will start off with Mr. Akeeagok.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker-elect. That's a very good question. Maybe I can answer you back in two parts in regards to economic opportunities for the communities.

As a minister, we try to see what kind of opportunities we can provide to the smaller communities, and that was part of the mandate of the last government, how we can create opportunities. I know that Nunavut is unique. It can function in a unique manner, because there's a lot of opportunities that we can start. For example, it might be fisheries and the Amittuq area provide the most tasty *igunuk* (ph) that can be part of the community exchange program.

In regards to employment opportunities, we have a policy where people can stay in the communities and work for the government from their own communities, without going to the central communities. As I indicated earlier, all people of Nunavut have to be treated equally. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Member Main. Your response?

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The smaller communities, we have heard quite a lot from the smaller communities. I have visited some of the communities and representing Qikiqtarjuaq and Whale Cove they have told me, I'll repeat it, that the government does not represent them fully. And I do agree with you. We can do remote work and that's an opportunity that can take. We should work remotely with the smaller communities. So for the last four years or for the four years that are coming up, we can provide Nunavut-wide work. Should it go to Chesterfield Inlet or Grise Fiord or Resolute Bay or to Hall Beach, we should be creating those positions and have unemployed people who have the education to fill that position.

Sometimes we depend too much on the education of an individual. The Department of Human Resources have quite a large budget, and we're going to be using a part of that budget for training programs in all communities, including the smaller communities. We could provide the training and fill the positions and create more employment opportunity, from what I envision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Simailak. If you have any questions, please make an indication to the chair and I'll write your name down. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My first question is regarding elder care. We have a high population of elders that now need to be placed in homes. Currently we have the new elders facility in Rankin Inlet. It's open now. It's operational. It's already full. The previous governments have planned to build elder care facilities in Cambridge Bay and Iqaluit as well, but that will be years away.

Construction takes many years. What other options would you consider to build elder care facilities in the territory in the smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Main, you will go first.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I feel for you. We love our families who are placed in elder care homes, and it affects the whole family and also the whole community. Compassion is a big part of the Inuit culture, and we have to look at providing those types of services in Nunavut. We have to build elder care homes in the Nunavut communities.

(interpretation ends) The elders strategy that came out in the last four years is a good, solid document that can guide us, and in terms of which community gets an elder facility next after Cambridge Bay and after Iqaluit, under the current plans, that's a decision we have to make together. And how do those facilities get built? How do they get operated? I think this is a key area where we have shared interests with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated as well as some municipalities, as well as some regional Inuit associations.

So I think as I mentioned in my speech, it's about partnerships, and that's where, what is the job of the premier? It's not to micro manage and say this community gets this and this community gets that. The job of the premier is to build and support those partnerships that are going to support communities like Baker Lake.

I want to mention that we need to be open to creative solutions, whether it's privately operated facilities, as well as looking for infrastructure dollars from the private sector, such as Agnico Eagle, for example.

And Nunavut Tunngavik is a strong partner in this. I'm very thankful that we saw a commitment of \$15 million in the last government put forward towards three elder facilities, one in Gjoa Haven, the other one in Igloolik, the other one in Arviat. That's a very exciting new way of looking at this. At the end of the day it's all about partnerships. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Akeeagok.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I feel for you for bringing that up. It is something that's very hard for the family, to place their elder in a care package. It affects the whole family. And you feel compassion for the family and the individual in question.

And, yes, we have to build those elder care homes in Nunavut, where they are close to home. We have heard that the elders do not want to go out of their communities to be taken care of, so we have to think about what we can do to house our elders, and we have to work closely with the cabinet members. But the elders have to be home.

What can we do to provide those types of services? The Department of Health do not have enough people working in the home care positions. What we can do is to increase that department so they can provide the services to the elders at home.

With the Nunavut 3000 that was initiated by the previous government, we have to provide adequate housing for the elders. That should be a part of this government.

We will have a very close working relationship with the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, because the government cannot do it alone. We have to provide unique situations.

We were given direction to care for our elders. The policy is now in place, and implemented. Now what can we do to provide more adequate programs for our elders so that they can stay home and to be provided adequate housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: We have a question from member for Cambridge Bay. MLA Pedersen, the floor is yours.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question to the premier candidates is in relation to safety and security within Nunavut. As you are aware, many passengers currently arriving into Nunavut on direct flights into our territory are only screened in Winnipeg and Ottawa. Passengers boarding in Yellowknife do not currently have to go through security screening. This means that any passengers flying out of Yellowknife can board any flight to all three regions of Nunavut without security screening being required.

If you are selected as premier, what steps will you take with the Government of Canada and within federal-provincial-territorial meetings to ensure that Nunavut is safe from any threats that may arise because of passengers and cargo arriving into our communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. MLA Akeeagok, your first response.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this work has begun. In my time as justice minister and also once upon a time being the transport minister, work has been done to try and put screening in place where we cover our southern borders because, for Canada Post it's the three facilities in Montreal, Winnipeg and Edmonton. There have been pilot projects that have been done where screening has been successful. Our government has been offering to Canada Post to bring forward resources. As premier I will be continuing to advocate for that.

You have identified something, a very serious flaw which is in Yellowknife where there is no screening at all. That's something that we need look and direct our federal partner, which does the airport screening. And if they are not willing to, we need to find another

solution. I think we really need to do that, because one death from hard drugs is one death too many, and that's not acceptable. And it's something that our government really needs to step up and take those. As premier I will work very closely with the ministers to try and get this up and running as fast as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, MLA Main. Your turn.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) So in terms of the issue around transport and screening, I think the premier, or whoever is put in that role needs to work closely with their ministers on this. It needs to be a priority. It's not only Cambridge Bay that is being impacted. There are other communities in Nunavut that are being impacted by harder drugs. And it's incredibly concerning. We can look at it in terms of what resources do RCMP need on the ground in the community level; are there requests for more members at the community level that have come forward, and have those requests been given consideration, in terms of the budgeting process. Also, yes, the transport agencies and the federal piece.

The other part of this that I think we need keep in mind is that there's a huge health aspect to this around mental health and addictions. The people that are struggling with addiction who are currently using hard drugs, we need to make sure that they are being given resource to say keep themselves safe, such as overdose prevention kits. We can understand public health around wastewater testing so we know which drugs are present in which communities.

So it needs to be a balanced approach. I don't think the government should be putting all our resources only on enforcement. We also need to look at the mental health and addictions side of things, because many Nunavummiut are struggling with addictions, and I see this harder drugs issue as a part of that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. To questions, MLA Angootealuk. Your opportunity.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question concerns mines and Inuit who work at the mines. How much have they increased? Would you know how many -- there are enough members every Inuit working at the mine sites? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. MLA Main, your first response.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From my observation, the numbers, what actual numbers they are I don't remember, but we need to take more jobs as Nunavummiut Inuit we need to take more of the jobs. And I have heard from my constituents often what struggles they are facing. The lack of work is one of the biggest

issues. Yes, we know housing is constantly raised, health, education, but the issue of no jobs, even one job that can be provided to a community, the family will be lifted. You have more food on the table. And mental health issues will go away and education will increase.

If I'm elected for premiership, the mining companies are ones I would advocate to see increases. And government, through education, if we need to spend money towards that, yes, I would support it. So jobs for Nunavummiut for Inuit would begin to become reality. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. MLA Akeeagok, your response.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree. What's happening with the system? Is that better now? Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, in areas of mining and Inuit working in the mines are fewer, but are increasing, and I firmly believe that with more effort we will see more increase.

I have been Minister responsible for Mining, and having talked with supervisors at Agnico Eagle in particular, have often stated that in the south and areas around the world where gold is mined, in some areas it's Indigenous people who take on senior roles in areas of cleaning and so forth, and they have a vision. The vision up here is reality for Nunavut.

We have to believe when Inuit start taking control of mining, that is developing, and we understand it and that it can be staining. And I have pushed towards that goal.

So as government, we are always advocating the mines to create more jobs and we also provide education as Nunavut government. I think we can make an impact for those who do not have jobs to provide means how they can take on the jobs. And there are varied areas where jobs may be available for Nunavummiut. Those are areas that we need to pursue. And I totally anticipate as Inuit, through Nunavut government, these can be controlled by Inuit. So I urge Inuit. Take on the challenges and if you work in area of mining, continue on and with your education.

These are areas I think we should be pushing towards with our people in areas of mining and other areas. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): We will now take a break for lunch and we will resume at 1:30. There are more questions that are yet to be posed. We will resume at 1:30.

>>Meeting recessed at 11:54 and resumed at 13:30

Chairman: Thank you. Member Akeeagok, your response.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I can't wait for the Land Use Plan to be finalized. It has been a long time coming. As you mentioned, it has been over 20 years, and it is something that this is one of the critical articles, the land claims, that needs to be finalized. It's something that really needs to get done.

With that being said, it is in the review between the three parties, the Government of Nunavut, the Government of Canada, and Nunavut Tunngavik. It is within that review that decision will need to be made, whether to support or reject it with reasons, or amend it with reasons. I look forward to the day, and I hope that it's going to be soon, and within our term of this government, that a decision will be made. That decision really needs to be made now. It's something that whether it's support or go back to the drawing board or needs to be amended, that decision I think is crucial. And I respect those three parties.

Within our government we have tasked a minister to lead this on behalf of the government, but it will need to be a government decision and that's something that I look forward to having a very wholesome discussions with the minister that will need to be part of the three parties to make that decision.

That's something that I'll fully support with the minister in terms of see what the documents are, and in order for that, to make that decision. I think it's far too long that we are waiting for that decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Main, your response.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a very good question. The Land Use Plan, the plan for how the land wants to be used, this has been worked on by the planning commission. If I became premier there was a question about, like what would I tell the minister responsible to do. This matter will have to be decided upon in the cabinet, by the minister appointed by the premier. But the premier has to stay out of the discussion.

(interpretation ends) In terms of the internal workings of the government and the past years since the plan has been put forward and the work that has happened, I think one of the first tasks is to look at those internal processes and to see if there's anything within the Nunavut government that's holding up a decision being made.

The other thing that needs to happen is continued communication and consultation with the other signatories in terms of understanding where they stand. And it's not necessarily that the Nunavut government would have the exact same opinion as Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, for example, but it's important to understand where they are at, how many issues they have with the plan, how many things need adjustment. Because if any of the

signatories reject the plan, then we do another go-around, is my understanding of the process.

So it would be looking at the internal workings of the government to see if there is any way of getting towards a decision faster, and then also working to understand our stakeholders. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you to our list. According to my list, I will go to Arviat, Member Kablutsiak, Member for Arviat South.

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question I would like to ask is about education. Nunavut Arctic College, when the ITK was talking about Nunavut Arctic College, about creating a university in Inuit land (interpretation ends) based on education.

With the recent announcement by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami on being open for northern regions to bid for a location of the Inuit university, how will you ensure that Nunavut receives this bid so that the university stays in Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Main, open to your response.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a very good question. From my understanding, the Inuit definitely of Canada is holding the responsibility at this time, and the -- as to what the premier will do. The university has to be within Nunavut. It's not going to be possible if the ITK committee, they also have board members from outside of Nunavut. I support the idea, because education is a root to careers and benefits, and we need to support education more in Nunavut, in Arctic College, within high school as well, and even in the daycares. So education creates a better future.

The new member from Arviat, I'm proud of him. With Nunavut Arctic College I want to see if they can work along more in creating this, and I would like to see where Nunavut Arctic College can be involved, because they are always lacking funds that can be used to create infrastructure. So I would have them see if the Nunavut Arctic College and other institutions can work together to create this university. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Akeeagok, time for your response.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. That's a good question. With Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, we have no choice but to work closely with them. In regards to the Inuit university, I would really like to see that happen in Nunavut because I believe in Nunavut, and we have to express Nunavut's abilities.

When this comes up to the vote for the Inuit university, I will greatly support it and I would work with my fellow ministers on it because it will affect many people, especially people in Nunavut, our students. We get more and more students graduating grade 12, and I long for this to happen sooner so that our precious students can have another place where they can go to university. It would be really good if it can be in Nunavut. It would be the first university in Nunavut and we could produce the first graduates. So I will really try to support this idea. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you to the people who voted for me to bring me back here. George Hickes is still here, too, and I'm very glad to take part in this discussion.

My question to the candidates for premier, I'm not sure which one will win. We have to select one of them, although it would seem okay to select both of them. But I have two main questions.

