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Speaker: The Honourable James Arreak, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Uqqummiut)

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(Iqaluit East)
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Women; Minister responsible for
Immigration*

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(Tununiq)

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(Baker Lake)

Tagak Curley
(Rankin Inlet North)

Ron Elliott
(Quttiktuq)

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Minister of Human Resources*

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Elders and Youth; Minister of
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*Deputy Premier; Minister of
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Hon. Hunter Tootoo
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, January 26, 2009**

Members Present:

Honourable Eva Aariak, Honourable James Arreak, Mr. James Arvaluk, Mr. Moses Aupaluktuq, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Ron Elliot, Mr. Adamee Komoartok, Honourable Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Johnny Ningeongan, Mr. Paul Okalik, Mr. Eruk Pauloosie, Honourable Keith Peterson, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Mr. Fred Schell, Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Honourable Peter Taptuna, Honourable Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. James Arreak)
(interpretation): Good afternoon. Before we proceed, I would like to ask Mr. Ningeongan to say the opening prayer.
Mr. Ningeongan.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Good afternoon, Premier, Ministers, Members, and all Nunavummiut.
(interpretation ends) At this time, I would like to make a statement.

On behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, I wish to express our deepest condolences to the family of the Hon. Helen Maksagak, who passed away last week.

Helen Maksagak served with distinction as Nunavut's first commissioner. She also served as the territory's deputy commissioner. Helen devoted her life to community service. In 2002, she was appointed to the Order of Canada in recognition of her service to the people of the North.

I also want to take this opportunity to note that one of Helen's many contributions to this House will remain with us.

On April 1, 1999, Helen donated one of the bibles in her personal collection to the Legislative Assembly. As you can see from where it rests on the table to my right, it has been present in the Chamber since that day.

I wish to advise the House that the flags at the Legislative Assembly have been lowered to half mast in commemoration of Mrs. Maksagak's passing.

I ask all members to join me in a moment of silence.

>>*Moment of Silence*

(interpretation) Thank you. Please be seated.

Thank you. Before we proceed to the Orders of the Day, I am pleased to take this opportunity to make an announcement regarding the upcoming celebrations to mark the 10th anniversary of the creation of Nunavut.

Later today, I will be writing to the principals of all of our high schools in order to inform them of the Legislative Assembly's *Nunavut at 10* essay competition. The competition is open to any person who is enrolled in grades 10 to 12 in a Nunavut high school. Essays may be submitted in any of Nunavut's official languages. The deadline for submissions is March 13, 2009.

I look forward to announcing the winners on April 1, 2009. Each winner will receive one of the Royal Canadian

Mint's 2009 14-karat commemorative \$100 gold coins to mark the 10th anniversary of Nunavut's creation. The coins were designed by internationally-renowned Pangnirtung artist Andrew Qappik.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Speaker (interpretation): I would ask all members to encourage youth in their communities to take part in this competition.

We will now proceed with the Orders of the Day. (interpretation ends) Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Peterson.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 001 – 3(1): Remembering Nunavut's First Commissioner

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in remembrance of our first Commissioner of Nunavut and most recently, our Deputy Commissioner, Helen Maksagak. On Friday, after a lengthy and courageous battle with cancer, Helen passed away at home on the shores of Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, Helen was not only a constituent of mine but a wonderful friend to my family for over 40 years. Helen was always there to provide generous support and advice as a friend and mentor. She was a strong community leader who dedicated herself to public service and she raised the bar for all of Nunavut's current and future leaders.

Helen was the first woman and Inuk to serve as Deputy Commissioner and later

as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, among her many personal and public achievements, she was recognized for her public service with the Order of Canada in 2002, as well as an Honorary Doctorate of Law from Cape Breton University in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Cambridge Bay and all of Nunavut, I would like to take this opportunity to extend sincere condolences to Helen's family. Helen's accomplishments and gifts to Nunavut will never be forgotten. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Ministers' Statements. Ms. Premier.

Minister's Statement 002 – 3(1): First Ministers' Meeting

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During my first two months as Premier, I have met several times with Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Cabinet, including Nunavut Member of Parliament Leona Aglukkaq. Recently, these meetings have been focused on the 2009-2010 federal budget and Nunavut's priorities for infrastructure investment.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, on January 6, I was joined by my colleague, the Minister for Community and Government Services, for meetings with Ministers Baird, Strahl, and Aglukkaq on our infrastructure needs. The federal government is proposing to stimulate the economy with short-term investments and is determining which ones would be the biggest impact now.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut has an infrastructure deficit that we are addressing through our own capital plan and through federal monies, including the Building Canada Fund and the Northern Housing Trust. We have been working with the federal departments to move forward with those projects to the best of our capabilities and we have made suggestions to the Government of Canada on where they should focus increased infrastructure investments.

On January 15, Mr. Speaker, and 16, I attended meetings on the economy with the Prime Minister and my provincial and territorial colleagues. First, we met with the leaders of the five national aboriginal organizations to discuss practical ways to increase aboriginal participation in the economy. I was pleased to share the views expressed by Mary Simon, President of Tapiriit Kanatami, for improving education and skills development, and for focusing on housing construction as a way of promoting on-the-job skills development and economic growth.

On Friday, First Ministers reconvened and I had an opportunity to speak about our infrastructure priorities, including housing, for the 2009-2010 construction seasons. I also spoke about skills development needs within our territory, the need for innovative approaches to federal funding for labour market development, and the need for Canada to renew funding for Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development. At the appropriate time, I will table a report on this meeting.

Mr. Speaker, the results of these meetings should be reflected in announcements contained tomorrow in

the 2009 Federal Budget. We intend to monitor those outcomes very carefully, and we're anticipating the outcomes, and to continue to work with Canada to strengthen our economy and to ensure that our labour force is well prepared for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Tapardjuk.

Minister's Statement 003 – 3(1): Elder Support Phone Line 1-866-684-5056

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to welcome all the members. Although we saw each other recently, it is good to see my colleagues again.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues and Nunavummiut about the launch of an elder support line by the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth.

During consultations throughout Nunavut over the past year, the need for elders to have somewhere to turn to for advice and support in dealing with personal safety issues they are facing on a daily basis in their homes came up again and again.

This toll-free support line will be managed by CLEY's Elder Advisor here in Iqaluit. The line will keep names and experiences confidential, but provide a safe haven for elders (in Inuktitut only) to receive advice and talk to a confidante. Non-intrusive, basic baseline data will be collected from the telephone

line in order to address needs and plan for future programs.

For elders concerned about their physical and emotional wellbeing and who would like to talk to someone, this toll-free phone line will be available for peer-to-peer counselling in Inuktitut. The phone line will be open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

No one deserves to have their rights violated. No one deserves to be mistreated or exploited at any age. Those who are suffering need to know that we care and help is available.

Please join me in making Nunavummiut aware that our elders should be respected; abuse, in any form, is not right. I would like to encourage all Nunavummiut to get involved and ensure that the elders in our communities are treated fairly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. If you have any statements, please raise your hand. (interpretation ends) Ms. Premier.

Minister's Statement 004 – 3(1): 4th Judge for Nunavut

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to take this opportunity to applaud the recent appointment of the Hon. Neil A. Sharkey as Judge of the Nunavut Court of Justice. Mr. Justice Sharkey has been a member of the Nunavut Bar since 1999, of the Northwest Territories Bar since 1983, and the Bar of Saskatchewan since 1976.

Mr. Justice Sharkey has been involved in the practice of law in Nunavut in various roles, from Crown Counsel to private practitioner and Executive Director of Maliganik Tukisiniakvik for many years. Mr. Justice Sharkey has an acknowledged expertise in criminal appeals and major criminal cases.

As you are aware, the justice department is dedicated to providing the most culturally appropriate, equitable and effective justice services to Nunavummiut, and it was quite clear that part of the reason for delays in hearings, trials, and other court procedures was the lack of a fourth judge.

As our Senior Judge, the Hon. Beverley Browne indicated some time ago "the lack of judicial resources in Nunavut continues to be a chronic problem and a concern." The Department of Justice of the Nunavut government, in cooperation and coordination with our federal partners, had made a strong case for the increase in judicial resources for our territory.

The appointment of Hon. Justice Sharkey was the result of our efforts and this appointment will certainly assist the administration of justice in Nunavut and address many of the shortfalls and delays in the courts.

The Department of Justice will continue to work to improve the provision of justice services to Nunavummiut, to increase the number of lawyers and amount of legal aid funding available in the territory, and to strive to ensure that all justice-related needs of Nunavummiut are met. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Tootoo.

**Minister's Statement 005 – 3(1):
Nunavut Housing Needs Survey**

Hon. Hunter Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today as the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation to inform this House and all Nunavummiut of an important initiative. The Nunavut Housing Corporation, in partnership with Statistics Canada and the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, is undertaking a comprehensive and Nunavut-wide housing needs survey.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Housing Needs Survey aims to collect current and accurate data on the housing needs of Nunavummiut, and to assist the Government of Nunavut in planning and providing for the housing needs of our communities.

