

REMARKS OF INCOMING CHAIR
DALEE SAMBO DOROUGH
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[as delivered]

Are you ready? I think that I'm ready. Jimmy said I had two hours!

Thank you so much Okaklik for the introduction. I think it's important to tell you a little about myself personally. First of all, my paternal grandparents are Artidoro and Hannah Powers Sambo. Artidoro Sambo was from Italy, he arrived here at the turn of the century. Hannah Powers, Inupiaq, adopted by a family in Unalakleet. Just so happens to be the same woman that adopted Elaine Upicksoun, who was married to the late Art Upicksoun from this region. My maternal grandparents are Mitiaq and Napayangnaq of Unalakleet. Carlson Norman, Mitiaq defected from Shaktoolik and moved to Unalakleet. Napayangnaq is Josphine Panipchuk. My parents are the late Frank and Esther Sambo.

This is my 13th ICC General Assembly. In 1975, I was in high school and active in politics. I learned about the ANCSA at a very young age. Actually, I was 14 years old when I got my hands a copy of the ANCSA and from my point of view, at that time, at that young age, I recognized that there were some problems with that piece of legislation because I knew that my grandparents Mitiaq and Napayangnaq that their way in this world that a people could extinguish the rights of another people. The term extinguishment I knew that was not a good thing. How was it that the federal government could extinguish my grandparents way of life? So, it had me concerned and I became politically involved. But, in high school, and this might be the wrong message for some of the young people in this room, at that time I really hated school because they weren't teaching me things that weren't relevant to me as, an Inupiaq. Yes, indeed they may have been relevant, but they weren't relevant to my personal context and who I was at that time, and I was still learning about who I was at that time.

Nevertheless, what I did was I went to the school principal and said you know if I can't do an independent study or something, then I'll have to drop-out, so I can do the things that I want to do. they said Well that's not acceptable for you to drop out, so we'll do an independent study. So, I managed to design my own political science classes. The first call that I designed for myself was to become involved in Eben Hopson's campaign against our sole us congressman Don Young. In 1976, Eben Hopson ran on the single-issue platform of the need for an Arctic Policy.

Of course, in his mind, his motivations were to define everything relevant to our political economic, social political culture aspirations. So, it was an honor for me to be involved in his campaign and through my work with Eben and at that time the, in fact North Slope Borough Public Safety Department, I was able to become involved in the first Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the ICC, right here in Utqiagvik. I was just a kid. It was incredible, what foresight this individual had. And, since that time I've been to very single General Assembly and I've been very, very fortunate to be embraced by the political leadership of the ICC over these many, many decades.

In 1982, when the ICC determined that they needed a branch office in Alaska, I was approached by Jimmy. And, I knew that he had probably interviewed a few other people. I was intrigued by the opportunity and it just seemed like the natural thing to do, and fortunately I was selected as Executive Director of the Alaska Office and Special Assistant to then president Hans Pavia Rosing. Since that time, I should note that it was from 1982-1989 that I served in this position. Since that time, I've had the opportunity to serve with the extraordinary leaders and subsequent leaders of the ICC. When MS was elected and during her term, she had a health, and I've actually been the interim president of ICC in the past, she asked me to serve for approximately a 6-month period due to health issues. I've been extremely fortunate to have worked with HD and many other on the international human rights work and even though I left the organization to pursue an education, I was able to still have a hand in the and in part the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

I would like to acknowledge the work of Okalik Egeesiak as the outgoing Chair and the entire Executive Council Nuka, Hjalmar, Vera, Jimmy, Nancy, Duane, Herb, Tatiana and Elena. Many of the goals set in 2014 at Inuvik have been accomplished under your collective, steady leadership as the ICC EC members for the past four years.

I know that there is insufficient time to comment on all the matters discussed over the last 4 days. However, allow me to address a few issues. And, based on our discussions, I know that I won't be saying anything new – we all have a mutual desire to see us thrive as Inuit, but I'll try to be brief.

The first message is that we need every Inuk. We've heard everyone say this already. There are 7.6 billion people on earth. There are approximately 165,000 Inuit on the entire planet. So, we need every single one of us; every woman, every man, every young person, every child, every mother, every father, every elder. We need every Inuk. Period. We need every one of you here today but even more important and we've already heard this, we need all those at home. We need every future leader. We very past leader. We should be concerned about calling upon our past leaders as a wealth of knowledge

and wisdom there. We need every future leader. “There is nothing like being wanted or being welcomed. Being valued.”¹ We heard that from the youth already. Every Inuk is wanted. Every Inuk is welcomed. And, Every Inuk is valued. More significantly, every Inuk is the Inuit Circumpolar Council. Okay.

Each of you in this room can play a part, immediately and at no cost to anyone by drawing attention to the ICC and our mutual aspirations. Think about it when you go home, this isn't going to take any effort, I know you're going to talk about your experience here, educate others. Everyone in this room can contribute through their intellect and share your ideas, your perspective, your opinions about the discussions, the substantive discussions, that we've had here today. And, that in and of itself even in itself is an extraordinary contribution. It's amazing that we have livestreaming, that those in Kalaallit Nunaat can view gavel-to-gavel discussions that we've held here, but that human contact, that human message is even more significant especially to those at home, those at home that have never had an opportunity to attend an ICC GA or to represent the ICC as an Inuk. So, don't underestimate, the value of these message, the dialogue, the discussions those person contributions that you've had an Inuk.