In regards to climate change, the climate has changed a lot, not just in Pangnirtung. In Pangnirtung the change has affected hunting, has really changed hunting and fishing. In the spring time we would travel on the ice, and we can never do that anymore. We have to travel on land. And everybody knows that Pangnirtung is very mountainy and rough, and it's dangerous, too.

My question will be in terms of a climate change, about climate change adaptation, on how, because the communities have been greatly affected through their hunting due to the climate change. What are you going to do about creating new roads or trails because of climate change? I'm not talking about hunting, I'm talking about the need to have a good route, safe route to get out of the communities. So my first question is: What are your plans if you become premier, either one of you, on this matter? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Akeeagok, if you can respond first.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I think of your family Mr. Mike and think of them through prayer. You are in our thoughts. As Inuit, we have compassion for each other.

You go through climate change and it's visible. And we feel it, especially in Pangnirtung because in winter time, there was good fisheries and there were good economic opportunities but due to the ice breaking up right away it's becoming different with that. In regards to climate change, we have to be very careful and watch it and we need to have adaptation programs like for example, in the month of July, we had signed a memorandum of understanding for Nunavut Tunngavik and Qikiqtani Inuit Association

and the Greenland Homeland Government of fisheries. How we can learn from each other so that we understand the changes that are occurring and how can we change the fisheries, how we can implement the fisheries to be in a safe environment when they are going out. So this was agreed to just recently, and I expect not just for the community of Pangnirtung, but all the communities of Nunavut would require more support for fisheries, opportunities and also for transportation purposes.

We expect that we will have to discuss this further and look for ways to make sure that we have good road systems. We need to have monitoring systems more available, for example, like the ice surveys or Nauttisuqtiit guardians of the climate so we can utilize them as well. And as we are aware that the climate is changing, we need to look for ways how to improve the situation, because we know exactly what the -- how the climate is changing. That's what I wanted to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a very good question in regards to climate change. And we see it differently from each. We feel, like different ways like that. How much hunters can see the different or see the difference occurring, and there could be an opportunity for economic development for turbot fisheries in Pangnirtung, and it has a great impact on that. I believe we need to, as a government we need to discuss this and look at ways how we can keep it safe to make sure everybody is safe.

We need to provide support for search and rescue, especially the Nunavut Emergency Management especially. There was a conference with search and rescue in Cambridge Bay last week. That was a very good example of how we can provide support as a Nunavut government in regards to Nunavut emergency cases, and also with search and rescue.

If I understood your question correctly in regards to making roads, I believe constructing roads like sometimes they used to travel in the past through ice, but due to climate change they have to travel through inland. So therefore, if we can build roads it would be beneficial. I would be in support that in all the communities of Nunavut, that we need to construct roads so the hunters can go there, making a road to their fisheries and I believe that we can look at ways that it could also be economic development for our harvesters and the local community, and also the communities can improve with economic development. But we would look for funding to make sure that we can construct roads. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The Member for Pangnirtung has another question. Please proceed. Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, my second question, although it was mentioned earlier but the funding has not been talked about in regards to the food security issue. We need to provide good support, especially the people who require help for children up to 18. Those families require more support, and it's harder for them. Today many people are going hungry. They lack food to eat.

For that reason what would you, how would you like to provide funding to make sure there's food security? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member Main, please proceed to respond to the question. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we feel for the hungry, and Nunavut government is looking at the funding. We hold billions of dollars and we operate on that. When there are people hungry out there in the communities, we are very sorry to see that. We need to eradicate hungry children especially. Yes, I would be in support. I was very, we are regretful that the federal government, at first they provided food vouchers and it really provided support to the communities. After a year later that program was pulled back, and it's still being felt. So we need to look at it and discuss this, especially the school food programs.

We need to look at ways how we can provide funding. Even the federal government, they provided the national food school program but looking at the amount of funding, it's still too small to provide for the whole territory of Nunavut. The Nunavut government will have to provide more funding for the program for food security, whether it be school or outside. And also include the harvesters and through the HTOs. We will have to work with them through hunting and fishing programs. They also help for food security. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Just to remind members, please make sure you shut your cell phones or put them on mute. According to the list of names, Member for Uqqummiut. I'm sorry, Mr. Akeeagok, it's your turn to respond. Mr. Akeeagok.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, during my opening comments I spoke to this issue. This is an urgent case, as I have stated that it's an urgent case, the federal government provided program and they pulled it out.

We feel for the people who have no food security. In the beginning they were provided food security for the people, and they provided food and then they pulled it out.

Rather than feel sorry for that, we have to look at ways how we can resolve this as a government. As I stated before, we need to do this urgently, deal with this urgently. If I'm elected I will work with the cabinet as a priority, especially during, as the years go by the groceries are becoming expensive. Even people who are good wage earners, they go

hungry. And the food banks in the communities have to look for more food, a lot more food. So therefore we definitely have to deal with this issue.

I also agree with the member's concern, as it has a great impact for the whole territory of Nunavut. And we need to find ways or a long-term solution. As I stated before, we need to work closely with the federal government in regards to this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you as well. I apologize. I'm trying to follow the list of names in order to provide great opportunity for the candidates to provide response. Mr. Kautuk, member for Uqqummiut, it's your turn.

Mr. Kautuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. In regards to housing, rents, like sometimes because we pay rent, even though we should be paying for our groceries rather than paying for rent. How would you resolve this issue and improve this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you as well. Response going to Mr. Main. I'm sorry. Mr. Akeegok, it's your turn. I'm trying to give them equal opportunity to respond. Mr. Akeegok.

Mr. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have been discussing this very long time on how we can improve the situation, and we need to. I know that we need to -- it's felt that we need to improve this. We need look at it thoroughly and make recommendations for improvement. I agree with you that it also has an impact on food security and also it has an impact on people who don't want to work and people who work and who are in the workforce can pay for their rent and buy groceries.

And also the rent, when the people who rent housing from housing corporation, when they become wage earners, they have to pay part of the rent right away from their wage. And Inuit, it has not been the practice of Inuit in their way of life, so therefore they kind of give up.

So rather than deducting from the wage earners, we have to look for a better solution. The Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, I would work very closely with the individual.

I have been thinking about this issue for quite some time, and I understand that we need to improve this issue. I will want to work closely with the new minister and all the members of the Legislative Assembly, as it impacts all of the communities, especially in the communities that don't have employment opportunities. There's a bigger impact on those communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. It's your turn, Mr. Main. Your response.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with Member Akeeagok because it has an impact on employment and also unemployment as well. Many Nunavummiut reside in public housing. And if I remember correctly, Nunavut Housing Corporation has 6,000 tenants in their public housing.

Once the housing corporation, (interpretation ends) through the Office of the Auditor General in terms of review of the public housing program, I believe there is some really important work that's going to be happening at the Nunavut Housing Corporation following the recommendations of that report, including new software that they are putting in place in terms of their housing allocation and management of their stock.

I think this is an issue around the rent scale. I'm not going to sit here today and say I'm going to make rent cheaper for everybody in Nunavut. I wish I could say that. We could do that, but we have to find money to replace that lost revenue.

I mean, I think at the end of the day, a lot of the decisions we have to make here in the House, they come down to money, and where do we want to put the government's money. If we want to, if there's a concerted effort in the House to see public housing rents reduced, I think that's a priority that the government would have to take seriously. It goes into the development of our mandate.

I just wanted to mention one thing on the rent scale and public housing. There is a lot of need for increased maintenance work across Nunavut. I've heard that from my constituents in terms of, they will pay rent, but when they are paying rent on a unit that has a lot of undressed needs, if it's holes in the walls or issues with the heating, that has to be balanced. If the Nunavut Housing Corporation is going to ask for their rent on time every month, then the tenants have a right to ask for maintenance to be addressed in a timely manner. So I think those issues are connected.

I thank the member for the question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Following the list of names, Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is in regards to health care. During my campaign trail I heard many constituents that were not satisfied with the quality of care that they received, and I will give a couple of examples. There has been unnecessary deaths that are happening that are curable, such as pneumonia, and patients being sent out too late, only to find out that when they come back they are at stage 4 cancer. To our communities, there is not acceptable. How would you address this scenario. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, if you would respond to that question. Thank you.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My condolences to anybody in Kugluktuk who has been impacted.

Health care is one of the cornerstones of the Nunavut government. We put a big piece of our annual budget towards health care already, and there are still unaddressed needs. I mentioned in my speech that I served as health minister for four years, but I'm not going to sugar-coat it. There are still a lot of undressed needs, everything from elder care to cancer screening to staffing.

I'll try not to talk too long here, but in terms of cancer screening, we have known for a long time that Nunavut needs a formalized cancer screening program. We have now begun the first formalized cancer screening program for colorectal cancer screening. It's being rolled out to all of Nunavut's communities.

The plan is after colorectal cancer to move on to the other most common types of cancers, which are cervical, breast, and lung cancer. Now, that's something that's needed. That work needs to happen in terms of public health.

In terms of the access to services, the Nunavut government needs to continue pushing hard on recruitment and retention of nurses and doctors. We had to put more money on the table to stay competitive nationally in the past few years, and we did that. It wasn't cheap, but we needed to do that.

We also need to invest more in virtual care so that somebody could walk into a health centre with an emergent need, say it's midnight on a weekend, and they can be connected to an emergency room in one of our southern hospitals for expert consultation and support. We know this is possible. This is already start to go happen here in territory. We need to do more virtual care. That's part of it.

I think, the other thing that I would like to see is a continued rollout and expansion of ground transportation at the community level, so stretcher services at the community level so that when somebody is in an emergency they don't have to look around on Facebook for a ride or call a taxi. They can call the fire department. They can calm the hamlet to get a ride when it is an emergent need to the health centre. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok. Your response, please.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Over the last eight years I've been a member here, the Department of Health has only once not asked for supplementary appropriation because they have over-expended within their budgets. To me that is a chronic problem

that needs to be addressed. It is being discussed at the national level, at the provincial level, and at the territorial level. Health care needs to be resourced and resourced adequately, and it needs to ensure that patients are being looked after. Screening is one of the critical things that has been started, and I commend my colleague for the department to start that. And we need more.

We are going to need to look at health care very closely to ensure that patients are being looked after. And in my opening comments I did say that we need to provide care and we need to provide programs that need them the most. It is unacceptable that far too many patients are going and finding that it is too late to do anything. There are ways of doing things, and I think we need to address that.

It is a national concern and it is within our government a very concern that we need to address in order to make sure that health is healthier. And definitely that we need to tackle, and we're going to need to do it together.

We will need a very strong team of ministers. It's a very strong government and very strong legislature to address this, and I think we're up for the task. It's something that I will try my hardest to do my part at the national and provincial, territorial level and at our territory, and at our health centres who are very crucial, and they need to remain open. And all the doctors and nurses that are there need to be recognized and resourced in order for them to do their work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Member for Rankin Inlet, Ms. Tattuinee.

Ms. Tattuinee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to ask the premier candidates how you would plan to ensure balanced approach to providing opportunities to grow and become more economically independent, a whole-of-Nunavut approach. You start to notice have and have not communities. I just wanted to get your idea of how you would provide that kind of approach so that the whole of Nunavut has opportunities to grow economically and become more independently at the community level, not only the regional centres. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your response, please.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We need to diversify our economy and we need to understand our economy. Every community has beauty in each part of this beautiful territory. There are a lot of opportunities that we are not taking part. We are when we see, when people see where the government is spending a lot of the money too always take place in every community, and they say this small community is not being looked after or this big centre is being not looked after. I see that.

Having been a member for a very small community to now being a very large city, I feel that there are pros and cons in terms of finding the right appropriate economic opportunities. It's not going to be one size fits all. We need to diversify ourselves.

There are strengths in communities. There are places that are so beautiful that the rest of the world should see Nunavut. And there are the best tasting fish, and each one of us will say it's my community. I've tasted a lot of fish, and they all can feed a lot of us.

We're not tapping to places. Like where our airlines, we're not looking to our airline where is they fly full and come back empty. There should be ways of having some of those beautiful resources that are from providing to centres that need it. I think that's one creative way that I think we're going to need to do that. Because once one benefits, the other parts benefit.

Just like here in Nunavut, whatever we build, it benefits the southern provinces. We need to turn that around where we benefit each other. And I think we can do that as communities unifying together. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, your response, please.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That is a really great question, in terms of economic independence. Like Mr. Akeegok mentioned, it's not going to be one size fits all. Some communities will be more dependent on government programs and assistance than others.