In 2004, it was estimated that 3,000 public housing units were required over a ten-year time span to alleviate the severe overcrowding in our public housing. Mr. Speaker, this estimate was based on statistical information from the 2001 Census and the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. Since then, the Housing Corporation has continued to deliver public housing units through federal investments from Infrastructure Canada and the Northern Housing Trust.

Mr. Speaker, also since 2001, the annual growth and demand for new housing has grown at an estimated pace of over 270 public housing units per year. Best

estimates are that after the 725 units from the \$200 million Housing Trust have been delivered and built, Nunavut will still have a shortfall of over 3,300 units.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut housing survey is designed to provide the corporation with the most current data to determine the exact needs for additional investment into housing for Nunavummiut. Mr. Speaker, given the critical shortage of housing, we require current and real data to update the *Nunavut Ten-Year Inuit Housing Action Plan* in order to secure additional funding that will address the growing housing crisis in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut housing survey is a confidential, door-to-door survey that will be locally delivered throughout March and April of this year. The survey requires the full participation of all Nunavummiut, whether they are in public housing, staff housing, employee provided housing, private housing, or own their own homes, to ensure that the housing needs of our people are accurately recorded. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Ministers' Statements. Minister Shewchuk.

**Minister's Statement 006 – 3(1):
Nunavut Participation in National
Polar Bear Round Table**

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On January 16, I attended a National Polar Bear Round Table hosted by the federal Environment Minister Jim

Prentice. This was a very successful meeting in that it allowed all parties, including scientists, Inuit, the provinces and territories, the federal government, wildlife management boards, and non-government organizations, to present their views and to gather a better understanding of each other's points of view on polar bear management in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, Nunavut is home to 65 percent of the world's polar bears and has a very successful polar bear management program. We were able to describe this program and how we work with communities using a combination of Inuit knowledge and science to manage polar bears, using a co-management system outlined under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*. We, of course, have challenges and the potential effects of climate change are a concern, but the fact is that the polar bear populations are mostly thriving. Polar bears are not in a crisis situation; they are a resource to be managed and that is what we are doing.

Perhaps the biggest value of the meeting was to give the rest of Canada a better understanding of how polar bear management actually works. Other more tangible outcomes include a commitment from the federal minister to support better inclusion of Inuit knowledge in polar bear management decision-making and a commitment to pursue the completion of co-management agreements with other jurisdictions that we share our polar bear populations with such as Greenland.

This forum was an important first step toward better cooperation and collaboration between all parties

interested in sustainable polar bear management. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. (interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Mr. Taptuna.

Minister's Statement 007 – 3(1): New Driver's Licence and General Identification Card

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to advise the Members of this House to the introduction of a new system that will provide Nunavummiut with secure and enhanced driver's licences and identification cards.

Under the Canadian Driver's Licence Agreement signed by the Government of Nunavut, driver's licences and identification cards are required to have enhanced security features in order to be accepted by other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, Transport Canada regulations also require that all air travellers over the age of 12 years old have government issued photo identification before boarding aircraft.

In order to meet these requirements, the Department of Economic Development and Transportation has had to change the way driver's licences and general identification cards are processed and printed.

Mr. Speaker, with the new system, the security features in the card includes holographic images, microprinting, and

other features found in currency. This has resulted in the change in the way that they are processed and printed. Driver's licences and identification cards will no longer be issued over the counter, even in automated stations such as in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, all licences and general identification cards will now be printed by the Canadian Banknote Company in Ottawa and mailed directly to the cardholder. This is the way other jurisdictions, including the NWT, or the Northwest Territories, are now issuing their cards. Under this system, all Nunavummiut can expect their licences and identification cards within a period of four to six weeks from the time they apply.

Mr. Speaker, all of us have heard of incidents where Nunavummiut have been stuck without proper identification following a medevac or an unexpected trip to southern Canada. To avoid this, I would like to take this time to encourage all Nunavummiut 12 years and older to get either a general identification card or a driver's licence through the Motor Vehicles issuing office in their community even if they're not planning to travel in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Kusugak.

**Minister's Statement 008 – 3(1):
Enhancement to our Search and
Rescue Capabilities**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to

provide members with information on the awarding of funding approved by the federal government as part of the International Polar Year.

Protection Services identified a need for specialized vehicles that could be used for search and rescue during the spring when travel by snow machine becomes impossible. Knowing the many challenges our government faces financially, we looked for what funding might be available through various federal programs.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kusugak is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, we submitted a proposal to the International Polar Year entitled "Enhancing Ground Search and Rescue in Nunavut." Our proposal was for the purchase and shipping of nine Avenger all-terrain vehicles. The vehicles are amphibious and are able to travel on snow, mud, and in the water, and can be equipped with tracks should the need arise. These vehicles can also be transported by air so that we may move them throughout the territory.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say that the Government of Canada found merit in our proposal and awarded our government funding in the amount of \$287,150. This is good news and I wish to thank the Government of Canada and

the International Polar Year committee for supporting this worthwhile proposal.

The tender for the Avenger is currently being advertised for delivery on the 2009 sealift. They will be shipped to nine selected communities with the intent to have them available to other communities on an emergency basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. If there are no more, Item 3. Members' Statements. Mr. Okalik.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 017 – 3(1): Recent Deaths in Constituency and Nunavut

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome my colleagues who have travelled here to our community of Iqaluit.

My colleagues, it has been quite a difficult winter for my constituents here in Iqaluit, particularly with the loss of what seems to be far too many loved ones, and some passed on during the Christmas holidays.

I particularly recall the passing of Oolahnee Coman, who was one of my constituents. She worked really hard in all her endeavours and she was an avid participant in election campaigns. She was also very funny and seemed to have a bottomless well of jokes. She will be dearly missed and I am proud to have represented her. I also extend my condolences to her family.

Last week, we buried a respected elder, Henry Boaz, and this was also regrettable. He will be remembered for his involvement in our community.

On Friday, we also laid to rest Marge Lalonde, who was a tireless volunteer for our community and did a lot of work. We will all miss her here in Iqaluit.

(interpretation ends) Over the weekend, I learned of the loss of our first commissioner, Helen Mapsagak. I first met Helen in the winter of 1986 as a researcher and negotiator. That winter, I had to consult the Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers Association during their AGM.

There was no hotel space during that week, so John and Helen took me in during my first visit ever to Cambridge Bay. They spoiled me during that time. They fed me frozen trout for the first time and I felt like I never left their home. So whenever I went to Cambridge Bay, I was always welcomed and I felt right at home.

During my first term as the Premier of the territory, I had the great fortune of having a commissioner that had been there before. She gave me wise counsel and advice. The advice she gave me gave me confidence and strength, which definitely assisted me in my challenges that were coming in before me. The whole territory benefited from her wise counsel and for that, we are truly grateful.

Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are

there any nays? There are no nays.
Please proceed, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) John and Helen's children have become true friends for me like siblings, from Harry providing me with a snowmobile and Gary being my guide for my successful hunts in Cambridge Bay. So to all of her children, you are like my brothers and sisters and will definitely miss your mom. I will definitely miss her great baking as she baked some great goods and I went for tea at her house. My thoughts and prayers are with you and for all of Nunavut.

(interpretation) I wanted to let the relatives of all those who passed away know that they are in my thoughts. I extend my condolences to all those who have lost a loved one here in Iqaluit. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who just lost their loved one in Cambridge Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Arvaluk.

**Member's Statement 018 – 3(1):
Representing Tununingmiut**

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to express my gratitude to the members who nominated me for a position on the Executive Committee, even though I was defeated by my partner in crime, Tagak. I have absolutely no regrets or concerns and as a matter of fact, I'm rather proud of his

appointment and his successful attempt for a position.

I would like to thank my partner, Lisa, whom I rarely mention, for always providing me with support.

My constituents encouraged me to run for a ministerial position and that's why I agreed to the nomination. I also wanted to work on the issues facing us, but I will not be going anywhere and I have not given up on representing our government. If, in the future, a Member of the Executive Council gets tired or leaves, then I may try again next time. However, I wish to inform my constituents in Pond Inlet that I will be working hard for them by raising questions and making Members' Statements.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the standing committees as there will be a lot of work, especially on the financial bills that are put forward. There will also be quite a number of bills we may have to review, such as the custom adoption issue as well as others, that will require careful deliberation. We will have a lot of work ahead of us, so my expectations are that I will be getting to work immediately.

I will be raising questions today, especially in regard to the airlines and the decision to cut routes, such as Kenn Borek's decision to cut the High Arctic route via Pond Inlet that allows us to visit our relatives in Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, and other places. That has already impacted us in Pond Inlet. So I will be raising questions to the Minister of Transportation at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Members' Statements. (interpretation ends) Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

**Member's Statement 019 – 3(1):
Isolation and Opportunity in the
High Arctic**

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the House of the results of my recent community consultation in Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord, and Resolute Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the months of December and January provided me with the opportunity to meet in person with local community leaders and residents. I appreciate the willingness of my constituents to speak frankly with me on issues of concern.

