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Inquiry on

### **THE ARCTIC**

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2 pm

Witness: Terry Audla

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Members present

Lord Teverson (Chairman)  
Lord Addington  
Lord Hannay of Chiswick  
Viscount Hanworth  
Lord Hunt of Chesterton  
Lord Moynihan  
Lord Oxburgh  
Baroness Neville-Jones  
Lord Soley  
Lord Tugendhat

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**Examination of Witness**

**Terry Audla**, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)

**Q292 The Chairman:** Mr Audla, good afternoon, or good morning for you I think. Can you hear me okay?

**Terry Audla:** Good afternoon. Yes, I can hear you fine, thank you.

**The Chairman:** Good. I think you are in Ottawa. Is that right?

**Terry Audla:** That is correct, I am in Ottawa.

**The Chairman:** Mr Audla, thank you very much indeed for appearing in front of the House of Lords Arctic Select Committee. This is our 23rd evidence session. We are very grateful to you for making yourself available. You should have had a copy of all our interests e-mailed to you. I will ask you to introduce yourself. We then have a number of questions, the shape of which I think you are well aware. We will then move into a discussion about Arctic issues in your area. Does that sound good?

**Terry Audla:** Yes, thank you, my Lord Chairman. My name is Terry Audla. I am the president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, which represents all Inuit in Canada. We number about 60,000 and

we are growing in numbers. We live across Canada's Arctic, mostly above the tree line. The map behind me shows the geographical region that I represent.

**Q293 The Chairman:** Thank you. I should say that I am Robin Teverson. I chair the Select Committee and I have around me a dozen of my colleagues, Members of the House of Lords, on the Committee. I will start by asking you how life has changed for the Inuit of northern Canada in recent decades. How are the changes in the Arctic impacting on the lives of those communities? What are the positives and negatives of those changes? After that I would like to move on to the land claims side, but perhaps you can begin with that general introduction of the current situation and how it has changed in northern Canada.

**Terry Audla:** Okay. I do not know how much time we have. I could go on for hours on that specific issue.

**The Chairman:** Let me answer that straightaway. It is a very good question. We have until 3 pm on our side, so effectively 55 minutes for the session as a whole.

**Terry Audla:** Okay, that is great. Thank you, my Lord Chairman. Specific to your question, in a matter of decades—a generation, if not two generations—Inuit have moved from igloos and seal-skin tents to static communities, often in inadequate and overcrowded homes. Where we used to get our food exclusively from the land and sea, many now shop for packaged items at exorbitant cost. Until very recently, providing for a family entailed hunting, gathering, sewing and building, yet for the majority of Inuit it now means going to school and getting a job.

Within the past 40 years, Canadian Inuit also concluded five contiguous land claim agreements, which we will get into in greater detail later, stretching from coast to coast. These are constitutionally protected treaties between Inuit and the Crown. They form the basis of our relationship with the Government of Canada. These land claim agreements

provided us with tools for shaping our lives and developing our lands and resources. They equipped us with critical roles in the governance and economies of our regions and communities. Over the course of several decades, we have fought to have a voice in discussions that affect our lives. On matters of resource development, our land claim organisations obligate Governments and corporate entities to work in full partnership with us and to ensure that their projects are to our long-term benefit. Basically, those are the changes that we have seen in a very short amount of time. We are going through our own growing pains but we have managed to be quite successful in creating a formal relationship through our modern treaties with the Crown.

**The Chairman:** Thank you. Have the land agreements generally been seen as successful, even-handed deals that will last into the future successfully? Has the balance been correct? Is everybody on the whole satisfied with the outcome of those? Are they working in practice?

**Terry Audla:** The Inuit are very proud of their successes through the signing and ratification of these modern treaties. They are protected under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act. When it comes to the implementation, that is a whole different—

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**The Chairman:** Hello again. I think we were talking about the land agreements, particularly their implementation and how that has taken place.

**Terry Audla:** Again, the Inuit were very proud to have been successful in the negotiation of these land claims. Just to give you an idea of the geographical scope, the map behind me shows you the geographical area. That represents 40% of Canada's land-mass. The sheer scope of it compares to either Australia or India. The geographical area is almost similar in scope to the European Union. Within that area, Inuit have successfully negotiated actual

titles to lands and have become one of the largest private landholders in the world. That area is equivalent to the size of Spain and Portugal. The geographical area in question also covers close to 50% of Canada's coastline. In all those areas, Inuit, through their land claims, have a say in what happens with respect to any development, either renewable or non-renewable.