When you go home I especially welcome the remarks by our youth delegates Ruth and Quluttannguaq and all youth speakers about the need for real, concrete, ongoing financial and physical support, and we must collectively determine how to do so.

I want to talk a bit about Unity and coordination -- Our founding father, Eben Hopson, had the foresight to unite us as a people. He saw the value of advancing a coherent, coordinated approach to our collective action. and our united voice at the international level. In February 1983, when ICC gained NGO status by the ECOSOC at the UN, Hans Pavia Rosing as ICC's first President, stated that, "we take this acceptance of our NGO application as recognition by the United Nations [the ultimate intergovernmental organization] of the important role Inuit can play in promoting the objectives of the UN and in assisting the international community in developing a greater awareness of and sensitivity to the Arctic region, its environment, and its inhabitants."²

To date, we have done this. We have infused the UN, the Arctic Council and other intergovernmental fora with our distinct perspectives. However, in the future, we must do more and in an inclusive and comprehensive fashion, ensuring that we take the time to provide a coordinated

¹ Michael Connolly, The Narrows.

² ICC Granted UN Status Inuit Assume New Role in World Community at <http://www.ebenhopson.com/apr/March%201983/8/index.html> last accessed on 14 July 2018

approach to our collective action, ensuring that each of our unique regions are effectively contributing to a united Inuit voice in our overall work at the international level.

We must enhance collaboration, cooperation and communication between all Inuit as well as our four branch offices. Moving forward, we must consider how to gain the input of those at the local, regional and national level to be responsive to the concerns and interests of Inuit. Like the diversity of delegates from each of our four regions all around the table, our branch offices at the national level must be responsive to and inclusive of all our diverse political, economic, social and cultural institutions and ensure that we are working to amplify domestic priorities and concerns at the international level. And, internationally, we will ensure that leadership and our four respective offices have direct, regular and substantive collaboration, cooperation and communication. Such an approach will ensure that we are more strategic, that we can maximize our few resources. Through enhanced communication, we can and will provide a more unified, coherent, coordinated and inclusive voice in favor of all Inuit.

Self-determination and self-sufficiency are crucial. It's been stated on the floor already. In international law, the right to self-determination is regarded as the pre-requisite for the exercise and enjoyment of all human rights. A prerequisite, it is required. We have determined our political status – we are distinct peoples, with distinct rights that inhabit a distinct region of the world. Therefore, we must ensure that Inuit, at all levels, are not hindered or stifled in their expression of self-determination in every realm. In this regard, we must be able to “freely pursue our economic, social and cultural development.”

The remarks of our, I'll say, senior delegate Charlie Watt spoke in relation to erasing the imposed borders and of nationhood. Such an objective conjures up a powerful state of mind and the oneness of our people. It also speaks to our extraordinary political development over the past 41 years as well as our present capacity, and our desire for the self-sufficiency that was a hallmark of our societies before contact. Yet, at the same time, we must be mindful of the present geopolitical and geostrategic reality of the current Arctic five nation-states. There's no doubt that they take their sovereignty and self-determination seriously. We're acutely aware of their economic and political force both here at home and across the globe. We're also acutely aware of the measure of our own economic and political force. So, the objective of a single Inuit governance institution will require careful and critical analysis in the future. It's a significant political enterprise. We've seen this happen in other parts of the world.

The desire for self-determination and self-sufficiency saturates every dimension of our lives, issues both large and small, at the micro level as individuals and the macro level, issues of global significance.

At the macro level, as external, global pressures upon our homelands begin to compound even further. We've heard already remarks about the impact that we've suffered from, generated by activities at the global level. We as Inuit, must be prepared to address them head on through our collective voice and our right to self-determination. Rex Rock spoke of the need to make plans 10, 20, 30 years ahead and he's right. Yet, we have to recognize that China may have a thousand-year plan, not to mention all other countries that have designs for our Arctic homelands. We can't underestimate it, we've already seen the growing, compounded interests and pressures. Therefore, we must become more assertive about our status and rights to effectively safeguard what is indeed ours: the lands, territories and resources of the Arctic. I'd like to recall Eben Hopson's welcoming address to the 1977 conference

“Our language contains the memory of four thousand years of human survival through the conservation and good managing of our Arctic wealth...Our language contains the intricate knowledge of the ice that we have seen no others demonstrate. Without our central involvement, there can be no safe and responsible Arctic resource development.”