Mr. Speaker, I was particularly struck by a comment that I heard from my constituents who told me that residents often feel that they are prisoners in their own communities.

The remote location of our communities results in an unbearably high cost of living. Problems with food mail programs, reduction in airline services, and ongoing infrastructure deficits are all issues of concern. I look forward to addressing many of these topics during the months ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that there are also exciting opportunities before us. As you know, the Arctic Fisheries Alliance is working hard to get a fair share of Nunavut's turbot quota. The alliance is committed to providing much needed training and employment

opportunities for Inuit, and I support their efforts wholeheartedly.

The High Arctic communities which I represent are increasingly in the national spotlight as our country becomes increasingly aware of the importance of arctic sovereignty. In December, I had the opportunity to welcome representatives from the Canadian Forces Joint Task Force North to Arctic Bay. As a long-time volunteer with Arctic Bay's cadet movement, I was very gratified at the level of support expressed by Brigadier General Miller's office for our local cadets, junior rangers, and the ranger patrol.

Mr. Speaker, recent federal announcements on initiatives concerning the High Arctic are of tremendous importance to my constituents. I see a need for federal, territorial, and local leaders to work closely together on such issues as infrastructure development and youth. I also urge appropriate parties to work together to address the need for access to affordable airline service. I believe that the legacy of the High Arctic relocation means that the federal government has a responsibility in this matter.

Mr. Speaker, the upcoming visit of President Obama to Canada is an excellent opportunity for our federal government to vigorously pursue an arctic sovereignty agenda that takes into account the aspirations and needs of the people who live in the North. I have personally written to the Prime Minister on this matter and I look forward to his reply.

Before I conclude, I would like to take a moment to note for the record the

accomplishments of two very well-known northerners.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to continue with my Member's Statement.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. At this time, the member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I conclude, I would like to take a moment to note for the record the accomplishments of two very well-known northerners.

On March 6 of this year, a ceremony to mark the 16th Annual National Aboriginal Achievement Awards will be held in Winnipeg. Two of this year's recipients are Mr. Paul Okalik and Ms. Carol Morin. I ask all members to join me in paying tribute to these deserving individuals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

**Member's Statement 020 – 3(1):
Becoming a Member of the
Executive Council**

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and first of all, I want to say how happy I am to see you sitting up there, although you were there last fall.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention two things as I stand here. We also lost two people in Rankin Inlet last fall and they're in my colleague's riding. An individual who was considered a real man and hunter, who was relatively young and not quite an elder, suddenly passed away last fall. A woman also passed away from an illness. As a result, the residents of Rankin Inlet have become orphaned in a way. My colleague will be able to announce their names as they are from his riding.

The other matter I wanted to talk about is my fellow nominees in the election we had for a Cabinet position. I want to thank Mr. Arvaluk and his sense of history. I want to take to heart the things he said and I will want to revisit them. I also want to say how much I enjoyed listening to what Mr. Schell had to say and I think we should not forget what we need to do for our youth. He was very articulate in how young people go through difficulties. Both Mr. Arvaluk and Mr. Schell are very capable and should they seek to join the Cabinet in the future, I would not hesitate to support them.

Mr. Speaker, I first want to thank the people of Rankin Inlet for the way they are always friendly and welcoming after the Third Assembly had been elected. Many of those who provide support are listening and we know them quite well. We want them to feel free to let us know when they want to hear from us.

Now that I am in the Cabinet, I want to let the Premier know that I will use all my abilities and strengths in serving her and I look forward to working closely with her for the benefit of Nunavutmiut. It is especially important now that

Canada is experiencing financial difficulties.

Mr. Speaker, I would to ask for unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, I want the Premier to know that Nunavut will be touched by financial hardship that is spreading across Canada and indeed around the world.

I am aware of the responsibilities of Cabinet and the activities they have been undertaking for Nunavut. We must look forward and positively that the work they do will have a positive impact and we will have to work together. Mr. Speaker, we will undoubtedly experience hardship and we will have to be as proactive as possible in seeking the best possible solutions. I want to work as closely as possible with my Cabinet colleagues.

Lastly, although I'm not passing on my greetings to those who are here, I am quite proud of my colleagues whom I worked with on the standing committees and we will listen to the questions that they pose. I would also like to recognize the hard work of the Clerk and his staff and thank them while I have the opportunity.

Further, I wish to thank my wife and all my relatives who are listening to the

proceedings on the radio in Rankin Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. (interpretation ends) Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo. (interpretation) I apologize; I saw a raised hand and I thought it was you. (interpretation ends) Member for Rankin Inlet South-Whale Cove, Mr. Kusugak.

**Member's Statement 021 – 3(1):
Artwork by Constituent Susan
Shirley on Display in the Assembly**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to Mr. Curley's comments regarding the loss of Nuqittuq in Rankin Inlet, it was extremely hard at that time as it occurred during Christmas festivities.

The other person we lost during this time was Margaret Anawak. She passed away around the same time and we wish to extend our condolences to the relatives who were left behind. They are in our thoughts and prayers.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of my colleagues and the general public to the current display of artwork in the lobby of the Legislative Assembly. The artwork was done by Ms. Susan Shirley of Rankin Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate and thank Susan for sharing her artwork with us. As fellow residents of Rankin Inlet, I know the Shirley family very well and they have their art gallery right beside my house. One of the common

themes in the family is art. As most people from the community are aware, this is a very talented family when it comes to all forms and types of art.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to encourage the general public and all the Members of this Assembly to enjoy the fine display in the lobby, and I would once again like to congratulate Susan Shirley on a very beautiful display. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit East, Ms. Aariak.

**Member's Statement 022 – 3(1):
Constituency Office
Location/Condolences to Helen
Maksagak and Family**

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to take this opportunity to thank the people who voted for me in Iqaluit East. They provided a tremendous amount of support last October during my campaign. I will do my utmost to try to make their expectations become realities during our term as an open government.

I also wish to make an announcement, Mr. Speaker, that my constituency office is now located at 208 Quliruaq Building on Sinaa Street. My constituents are welcome to come to my office and ask questions or call me directly by phone. I wanted to notify my constituents about that, Mr. Speaker.

I also wish to take this opportunity to recognize certain individuals who supported me as I am not alone in this. I

thank all of my relatives and the communities that have supported me. I would like to thank my children, especially my daughter, Karliin, who has provided me with her undying support, as well as my sons, Jordan, Shawn, and Gerry. I wanted to state their names.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those people who supported me in my campaign even though it was quite cold and there were many dogs that made it difficult to visit some of the houses. So I wish to thank those who worked with me during that time. One of my workers was almost bitten as well. I wanted to thank them for their continued support by mentioning them.

And I wish to add that we are keeping Madam Helen Maksagak in our thoughts. I had an opportunity to visit her in November when we went to the Kitikmeot to attend a meeting held by Nunavut Tunngavik and that was the last time I was to see her. I wish to let her relatives know that they are in our thoughts and prayers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Ningeongan.

**Member's Statement 023 – 3(1):
Messages to
Constituents/Condolences to Helen
Maksagak and Family**

Mr. Ningeongan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that from time to time, we will have to deal with difficult issues in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a celebratory announcement regarding my community. There will be a wedding held this evening for Geraldine Stanley and Jonathan Imiqtaut. I wish to extend my congratulations on behalf of my relatives and community. I received an invitation to attend to their matrimonial event. Unfortunately, I cannot attend as I am in Iqaluit, so I would like to apologize for that.

I wish to extend my best wishes to my constituents in Chesterfield Inlet and Coral Harbour. I would like to take this opportunity to inform them that I will voice some of their concerns, not necessarily in this House but via other avenues, and that they can expect me to bring back some answers.

As well, I offer my condolences to the relatives left behind by the former Commissioner of Nunavut, Ms. Helen Maksagak, and praise her dedication on behalf of Nunavummiut. Even though we were not from the same community, it was easy to see her commitment and hard work. I wish to let her relatives know that they are in my thoughts and prayers in their time of difficulty. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Members' Statements. Member for (interpretation ends) Baker Lake, Mr. Aupaluktuq.

**Member's Statement 024 – 3(1):
Messages Regarding
Constituency/Update on
Constituency Office**

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's obvious that we will be working together as a government and that we will face some challenges. Today, I wish to notify all Nunavummiut listening to the proceedings that the matters we are dealing with are not easy and that we have to work really hard. It's also quite obvious that most of the people listening in are learning about government operations, understanding the connections between the levels of government, and getting to know how the Legislative Assembly works.

I wish to acknowledge several people in Baker Lake who passed away between our meetings. Orin Durey was a teacher in Baker Lake and most of the students enjoyed being his pupils.

Several elders passed away this winter. Inukpak and especially Gideon Koo, I have never forgotten Koo ever since I was a child because he was always working. He had to retire, but he preferred to keep working. He was a role model for us as we always saw him working and I will never forget him.