There is great potential across Nunavut in terms of the natural resources that we have. Not just fisheries; also minerals, also tourism. It needs to be an approach that meets the needs of the community, and the answer isn't always more government. In some cases when it comes to small business, when it comes to economic development, the government just needs to get out of the way. And I believe it would be a valuable exercise for the next government to look at opportunities to streamline, to reduce regulation, to reduce red tape, and just get out of the way and let communities develop.

A good example is if a hamlet wants to set up a development corporation and they want to start harvesting renewable energy and get a revenue stream for themselves, do you know how much red tape they have to cut through? It's just one example of many where a community wants to start a solar farm, they want to put up a wind turbine, well go through all the red tape first and make sure you get the minister's approval. I think the exercise of deregulation and streamlining could be very valuable for local economies.

And one final thing. The next Nunavut government needs to look at developing a manufacturing strategy so that we are supporting local businesses when they do build things in territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): And thank you. Following my list of names, we will move to Iqaluit-Manirajak, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Ms. Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman (interpretation ends) My question for the candidates is about our youth. As we know, a large percentage of our territory is made up of young people. How will you create opportunities for young people to participate meaningfully in decision-making, not just as participants of programs or services but as leaders? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, your response, please.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. When you look at the number 11,000, which I believe is the rough number of children who are school age in Nunavut, it's both exciting and overwhelming when you think about trying to provide for and support that many youth in the territory, it's a huge challenge but it's also a huge opportunity.

It's right in the Suicide Prevention Action Plan. It's detailed in there that what the member is asking about in terms of involving youth at decision-making tables that that needs to be rolled out across organizations.

And so it's a case of supporting the youth, creating the seats, creating the opportunities to have them around the table, and making sure that we back up those words with action: Things like the Youth Parliament, which I hope will happen during the 7th Assembly where we have youth from across Nunavut coming to better understand the Legislative Assembly process, things like that, they are very valuable in terms of the future of Nunavut.

I hope to see the Suicide Prevention Strategy or the action plan implemented over the coming years, because the most important word in that plan is action. And what the member is asking about, that is something that we can do to help create better mental health outcomes among youth. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your turn.

Mr. Akeeagok: I think the youth can figure out what they want to do and what they need to do, and what we need to do is help resource them. The youth are so cool and so resourceful. We need to give them the tools in order for them to excel. There are different programs that are out there that's going to help and different resources.

For our next government, we need to start sharing some of the facilities that we do have, because the youth need spaces in order to excel in the programs. The youth need outboard motors or skidoos in order for them to start venturing off. There are some very

good programs like the young hunters program that is been rolled around that is non-profit that's being done throughout the territory. We need to encourage those that have resources to come to Nunavut and offer these programs, and have our government provide some sweat equity in order for them to excel, because if we give them the right tools, you're going to see wonderful programs being developed, and over time, success.

One of the critical things that I wanted to play is that our lateral violence needs to stop at the youth level, at all ages, but at the youth in order for them to excel. When some youth tries to start to run programs, a lot of the social media, the negativeness of it deters them. And that's very hurtful seeing that, because what we really need to do is encourage every youth, and tell them this world, the door is open for you.

It is really open for them, and it is for them to grasp it, and that's where I really think that we need to make sure that we promote the programs that are out and the programs that we need to see, because once they grasp it, I am very confident our youth in the territory will run with it. And I can't wait for that to happen. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. As for my list, Netsilik MLA, Ms. Lyall, your turn.

Ms. Lyall (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The rate of violent crimes against women and also the rate of family violence in Nunavut is ten times higher than the national average, and only a few percentage of our communities have family violence shelters located locally. My question to the candidates is: What are your ideas on how we, as the new incoming government, could safeguard the safety of our women and children, both within their homes and communities, but also within their workspaces on the Government of Nunavut and the agencies, being the largest employer within the territory? What are your ideas to ensure that we are providing healthy workspaces for women and gender diverse within our workplaces? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Akeeagok, to you.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): For this question I think it's very timely that you pose this question. Our government had introduced *Family Abuse Intervention Act* a while back, and the review has been needed, and that review has taken place. Through that review there's a strong need to strengthen that Family Abuse Intervention Act. It is foreseeable within our 7th Assembly that we can tackle this through our legislation and through those legislation we can then provide the right tools and the right programs. It has been identified and it continues that domestic violence in this territory is very alarming, but it's something that through our legislature and having the right departments respond to this and work to this and provide adequate resources, this can be achieved.

In this day and age, violence shouldn't be here in our territory, but I don't just shrug it off saying it shouldn't be here. It is here, and we need to do something about it. And with the

right people, around here, we can do something about it. And with providing the support for the departments and those non-profit organizations and the very families that provide safe homes, and resource them adequately, we can do that and we should do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you as well. And turning to Mr. Main, your response.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) You know, I echo my colleague in terms of the amount of violence. It's simply unacceptable, and there are families, there are children who are being impacted by this all too often, and we need to do everything that we can to support education, to support means of relief for those who are being impacted, as well as support for victims. So prevention, immediate response, and then the after care when it comes to domestic violence.

The review of the Family Abuse Intervention Act is going to be an important initiative of this government. My understanding from a high level is that although the act was well intentioned, in terms of the impact on the ground at the community level, it hasn't done all the things that previous governments wanted it to do. So it's an example of, you can have good intentions and, meaning to do good, government wanting to help. But it's that last piece, in terms of implementing the legislation or putting the supports, making sure they make it to the people who need it, that's the grunt work that the government the next government has to lean into, in terms of finding out where the barriers are.

In terms of workplaces, I think Department of Human Resources is leading a series of expansions in terms of workplace wellness, tracking down harassment or dealing allow to support our employees who are dealing with domestic violence. Those need to be important components of the larger wellness work that's happening for our employees. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Iqaluit-Sinaa MLA, Ms. Brewster. Your turn.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Speaker-elect, and thank you everyone for all these really important questions and important answers as well.

I would like to stay on the topic of violence and trauma in Nunavut. We're talking about workplace safety, mental health, and especially children and youth. I know that we spend about \$3 million a year alone on security for health centres in order to keep our workers safe, as well as our clients who are attending those workplaces. I want to hear more and delve deeper into what each candidate sees as tangible actions to take in order to not just have the short term solution of funding security guards and that sort of thing, but to look at a longer term solution.

We heard from answers and questions that there are about 11,000 young people in the school system right now. We have an education system that we are the masters of and we

can create an education system that takes into account the level of violence and trauma that young people are facing as part of their lived lives as students, and I would like to hear what specific actions can be taken in order to bring children to the place where they can break the cycle of violence, harassment and trauma so that in the future we don't have to spend \$3 million a year on security guards to keep our workers and citizens safe.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, you have your opportunity.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm going to answer this, I guess, in two sides of it. In terms of the security guard piece and the need for security services to protect our employees, I don't see that going away anytime soon, so in terms of getting the maximum benefit and maximum Inuit employment from security services, say at health services, the next government needs to look at formalizing that function and establishing whether it could be established, similar to a sheriff service that's provided through Department of Justice with training, certifications, and regulation of employees.

In terms of the member's question around violence and children, I think it comes down to trying to ensure that they are living in healthy homes, living in homes that are free from violence. And that talks to the need for continued investment at Department of Family Services in terms of child protection, in terms of interdepartmental collaboration, not just Family Services but then working with their partners at Education as well as Department of Health.

This is something that I believe the member is asking about is something that would take a long time, you know, 15, 20 years into the future. But the next government needs to keep pushing on those longer term files, because we know that protecting a child today could save a life 15 years in the future. So we can't shy away from that hard work that's going to take a long time show results.

But at the end of the day, in terms of protecting children, making sure they are free from violence, it take a community. The Nunavut government is an important part of that community, making sure that our employees are coordinated amongst each other across departments and that we are retaining employees at the community level so we know the people that they are working with. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Akeeagok, your turn.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, a very good response that my colleague just responded. And it is something I share, too. It is one, especially on family violence, as I mentioned in my speech, there is some intergenerational trauma that needs to be cut, and that's something that really needs to be addressed, especially with family violence.

If you grew up with family violence and then you're starting to raise your own family, you grew up with that and you know that's the only way that that happens. We need programs and we need people that can get, and for those that seek help, or at times we should tell them that you need help and you're going to get help, and that's one way that I think we can break this intergenerational trauma is that we have those adequate resources.

There is some good work, like Ilisaqsivik, that train and bring counsellors to the communities now. We do that in all part of our territory with different not-for-profit organizations we need to support that and celebrate that and promote that.

Those folks that are in that field, especially the Inuit that are self-training themselves into this, we can launch them into communities and launch them into families and bring that awareness to the family that needs it. And it is something that we really need to focus on.

As I mentioned too, one of the things that I mentioned that I'll elaborate more, is people are going from one place to another place to another when they want to deal with their addictions, and they say you have to do this first and then go to this one and go to that one. I think if somebody asks for help, that help should be available, readily available. And if we send them to a treatment centre or to a family violence shelter and given the right tools and they repeat, we need to do that again. Because when they get into that, that is a success because they are asking for help and we're trying to, we are providing that help, and over time it's going to help the individual.

There are very few that are successful at the first try, but there are some that need to come back, and we need to recognize that. And instead of saying oh, she or he failed this program therefore we shouldn't support it, I think we should look at it in the eyes of who is in addictions and who is in violence, because they are seeking for that help and that safety, and that safety is somewhere that's going to help over time and for very immediately.

I think through that we can do something about this, and I really wish that we can do that to help make Nunavut a lot healthier. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, member for Tununiq, Mr. Koonoo.

Mr. Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask about the people who go to hospital by travelling by airline. Now, I'm proud that there are new programs that have been initiated and there's one in Winnipeg and Edmonton, must be boarding homes, but there is still much room for improvement. People who go for medical travel are kicked out, and then they have no place to stay and have no more help and no more food to eat, and they're usually broke. This is very inconvenient when it happens, especially over here, when people get drunk. And especially in the summer time

there's a lot of drinking outside of the boarding homes, and when they are on their way to Ottawa sometimes they have to sleep overnight in Rankin Inlet, for example, and then they don't have hotel rooms to stay at, at times, and they can't wait at the airport.

How do you feel that this can be improved so that the medical travel can run more smoothly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your response.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the person next to me has worked a lot on that, and he had to work on that, and there are many things that need to be improved in the health department. That is one of the biggest issues, and we really need to do something about it. All the concerns that we hear, we need to do something about them.

There should be ways to improve the health department for the medical travel patients. I completely agree with that and it really, we have started to try to improve the situation. The airline tickets have been improved, and also the Department of Health always has a telephone available and are able to respond, to try and find out why they are no longer being helped when they get kicked out and they become homeless. Especially in the south there are more and more homeless people in the south now, and it would be good if we could bring them back. We really need to do something about them.

With the policies, I like working on the policies about not being allowed to drink and not be violent while you're at the boarding home, those are good rules. They are there for hospital purposes, and their minds should be set like that, that they are there for the hospital.

So if they can be shown how to drink properly or take other drugs properly. A lot of times the health department is blamed, but a lot of times as people, the draw of alcohol and drugs becomes stronger and we go down as free people and all of a sudden we're not so free anymore when we break the rules. We really need to do something about it as soon as we can. I completely agree with that.

And the person next to me has addressed that a number of times. We really need to do something. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, your turn.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a very good question. I'll try to keep response short. First of all, with the medical travel policy, it needs to be amended. It needs to be improved and we have seen where it needs to be, well the Department of Health has found where it needs to be improved. They are planning to update the policy and make it clearer to understand, so that should help.

And my colleague is correct in saying that alcohol is the usual problem, and if we look deeper into the problem, I think addictions have a lot to do with it. Programs to help them, where else can we create them for Nunavummiut?

Like I stated, healing, on-the-land treatment where all Nunavut communities should start that, and we all know how useful it can be and we know that there are very able people that can run that in the communities.

Lastly, I would like to say about infrastructure. With medical travel, we use too much of medical travel right now because of the lack of infrastructure in the communities. In Qikiqtarjuaq, for example, they have been waiting for a new health centre for a long time, and because of no funding available, it hasn't been built, but there are plans to build it now and the federal government has stated in the past with infrastructure, we have been asking them to give us money to create infrastructure so that we won't rely so much on medical travel. But the federal government never heard that, and in their new budget, there's something about health infrastructure.

(interpretation ends) Health infrastructure. I apologize for mixing up my languages, but it's very exciting to see federal interest in health infrastructure in the Arctic, because that's the way that we're going to get off of using so much medical travel and bringing care closer to Nunavummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Back to my list. Member for Rankin Inlet North and Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question I would like to ask is: There are too many homeless people now in Nunavut. What will you do to improve the situation of homelessness to decrease the number of homeless people? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, your response.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker-elect. The way that it is set up, looking at Nunavut 3000 contents, there is a direction for transitional housing and other people who need special help in getting homes. I would like that to proceed.

