

What Was Said QUAQTAQ September 24 to 26, 2013

When the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement was negotiated in 1975, the focus was on the damming of rivers and hydroelectric production. Today, the situation is different: it's mining. We must stand up for our land. We can no longer be invisible.

Who We Are

(Culture and Identity • Harvesting • Lands • Environmental and Regional Planning)

The teaching of Inuktitut inside the school is difficult. Inuktitut teaching should take place on a full-time basis, not just a few hours a day. Not enough time is allocated for Inuktitut.

Nunavik history should be part of the school curriculum. We also need to record the history of Quaqtaq and preserve our archaeological sites.

Very often regarding wildlife management, Inuit traditional knowledge draws conclusions that are different from those of scientific researchers. More recognition is needed for our traditional knowledge.

Since quota systems have been implemented for some species, our traditional sharing practices have changed. We must now deal with situations that we did not bring about ourselves.

Roberts Lake has always been important to our community for subsistence harvesting. Yet now, we cannot protect it. Mineral claims blanket the area.

We have rights at Roberts Lake. We want this area to be protected.

Our landholding corporations and Makivik need to find ways to increase our rights on category lands, including subsurface rights.





Our Communities

(Elders, Women and Youth • Education • Health • Housing • Justice and Social Regulation • Community development • Biofood • Employment)

Elders need to have access to basic health services in Inuktitut and must receive better support against abuse. How can the Nunavik Elders Committee help with this?

We should look at how annual income tax and indexed old age security pensions can be adapted to help reduce the cost of living for elders and families.

Many children carry anger learned from their parents. If we could take up our responsibilities more, we would be able to improve community well-being.

The Aqitauvik Healing Centre has developed healing expertise needed in the communities and by Inuit. But the Centre is still struggling for funding.

Because of minor offences, many hunters have lost their right to possess firearms and are no longer able to hunt. Also, the incarceration of women is a new phenomenon that we need to work to prevent.

We hear a lot about children taken from their parents by youth protection services. We must find ways to prevent these children from being removed from the community and placed with non-Inuit families.



Raising children is not just the responsibility of women. Husbands must help their wives. There should be a centre where people can learn about parenting, cooking and how to take care of their children.

Youth must be encouraged to pursue their education. It will help them get better jobs and deal with their responsibilities. Teachers need support as well. Too often we think that Makivik and the KRG will look after things, but I feel the solutions must come from within each community.

Youth should be asked to take responsibilities at home even while they are young. They also need to be involved now, while we are making important decisions for the future.

The school calendar does not take into account the seasons. Could we extend school hours in the fall when the days are shorter, and stop in May when the days get longer?

There should be a place for students to go when their teachers are absent.

Bullying at school and in workplaces should be stopped.

When young Inuit go south for college, they perceive that they are behind. We need to give them a proper education.

Alcohol during pregnancy leads to foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Children born with FASD will always need special support.

Evictions are very difficult for those involved and the community. Greater care must be taken with those facing eviction to help them avoid it. Here in Quaqtaq, we have to start taking control over our lives and follow up concretely on the conference on prevention and empowerment. The justice committee too should be strengthened to play a bigger role.

Quaqtaq is lagging behind other Nunavik communities. We cannot even get water delivered when there is a snow storm. We should not wait for outside help. We can solve our problems ourselves.

The communities of Quaqtaq, Kangirsuk and Aupaluk should join forces to bring their business concerns together.

The landholding corporation has many businesses but individuals do not have the same opportunities.

Fresh food takes a long time to reach our community so we must take care to protect our local food resources.

Salaries and benefits are very different from one organization to another, and employees of local organization do not even receive benefits. More recognition should be given to skilled Inuit in the workplace.

Students must pursue their education if they want to one day have good jobs, including in mining, and if they want to be respected.



Our Region (Tourism • Mining • Energy • Transportation • Telecommunications)

For sure it is sad to see that there are only 88 Inuit working at the Raglan mine. On the other hand, if we wonder what they would be doing without those



jobs at the mine, we should feel glad that many are working there.

Inuit must take ownership of the tourism industry since tourism has the potential to create jobs.

Since tourists must pay so much to travel to Nunavik, it is important that our guides have proper training and insurance.

A mining policy that proposes industry guidelines in Nunavik will be very useful. Protection for our lands and the environment and the impacts of mining on our daily lives would of course be taken into account. Landholding corporations must also be given the opportunity to provide input.

Mining will affect our way of life but bring benefits in the future.

If there is mining and we lose access to our country foods, we will need to be compensated because we will have to get our food from somewhere else.

Is it normal that we do not receive energy produced in the north to heat our homes and water?

Before constructing power lines, we will need to consider the damage that will be caused to the land and disturbances on wildlife.





Cargo and mining ships passing through our coastal waters could lead to the contamination of our marine mammals. We must also be concerned about the possibility of oil spills.

We have a right to control our lands and we will have to find ways to become involved with the two major mining projects in the Ungava area.

Our Vision of Development

It's time to stop talking and take action.

We need a representative in the National Assembly. We need self-government.

Our future generations will need different tools.

Nunavimmiut should go to the government together. Divided, we are weak, but together we can be strong. In the future, I would like Inuit to act of one accord, in harmony. Unity is the way to progress.

This issue of What Was Said is a summary of remarks made during discussions on regional development in Quaqtaq in September. Participants included the mayor, representatives of the landholding corporation and cooperative association, as well as community Anguvigaq, cultural, education, elders, youth, justice, church and recreation committees, and local representatives of the Makivik Corporation, the Kativik Regional Government, the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, and the Kativik School Board.