As well, I wish to thank Baker Lake residents for having elected me to this position. I will be writing to the people, but they are not in Baker Lake at this time. I would like to state that I was unable to attend due to an illness. I had to visit a doctor and I thank the doctor for assisting me.

With respect to recognizing constituents, there is a person who I recognize sitting immediately behind me, Donat Nivingajuq, who is from Baker Lake. My colleague, Lorne Kusugak, made a statement about Susan Shirley's artwork

and I wanted her art recognized as well. I went to high school in Rankin Inlet and I was in school with their son.

Finally, I wish to let the ministers know that I support them. However, it is also obvious that members will have many questions. I want them to be aware that I will keep raising questions, especially with respect to health. There are quite a number of people who wish to raise questions about health care and how it can be managed better in Nunavut. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. (interpretation ends) Members' Statements. (interpretation) If there are no more, (interpretation ends) I'm sorry. Mr. Shewchuk.

**Member's Statement 025 – 3(1):
Thanks to Constituents**

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the constituents of Arviat and advise them that I am here in the Legislative Assembly first and foremost to represent them.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate Mr. Curley on his being elected to Cabinet as a minister. I would like to say to all my colleagues in the House that I look forward to working with each and every one of you to make Nunavut a better place to live. Thank you very much.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. (interpretation) If there are

no more, (interpretation ends) Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. There being none. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Hunter Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to recognize an individual who I'm sure is no stranger to everyone here in the House now anyway after the election and that's our Integrity Commissioner, Mr. Norman Pickell. I would like to welcome him here to the Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Pauloosie.

Mr. Pauloosie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Sammy Pauloosie, my brother from Taloyoak. He's here to play music on Saturday, so he will be playing guitar for us on Saturday night. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. If there are no more, Item 6. Oral Questions.

Item 6: Oral Questions

**Question 001 – 3(1): George W. Bush
Claims the Northwest Passage is
International Waters**

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am giddy with delight

since I'm now able to pose questions freely and I will not be fearful of anyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to pose the first question and I wish to thank you for that opportunity.

I wish to pose a question to the Premier on how they dealt with an issue that the outgoing President of the USA brought to bear regarding the Northwest Passage. They want freedom to use the Northwest Passage and they maintain this is an international waterway and therefore, not under the jurisprudence of Canada even though it's within our waters. I would like to ask the Premier what she has heard with respect to that issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier of Nunavut, Ms. Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you for asking that question. With regard to the issue he just raised, it was news to us as well when it was brought up.

With regard to the High Arctic and the Northwest Passage, this issue may emerge as a very important one over the next few years and I am quite happy that our federal government appointed Bruce Rawson to work on the devolution file. They just hired this person and this is all part of the negotiating process towards devolution.

The sovereignty of our waters in the High Arctic is a very important issue which we will work hard to address and I will commit to keeping this House informed on any developments with regards to the Northwest Passage. Many of our residents don't know how it would affect Nunavut and our position is

that these are our inland waters. Inuit have lived in those lands and waters for many generations, our ancestors' bones lie all over those areas, and we believe it to be our land.

The whole matter requires that we inform the rest of the world about these issues either through our federal government or via other agencies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Your first supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Premier for her answer. This matter is indeed a matter that could have dire consequences for all of Nunavut and indeed for all of the members here if it ever becomes an international waterway as per the American position. That would mean that passage would be undertaken at any time without notifying Canada and it would have many adverse impacts on our environment.

Due to the fact that the Americans insist on the passage being an international waterway, I thought they got the best answer from the NWT government. But our government, the territory that will be most impacted, never made any statements even though we will bear the brunt of the impacts since we live here and I found this unacceptable. I would like this government to properly address any matters that could conceivably have such a large impact on our people.

This is especially when it impacts our people and we do not want any government, foreign or otherwise, to suppress our people. This is our land as

Inuit descendents and I want this government to address any issues that impact Nunavut by making the Nunavut position clear on behalf of all Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. (interpretation ends) Ms. Premier.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. I believe that you are directing this government to undertake this initiative. That is why I sit in my position, to hear directions that members want us to move towards. It's good to be provided with items that members wish addressed, including any action items, and the only way to progress is to move forward.

However, I can also state that it is a very high priority issue for this government and even if we didn't address it immediately, it doesn't mean that we're ignoring it. We are carefully deliberating on the issues inherent to the matter and addressing some of our colleague's concerns and ideas with respect to the issue at hand, and that is how we will approach these issues. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Question 002 – 3(1): Infrastructure Needs in the High Arctic

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Earlier this month, the minister and Premier Aariak met in Ottawa with the federal Infrastructure Minister John

Baird to discuss Nunavut's urgent infrastructure needs. I am certain that the minister is as eager as I am to review the contents of tomorrow's federal budget and I am hopeful that he emphasizes the importance of ensuring that our most remote communities, such as Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, and Grise Fiord, are not neglected.

Can the minister tell the House what commitments the federal government provided to Nunavut at this meeting with respect to meeting our infrastructure needs? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister of Community and Government Services, Hon. Lorne Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we do have a lot of infrastructure needs throughout the territory and I am not able at this time to tell you what commitments they are. Hopefully we will have some news in our favour come the budget tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 23 of last year, the GN announced plans to construct a new office building in Grise Fiord. This much needed and long awaited announcement was met with great enthusiasm in my constituency. Can the minister confirm for me today that this project will go ahead during the 2009-2010 fiscal year and will he commit to keeping the community fully informed on its progress? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The construction of the new office building for Grise Fiord is currently in the planning phase. The CGS staff met with the hamlet officials earlier to determine the type of building that would be required to best meet the community's needs and I will keep your community fully informed on the progress. But at this time, it will be appearing before the standing committee which will be meeting some time next month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will appreciate, the community of Resolute Bay was very pleased to note the federal/territorial news release on September 4, 2008, which announced \$24.4 million in joint funding under the Canada-Nunavut Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund to "support economic and community projects in Nunavut communities."

A portion of this funding has been allocated towards the construction of Resolute Bay's much needed and much anticipated new community arena. Can the minister update the House today on the status of this important project? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The construction of the new community arena for Resolute Bay, which is cost shared by Canada and the Government of Nunavut through the Municipal Infrastructure Fund, is currently in the planning phase and

again, it will be dealt with at the standing committee next month. And I will keep the member and the community informed on its progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Community and Government Services' capital estimates for 2008-09 included \$2.35 million in funding for Arctic Bay's community hall project. Can the minister indicate to me today whether this project is on schedule? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The construction for the new community hall for Arctic Bay again is cost shared by Canada and the Government of Nunavut through the Municipal Infrastructure Fund. The construction contract has been awarded. Construction of the community hall will be completed during the fiscal year of 2009-2010 and I will keep you informed on its progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 003 – 3(1): Airline Service in Nunavut

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to raise a matter with the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

On November 21, 2006, the Legislative Assembly passed a formal motion concerning the urgent need for the Government of Nunavut to work with the Northern Air Transport Association to bring forward an action plan to improve the availability of affordable and reliable air service to Nunavut's smaller communities. I had the honour of voting in favour of this important motion, along with a number of my colleagues who are in the House today.

Can the minister update the House today on what progress his department has made in preparing an updated Nunavut Transportation Strategy for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Hon. Peter Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to answer the hon. member from Tununig. The motion was made in 2006, I am aware of that. At this time, there are no easy solutions for the high cost of travel to our remote communities. At this time, the Government of Nunavut will be lobbying the federal government for more assistance for the North.

Some of the things that we are going to be looking at are conducting research in subsidies provided by the federal government in other sectors, demonstrating sovereignty through economic use rather than military presence, and looking at what economic opportunities there might be to improve the outlook for the High Arctic that the hon. member from Tununig is concerned about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will be well aware, Nunavummiut living in High Arctic communities like Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, and Grise Fiord especially, are extremely concerned about recent cuts to airline services between our communities. When will the minister be sitting down with the Northern Air Transportation Association to explore ways to meet the transportation needs of our most remote communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to point out that the airlines have contractual agreements to provide basic levels of service, especially the Food Mail Program and medical air services, and these must be adhered to.

In February, next month, there's going to be consultations happening with the High Arctic mayors from these three particular communities, including airlines. From there, we are hoping to develop a working plan to address the issue of the high cost of transportation up in the High Arctic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: When the government issued its recent Request of Proposals for medical travel, airlines were asked to, and I quote, "clearly identify how their proposal would contribute to improving

scheduled airline services throughout Nunavut.”

Can the minister explain to the House today how his department works with the Department of Health and Social Services to encourage airlines that have been awarded medical travel contracts to expand services to our small and remote communities like Grise Fiord and the surrounding communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the issues that we have been dealing with is that the Government of Nunavut is not in a position to provide subsidies to the air carriers operating on these routes.

One of the things that we have been discussing with the air carriers is they have been consulted on the best ways to reduce costs in the High Arctic. Their suggestion was to lengthen the runways. The purpose of that would be to start using modern aircraft that are more efficient to bring the costs down for these communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was way too quick. (interpretation ends) I recognize that the Government of Nunavut has very little flexibility to directly subsidize the commercial airlines.