(interpretation ends) The Office of the Auditor General, you know, I just mentioned Nunavut 3000. The Office of the Auditor General did make important recommendations around the transparency of the reporting around Nunavut 3000. That needs to be carried through. That recommendation needs to be embraced by the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the next government so that members of this Assembly can gauge the results that are coming out of Nunavut 3000. How many homeless Nunavummiut are finding homes or finding supports through this plan?

And again, partnerships. It can't just be the Nunavut Housing Corporation. I know they have established ways to partner with non-profits. Those need to be supported. And we also need to look for other partners, whether they are federal or within Inuit organizations, say for example Kivalliq Inuit Association. And so those are the ways that we're going to help more people find a home. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your response.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, homelessness is very worrisome right now, especially now with winter coming. They actually don't have any place to go, and we always try to brainstorm as to how we can help them more. With homeless people, we need to hear from the actual homeless people like what are their concerns and why are they in that situation. Sometimes people who have gone through very hard trauma, they end up getting evicted and get homeless. So I believe they need help with their concerns and make them want to be part of their community again. That's one of the things that I've been thinking about. It would be good if we could do that here and work with each other properly, not the government but everybody. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Does anyone else want to ask a question? Is there someone here who has not asked a question yet but would like to? We have another person wanting to ask a question. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am thinking about caribou right now. They seem to be diminishing in number, especially the caribou in the Keewatin. I remember when I was a young man in the summer time we would go across by boat with my uncle Philip to go to my grandfather's. My grandparents would go inland in the summer time, and as we were getting closer, Caleb said to me, "Look at all the caribou there," and then I started looking for caribou and I asked him, "No, I don't see any caribou." And then he said, "just keep looking, don't blink, just look in one spot." And when I listened and did it properly, the whole land seemed to be moving with like 20 or 50,000 caribou. But today we don't see that anymore. It's very rare for people to see that these days.

I'm thinking that our caribou needs to be protected better and I understand that the minister will have that under his or her responsibility, but if you get selected for premier, what would you do? How would you take part?

And the Bluenose caribou in Kugluktuk are under concerns as well, and also the Baffin caribou have been under concerns for a while now. The Keewatin caribou go under the same diminishment so what will you do to correct that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok.

Mr. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to say your father and yourself make really good caribou that has been cached, and I thank you for providing that kind of food to me. Some of us who live in an area where there are less caribou, although there used to be a great huge population of caribou, caribou sustenance especially in Baffin region, we have been impacted with lack of caribou, and also with Kitikmeot, as well. There's a total allowable harvest set due to population decline, and I know that there has been quite concern.

And we hear from Kivalliq and they are becoming louder and louder in Kivalliq especially, talking about the caribou population decrease and they want us to do something about it. And the management of caribou too, especially the caribou has declined. In regards to caribou management and also wildlife management, this has to be very important.

As well, would like to work closely with different entities, and work closely with especially with the Department of Environment and they try to manage the caribou very well, and also with the regional Inuit associations and also NTI has also worked with the support of Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. They do look for ways how to work with these issues with all those entities. We look for management working together. We have to make a decision, or any kind of, whether it be caribou or wildlife, we have to work together to deal with it.

When I am, if I am selected to be premier, I will be working with the Department of Environment minister and with the other co-management and also the concerns. I know there's a Beverly caribou management. As well each herd has their own management board and we work and support with these entities and work closely with them because I have felt them myself, especially when there were many caribou and now they are really scarce. They are scarce now, and it has a great impact on our lives. Many people have been impacted.

Also in the region of Kitikmeot, they are working very hard. There used to be abundance of the caribou, and the caribou population is decreasing perhaps due to climate change; I'm not sure what's causing this. But we need to work closely with the co-management people. We need to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Caribou population or caribou management, we acknowledge the fact that there's a great interest on polar bears and caribou, and there's a great concentration of interest on those species. Even myself I think I forget what they look like. I haven't gone out hunting for too long.

We need to work together closely as the member my co-colleague, what he says that the wildlife management starting from the Nunavut Wildlife Management all the way down to the local hunting associations and with the Nunavut implementation contract, the HTOs will be now receiving bigger funds. And we're very happy to see that and we need to work closely with the HTOs. In regards to caribou management, we need to listen to what they says and what they would like to see.

Depends on like for example (interpretation ends) on listening to the needs of the community and regional level and what the desires are from the local representation. Do they want to see more revenue-generating opportunities through tourism? Do they want to see more conservation around the habitat and migratory routes? It starts with listening and understanding, and then getting on board and supporting the local groups. Because when it comes to caribou across Nunavut, my understanding is that there's very different needs and very different perspectives.

The role of the Nunavut government should be of a partner and a supporter when it comes to caribou across Nunavut. It's a huge source of food security, and there's also a huge enjoyment and well-being from hunting. So when it comes to programs like young hunters programs, those are the kinds of things we need to see more of. We need to see more school hunts. We need to see more caribou in schools in terms of processing skins, meat. These are the kind of things that ela, tuktu, they make us healthy, and we need to work with our partners on how to protect or develop community interests. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Although we going to have a long meeting in regards to this, we'll take a short break.

Before we do take a short break, I would like to acknowledge and recognize an individual who used to be a member for Iqaluktuuttiaq. Please welcome Jeannie Hakongak Ehaloak to the gallery. And also Joanne Taptuna, our late premier's wife. Welcome.

We will resume with the questions after we take a 15-minute break. I still have a list of names left, so we'll take a 15-minute break.

>>Meeting recessed at 14:56 and resumed at 15:21

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you for returning. Going back to the agenda. Welcome. We're still on question period for the premiers, and I want to give opportunity to the member who hasn't asked questions. Mr. Taqtu, member for high Arctic.

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask my two questions right away, thank you.

We have all been impacted by suicide in the whole territory of Nunavut, and this issue is very painful, and young people, especially young people are now committing suicide.

How would you try and reduce the number of suicide if selected to the position of premier? Because it's very painful whether young people commit suicide. How would you try and provide support to people when selected to premier? And also, secondly, it's very important to Nunavut...

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Taqtu, after your response I'll give you an opportunity to ask another topic. If we can allow the candidates to respond. Mr. Akeeagok, you go first.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, the suicide issue is very it's a great impact on us, especially when you are a member of the Legislative Assembly. And we try to provide programs and urge the people to make sure that they talk about the public, talk in public about efforts to reduce the number of suicides. We provide funding for programs and we do provide try to get make sure that there's people who are available to provide support.

I think it was a couple of years ago that all of us cabinet ministers had signed an agreement with NTI, RCMP, and various entities to tackle the suicide issue. This plan is now, they are planning not just for the present time, not just for us. It's geared for all the people who will have to work and who will be running the program. That was set out in the plan, but now we're implementing the contents and I expect that as premier that I will urge to make sure that we provide funding to entities that will tackle this issue and provide, make the funding more available. Like we need more mental health workers as well. The Atii Angutiit! Program that was recently launched, so that men can try and help themselves. I'm very pleased about that. And I'm very proud and thankful that it was initiated at the high Arctic with the Department of Health.

We look at ways how we can improve lives and enjoy life better, and have a fair life.

So as premier I will work hard on that and also the government department ministers have signed an agreement and I will remind them as well. I will remind the new members in regards to this, because this issue is very important. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, it's your turn.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your question to my colleague. This issue is very heavy, and we need to discuss heavy issues in the House, as we all have been impacted. Nunavummiut need help. That's why we're here, to provide support.

I'm very pleased in the past years the funding for mental health and providing mental health workers, the funding has been increasing every year in Nunavut territory, but we need more funding to make sure there's help programs available. And on suicide prevention, in the plan there are 25 recommendations or action items, and looking at some of the action items, some of them have been implemented. For example, in the

schools, within the schools we need a mental health worker, and we're moving along with that through education coalition and we're moving forward with that.

Sometimes there are small, we provide funding like for example trigger locks. As we're aware that if we use that in Nunavut if we utilize these more, there was a study done. Even though it was done that study was done outside of the territory, these trigger locks, when trigger locks the number of suicides had decreased during that research and it provides some help.

But 25 action items or plans looking at that especially, those come from young people. We need to listen to the young people with these 25 action plans. We move them forward within the upcoming years. That's what I would work towards if they need more funding, and if they need the capacity built, I would do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. If you have an additional question, please proceed.

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My second question: The number of Inuktitut-speaking people are reducing and dropping and more people are speaking English. If they can teach Inuktitut language at the schools and also in Arctic College, what would you do to increase the number of Inuktitut programs so that Nunavummiut could speak Inuktitut more? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main, please proceed with your response.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We work with the language experts. There are many people who specialize in language issues. I know that Culture and Heritage work coming from the Nunavut Government, but there's entities to make sure those entities are running smoothly and look at ways how we can provide more support to them, especially the language commission. I'm sorry that we don't have a language commissioner at this time, and this is an independent officer of Legislative Assembly.

And then Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, the terminology, the Inuktitut terminology how can we provide more support and how we can improve the office of the language terminology office? And also the education department?

It's evident that their whole thought, they start teaching from daycare. It starts with the daycare. We heard that daycare, that we need to, when there are Inuktitut-speaking people, the children tend to speak Inuktitut later on. Like for example, my children in Arviat, they learn Inuktitut and our son, every time we go pick him up from daycare, he would sing Inuktitut songs. And I notice, we notice how much he was learning Inuktitut from the daycare staff. And also the school, within the school, the funding for language programming like for example more Inuktitut. More Inuit should be more teachers and I

believe that it would be more supportive and it would be helpful. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your response.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have strengthened the usage of the Inuktitut language as soon as possible. A recent study said that the Inuktitut language was endangered, and we have to promote the usage of Inuktitut as a whole population. There are a lot of strong legislations that the government has in regards to the usage of Inuktitut, and there's also plans for the schools to promote the usage. I believe they teach in Inuktitut up to grade 6 but it has to go up to the grade 12 level. It will help more people using Inuktitut as the language of choice.

We know that there needs to be more Inuktitut languages. We have a shortage at the moment. And with the NTEP program, we have applied the NTEP programs in ten communities and we have to urge the Minister of Languages in regards to the promotion and usage of the Inuktitut language, and only then can we see more people speaking Inuktitut.

It's very obvious that there's an erosion in the usage of the Inuktitut language.

We also have to apply Inuktitut at home, starting at home and even myself, I see the decrease in the usage. So I work hard to promote the usage of Inuktitut language personally and also publicly.

And if possible I would like to see more people applying, using Inuktitut because we do have interpreters in the House. Our elders will be more comfortable that way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I should like to recognize Mr. Speaker, Tony Akoak. And also Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter (interpretation): Thank you, Speaker-elect. (interpretation ends)
Congratulations on your Speaker-elect.

(interpretation) I would like to ask a question regarding bootleggers. (interpretation ends)
It affects violence at home, food security. There's a lot of bootleggers, Gjoa Haven is supposed to be a dry community. I'm sure it's not the only one. The whole of Nunavut, they bootlegging. What are you going to do to battle bootlegging problems in Nunavut?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Akeeagok, your response please.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to respond. First of all and know that liquor is brought up by airlines and by the post office, with the post office from Winnipeg. As mentioned, Montreal, they look to see if there's alcohol or drugs being brought in. And I think it would be a good place to start where there's surveillance of items coming in through the post office, and secondly, if people want to eat, alcohol is readily available and we have not practised proper usage of liquor. There's physical abuse and separations among couples because of not using alcohol properly. That's how I can respond to your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main. Your response?

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Looking at bootlegging, you know, it's a multifaceted issue. If selected I would work closely with the Minister of Justice in terms of the items that my colleague just mentioned in terms of the shipment, the tracking, the scanning with Canada Post that could help to control the influx.

But there also has to be a component in terms of what are we doing on the ground in the community, in terms of law enforcement. I have heard some very interesting ideas around bringing back community constable type positions that could serve as a stronger liaison between RCMP officers and community members. I think that deserves close consideration.

