



**Honourable Nellie T. Kusugak
Commissioner of Nunavut**

Speaking Notes

Ahiarmiut Apology

Tuesday January 29, 2019

Arviat, Nunavut

Good day,

Ullukkut tunngasugitsi arviarmiut, niurruallu, tagvungarnitamaat uummatiga saimaqsaqtauvaktuq, matnalluavik.

(welcome people of Arviat, and visitors, everytime I come here my heart becomes content, thank you)

I want to begin by acknowledging distinguished guests, the honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of crown - Indigenous relations, Arviat MLA Joe Savikataaq Premier of Nunavut, Minister Kusugak, President of NTI, Ms Aluki Kotierk, and Arviat MLA John Main. I apologize if I have missed anyone

I would also like to take this opportunity to say a special thank you to David Serkoak and Elisapee Karetak of the Ahiarmiut society for welcoming me and inviting me to speak during this very special ceremony. Matnalluavik.

What we are all gathered here for today is very close to my heart, as my family has strong connections to Ahiarmiut. Some of you may not know my late father Johnny Karetak, who was an RCMP Special Constable by profession. As a part of fulfilling his duties, he was involved during the final

stages of the Ahlarmiut relocations as they were removing the last people at HBC post, Padlei. I was so excited as a little girl when the Ahlarmiut were brought here, little did I know the history of why. I think of all the ones who were around when I grew up here. I thank you all on behalf of my parents who welcomed you into their home. You gave us more than you can imagine. Thank you from my family.

As I grew up among Ahlarmiut, I often think about the people and the families that were affected by the forced relocations. Some of you are fortunate enough to be here with us today, but let us also remember those who have passed on as today's ceremony marks a historic day. A day that I hope will bring peace and harmony from years and years of hurt, anger, and other memories that bring feelings and emotions that I cannot even begin to imagine. I have a daughter who is named Nanuq after a very dear Ahlarmiut friend. Kinguvaarijaujut takusinnaq&ugit saimmarnaqtuq.(I get happy just seeing their descendants)

As Commissioner of Nunavut, and on behalf of Nunavut and Kivallirmiut. I apologize if we ever caused you grief when you came here, I am truly sorry. I hope that it will help you and have closure to you and your loved

ones. Quviasuqatigilluavikpapsi. Thank you Natan for helping to push this forward, and a huge gratitude and thanks to David Hiquaq, who worked very hard to bring justice to his family and the others. We applaud you for working and kept working hard even though you may have wanted to give up many many times. All your hard work is truly appreciated, you have done your parents proud so they can rest in peace. Thank you to the society and all their hard work. This day has come. Niriungniqarlusi, akisaqtuqtaugapsi ammalu sivuliqsi. Isumagijungnaiqatigiingnirlu taimauluni. (there must be hope and forgiveness, someone fought for you and your families)

As we will hear later on from Minister Bennett, I am truly honoured to be here today to witness an important step. A step towards the healing of Ahiarmiut. I know you have fought long and hard for this.