However, given the strategic importance of the High Arctic to our national

sovereignty, I think you have mentioned that already, and in light of the historical legacy of the High Arctic relocations, I think it's called relocation but we used to call it exile of these people from elsewhere, I believe that we ought to make a case to the federal government that Ottawa has a responsibility to ensure that the people of the High Arctic have access to affordable air service.

When will the minister be raising this issue with his federal counterpart and what timeframe does he have to discuss that with the federal government? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this moment, the department will develop a position paper on economic and transportation issues of High Arctic, including developing a lobbying strategy to ensure that the high costs of sovereignty are equitably shared by different levels of government.

On January 22, 2009, the cost of demonstrating sovereignty through military patrols was identified at \$843 million per year. This may present an opportunity to outline a strategy to the federal government that demonstrates sovereignty through economic use at a significantly lower cost to the High Arctic. At this time, we are still working on the scheduling and the timeframe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Question 004 – 3(1): Financial Aid for Home Heating Fuel in Upcoming Budget

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Bonus day. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Finance.

I believe that the minister is aware of the high cost of fuel here in Nunavut. I was just recently in the south where I rented a vehicle and whenever I would fill up the tank, it would cost me approximately \$20. But when I do the same thing here, it usually costs me upwards of \$40 to fill up half the small tank on my vehicle. I'm just citing this as an example of the disparity in fuel costs today.

However, most private homeowners have experienced a tremendous impact on their books this winter due to increased fuel costs. So I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he is planning to address this in their upcoming budget by providing more assistance to private homeowners. Therefore, my first question is if the minister has initiated any plans to provide assistance to them in his budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Finance and Chairman of the Financial Management Board, (interpretation ends) Hon. Keith Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. member for asking that question. Yes, we realize that there's a high cost of fuel in Nunavut. Unfortunately, last year, when we purchased fuel, we purchased at the

highest possible price, almost \$130 to \$140 per barrel, so that placed a lot of stress and strain on homeowners.

I believe we are always worried about the effect of high prices on homeowners and other users of fuel in Nunavut, and I believe as time goes on, we will be looking at ways to help the homeowners, particularly the seniors, with their higher fuel costs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. When we are reviewing the main estimates, we will ensure that we look at that more closely.

(interpretation ends) My follow-up question is in regard to the coming season. The rest of the country is enjoying two-year lows in fuel prices and we do have a hedging policy that we had put in place in prior years that we can use at any time. So I'm asking the hon. minister if he can hedge and purchase at this price so when the price goes up again, we won't be as badly affected.

So I encourage my colleague to consider that and hopefully he can move on hedging and buying at the lowest price possible for all Nunavummiut so all of Nunavut can benefit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance, Mr. Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. member for asking that question. It's interesting,

when I was on the regular members' side, I used to ask that question to the Premier and pressure him when the hedging policy was signed.

I am very pleased to inform the House that there is a hedging policy in place and recently, there was an agreement negotiated with Merrill Lynch and our Finance staff is working very closely with that organization on monitoring the prices. I have to inform the hon. member that there are no immediate plans to use the hedging policy this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Would it make it easier for my colleague to make that decision if he had the support of all members to a motion to purchase fuel at this low price at this time so that we can all enjoy the benefits of reduced prices for the coming year for homeowners and hunters, and all the people that rely on fuel for everyday survival? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. I don't think we need a motion in the House. The hedging policy is one of the tools that are available to the Government of Nunavut to secure fuel at lower prices. We are considering other alternatives at this time on how to benefit from the lower fuel costs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We put in that policy so that we can buy low and save for the long run. So I am hopeful that the minister and the rest of the Cabinet can reconsider and implement that policy, but I would like to know what other alternatives this government may be looking at. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that comment. As the member is aware, as I said earlier, the hedging policy is one of the tools.

We're in a very volatile environment these days with the price of fuel. A barrel of oil fluctuated from \$34 to \$50 per barrel in recent weeks alone, so that's how volatile it is. Our advisors who monitor fuel prices are indicating long-term that they don't see fuel increasing much past \$50 per barrel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Question 005 – 3(1): Emergency Contingency Plan for the High Arctic

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

As the hon. member of Tununig has so eloquently pointed out, the issue of the airline services to our communities provides many challenges. With the loss of the flight between Pond Inlet, Resolute Bay, and Cambridge Bay, it has cut off a major route of travel to the east and the west. It has created barriers for my constituents in Grise Fiord to travel and visit relatives in Pond Inlet. For the Government of Nunavut, it has created longer travel time for employees to travel to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay to service the communities.

With the manner in which the airline cut this service route, it has gotten residents in Grise Fiord concerned about the future. Presently, there is one airline servicing this remote community. There are concerns that this airline could pull out and stop servicing their community. If this were to happen, this would cut off essential services to their community. Health care, food supply, and mail service, to mention a few, would stop.

I'm sure our government, with the best interest of its residents in mind, has some type of emergency plan in place to deal with this situation. Can the minister tell me today if there is such an emergency plan created to deal with a situation like this should it arise in any of the communities across Nunavut?

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Hon. Mr. Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from the hon. member from Quttiktuq. At this time, I am not aware of any emergency scheduling or plans for these High Arctic communities or any other community in

Nunavut, so I'll take the question as notice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The minister has taken the question as notice. (interpretation ends) Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Question 006 – 3(1): Leaked Comments of Former Minister

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Premier. The Premier was on the news recently regarding the former Minister of Justice and she stated that he was removed from that portfolio, which was extremely regrettable.

Apparently, someone was raising questions about the matter, especially as to whom the previous minister's, Minister Tapardjuk, email was addressed to. How many people and who raised questions about that email? I cannot find anything in the document. How many staff members was this sent to? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Ms. Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. It is indeed regrettable that we had to undertake this action, but when such matters surface, we have to deal with them as a government.

I didn't see the copy that you have of the actual email addressed to staff. It was sent to the Department of Justice staff members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Your first supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The email was appended to the document which came from your office and that's the reason why I raised the question of who was sent this email with several items cut out.

For some matters, it is regrettable to read what the email states. However, the matter of violence has to be looked at in all avenues if we are to lessen the number of incidents. Whichever portion we choose, there are bound to be detractors from it and people will not appreciate it. But as Inuit, we have to be open and transparent in dealing with these issues. How do these episodes start?

It's quite unbelievable that he was just removed. I believe this requires further review and if we are to stem the tide, we have to look at all of our options. Can she try to find out who this email was addressed to? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Ms. Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. It stated reasons behind violence against women. As a government, we don't condone violence against women and we don't want it ignored either. With respect to that email, it included incidents of violence against women that stated that it was initiated by the women and they cited examples of how it can occur.

I spoke to the minister and the minister apologized for his actions. His reasoning

for writing the email was to debate Inuit knowledge aspects and how the government can better incorporate traditional practices into its operations. However, you know how the ending went and the email actually included examples that were unacceptable, especially to have victims listen to some examples whereby they are the ones who are being blamed for violence. That's the only area that was unacceptable to me and that's the area that I dealt with.

With respect to the organization, if we are to use Inuit culture in the government practices, then we would identify the government policies and we would have to negotiate off some of the material. If we were to follow some of the recommendations in this email, it would be good to have an open and transparent government. You can read the body of the text of the email from that organization and the mandate is to work towards incorporating more traditional practices here in Nunavut.

The email was addressed to the Executive Council as well as his colleagues. It was sent to the senior management of the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth and his colleagues from the Department of Justice. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Your second supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the email was indeed just addressed to those people, then they limited themselves. We can speak about any matter, especially when we are looking at options and alternative avenues. It's good to make

improvements in the way we deal with matters on a daily basis.

The previous minister was very vocal about protecting Inuit traditional practices and incorporating them into government operations. He was removed when he was just trying to ask how we should operate as a government. Will we be repatriating our Inuit customs? Keeping them hidden is not a viable option and it's something I wouldn't like to see.

Everyone has to be able to see both sides of every coin, not just the ones that we like. We all run into difficult situations and some of them will not be very good to hear, but we have to try to deal with all of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Premier of Nunavut, Ms. Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister in question was and we are all aware that he was and is working very diligently on his mandate. It was due to his attempts to protect Inuit customs that he penned that email to his colleagues and staff members.

I have no problem with that part of the process since it's assisting some of the government initiatives. However, it was the portion alluding to violence against spouses, as well as the RCMP and the allegations that other agencies which killed off parts of the Inuit culture were the only areas that caused us concern and that's the only reason why we have kept that email.

As well, with regard to his portfolio under CLEY, that has not been changed and further, I may be adding more responsibilities once the government has had all of the portfolios assigned. Now that we have the final Member of the Executive Council, Mr. Tagak Curley, I will be reviewing the matter of the portfolios. I completely believe in Mr. Tapardjuk's capabilities and he works extremely hard on the issues on his slate.