We also need to look at the functioning of the civil forfeiture office within the Government of Nunavut. That's a powerful tool where bootleggers, who are in some cases getting rich off the backs of children, can have their belongings seized. We need to look at whether that office is functioning as it was intended and if it needs additional resources, additional direction in terms of cracking down on bootleggers, then action can be taken in that regard. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to remind everyone to go right to the point of your question without a lengthy preamble. Keep it brief and to the point. I know all your questions are important and you're here representing your ridings and I'm sure that the information is going out to your communities. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the premier candidates, my question is in relation to equality of government expenditures within Nunavut. I had a bit of a preamble, but I'll get right to the question for you. If selected as premier what will you do to ensure equality of government spending and government functions within all three regions of Nunavut? Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main, you've got the first crack at that one.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This is an issue, I would have liked the preamble, could have given me a better idea on how to answer.

Sharing the wealth or making sure that communities are being supported to the best extent possible, that's the responsibility of this Assembly, of the members in this House. It comes down in essence to the idea that all communities are equal. We have 25 communities in Nunavut and we need to support them all.

And where we have inequality, in terms of distribution of, it could be programs, it could be staffing, it could be infrastructure, these are things that are talked about at the dinner table in many households in Nunavut.

Any time you have communities feeling like they are being left out or being left behind, that's very concerning, and if this Assembly decides to place something around this topic in the mandate, to have an examination of expenditures and functions, that's entirely the prerogative of the Assembly.

I'm a strong believer in decentralization of government staff functions. I think the past 25 years have shown that decentralization has led to increase our Inuit employment rate, and if we want to keep that Inuit employment rate within the Nunavut government increasing, I believe that decentralization needs to be given continued support.

And the final thing that I want to mention is that, if we look at the government dollars spending on infrastructure, for example, if we can find ways to build cheaper, then we can build more. We heard an example where potential tank farm had doubled in a number of years, and the costing estimates had doubled, a hundred per cent cost increase within a short number of the years. That's extremely concerning, because that means that the money is in our pocket and it's getting smaller as we sit still.

So whether it comes to government infrastructure, we need to look at how can we build schools cheaper, how can we build health centres cheaper, because that will make more infrastructure available to many other communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your response.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a very good question but a very difficult one to answer, because if you look at spending and you compare the infrastructure that's needed in a major centre or that is needed for territory-wide, do you put that against -- do you put that as that it's being spent more in one region or another? Because the facilities, like the elder care facilities that are being built in the three regions are there to service all elders. Do you want to pin that as whether the region is getting more than the other regions? I think we need to find the true definition of what kind of

funds. That need to be equalized, and that's something that's a very good one that I think we need to look into, and it's something that we can definitely try to do.

One of the ways I think that we need to also look at is using housing, Nunavut 3000 as an example. Before we were building 60 houses a year and it was for four or five communities. And when Nunavut 3000 came on, it was to build in every community. And I found that to be very, that's equality that you know the need is from every community and you try and address it by including everyone. I applaud the housing corporation for doing that, because some of our communities did not see a single housing being built for a number of years. And the fundamental things for us as government we have to keep an eye on, and when we introduce programs, it's that how can we roll it out to every community and how can we do that and with finite resources, it's getting harder and harder.

We need more mental health workers, and for that we need every roll it out to every community. If it's small community is it fair for them to have one, when a large community guess four? Because we know the need for each of those communities to screen. And if you look at staff burnout, if you put a small one, you're making that potential to fail program. So you've got to keep that in your eyes.

As a leader this is something that I would very much stress to my cabinet colleagues and to this House, in terms of let's be fair to all communities, and that every one of our communities, regardless whether they are small, medium or large, is that we do have fair equity in terms of funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Two questions on my list my apologies I made a mistake earlier. I did say Arviat. Mr. Kablutsiak, your turn.

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman I have many questions, but as per our rules I'll ask to make two questions. I'll ask other questions at a later time. This question concerns all Nunavummiut, which is shortage of housing. My question is (interpretation ends) how well you will ensure that Inuit employment plan is addressed by coming up with solutions by creating jobs to Nunavummiut and supporting pilot projects. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your response.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, we all have many questions, but we can't entertain them at this time. If elected as premier, my doors will be open to pose questions or concerns and what you may want to see as solutions, and I am open, as I mentioned.

With regards to housing, the plans or the strategy, (interpretation ends) when the government is building infrastructure, it was going project by project by project, and it

was very difficult for Inuit employment to be maintained, because we do not give that assurance that there's going to be a project in the next year and the next year. Through Nunavut Housing 3000 a number of initiatives have taken place which allowed for a seven-year deal. Then you could plan and say we're going to target Inuit employment into the trades and to the administration so training can be provided and the private company can be given assurance that they can continue and move project to project and be secure.

The other parts that have been happy with our Indigenous folks that had done that, and they have learned how to do it and they are now working in Rankin Inlet, building and training Inuit, their fellow Indigenous people, to do it. What a wonderful example of our Indigenous folks working together in order to advance Inuit employment.

In my opening comments I've called on all of our Inuit to come and work and participate and help implement our programs so you can succeed. Their success is our success.

And that is what I wanted to respond to this very important question. Thank you for posing that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Over to you, Mr. Main. The floor is yours.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regards to Inuit participation in housing development and what numbers we are looking at, with we need to get that. How many are in training as statistics. The Office of the Auditor General, in regards to Nunavut 3000 there were issues and Nunavut Housing Corporation took down how many Inuit are in training and how many are actively working, and if anything has to be established or perhaps increased education and training, we would require that.

(interpretation ends) There are a couple of other pieces I wanted to mention. I would love to see pilot projects. I would love to see a pilot project around labour-only contracts for housing. Previous years in Arviat, it's hard to imagine a company hitting 95 per cent Inuit employment, but that has happened in the past, and there's some really interesting work happening in other parts of the territory, I believe in Igloolik, unless I am mistaken, where there is real energy and emphasis being put on Inuit employment and training in housing field.

One final thing. I mean, Nunavut Arctic College is a key partner and I love the work that's being done in Rankin Inlet. It would be wonderful to see that work expand beyond just Rankin Inlet, expand into other communities, if it can be.

One of the underlying pieces that needs scrutiny is the trades certification process, including the entrance exams in terms of, again, government looking at where are the barriers, how can we remove barriers for Inuit who want to enter building trades. That's also a piece that I wanted mention today. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. With my names, Hudson Bay MLA, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Why should I vote for you for premier? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I mean, if you're going to vote for me, I would prefer that you feel like I'm going to do the best job. At the end of the day, it's all about your constituents. It's about Nunavummiut. We're all here for Nunavummiut. And it's about the work. It's about the job.

I've spent four years on this side of the House, four years on that side of the House, and the next four years has to be all about collaboration in this House in between members in between standing committees, cabinet members, but also with organizations outside of this House. And like I said in my speech, that's the thing that I'm the most proud of from the past four years as a minister, has been building partnerships. And I think that's probably the biggest thing that I bring to the table in terms of this job. Vote with your heart, would be my two cents. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thought he was going to ask a simple question but this is one very difficult question to answer, and it's something, it's very difficult to try and promote yourself and to try and give reasons why you need to do that.

Actions speaks a lot, and for myself, for the progression that I have done with my public service life going, from public service to elected official and being minister, and have a majority of portfolios that have taken place, having served with every premier in this territory as a boss, I understand the very unique role the premier brings to this legislature. And it is one that I think that I'm ready for.

We will need a very strong team of ministers in order to advance all the mandate and all the operations and maintenance that we need to oversee, so we can't do it alone, but it's something that I want to bring as a team player, a team. We need a strong team in order to implement what we want to do for the next four years, and I think this is the reasons why I seek for your vote.

But it is up to you individually on who you are going to vote for, and that's going to be for the next four years and whatever that vote is, I will respect and appreciate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Before going to questions I would like to recognize the previous MLA for Tununiq, Karen Nutarak. Welcome. And her husband, Harvey. Welcome. We still have a question. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Ms. Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) During the campaign Nunavummiut shared concerns about the state of education in our territory, specifically the curriculum, the strength of Inuktitut education, and the age and capacity of our schools which serve many roles in all of our communities. These issues also affected the DEAs. As premier how would you set priorities to address these challenges and what concrete steps would you take?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as we stated, as premier we can't do everything and this is why for this very question we will need a strong education minister. It's something that somebody that wants to work with me in advancing all which you've highlighted. Those were repeated in the same during my campaign, and it's something that I have committed to do.

There is some legislation that needs to be amended to help towards this, and that's something that I think that we as legislators will be able to provide our input but it's from this. There are a lot of bodies like the DEAs. There are 27 DEAs in the territory that we need to work with, and that's something that I would task a minister to work very closely and collaboratively to each and every one of those and collectively with the coalition of the DEA, and also let's keep that Inuktitut curriculum flowing. As I stated earlier, it's at grade 6. It needs to go to grade 12. We need to find ways of making sure that excels and that will be complete so it will benefit our students. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, your turn.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a very good question in the area of education. As a priority, in my view, our teachers, some are Nunavummiut, some are newcomers and they are all capable and have great abilities, and they are tireless. The worry is that the shortage of teachers when you look at their responsibilities and the roles are still vacant, it's worrisome.

(interpretation ends) In terms of the need to invest more on recruitment and retention of our teachers, that has to be a foundational piece. I know we have a new collective agreement with the Nunavut Teachers' Association, and saw them get some much deserved pay increases and benefits increases through that. That will be great. But I feel that more we can do. We shouldn't be having, having to look for teachers at the beginning

of the school year in terms of putting a warm body at the front of the classroom. Our children need qualified teachers to be leading them through their school year, and ideally they would be Inuktitut-speaking Inuit, but if we don't have the needed numbers for that, then it needs to be a certified teacher at the front of the classroom.

On the infrastructure question, I'll go back to my earlier response where I mentioned taking a real hard look at how we build things in Nunavut. If we can build schools for cheaper, then we can build more. If we can add on modular classrooms, then we can take care of our students better.

We need to be more creative when it comes to our infrastructure, because there are way too many schools where they are just simply not big enough, and the students and the staff are suffering as a result. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): I would like to recognize the guests, Premier PJ Akeeagok and president of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Jeremy Tunnaralik, and Nunavut Tunngavik's vice president, Paul Irngout. Please. Welcome to the House. According to my list, Member for Netsilik, Ms. Lyall.

Ms. Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we've heard earlier this afternoon and this morning, there have been a number of Auditor General reports that have seen concerns around and recommendations around transparency and reporting, most recently around audit on the social housing program and Nunavut 3000.

My question to the candidates is: Do you have any ideas around how we can ensure that we are accurately reporting numbers or modernizing how we report numbers, not just to the Office of the Auditor General but to Nunavummiut? How we can do there in a way where this information is passed along numerous avenues, and where it is acceptable? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, you will be first.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) Thank you to the member for to the member for the question. It's a great question. As they say, information is power, and if the decision makers in this room today have easier access to information, then you can make better decisions, or we can make better decisions.

I think a big part of the work that is needed is involving the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics. Over the last couple of years that office has been in a bit of, I'll characterize it as a rebuild mode, I'll call it. But I'm happy to hear that it has started its operations up again, and I'm going to resist the urge to look at the premier to confirm it this or not, but Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs has been investing time and effort in making sure that the

office is up and running and performing its functions. So that's got to be a big part of ensuring transparency.

You mentioned Office of the Auditor General reports. I believe there needs to be a more systematic method of tracking the implementation of recommendations from Office of Auditor General reports so that they are not put on the shelf after a year or so, so that those important recommendations from the Auditor General stay alive and that they still carry weight in terms of the workings of the government.

And the final thing I will mention is around access to information for Nunavummiut. I believe that the Nunavut government can make services and information more available through digital means and, you know, it's not just a one-way flow of giving them information, but also allowing Nunavummiut to provide information to the Nunavut government through avenues like our website and/or other tools such as social media. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, your turn.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chair, the Auditor General is a very important function for this territory, and they get to review our books and some of our programs and they've just done one on the social housing. They are a valuable asset of this government in terms of looking at particular programs, and I commend their work and their work is very superb in terms of providing information to the members and to the government in terms of looking at the various programs.

One of the things that I really think is that we need to address our human resource capacity. We have so much things to do and so little staff. We need to make sure that we do have staff, because once we have those staff, then those datas will be produced. Without staff, it's very difficult to produce any data. As my colleague mentioned, the statistics bureau is a critical function that is now functional, that I look forward to working closely with that, as it is under the Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs in terms of providing guidance through that. It's one that I think is that for us to provide more accurate information to our Nunavummiut is that we need adequate staff in order to produce those data and produce those records that inform Nunavummiut. It is critical that we continue providing information to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Next on my list, Member for Rankin Inlet South. Ms. Tattuinee, go ahead.

Ms. Tattuinee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On the subject of human resources, and increasingly the advertisements for positions are requesting degrees and certification and that kind of thing. While all of that is important, will the government start to consider individual experience, skills, abilities based on competency requirements for the positions? That's considered knowledge and whatnot.