Now, the implementation side of it is another question: how much is the Government obligated? On their side, the Inuit feel they have been living up to the agreements and it is a matter of having the Government live up to their side as well—so far so good in today's examples. It is a matter of coming to the table and coming to some agreement as to what needs to be implemented and what the obligations are. It is very legalistic. These are very comprehensive land claims. It is a matter of interpretation in a lot of cases.

**Q294 Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** Do you believe that the problems of the indigenous population in Canada, which you represent, and those of indigenous populations in other parts of the world outside the Arctic are very different, or are they basically broadly similar and need broadly similar responses from the international community, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

**Terry Audla:** Thank you for that question. Indigenous groups around the world are interestingly very similar in a broad sense: our voices and our opinions are not given the same weight in the countries in which we reside. Our organisation, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, through its relations with the Inuit Circumpolar Council, of which I am vice-president for the Canadian division, has been quite successful in the drafting of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We feel that the Canadian model, with respect to the modern treaties, could be upheld as a model to other nations as to how they

would work with their indigenous people. In that sense, we felt that we could assist other nations in working with their indigenous people.

In the cases of our socioeconomics and our physical and mental health—our well-being—we are not yet at par with the rest of Canada. This is the one thing that we are working hard towards in our organisation. When you look at the high drop-out rates at school, the tuberculosis rates and suicide rates among our people, we still have a long way to go to get to at least par with the rest of the nation. Sadly, that is true of other indigenous communities around the world. But in the case of Canada, through the work of our organisation and working in partnership with the regions and regional land claim organisations, we are working diligently to try to address them and at least get to par with the rest of the nation. We are not there yet. We are still a long way away. I hope that answers your question.

**Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** Yes, absolutely. Thank you very much.

**Q295 Lord Addington:** Hello Terry. Nice to see you again. To what extent do you think the recent economic developments have affected and been welcomed by the Inuit community? How do the local people feel that the economic and social benefits from such development affect them, and how do they relate to the campaign for greater autonomy and rights among your local people? How does all this tie together?

**Terry Audla:** That is a good question. Thank you my Lord Chairman, and Lord Addington—it was a pleasure to meet you at the Arctic Circle conference in Reykjavik. In 2009 the Inuit ratified a circumpolar declaration on sovereignty in the Arctic, which articulates the desire among Inuit to develop innovative and creative jurisdictional arrangements that balance our rights and responsibilities with those of states. Put simply, the old ways of doing business in the Arctic are gone. Any major decisions affecting the Arctic require transparent

communication, active and constructive partnership with the Inuit, and in many cases the appropriate consent of the Inuit.

Various estimates suggest that a significant share of the world's natural resources are located in the Arctic. In 2011, Inuit responded to this changing reality with a statement aimed at setting the context for resource development in the modern Arctic. Another circumpolar Inuit declaration was passed on resource development principles, which says that development must be conducted in an environmentally responsible way and must deliver direct and substantial benefit to Inuit. We are beginning to see some benefits from such partnerships, but there remain significant questions regarding the impacts of such development on our land and wildlife. For that reason, there is no one-size-fits-all response to resource development inquiries. It is about striking a balance and making economic development work in tandem with social development—wherein lies the trick of trying to keep that balance so that it is done in an environmentally responsible manner, as well as a socially responsible manner. Based on the fact that we have these successful modern treaties, we welcome any resource-extraction industries, so long as they cross their "t"s, dot their "i"s, do their due diligence and ensure, if they come into the Arctic, that they are coming in with their eyes wide open and are aware of the land claim requirements, as well as the need to be respectful of the people and Inuit who live in the Arctic—to include them in the decision-making process. In this day and age we are no longer just the employees; we are also the employers.

**Lord Addington:** To follow up on that, would you say that you have good models of where you have enhanced the skill base of the community and your economic activity outwith that initial interaction? Are there examples there that you think we should know about and should be models for future development?

**Terry Audla:** You have probably heard examples of what not to do from the insurance industry. I can give you examples of the American Gulf disaster and the Italian cruise ship disaster. Insurance companies require the industry to ensure that they do their due diligence, and if they go to areas where they will experience extreme climates and conditions, that they go in with eyes wide open.

Good examples would probably be some of the current projects that are operating in Canada's north. Baffinland, on the northern tip of Baffin Island near Pond Inlet, is on lands where Inuit own the minerals. They are extracting what I call "Inuit iron ore". We are collecting the royalties on the extraction and have successfully negotiated an impacts and benefits agreement where we require minimum employment goals to ensure that Inuit are included in the whole scheme of ensuring that Inuit are gainfully employed, as well as being given the opportunity to advance into other areas. We are looking not just at heavy equipment operators but at potential engineers, based on the fact that this specific project may have a 100-year life. Being that it is multigenerational, we need to ensure that Inuit benefit and that mitigative requirements are met to ensure there is as little damage to the environment as possible.