However, this matter has taught us several things about emails and how easy it is to make errors. So we have to be very careful when we are sending emails, especially their contents, because they can land on any person's desk. The email has already arrived on different people's emails and we know that this is an issue that cannot be misunderstood, but it has already been misread. Due to that reason, Mr. Speaker, I want it understood that we didn't have a problem with the entirety of the email, only the specifics that I mentioned.

The two areas that I alluded to as being controversial are the violence against spouses and the allegations against the RCMP and CLEY. Those were the only two areas we disagreed with. My expectations are that he will remain as the Minister of CLEY and that he will continue to contribute towards the inclusion of the Inuit culture in our government. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Your final supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to this issue, we all know that all cases of assault against anyone need to be stopped.

Looking at the body of the text that was written, he was trying to find out about the matter. Yes, we may be a bit uncomfortable with some of the text, but was this a serious enough issue to remove him from his portfolio? No. If the Premier will be removing ministers for frivolous reasons, then it will become a very big concern.

We have to look at everyone equally, both men and women, because we all have to live together. This will have to be resolved in the future because we can't keep carrying on in this manner. We have to be open to one another and not take unilateral actions whenever something minor comes up. I would not want to see this in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Ms. Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. We had a meeting prior to the leadership forum this morning and we were openly discussing why we were doing this with Mr. Tapardjuk present. Mr. Tapardjuk recognized the support expressed by members and I thank him for his positive participation.

I want to repeat what I said about violence not being acceptable in any form, it's self-explanatory. The email stated that quite a few men get arrested possibly due to provocation by the women in their lives. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Question 007 – 3(1): Transportation, Interpreter, and Escort Deficiencies for Medical Travel

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was elected to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly by listening to the issues raised by residents in Baker Lake. I would like to work closely with the Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Minister Peterson, and express concerns of Baker Lake residents in regard to health care.

As an example, the residents were wondering why taxi vouchers stopped being provided and they wanted me to raise that question. It is becoming an almost daily issue for people who need to travel for medical reasons. When they are not able to get a ride to the airport, they cannot make the flight down to Winnipeg and this is exacerbated by the fact that many people can't afford taxi fares.

Another problem that keeps cropping up is the lack of proper interpreters and this concern is raised continually by the people who have to go on medical travel to Winnipeg. This is especially the case when they are staying at the Kivalliq House while waiting for their appointments.

The client escort policy is not understood very well by our people. If the medical patient is unilingual and requests an escort from a nurse or the health centre, they have to wait for an escort to become available before they can travel down. But when escorts do become available, the requests are not always approved. That should be clarified so that it's understood by residents in Baker Lake.

There are continual complaints about overcrowding in the Kivalliq House and we have heard that the intercom is in use all day. This has affected some of the patients, especially the people who are convalescing there.

I was told to raise these matters by my constituents and I have mentioned them to Minister Peterson in order to get answers. It's understandable if we don't get a response right away, but perhaps as we start working together on the issues impacting our people, he can provide more information to the residents of Baker Lake. Those are all the questions I have for now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Keith Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. member for raising those issues. Just before I attempt to answer, I would like to thank the Department of Health and Social Services' staff.

When I was a member on the opposite side there, I used to ask a lot of questions about health and now that I am on this side, I realize how much hard work that the Health and Social Services' staff do across Nunavut. We have a capacity issue in the department, but they work very hard to serve all Nunavummiut. When you're on that side, you don't know that, but when you're on this side, you find out awfully fast. So they have been keeping me up to date and briefing me on all kinds of issues. There's never a day that goes by where there's not an important issue somewhere in Nunavut.

As the hon. member mentioned that his constituents are concerned, I'll have the staff look into the transportation issue in Baker Lake.

Under your concern about client escorts, there is a client escort policy. It's quite detailed, but it's an improvement over the policy that was happening in the past. The previous policy was quite expensive and it was unclear and vague as to who could be an escort, the new policy clarifies that. Our officials at the department can certainly work with your community to explain that.

With respect to the boarding home I guess it's in Winnipeg, again we can look into that. Not enough space? I can't really comment on that, but we can talk to them about the loudness. Sometimes it could be an individual issue, but I hear issues about boarding homes all the time. I heard, for example, from one of my constituents in Cambridge Bay that there were some ladies in Yellowknife over Christmas who weren't getting enough food to eat.

So if members want to bring these issues to me before we get into session, we can certainly work on them. My office is always open and staff is very responsive to issues that are raised from the communities and from the MLAs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to remind members that when you ask your questions, please pose one question at a time as you are allotted up to three supplementary questions.

Oral Questions. Member for Tununig, Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 008 – 3(1): What Happens to People in the Care of Social Workers?

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you. I wish to ask a question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I prefer not to whisper since we were always admonished never to whisper when we were growing up.

>>*Laughter*

With respect to the children that are sent outside of the communities by social services, where are they sent to? They get shipped to another community that is not their own. When they have been shipped out and they have not indicated their desire to return home, what's the timeframe that social services follow prior to returning them to their communities?

To cite an example, if you live too long down south, then you won't be returned to your home community. What length of time has been established for this? How many months do they look after the child before they abandon the child to the social services workers in the south? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Keith Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. member for asking the question. He certainly could have leaned over and whispered or passed me a note and I would have tried to answer that. I don't have the particular details on how long people can stay when they're on medical travel.

I believe when you're in a boarding home, I think the department would like to get you home to your home community as quickly as possible after you have received your medical treatment. There's only so many rooms available or beds available in the boarding home. So of course, it's important to return you to your community as fast as possible and free up the beds and rooms for other patients. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was not referring to people on medical travel; I was referring to people sent out by social services. Some Inuit are sent out for various reasons related to their lives. Some apparently don't express their wish to return home right away. This is the first time I have heard about this, so I tried to ask how long people have to be away before they are abandoned by social services.

This question arose when someone lost a relative and although the person wanted to return home, he was told that because a number of months have passed, social services turned down his request. He ended up on the streets of Edmonton, forgotten and abandoned by social services.

I am willing to accept notice or receive a written response to my question as to whether this matter can be resolved right away or if the case can be dealt with in some other way. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the hon. member for that question and comment. I would have to check on that, but again, every case is judged on its individual merits.

I think it is the policy of the Department of Health and Social Services that patients return to their home communities as quickly as possible. It is very expensive for the Department of Health to keep patients at any time admitted in boarding homes and we know that it's more appropriate for patients to be in their home communities if they're well enough, surrounded by their family and friends to speed their recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) So individual merits, in other words, we will have to look at them case-by-case of whether that person is actually eligible to be returned according to the social services policy to his respective community. So is that individual merit determined by the social worker in that particular community or is there some sort of a reviewing body to determine that individual merit policy? (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. member for that answer. First of all, the approval for medical travel has conditions and the doctors or nurses in the communities would make that determination.

When you're at the hospital down south or if you're in Iqaluit, if the doctors or nurses determine that you're well enough to return home, then that would be what happens. You wouldn't stay an extra three or four days. The Department of Health is responsible for patients and when they're in our care, we would certainly like to get them home as quickly as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'm not talking about health patients. I'm talking about social service patients. It's not as clear-cut like the health patients in the hospitals, but rather how the patient from social services is being affected by psychological effects.

Sometimes social services may determine that you are ready to go home. Sometimes that person who has been affected mentally, or psychologically, or otherwise, doesn't feel that they are ready to go home yet, but sometimes social services let them go. When the person wants to go home, shouldn't that patient be allowed to go home because they were sent down by social services in the first place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. member for asking that question.

Again, Mr. Speaker, when the patient, whether it's a patient in the care of social services, wants to go home, again it

would have to a determination by the professionals of whether they should return home or remain. I'm sure we have a lot of confidence in the health and social services professionals to make that determination on behalf of the patient. I'm sure they will speak to the patient and they will also speak to the relatives of the patient to make that determination. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

**Question 009 – 3(1): Arctic
Sovereignty and the Devolution
Process**

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier.

Earlier this month, the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Canada announced that Ottawa has appointed a new chief representative for Nunavut devolution. This announcement made reference to the federal government's Northern Strategy.

Can the Premier indicate to the House today what our government's new timetable is with respect to achieving a new devolution agreement? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Premier of Nunavut, Hon. Eva Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Member for Quttiktuq. I don't know what the proper term for devolution is in Inuktitut, so I will be using the English term when I'm referring to the matter.

At this time, the issue of devolution is still a major issue with the Nunavut government. The Government of Nunavut will work with Ottawa on this issue, along with Nunavut Tunngavik, who must be involved in any negotiations on devolution. As I stated earlier, I am quite pleased with the federal appointment of Bruce Rawson to work on this issue as this is the first staff position they have created. Further, Nunavut Tunngavik already appointed Dennis Patterson to be their negotiator and the Government of Nunavut also has a negotiator.

The Nunavut government is ready and willing to discuss these matters with the federal government, but the federal government has yet to name a negotiator. Until such time as they do identify a negotiator, I am unable to say when and where this will go. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Your second supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to the issue of arctic sovereignty and the Northern Strategy, I believe that close cooperation and coordination between the federal, territorial, and municipal levels of government is essential with respect to such issues as infrastructure development, local employment, and contracting opportunities.