So you can say a degree in something or six years of frontline experience, upward mobility, and that kind of thing. I think that's what's preventing a lot of the positions being filled by Nunavummiut.

If you become premier will you address that particular aspect of capacity and filling positions with Nunavummiut? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok; you'll get the first opportunity.

Mr. Akeeagok: Thank you very much for the question. This is a very good question, and it's something that ideas like this turn into reality. That's something that I've been pushing as a minister and as Minister of Human Resources was really hard on pushing that we have more Inuit employment. And as you know, Inuit don't necessarily have the degrees yet. There are a lot, a number of good students that are coming up and earned their degrees, but the work that is needed is now.

And so one of the things that we did was we expedited direct appointments specifically and very focussed for Inuit that have been on the job for so many years and they continue to be casuals and be not recognized for the work that they're doing. And so we were able to expedite, and very proudly before this last government, we direct-appointed over 450 Inuit into positions that they were working and doing but not recognized because they didn't fit the criteria that you need a certain degree or you need a certificate of this. They've proven that they were able to work, and I think we need to continue that in terms of recognizing that.

Until we catch up with our youth getting all those degrees that are required under government, and I think that's something that we really need to continue to push for, and it's something to do and we've started that Nunavut-wide workplace, too, which I think will help Inuit and people that want to live in their communities and still work for the government. We're trying to do a combination of things to allow that more Inuit, more Nunavummiut do have jobs that help contribute to our programs and services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, your turn.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman (interpretation ends) Similar to my colleague candidate, I'm proud of the number of direct appointments that were put through in the last government. They do indicate, or they show that effort was being directed to reducing the number of casuals within the government, particularly Inuit who are in those positions and performing them.

In terms of equivalencies being considered in job competitions, I believe there are existing directives around that, but whether that's something that could be strengthened or whether that's something that could be looked at further, I'm certainly open to that. I think

the idea or the concept of having somebody who is looking to enter the GN, the Government of Nunavut, and falling short, or not getting screened in for an interview, makes me think about, well, what supports can we provide to that individual? Is it resume writing? Is it cover letter writing?

I think the fact that the individual wants to join the Government of Nunavut is good. We need to make sure that whether it's an economic development officer at the hamlet level, whether it's with the Department of Education at career development officers, that individual doesn't lose hope, because when people stop applying on jobs and they become frustrated, that's really quite -- it's a lost opportunity for them to join the civil service.

One final thing I wanted to mention is that under the new implementation contract, Nunavut implementation contract, I'm really excited to see that there are dollars allocated for pre-employment initiatives, which should help more Nunavummiut, more Inuit get the qualifications needed to join the civil service. So that has never been in place before in terms of that pre-employment piece, and my hope is that it's going to mean big things for adult education, and also Inuit employment in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Does anyone else have a question to the candidates? Everybody has had two opportunities to ask a question. Does anyone else want to ask a question?

I don't see any rise of names. We will take a short break and we will move into elections. We will take a break at first and come back. The bells will ring when it's time to come back. Thank you.

>>Meeting recessed at 16:18 and resumed at 16:35

Chairman (interpretation): We'll proceed to the voting table in an orderly fashion. We will start proceeding to the voting table and you may proceeding to the voting table, starting from over there.

Thank you. The ballots will now be taken to a secure area in the precinct for counting. Members may wish to wait in the lounge or here while we take a brief recess. Thank you.

>>Meeting recessed at 16:39 and resumed at 16:47

Election of Premier

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. There we go. Thank you, members. The forum has reconvened. I wish to advise members that Member Main has been chosen to serve as the Premier of Nunavut. (interpretation ends) Congratulations, Mr. Main.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Hello? (interpretation) At this time I will now invite the Premier-elect, Mr. Main, to make a few remarks. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): I have no choice but to thank you. Thank you very much. I will work to the best of my ability and work hard and treat every colleague, each and every one of you, thank you very much, and working together. I thank my co-nominee. I know that you work very hard and I'm very proud of you and I'm very happy that we were both candidates. Thank you very much. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

Chairman (interpretation): I thank you as well. I know that it was very, to answer questions during the question period with Nunavut population listening to the answers. We say good luck to the premier and also the colleagues that have been elected.

The first day of our session we will select eight members, and following the closure of nominations I ask to destroy the ballots. Member for Tasilik moves. Seconded by? We don't require a seconder. Thank you. The ballots will now be destroyed.

Nominations for Cabinet Positions

With the Premier-elect, we will now be opening up nominations for the cabinet members. For your information, members have agreed that the forum will select eight ministers to serve on cabinet.

Following the close of nominations each candidate has up to ten minutes to make remarks. We will proceed following in alphabetical order. The full caucus has agreed that there is no question period.

I remind members that if you are nominated, you must immediately accept or decline the nomination. The floor is now open for nominations. The floor is now open for nominations.

Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Mr. Speaker, I nominated MLA for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I accept. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): (No interpretation).

Ms. Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I nominated the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Gwen Healey Akearok.

Chairman (interpretation): (No interpretation).

Ms. Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): (No interpretation) Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I nominate George Hickes. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Hickes, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do.

Chairman (interpretation): (no interpretation) Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): I would like to nominate Annie Tattuinee.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Tattuinee, do you accept the nomination?

Ms. Tattuinee: Mr. Chair, thank you, yes, I do.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to nominate Cecile Nelvana Lyall.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Lyall, do you accept the nomination?

Ms. Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I nominate Mr. Simailak. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Simailak, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate member for Tununiq, Mr. Brian Koonoo.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Koonoo, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member for Quttiktuq, Ms. Tattuinee.

Ms. Tattuinee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate for cabinet, Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akeeagok, do you accept?

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I accept, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Any other nominations? Any further nominations? Mr. Koonoo.

Mr. Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate the member for Rankin Inlet-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Alex Sammurtok.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Any other nominations? The floor is still open. I believe there are no more nominations, and if that's the case, we will now proceed to candidates' speeches. You have ten minutes. Each candidate has ten minutes to make remarks. We will proceed in alphabetical order by surname. Mr. Akeeagok.

Mr. Akeeagok (interpretation): I was thinking that Ms. Akearok proceeds first as she is female. I am not going to go the full ten minutes, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank Steven Taqtu for the nomination. He is the member for Quttiktuq.

I congratulate Mr. John Main. We have worked quite hard over the years as colleagues in the House and outside of the House. And I would like to work very closely with the members, cabinet elected members. And I think you all believe, well I think you remember what I outlined in my comments. I have been a minister for eight years with

different portfolios under my belt, and eight departments that I was responsible for. For example, we worked very closely with the regional Inuit organizations and the mayors and the board of directors and different entities that were established to represent Nunavut and their communities.

I would like to take this time also to thank my family for the support they have provided me, and that's why I would like to put up my name for cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. And following the list of names, Ms. Brewster. You have ten minutes.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker-elect, and I would like to first off to start by thanking my constituents for putting their faith in me again, because without their faith, I wouldn't be here on this really important day. I look forward to committing to serve my constituents in the best way that I know how.

I know that during the last four years, I focused on being the best constituency MLA that there ever was, and I know from my campaign period that they had a lot of feedback, and I had a lot of improvement to do. I take that feedback and that advice to heart, and I will follow through on my promises to always improve and get better every day at the work that I'm doing.

So I thank my constituents of Iqaluit-Sinaa again and of course I thank Member Qavvik for putting his faith in me to nominate me and putting his faith really in the democratic system because it's really important that all that want the opportunity do get the opportunity to put their names forward, so thank you. And I'd like to as well, welcome the newly elected members. It has been a real pleasure getting to know you all and I look forward to working with everybody no matter what capacity we land in. I feel very full of hope based on how incredibly receptive and nice people are and how committed people are to their communities and I look forward to working together.

A little bit about myself is I have four years as a regular MLA where I was chair of the standing committee on social wellness and vice chair of a couple of other committees, and I really enjoyed working with my colleagues in those positions. Before that I had a 20-year career at the Department of Health, give or take a few months, in a number of management positions, starting with an interim position with my boss as manager of health promotion, moving into research and special projects, manager of health protection, public health positions.

As we know, I sat with the Office of Patient Relations, so I really got to know the health care system through that. I ended my work at the Department of Health as the director of travel programs, and the monumental task of moving people around for medical travel and solving their problems and as well as duty travel.

Today I made my first mistake as a member of the 7th Assembly. I stood up to nominate someone, and I had forgotten when the mace is here, we don't have to stand. I was the first person to point it out to my colleagues that you don't all have to stand, because some people followed my lead. And, you'll know that anytime that I receive feedback about something I've done or said, I take ownership of it. I point it out right away, if I feel like I've done something wrong, or if I feel like I could have done better. And that's the way I conduct myself always.

I have always been here to uplift my colleagues and to have difficult conversations when need be, and to always do that respectfully, and I promise I will continue to do that.

I have focused on good governance and integrity through my career here in the legislature, as well as my career in various governance positions before I came to become MLA, and I feel that as a public servant and as newly in this role as a public servant in another way as MLA, I will continue to do that. I hope that no matter what happens today, that we come away with the same feeling of respect for each other that we have nurtured in the last couple of weeks as a group, because from experience, that respect can slide fairly quickly, and that's not the best thing for all Nunavummiut.

I don't want to take up too much time. I know everybody has had their listening ears on all day. Just know that my hopes are to be able to take a logical step in what has been my career so far, and that is to serve as a member of cabinet and as a minister wherever the premier sees fit. I don't have any particular portfolio in mind. What I have in mind is to serve with integrity and with hard work and reliability.

Thank you all for your time. And I hope to be sitting across the way at the end of this. Thank you, everybody.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Ms. Healey Akearok, your turn.

Ms. Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to begin by congratulating our newly elected speaker and our Premier-elect, Mr. Main. I look forward to working with you in your new roles and in supporting the work ahead.

I also want to congratulate all of my colleagues in this Assembly. Each of us carries the trust of our communities, and I'm honoured to serve alongside you. I would like to thank my community of Iqaluit and the voters of Iqaluit-Manirajak for placing their confidence in me. I'm humbled of the responsibility they have given me.

I also want to acknowledge my husband and my daughters and extended family, and the elders and colleagues and friends who have supported and guided me throughout my life.

I'm grateful for their steady encouragement. I would also like to thank Ms. Lyall for her nomination today.

I feel very fortunate to have been born in Iqaluit. Iqaluit has shaped who I am. From a very young age, I was taught that we are here to be of service to one another, and that serving others is an everyday act of care in how we approach work and our responsibilities and our relationships. Those lessons have guided my career and the choices that I make. They remind me to act with humility and to remember that leadership is about responsibility and accountability to the people we serve.

I completed all of my schooling here in Iqaluit, and when I graduated, I chose to go to university so that I could learn more and return home to contribute. I studied the sciences, and then I moved back to Iqaluit and worked at our hospital and in the department of Health. I later co-founded Qaujigiaqtiit as a place for Inuit health and wellbeing. My time at Qaujigiaqtiit began with small community led projects and grew into leading larger initiatives throughout the territory. As the work expanded, so has my understanding of the issues facing our youth and families and communities and that path is what ultimately led me here. Over time, I continued to deepen my learning, eventually completing a doctorate in Public Health. I share that, not to promote achievements, but simply to say that I've always tried to build my knowledge in ways that would allow me to be useful. My work has focussed on supporting Inuit pathways to health and wellbeing and on helping to build systems by and for Nunavummiut.

I have spent much of my career visiting and working in communities all across our territory. I have been fortunate to spend time in 21 of our 25 beautiful communities, and the time I've spent in each unique place has stayed with me. Each community has its own strengths, history, and ways of supporting one another. Every community holds knowledge and experience that strengthens our territory as a whole.

Much of my work has been in building programs, organizations, and joint initiatives that support all our communities. I've worked with elders, youth, schools, health centres, community organizations, and governments.

I've been fortunate to represent Nunavut and Canada at circumpolar tables working with leaders from around our Arctic. In those spaces, I've seen the power of partnership and different approaches to building consensus and to turning our shared priorities into action. I have also seen the gaps, the pressures on communities, and the need for meaningful opportunities for our young people. Everything that I've learned along the way has prepared me to be here.

If I'm given the responsibility of serving on the Executive Council, I will continue to lead from those experiences with integrity and a focus on practical solutions shaped by the people that we represent.

I believe in our consensus system. We are one territory. The work ahead of us is shared work that will require the strengths of all of us. If I'm selected to serve on Executive Council, I will carry out that work with respect, patience, and a willingness to collaborate with every member.