As a maritime people reliant upon the marine environment, including the coastal seas and the Arctic Ocean, we should consider development of a strategy that guarantees our role as primary actors in development of any initiatives related to our coastal seas and the Arctic Ocean, to the territory that we have always regarded as Eben Hopson's said, “our Arctic wealth”. Lene Kielsen Holm addressed the work that she has memorialized in the book the *Meaning of Ice*; Willie Goodwin spoke of the transit lanes through our coastal seas and the Arctic Ocean; Austin Ahmasoak spoke of the implications of heavy fuel oil use in our marine environment; each of these matters have existing and future impacts upon our food security – and these are just a few dimensions that should be considered in an overall strategy concerning the coastal seas and the Arctic Ocean.

I want to underscore the interrelated, interdependent and indivisible nature of human rights. We understand this, we always have. Implementation of this dimension of human rights must also be exercised by all of our own institutions, whether economic, political, social or cultural. Our leaders must take the interrelated, interdependent and indivisible nature of our human rights when making decisions, large and small. Examples include the relationship between health and well-being and our systems of education; also, how an economic decision may impact the social and cultural life of individuals within

our communities. I know that each of you can identify many other important interrelationships. The interrelated nature of our rights must also be understood by governments, corporations, environmental organizations, and all others. It is a distinct and important characteristic of individual and collective human rights.

The manifestation of our right to self-determination should also incorporate our own protocols, customs, practices, values and institutions. Too often, we duplicate the structures, procedures and substance of the settlers. Think of our highly complex, sophisticated and spiritual protocols. Our reliance upon such values and practices can and will strengthen our right to self-determination and its expressions among our own people. Significantly, it may educate all others that we interact with. And, if we just think about the Inupiat whaling culture, this extraordinary and sophisticated and complex way of being as a people. We need to figure out ways that we can embrace those values, practices and institutions in all of our other activities.

At the micro level, numerous interventions have been made about urgent social and cultural conditions. Natan spoke of the need to be responsive to the “most vulnerable”, the most vulnerable among us, in the context of personal security. His comments intersect with those made by Sara regarding child sexual abuse; in addition, Rebecca’s comments to violence against Inuit women, and the many comments concerning suicide within our communities, loss of language, and a host of other stark realities. And, most are rightly characterized as crisis. These conditions also require acts of self-determination and self-sufficiency. These are conditions that we ourselves must face and address.

In relation to cultural issues, that I didn’t get to elaborate upon in my remarks on Tuesday when I spoke of human rights. The UNESCO designation of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Those directly engaged in the work of Inuit language, its preservation and the promotion of it, should look into this designation and consider the ways and means that ICC can capitalize upon this important International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Regarding self-sufficiency, I want to applaud this important objective; it’s one that I wholeheartedly endorse. Yet, at the same time, I want to underscore the fact that our respective national governments have fiduciary obligations, these fiduciary obligations can essentially be summed up as the cost of colonization. In those areas of fiduciary responsibility, we should never regard these solemn obligations as “dependency” or a “hand out”. Lest, we forget those that faced and continue to face unimaginable suffering as well as the extensive lands, territories and resources taken by the states that now surround us. Therefore, we can’t let these governments off the hook. And, we should emphasize

this fiduciary responsibility and maximize the use of the resources owed toward the restoration of the health, vitality, dignity, and cultural integrity of our people.

Herb made an important statement about Inuit self-determination, self-sufficiency and decision-making. In my view, this applies to every economic, social, cultural and political institution throughout Inuit Nunaat. We have always been an ingenious people, creative, resourceful, imaginative. We've demonstrated highly sophisticated capacity and wisdom for generations and we need to reclaim that in every possible context, including within our branch offices. At every level, we should be hiring, training and maximizing the role of Inuit individuals across the board and especially in those crucial leadership positions that determine and direct the essential work of Inuit institutions, including the ICC. This objective should be a fundamental characteristic of all Inuit entities. I know that our existing institutions make this an important a priority and object, but I think that more needs to done in this regard. In addition, as Marie Greene stated, we have a deep and growing pool of capable, competent, amazing, inspirational Inuit. Also, such an objective uplifts our own people in immeasurable ways. And, never mind that it is 2018. So, across the board, we can do more outreach to those that we know have capacity and knowledge to contribute.

In conclusion, I believe that one of the greatest honors bestowed upon an Indigenous person is the simple expression of recognition, confidence and the support of your own people. I am genuinely honored to have been selected to lead the Inuit Circumpolar Council for the next four years.

Some years ago, I heard Ande Somby, a Sami who was studying at UAF, he was giving a presentation, and I've repeated his quote a number of times. He stated "we have a right to the past; we have a right to the present; and we have a right to the future" as Indigenous people. Every one of us in this room, our past, our present and our future. It's true for all Indigenous peoples across the globe, including us as the Indigenous peoples of our Arctic homeland, the Inuit.

We have often heard our elders talk about their lives before contact with outsiders. I've seen interviews, I've spoken to elders about. Many have the same refrain -- "we were happy". One of the most rewarding things that an Indigenous person can ever do is to make your people happy. In the next four years, I will do everything that I can to make you happy. Not only for you, here in this room, but more important to all those Inuit across the entire stretch of Inuit Nunaat. Quyanaq. Nakurmik. Quyaanasuaq. I'm honored.