For example, while the Nanisivik Naval Facility project is of great importance to my constituents in Arctic Bay, people are concerned that the road between the community and the facility may be closed. Can the premier assure me that she fully supports the involvement of the

community itself when it comes to making such decisions? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Ms. Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Nunavut is in full support of that. (interpretation ends) Inuit use and occupancy of the Arctic, both traditional and contemporary, comprise of a critical part of Canada's legal case for arctic sovereignty.

Devolution and full implementation of the NLCA are key steps Canada can take to equip Nunavut to play a strengthened role in the Arctic on behalf of Canada. Canada's sovereignty over the Arctic regions can only be asserted by building prosperous and sustainable communities in the North.

The Government of Nunavut believes that arctic sovereignty depends on cultural, economic, social, and human dimension, and obviously, this includes full participation from what we plan to hear from the people of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Premier. Your second supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: I think this is going to be my final one as I just don't have enough time. Mr. Speaker, in her announcement on January 15, the Premier indicated that one of the goals of the devolution process is to "make ourselves ready to be the managers and regulators of the resources on and beneath our lands and seabed."

As the Premier knows, the eyes of the world are on the High Arctic and the Northwest Passage, and many experts believe that competition between nations for access to the natural resources in this region will increase in coming years. Can the Premier indicate to me what her government's current position is with respect to Nunavut's jurisdiction in relation to the natural resources of the High Arctic? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. I don't quite understand the question that the member is asking, perhaps he can clarify it. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Please clarify your question, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: I guess what I'm getting at is whether the Government of Nunavut has a position on how we are going to manage the natural resources within the High Arctic.

For example, the US government has made a stand in recognizing the Northwest Passage as international waters, which then they could lay claim on that as well. As far as I understand from my reading, the Canadian government recognizes it as internal waters. I just wanted I guess a reiteration of what the Nunavut government feels whether we have sovereignty over our natural resources or not. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation

ends) The Government of Nunavut is ready to negotiate. We have a negotiator and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated has a negotiator, but the Government of Canada has not appointed a negotiator yet.

Once the Government of Canada appoints a negotiator, we will be in a position to carry out the negotiations that would include all of the pertinent information in terms of the resources and what has to be done within the sovereignty issue. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Question 010 – 3(1): Update on GN's Purchase of Sealskins from Nunavummiut

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot ascertain which minister is specifically responsible for fisheries. I wonder who that would be. Okay, thank you. I would like to pose this question to him.

Fisheries is a very important sector, along with the sealskin sector. It was stated on the news lately that the sale did not go well. Is that true? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister of Environment, Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was wondering if Mr. Okalik was going to get a question in for me or not, but yes, that is true. The Department of Environment has approximately 11,000 seal pelts down at the auction right now that are unsold.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is extremely regrettable if that is indeed the case. Have you made any plans to try to sell those sealskins again? As an example, we can showcase these pelts by marketing them to the outside world. Perhaps we can trade for some other commodity. Will your department be dealing with this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Okalik, the hon. member, we are working on options to deal with these seal pelts and one of the options is to bring some of those seal pelts back so they can be utilized in Nunavut also. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Question Period is now over. (interpretation ends) Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. I'm sorry. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Mr. Komoartok.

Item 11: Reports of Standing and Special Committees

Committee Report 001 – 3(1): Report of the Striking Committee on the Recommended Structure and Terms of Reference of the Standing Committees of the Third Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, (interpretation ends) I have the honour of presenting the Report of the Striking Committee on the Recommended Structure and Terms of Reference of the Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, as members in the House are aware, section 17 of the *Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council Act* provides that the Legislative Assembly may establish such committees to aid and advise it as it deems necessary.

Rule 83 of the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly* requires that a Striking Committee be established to report and recommend to the House the membership of the standing committees of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my Striking Committee colleagues, I am pleased to present our recommendations for the structure and terms of reference for the standing committees of the Third Legislative Assembly. These recommendations have been reviewed and ratified by the Regular Members' Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, standing committees perform a number of important oversight functions on the activities of the government through:

- The scrutiny of proposed legislation;

- The scrutiny of departmental and corporate business plans;
- The scrutiny of main estimates and capital estimates;
- The review of annual reports of independent officers of the Legislative Assembly; and
- The study of specific public policy issues and other matters referred to committees by the House.

The work of the standing committees allows for significant public and stakeholder input into the development of new legislation. The public hearings that standing committees hold on the annual reports of the Auditor General, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and the Languages Commissioner serve to enhance government transparency and accountability.

Mr. Speaker, in developing its recommendations, the Striking Committee took into careful account a number of factors that are required for any legislature's committee system to be effective.

Mr. Speaker, your Striking Committee is recommending that five new standing committees be established.

The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts will have oversight responsibility for the government's three central agency departments, in addition to a number of Crown agencies. This committee will review the government's public accounts, the reports of the Auditor General, and the reports of Nunavut's Languages Commissioner and Information and Privacy Commissioner. The committee is also

empowered to consider issues related to the implementation of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*. All ten regular MLAs will serve on this committee.

The Standing Committee on Legislation will also be composed of all ten regular MLAs. This committee has the mandate to review all bills that receive second reading in the Legislative Assembly, with the exception of Appropriation Acts and House Bills, which are automatically referred to the Committee of the Whole. I would also like to draw the attention of the House to those provisions in the terms of reference for this committee that explicitly provide for the opportunity to scrutinize from time to time the regulations that are proposed and/or passed by the government.

As members are aware, a number of important matters are dealt with through regulation. While the government has the ability to pass regulations without formal Legislative Assembly approval, the committee can and should play a role in the scrutiny of those regulations that are of significant importance. I would note, for example, that the Parliament of Canada maintains a joint committee that is composed of both Senators and Members of Parliament. That committee has the mandate to scrutinize federal regulations.

The Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development will have oversight responsibility for the Department of Environment, the Department of Community and Government Services, the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, and the Nunavut Housing Corporation. This committee will be composed of five MLAs. As you

will note, its focus is on those departments and agencies with responsibility for such matters as infrastructure, resource management, and housing.

The Standing Committee on Social Wellness will have oversight responsibility for the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth. This committee will be composed of five MLAs. As you will note, its focus is on those departments with responsibility for programs and services that focus directly on people.

The Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges will consider the operation of the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly* and any other matter referred to it by the House. Five MLAs will sit on this committee, including a ministerial representative.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes my report. I move that the Report of the Striking Committee be received and adopted by the House, and that the Terms of Reference of the Standing Committees of the Third Legislative Assembly be entered into the record. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. The member has moved that the Report of the Striking Committee be received and adopted by the House, and that the terms of reference of the standing committees be entered into the record as read. Are you agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Terms of Reference for the Standing
Committees of the
Third Legislative Assembly of
Nunavut**

January 2009

**Standing Committee on
Oversight of Government Operations
and Public Accounts**

The mandate of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts is to:

- Review main estimates, capital estimates, departmental business plans and corporate business plans; and
- Consider any other matter referred by the House.

The standing committee has oversight responsibility for the following Government of Nunavut departments and Crown agencies:

- Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs;
- Department of Finance;
- Department of Human Resources;
- Nunavut Arctic College;
- Nunavut Business Credit Corporation;
- Nunavut Development Corporation;
- Qulliq Energy Corporation;
- Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission; and
- Unless otherwise referred to in the terms of reference of any other standing committee, all other boards and agencies of the Government of Nunavut.

The standing committee has additional responsibility for:

- Reviewing the annual financial statements and public accounts of the Government of Nunavut and

- the reports of the Auditor General;
- Reviewing the reports of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut;
 - Reviewing the reports of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut; and
 - Considering issues related to the Government of Nunavut's obligations with respect to the implementation of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*.

Standing Committee on Legislation

The mandate of the Standing Committee on Legislation is to:

- Review legislative proposals;
- Review bills referred by the House after second reading, pursuant to the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly*;
- Scrutinize regulations that are proposed and/or passed by the government; and
- Consider any other matter referred by the House.

**Standing Committee on
Social Wellness**

The mandate of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness is to:

- Review main estimates, capital estimates, departmental business plans and corporate business plans; and
- Consider any other matter referred by the House.

The standing committee has oversight responsibility for the following Government of Nunavut departments:

- Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth;
- Department of Education;
- Department of Health and Social Services; and
- Department of Justice.

**Standing Committee on
Community and Economic
Development**

The mandate of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development is to:

- Review main estimates, capital estimates, departmental business plans and corporate business plans; and
- Consider any other matter referred by the House.

The standing committee has oversight responsibility for the following Government of Nunavut departments and Crown agencies:

- Department of Community and Government Services;
- Department of Economic Development and Transportation;
- Department of Environment; and
- Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges

The mandate of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges is to:

- Consider the operation of the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut*; and
- Consider any other matter referred by the House with respect to the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut*.

Speaker: Thank you, Members. We will take a 20-minute break.

(interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:40 and resumed at 16:04*

Speaker: Thank you, Members. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. There are none. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Madam Premier.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 001 – 3(1): GN's Response to the 2007-2008 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

Tabled Document 002 – 3(1): F/P/T Ministerial Report

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the following document:

- Government of Nunavut's response to the 2007-08 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

I have another document to table as well. (interpretation ends) I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to table the following document:

- First Ministers' Meeting

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Can we have those documents brought forward to the table, please.

(interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Mr. Shewchuk... Mr. Peterson.

**Tabled Document 003 – 3(1): GN
2007-08 Interim Financial
Report**

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Finance is continuing its progress on the tabling of the public accounts within the statutory requirements. The 2007-08 Interim Financial Statements were completed by September 30, 2008, in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act*.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 2007-08 Interim Financial Report.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Tootoo.

**Tabled Document 004 – 3(1): Nunavut
Housing Corporation's Annual
Report for 2005-2006**

Hon. Hunter Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure, Mr. Peterson, it's nice to table something you have asked for, for so long. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the following document:

- Nunavut Housing Corporation's Annual Report for 2005-2006

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Shewchuk.

**Tabled Document 005 – 3(1): Towards
a Representative Government –
Statistics as of September 30,
2008**

**Tabled Document 006 – 3(1): Towards
a Representative Government –
Statistics as of June 30, 2008**

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the following documents:

- Towards a Representative Government Statistics as of June 30, 2008 and September 30, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. (interpretation)
Can we have those documents brought forward to the table, please.

Tabling of Documents. Mr. Tapardjuk.

**Tabled Document 007 – 3(1): Elder
Help Line Poster**

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As per my statement with respect to the elder support phone line, I wish to table the following document:

- Elder Help Line Poster

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Can we have that document brought forward to the table, please.

(interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. I, too, have documents to table.

**Tabled Document 008 – 3(1):
Supplementary Retiring
Allowances Act**

**Tabled Document 009 – 3(1): 2006-
2007 Annual Report of the
Languages Commissioner of
Nunavut**

**Tabled Document 010 – 3(1): 2007-
2008 Annual Report on the
Payment of Indemnities,
Allowances and Expenses to
Members of the Legislative
Assembly**

Thank you, Members. As required by subsection 20.1 of the *Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act*, I wish to table a list of those members who have filed elections under the Act. Thank you.

I have another document. Thank you, Members. I wish to table the 2006-2007 Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. Thank you.

Members, as required by section 36 of the *Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council Act*, I wish to table the 2007-2008 Annual Report on the Payment of Indemnities, Allowances and Expenses to Members of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

Tabling of Documents. (interpretation)
There are no more. (interpretation ends)
Item 14. Notices of Motions. Mr. Okalik.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

**Motion 008 – 3(1): Appointment of
Languages Commissioner of
Nunavut – Notice**

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to give notice that on January 28, 2009, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Ms. Alexina Kublu be appointed as Languages Commissioner, effective this day.

My colleagues and Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. Mr. Arvaluk.

**Motion 009 – 3(1): Appointment of
Deputy Chairpersons of the
Committee of the Whole – Notice**

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, January 28, 2008, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Paul Okalik, (interpretation ends) Member for Iqaluit West, (interpretation) and Johnny Ningeongan, (interpretation ends) Member for Nanulik, (interpretation) be elected Deputy Chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole.

At the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Notices of Motions. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Motion 010 – 3(1): Appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut – Notice

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I give notice that on Wednesday, January 28, 2009, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Tagak Curley, Member for Rankin Inlet North, be appointed to the Executive Council of Nunavut.

At the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Notice of Motions. Mr. Elliott.

Motion 011 – 3(1): Extended Adjournment – Notice

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, January 28, 2009, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Amittuq, that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when the House concludes its present sitting in Iqaluit, it shall be adjourned until March 17, 2009.

At the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Notices of Motions. Mr. Komoartok.

Motion 012 – 3(1): Appointments to Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly – Notice

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on January 28, 2009, (interpretation ends) I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Tununiq, that members be appointed to standing committees of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will ask for unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Mr. Okalik.

Item 16: Motions

Mr. Okalik: *Merci Monsieur le Président.* (interpretation) I wish to seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation). Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Mr. Okalik is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may proceed, Mr. Okalik.

Motion 008 – 3(1): Appointment of Languages Commissioner of Nunavut

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my colleagues.

WHEREAS section 18 of the *Official Languages Act* provides that the Languages Commissioner is appointed by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly to hold office for a term of four years during good behaviour;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly's Management and Services Board has undertaken a merit-based selection process for this position;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to recommend an appointment to this position;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Ms. Alexina Kublu be appointed as Languages Commissioner, effective this day.

(interpretation ends) *Merci Monsieur le Président.*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik: *Merci Monsieur le Président.* (interpretation) I am pleased that we will be able to proceed with this matter today. And further, this person is well known by many Inuit as she has been in the field of languages for many years. It is also quite obvious that this

person is quite passionate about languages and that these issues are close to her heart.

And further, with the *Inuit Language Protection Act* now enacted, this position will be quite important. I am extremely pleased that I was able to work with our previous colleagues in the last Assembly as I was able to cooperate with them when we were identifying issues for the legislation.

I also wish to thank all of the people who applied for the position and for their interest. I thank them all as we had a hard choice to make. Further, I am quite pleased since I know this individual will work to her utmost to fulfill her duties. I am pleased that the House is now in a position to recommend a permanent appointment and I look forward to the support of all members for this motion.

So I would like to acknowledge Alexina Kublu, who is present today, along with her daughter and grandchild, and her staff member, Sandra Inutiq. I know that she is quite capable and I look forward to working with her in her new role and we have to offer all of our support to her.

I wish to welcome her and I urge you to choose wisely, my fellow colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Thank you. Opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried.

>> *Applause*

Thank you. We are very proud of you, Ms. Alexina Kublu.

(interpretation ends) Motions. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): I would like to deal with a motion that is not quite on par with our previous motion. I wish to seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Arvaluk.

Motion 009 – 3(1): Appointment of Deputy Chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my colleagues.

WHEREAS section 43 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides that the Legislative Assembly shall, at its first session, elect two Deputy Chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to make appointments;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Paul Okalik, Member for (interpretation ends) Iqaluit West, (interpretation) and Johnny Ningeongan, Member for Nanulik, be elected Deputy Chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Thank you. Opposed. The motion is carried.

>> *Applause*

Motions. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Motion 010 – 3(1): Appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) WHEREAS subsection 60 (1)(b) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides that there shall be an Executive Council of Nunavut composed of persons appointed by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Tagak Curley, Member for

Rankin Inlet North, be appointed to the Executive Council of Nunavut.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please raise your hand. Opposed. The motion is carried.

>>Applause

Motions. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Elliott.

Motion 011 – 3(1): Extended Adjournment

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Amittuq, that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when the House concludes its present sitting in Iqaluit, it shall be adjourned until March 17, 2009.

Further, that at any time prior to March 17, 2009, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its

business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Thank you. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Motions. Mr. Komoartok.

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There being none. Please proceed, Mr. Komoartok.

Motion 012 – 3(1): Appointments to Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS section 17 of the (interpretation ends) *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides for the Legislative Assembly to appoint such committees to aid and advise it as it seems necessary;

AND WHEREAS the Striking Committee has reported to the House;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to make appointments;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Tununiq, that

the following members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Legislation: James Arvaluk, Moses Aupaluktuq, Ron Elliott, Adamee Komoartok, Johnny Ningeongan, Paul Okalik, Euk Pauloosie, Allen Rumbolt, and Fred Schell;

AND FURTHER, I move that the following members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts: James Arvaluk, Moses Aupaluktuq, Ron Elliott, Adamee Komoartok, Johnny Ningeongan, Paul Okalik, Euk Pauloosie, Allen Rumbolt, and Fred Schell;

AND FURTHER, I move that the following members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Social Wellness: James Arvaluk, Moses Aupaluktuq, Ron Elliott, Johnny Ningeongan, and Paul Okalik;

AND FURTHER, I move that the following members be appointed as Alternate Members of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness: Adamee Komoartok and Euk Pauloosie;

AND FURTHER, I move that the following members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development: Adamee Komoartok, Euk Pauloosie, Allan Rumbolt, and Fred Schell;

AND FURTHER, I move that the following members be appointed as Alternate Members of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development: James Arvaluk, Ron Elliott, and Johnny Ningeongan;

AND FURTHER, I move that the following members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges: Moses Aupaluktuq, Ron Elliott, Paul Okalik, Euk Pauloosie, and the Hon. Keith Peterson representing the Cabinet;

AND FURTHER, I move that the following members be appointed as Alternate Members of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges: James Arvaluk and Adamee Komoartok.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion, raise your hand. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Motions. (interpretation ends) Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. There are none. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder for members to check the orientation program for meetings being held on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Orders of the Day for March 17, 2009:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements

4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:29*

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.
This House stands adjourned until
Tuesday, March 17, starting at 1:30 p.m.
Thank you.