I'm prepared to listen, to learn, and to get to work. I will take the time needed to understand the issues before us, and I'll approach decisions with care. I believe that our work is strongest when we harness our collective effort with one another and with our communities, and with those whose lives are impacted by our decisions.

Inuit knowledge and values will continue to guide how I think, how I work, and how I relate to others.

We all come to this Assembly with a shared commitment to improve the well-being of our territory. If I'm selected to serve on the Executive Council, I will do my best and I will carry that responsibility seriously.

Whatever the outcome today, I look forward to working with all of you to supporting your efforts and to contributing where I can. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Turning now to -- my apologies, Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First I would like to congratulate you. Everyone knows out there and in here how important the speaker's role is and how much respect I have for that seat. I did have the privilege to sit in that chair a couple of times as deputy speaker in the last Assembly, and I want to congratulate you on your appointment.

When we first got elected together in 2013, I don't think either of us would have imagined we would still be sitting here at this time in the roles that you're in and I'm hoping to be in once again.

I would also like to thank our premier-elect, Mr. Main. I look forward, we have been working together the last eight years and I look forward to the next four of working collaboratively together.

I would also like to take a brief moment to congratulate my niece, Elise Frederickson (ph), who graduated from MacEwan University just this morning. I did watch proceedings on my phone very briefly. Congratulations, Ellie. I'm very proud of you and I look forward to see what you're going to bring to the table.

Honourable colleagues, I appear before you today humbled by the opportunity to once again serve constituents of Iqaluit-Tasiluk in their House, and in the 7th Legislative

Assembly. Since first being elected in the 4th Assembly in 2013, and in the 12 years since, I have worked to earn the trust of the people of Iqaluit-Tasiluk, and the respect of my colleagues here in the Assembly and in the public service.

Over those years, I've had the privilege of serving in many roles in this House, recently as deputy speaker, as chair of the Committee of the Whole, Chair of Government Operations and Public Accounts, and various other committees.

I have sat on both sides of this House, splitting my time as a regular member for six years and as a cabinet minister for six years in some of the most challenging portfolios in our government.

As Minister of Finance I helped guide Nunavut through difficult fiscal realities and was able to course-correct our budgets from reaching record deficits into small surpluses.

Colleagues, as we learned in our briefings this week, our government coffers have been depleted, and we're going to be operated in the red for the foreseeable future. If left uncontrolled, we will not only have less money to invest in new projects but in the programs that Nunavummiut so desperately need. What we need now is someone at the helm with the experience to navigate through these rough financial waters ahead.

Colleagues, I believe that I've got the experience and track record to prove how to keep our government accountable and running smooth without sacrificing services to Nunavut. I ask for your confidence in my to be a minister of the cabinet table who can balance our needs and wants while also balancing the books. I've proven this approach before.

While I was Minister of Health, the Department of Health was spending tens of millions of dollars more than they budgeted year after year. That meant that every extra dollar the GN had left over in their budget went to Health to pay for their overspending. Being both the finance minister and the health minister at the time, I could have just let this continue and find money in other departments' budgets to supplement the health budget. Instead of looked at ways where we could save or spend more wisely.

What I found was that Nunavut was paying over \$70 million out of its own pocket for a program that Ottawa is required to provide. What I'm talking about is the Non-Insured Health Benefits, known as the NIHB program that most of us Inuit in this Assembly have access to fly south for medical care.

Colleagues, I fought for five years for Ottawa to come to the table and negotiate with Nunavut for a better deal. It took us threatening to hand the program back over to them before they took us seriously.

I have to note Premier Taptuna and Premier Savikataaq at the time gave me the opportunity to provide that stance with the federal government.

Colleagues, in 2020 I secured a deal that brought nearly \$80 million of new funding that year and ongoing funding for years to come. That single deal made the difference between having a record-setting deficit to having a surplus that year, but it also yielded hundreds of millions of dollars in new health care dollars for Nunavut since, and set a strong foundation for permanent deal with Ottawa that we're still getting for today.

And I have to acknowledge former Minister Main of Health, or I guess currently until tomorrow, for the hard work that he has done to help bring that file forward as well.

Colleagues, I believe we can do that again. I believe that if we open our books, we will start to see places that we can find new money or seize on opportunities where we've already made investments, such as in early child care and education.

In this 7th Assembly I hope to see a focus on Inuit employment, particularly in the health and Social Services where we've already invested millions of dollars to create new nursing and social working positions. These positions need to be filled by Inuit for Inuit.

When Manitok Thompson said during the election coverage that politicians need to make Inuit training and employment their top priority, I hope we all sat up in our chairs.

Our commitment to prioritizing Inuit employment has fallen by the way side, and this government needs to recommit to ensure that Inuit get priority in hiring, training, and skills development.

This is especially important on major projects like the new trauma and addictions centre, elders centres, and infrastructure that will be built through federal investments in Arctic security projects like the recently announced hydro project, airports and other infrastructure.

We need to ensure that Inuit employment is prioritized and planned for in each of these major projects so that Inuit beneficiaries directly benefit from these projects.

Today Nunavut stands at a historic place in time. The Nunavut devolution agreement will transfer powers from the Government of Canada to the Government of Nunavut, over land use, resource royalties, and environmental stewardship. It will be crucial to have experienced and steady leadership in our cabinet to help shepherd this transition, people who have worked in government before know the administrative processes, and are able to lead with confidence and collaboration.

Colleagues, although I have only met some of you recently, I hope I've given you a sense of who I am and what I can do if given the support to serve in this cabinet. Those who have worked with me before can attest that I have a strong work ethic, I am an

approachable and inclusive colleague, and I consider everyone's perspective when making decisions.

This is what I pledge to bring to this role, to this government, to my constituents, and to you in this Assembly. I do not take this responsibility lightly. I know the challenges ahead are great. But I also know the strength of our people and the importance of building a government that reflects their hopes and aspirations.

If entrusted with this role, I will continue to serve with integrity, dedication, and respect for the voices of all Nunavummiut.

With that, I would like to thank you and my family for supporting me to go forward in this fourth term, and I look forward to what we're going to fulfill. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, the Member for Tununig, Mr. Koonoo, this is your turn.

Mr. Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to say thank you to my family, especially my wife. They have committed themselves and support me on this endeavour. And the people of Pond Inlet that elected me, and those who did not elect me, I thank them for bringing me here. I want to try for ministership, because I believe that I am able. I can work hard and do it.

I have education from Nunavut Arctic College, environmental program in the year 2000, and I completed that program and was certified. I'm also a member of Parks Canada for 17 years, 22 years. I try work hard all the time on protecting the environment. I've sat on boards with the hunters and trappers organization from 2009 and 2010, and I was the secretary treasurer. After being a treasurer I became vice chairman. I was selected to sit as vice chairman, and we had to work real hard for two weeks when the narwhal were trapped in the ice.

In 2019 I was a member of the hunters and trappers organization, and we installed we were trying to install VHF repeaters, and we were successful in doing that, and they became useful in preventing accidents.

For many years I've been involved with the search and rescue group, and I've taken part in some very difficult searches. I've been the leader of the search and rescue during these hard times, and I tried keep everything together to help my community members.

I've gone to school. I've learned about Article 23 and 24 under the *Nunavut Agreement*, and the other agreements like IBAs for Parks Canada. The environment and environmental stewardship or protection, I always considered that very important, and I know the difficulties of being a hunter. I learned that very well since I was a child.

And in terms of protection of animals and harvesting of animals, I know about them all. I know how important they are for the people of Nunavut for food security and also in preserving Inuit culture.

I want to work. I want to be true and work hard. And, when you work hard, you do better work when you have a good goal, although I'm humble and I'm able. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We can all get better by trying to do things. And the next candidate is, Member for Netsilik, Ms. Lyall, you have ten minutes. You may start.

Ms. Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker-elect. Firstly I would like to thank my constituency, Netsilik, for putting your faith in me to serve as your MLA for the next four years. I've been humbled by your kind words and encouragement throughout the whole campaign and post election days. I'll work to the best of my ability to not just advocate for our communities, but to lay the foundation for the solutions that our community so desperately need.

I would also like to congratulate the other 20 members who have been elected or acclaimed, and to thank all those who put their names forward to serve our people. I would also like to thank the Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana, for nominating me.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to give a brief background on myself. After graduating from my high school in Taloyoak at Netsilik Iliapik (ph). I went to study at Nunavut Sivuniksavut and Red River College.

While taking part in the first ever third year cohort of Nunavut Sivuniksavut, I had the opportunity to intern with the different departments and agencies of the Government of Canada in Ottawa. Over the last few years, I have sat as a hamlet council member in Taloyoak where we were able to offer more programs, including expanded youth and elder activities and the food voucher program through collaboration with both the federal and territorial governments.

Since 2021, I also sat on the board of directors for Nunavut Sivuniksavut in various roles. During this time, I worked with an Inuit organization as an executive assistant, and also the first ever policy analyst on housing and homelessness. I am proud of our communities and the improvements that our people have seen over the years from past Assemblies, but there's still much work to do which will extend past our four years here.

And I think it's important to remember who we are serving and the issues that they face. Forty-one percent of our population is 19 or younger. It's important to ensure we're not just providing adequate programming for our youth, but to lay the groundwork to create more jobs and opportunities for our future workforce.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2022, Nunavut had the highest child poverty rate for children under six across the provinces and territories at 50 per cent. That's half of all the children in our territory are experiencing childhood poverty compared to the national average of 18.9 per cent.

Over the past few years we have seen many food voucher programs, and when they ran, our stores often ran out of fresh produce, making it very evident how many of our community members are going without food on a day-to-day basis.

As the cost of living rises, even the subsistence hunting may be out of reach for many of our hunters as the cost of fuel and equipment also rises. This also affects our communities' ability to complement food security with country food we so rely on.

Nunavut has the highest rate of suicide in the country. Our youth and community members are hurting. Suicide has touched the lives of so many across our territory, so much so that earlier this year it was again declared a crisis.

As I stated earlier today, the rate of violent crimes against women and family violence in Nunavut is ten times the national average, while only a few of our communities have family violence shelters within them. This means that many of our community members have to leave their town, their families and their support networks, in order to access the services and safety that they need.

Today we see increasing numbers of our community members suffering from homelessness, often having to stay in tents, cabins, or makeshift shelters, even when temperatures are below freezing.

Closing the gaps in housing, food security, health and overall social well-being cannot be done alone by one government organization or municipality. It's only through a collaboration with our community members, our local municipal governments, the federal government, but also Inuit organizations and local community not-for-profits will we be able to achieve the supports needed and services that are so urgently needed across our territory.

I would like to work toward the building of these partnerships from the communities and different organizations that I have already had experience doing, and if selected to hold a cabinet position, those partnerships and how essential they are to our success as a government would be something I would bring to the table.

Lastly, I would also like to thank my family and everyone's families, because our communities, families, and support networks have really brought us here today as well as those who elected us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. According to the list I have, Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok. You have ten minutes.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think I will use up all my ten minutes.

First of all, I would like to thank the people who voted for me, my wife, and my children. This is the third term that I've been a member of the Legislative Assembly. I was first elected in 2014 to 2017, and later on from 2021 to 2025 I've been a member of the Legislative Assembly.

I started working for the first time for government of NWT and also for Nunavut government for 25 years. I worked with, back then, Community and Government Services department, and from there I was one of the first people to start working as a (indiscernible) control clerk. Then I went to training to become a foreman for four years.

With Sivuatigiit (ph), I took part in that program in Ottawa and also in Rankin Inlet, and after I completed those courses, I became a community government services coordinator and regional director. I worked in that department for 19 years. I started working there when I was 20, 21.

Prior to that I worked at the Hudson's Bay Company, Northern stores, and Co-Op stores. Northern Stores, when it was Hudson's Bay, I was a store manager in various communities in Kivalliq and also in Baffin region, and I would travel by Hudson Bay Company to manage the stores.

I'm very thankful for being nominated to the cabinet. I believe that I have the ability, so therefore I accepted the nomination. If selected, I will work to represent the whole territory of Nunavut, and I know that for sure. That's the only way to go.

And also I thank my colleagues. I congratulate each and every one of you for being elected. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you as well. Member for Qamani'tuaq, Mr. Simailak, it's your turn.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank my wife, Marilyn, and my children for believing in me, and also member fellow Qamani'tuaq community. Thank you for electing me to become a member for Baker Lake. I will work to the best of my ability. And to Mr. Kablutsiak, thank you for nominating me to the cabinet. Thank you.

First of all, I would like to speak about how and where I was a member of the Baker Lake. I have been selected for three terms and also Qamani'tuaq as well once. I've been a councillor and I was deputy mayor at the time as well. And as well in Baker Lake I was a member for a local housing association. And usually I was appointed, and also when I was a member of the Legislative Assembly, I was a member of the cabinet for QEC.

(interpretation ends) I sat on the community liaison committee for Agnico Eagle when they were first starting up in Baker Lake. There was a lot of work to do with them as they dealt with the social and economic impacts that come with operating a mine.

I have also sat on the community liaison committee for Ariba Resources, as they were exploring close to Baker Lake and there needed to be collaboration between the community of Baker Lake and the company.

Prior to becoming a Member of the Legislative Assembly, I worked for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. While working there, I also sat on the Inuit employment and planning committee. I worked there for 20 years. It was a great learning experience, and we made some changes in there that have helped get more Inuit working for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. I am very proud of that.

I've also volunteered a few years with the minor hockey association in Baker Lake in the Qamani'tuaq search and rescue, helping out in coordination of searches over the years.

Getting back to my previous job at the Qulliq Energy Corporation, I was fortunate enough to travel to all but three Nunavut communities. I have seen many things in my travels, which I have been using here as well in this House to help advocate for the needs of Nunavummiut.

One of my priorities as a minister will be elder care and how we can provide more care. We know it is urgent. We have worked hard to accomplish that using collaboration, using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. There are 25 communities in Nunavut, and there are elders that do not want to leave the territory. They don't want to leave their home. They should be staying at home. We have to think about what other types of infrastructure that can be built to provide help for elders.

If we were to build a five- or ten-bed facility in smaller communities, that would be a start. We have to study that, and start working on that now. I love our elders, as you all saw this morning. It's my first question to the premier candidates. Let us help them.

I believe through partnerships with entities such as the mining companies, Inuit organizations and the federal government, we can create some other types of closer-to-home infrastructure to the elders in our communities.

The second thing I would want to work on as minister is working with my federal cabinet members is our Arctic College community learning centres. I think most of our communities do have a community learning centre. What other courses can be made available? For example, a lot of people want to work in trades. We now have operating mines in all three regions. We also have housing construction throughout Nunavut thanks to Nunavut 3000 and the last Assembly, the last government. They all need skilled workers. Extra attention is needed in trades, which would help create more employment in and keep more money in Nunavut.

I have also seen in many communities the aging public housing stock. Some of the units were built in 1968. They are too small. We have to continue dealing with it. Nunavut 3000 was a great initiative and a great start. I believe we have to continue working on that. All of these public housing units that are now being built or put up will help with underaccommodated people, with help with mental wellness. It will young families that need their own place to call home.

We have all heard of some places having 15 people in a two-bedroom unit, the hidden homeless. These new housing units being built will be making lives better for Nunavummiut.

I mentioned mining a couple of times in my speech, reason being, Baker Lake has the most experienced dealing with an operating mine. We began working on that in 2008 with road construction, and Agnico Eagle began commercial production in March of 2010. There have been many Inuit from the Kivalliq region working many years. The mine has been providing meaningful employment.

But Agnico Eagle announced they are now in the tail end of the mine life around Baker Lake. We have learned many things, what mistakes have been made, and successes there have been. Again, mining is now in all three regions. We need to take advantage of the opportunities that mining brings, employment, business startups.

We also need to hold the mining companies accountable, work with the other entities that have to ensure our land, our waters, and our wildlife are protected.

Using the experiences of Baker Lake can help us plan for the other mines that are now operating so that we can help more Nunavummiut gain meaningful employment.

Now let me speak a little bit about the federal government and the relationships we have had with them. Throughout the years, our governments have been explaining our needs to the federal government. I have in the past met with federal ministers, told our stories, our needs, telling Nunavut's point of view. That is something I would continue doing to help advocate for more federal funding, or if there is federal legislation that we do not agree with, as minister I would speak with my federal counterpart and explain why we do not agree with it.

One example I can use is the banning of certain rifles. We use high calibre rifles for hunting, hunting whales, muskox and bears, and some of those rifles were on the list to be banned. I explained that these are not assault weapons to us; they are the best rifles to use for hunting such large animals.

On the subject of animals, there's a delicate ecosystem that we must keep looking after. We have had many concerns about the population of caribou, what and how they are affected. It is a delicate balance, and we must ensure that they are all looked after.

What affects them? We need to ensure our neighbouring provinces and territories are following procedures to help mitigate any more quotas or species-at-risk designation.

We also have to look at population of wolves, and perhaps put a cull on wolves to help protect the caribou. I believe wolves are now overpopulated. We have to do something about that. Perhaps look at increasing the bounty on wolves and get it back down to a more manageable number, to ensure we have a healthier population of tuktu. We all know our beautiful territory is vast, but there's a lot of wolves roaming all over.

I would like to mention for cabinet consideration, we have many artists right across the territory. They don't really have a way to get their artwork into the world. They can sell them online, but to get them out of the territory is quite expensive. Maybe if the Government of Nunavut negotiates better freight rates or works with Canada Post, UPS, and FedEx. There are other options that can be looked at.

Lastly, I would also like to mention that I keep in mind that we must use Inuit *Qaujimaqatuqangit*, especially *Piliriqatigiinni*, working together, *Aajiiqatigiinni*, consensus decision-making, and *Qanuqtuurniq*, being innovative, finding a way to make things happen.

Thank you for your consideration for me as cabinet minister. Let's all work together the next four years. We are all here for the betterment of Nunavut, and by working together, consulting with people, consulting with each other, decision-making together, we can help achieve that. Thank you all. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Last but not least, the Member for Rankin Inlet South, Ms. Tattuinee.

Ms. Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I congratulate you on your being elected as speaker. I also would like to congratulate Mr. Main on his election, as Premier-elect. I sincerely want to thank MLA for Aivilik, Hannah Angootealuk for nominating me. Thank you for your confidence and for your belief in my ability to serve the territory.

I also want to thank my constituents, the people of Rankin Inlet South, for trusting me to represent you. Every day that I sit in this Assembly I will carry your voices, your hopes and your expectations with me.

I also want to thank my fellow MLAs for your dedication to the public service. Together in this chamber we represent hundreds of years of experience, wisdom, and connection across Nunavut. Every single one of us brings something to the table that is of significant value for the people that we have convinced to serve. They have chosen us to sit at this table and to make sound decisions for them.

We come from communities shaped by government policies, shaped by history, and shaped most importantly by Inuit resilience and determination.

As we look to the next chapter of our territory, we must ensure the development of Nunavut never comes at the expense of the people who live here, who choose to live here.

For too long we have depended on a transient work force that leaves the job when the job is done. This model does not build capacity, it does not build community, and it does not build a stronger Nunavut. Our future must be built by Nunavummiut, in every region and in every community. Nunavut must invest in Inuit. Inuit must be the ones empowered to lead our territory in every sector. And I believe every one of us around this table believes that.

When we began our orientation, did I not come with a fixed plan to seek any particular role. I wanted to listen and understand our collective priorities and see where my experience could best serve the territory.

Over the past few days, after hearing discussions and listening to each of you, and reflection, I now feel compelled, encouraged and ready to put my name forward to be part of the Executive Council.

Nunavut is much more than Iqaluit. The Executive Council must bring true understanding of the realities of life in our communities from Sanikiluaq to Grise Fiord, from Kugluktuk to Qikiqtarjuaq. I have lived and worked outside the capital for most of my life. I carry the perspective of those communities that too often feel overlooked and unheard.

I have been fortunate in my career to visit every community with the exception of Clyde River, so I have been able to see for myself some of the conditions that our communities are in.

My commitment to Nunavut is grounded in my identity as an Inuk woman, as a mother, as an *Anaanatsiaq*, as an *Amouq*, and as the daughter of parents whose lives were

changed by federal relocation policies. My family was relocated from Nunavik during a period when Inuit lives were changed, often without consultation in the name of sovereignty. When the ship was delayed, we ended up in Churchill, and we moved to Rankin Inlet in 1976.

This experience is not just my story, it is the story of hundreds of Inuit who were uprooted, moved, and expected to adapt. The history has stayed with me. It is the reason why I spent my early career collaborating with various levels of government and non-government organizations using existing policy. You got to get to know the policy to know what you can do, and where the flexibility lies.

Working in partnership to get things done to benefit Inuit in our community, I developed a passion to fight for Inuit rights, for Inuit self-determination, for a future where policy is no longer something done to us, but something created with us and by us.

It matters who leads Nunavut. It matters that members of the Executive Council understand community life, Inuit culture, and the challenges and strengths that define our people. It honours the intent of the *Nunavut Agreement* and the decades of advocacy that made the creation of Nunavut possible.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit showcases the resilience of its people, culture, language and it is reflected in every community in Nunavut.

Since 1995 I have worked closely with Inuit organizations responsible for implementing the *Nunavut Agreement*. Before that, I spent 12 years in both the federal and territorial public service. These decades of experience have given me a deep practical understanding of how government works, and more importantly, how it should work for Inuit.

I have built strong constructive and trusted relationships with Inuit organizations and with several levels of government. These relationships matter. They are essential in advancing Nunavut priorities in housing, health, infrastructure, education and economic development. They are essential to ensuring Nunavut is not overlooked, but respected and supported.

Nunavut is facing major decisions that will shape our future for generations. As a member of the Executive Council, I am ready on day one to lead on issues that define our territory's path forward. I am prepared to advocate for nation-building and long-term infrastructure that strengthens our communities and priorities. Opportunities towards economic self-sufficiency is very important to every person in this room.

I'm prepared to advocate for Nunavummiut to build capacity required for devolution so that decisions about our land and resources that contribute to the development of our economy are made at home.

I'm prepared to advocate for more housing, working with Inuit organizations and the federal government to ensure every Nunavummiut has a safe place to call home. These are not just outlying issues. They are the foundations of a thriving future for our children, grandchildren, and future generations.

As devolution takes shape, Nunavut needs an Executive Council that will champion all 25 communities and all three regions of Nunavut. I will advocate for an Executive Council that believes in building Inuit workforce, strengthening community capacity, and creating opportunities that allow our people to stay, to work, and thrive at home.

I would like to thank you for the time that you've taken to listen to me. I look forward to working with each and every one of you on all of the work that needs to be done to create a better Nunavut. So thank you, everyone, for taking the time to listen.

>> *Applause*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, all. All candidates have made their presentation. We'll take a brief break and then we'll proceed with balloting. When the bells ring please come back to the chambers. Thank you.

>> *Meeting recessed at 18:01 and resumed at 18:35*

Election for Cabinet Positions

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Good evening. We will proceed with ballots. Similarly, like earlier, you will go up and start voting accordingly. You may proceed.

Thank you, members. The ballots will be counted in a locked room, if you can wait a little while for the count. So we'll wait.

Thank you, members. As we reconvene, I would like to advise my fellow MLAs that the people elected to cabinet are:

Member Craig Simailak, Baker Lake;
Member Gwen Healey Akarok, Iqaluit-Manirajak;
Member David Akeeagok, for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu;
Member Janet Brewster, member for Iqaluit-Sinaa;
and Member George Hickes for Iqaluit-Tasiluk;
and Member Cecile Lyall for Netsilik;
and Member Annie Tattuinee for Rankin Inlet South;
and the Member for Tununig, Brian Koonoo.

I congratulate all of you. I'm proud of all of you, and I'm happy for you.

At the proper time during the first sitting, the positions will be made official with a motion.

I need to motion to destroy the ballots. Moved by Mr. Akeeagok. Thank you. The ballots will now be destroyed.

Before we actually conclude, I have some announcements. The swearing-in ceremony for members of the 7th Assembly will be held at 10 a.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2025 in this chamber.

The first sitting of the 7th Legislative Assembly of Nunavut will convene at 1:30 on Thursday, November 20, 2025. In this chamber we will have our first sitting.

The swearing in ceremony and proceedings of the House will be broadcast live across the territory, and I invite all Nunavummiut to join us. You'll be able to watch it on TV and online. You'll be able to watch it live.

I would like to thank everyone for electing me as Speaker. I'm proud of all of you for winning your seats as we represent Nunavut people.

And I would like to recognize my family, especially my wife, Anna Joanasie, and my daughter, Cynthia Joanasie, and my nephew is also here, or niece, Maryann Audla.

The Nunavut Leadership Forum stands adjourned.

>> *Applause*

>> *Meeting concluded at 19:03*