**Lord Hunt of Chesterton:** As a supplementary, would you not agree with some historians who would say that the way you have developed your agreements with the Canadian Government is in part because of the constitution of Canada, which was agreed a long time ago in this strange Parliament we are in? It is a very different constitution from that of the United States. I have been to the United States and have seen that Native Americans have had not nearly the good constitutional fortune that there is in Canada. Therefore, the whole global question of indigenous peoples is surely in part due to the way the various constitutions originated. Is there something to be said about that?

**Terry Audla:** Yes, I totally agree with that question. Being that we are a Commonwealth nation, the Inuit were quite instrumental in ensuring that we had specific constitutional protection in the repatriation of our constitution in, I believe, 1985. Again, that is in Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act, which we helped to develop and which opened up the modern treaty that we entered into. We have our counterparts: I mentioned the Inuit Circumpolar Council, and there are also our fellow Inuit in Greenland, in Alaska, and in the northern Chukotka region. We are quite well organised in being able to exchange notes on successes and failures. We know that the indigenous people in Alaska have a more difficult time getting the US Government to recognise their indigenous rights respecting titles and/or historical use and occupancy of the area in which they reside. They have been successful in partnering with the resource-extractive industry in that part of the world.

Greenland is working towards self-rule to become more autonomous from Denmark. I am not too sure about the Danish constitution and how they recognise their indigenous people, but because of our well organised circumpolar division we are able to ensure that we have what we call best practices or examples to assist whichever Inuit group we need to deal with.

**Q296 Lord Hunt of Chesterton:** Thank you. I am meant to ask you another question, in fact, about international campaigns to protect and preserve the Arctic environment and biodiversity. I wonder how those campaigns relate to the views of indigenous people in these areas, which we have heard causes considerable stresses and argument. Perhaps you would like to comment on that.

**Terry Audla:** Yes. It is too bad that we have less than an hour to go into this question. Thank you for that question, my Lord Chairman. Let me begin by addressing the language of the question. You asked me about international campaigns that attempt to “protect and

preserve” the Arctic. Regrettably, Inuit see these campaigns as misguided attempts by government and non-governmental organisations to fundamentally change our lives to suit their differently oriented moral standards. It was not so long ago that such attitudes directed every aspect of our way of life. Back then we called it colonialism. It is deeply troubling when our knowledge and experiences are minimised or marginalised. Our knowledge and experiences are quite effective and have been effective for our people to be able to survive for centuries in one of the harshest climates on the planet. We see this time after time, perhaps most blatantly on wildlife issues such as our seal and polar bear trade.

The theme of political empowerment is particularly important when it comes to climate change. Inuit feel the overarching influence of a warming planet in almost every aspect of our lives. We feel it when hunters become stranded due to unpredictable ice conditions. We feel it in the melting permafrost, which compromises the foundations of our very homes. Yet we are told by well funded organisations and foreign Governments that in the face of these impacts we must fundamentally change our way of life. I am talking specifically about the Inuit way of life: what we wear, what we eat, how we feed our families, how we choose to make a living in the modern world. They assert that our activities should be changed because they think it may cause undue stress to our species, wildlife and environment, instead of examining whose way of life truly needs to be adjusted. In Reykjavik recently I suggested to campaign movements such as “Save the Arctic” that climate change and carbon dioxide emissions are stemming not from the Arctic but from the industrialised nations. If you truly want to save the Arctic, you need to look in your own backyard.

This is the argument I make: the Inuit in the Arctic have to be given the opportunity to come up with their own decisions with respect to our way of life, how we determine our future and how we can take advantage of the renewable and non-renewable resources around us.

In news stories we are often portrayed as a simple people who do not understand the science of conservation. In reality, we are the original conservationists and we are the true scientists when it comes to the Arctic wildlife—the flora and fauna. Our citizens and yours are regularly called upon to save the Arctic. Our battle cry calls on Government and civil society to respect Inuit knowledge, to empower and support us in our efforts to maintain our homeland, as we have for thousands of years, and to provide us with the resources and tools we need to overcome a history of repression and marginalisation. We do not need to be saved, but we do need to be heard and respected. To that end, I commend you for inviting us to speak today. I sincerely hope that our message resonates in your forthcoming recommendations.

**Q297 Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** Could we now look at a very specific issue: the European Union's ban on seal products? Could you say a little about the impact it had on the Canadian Inuit? Could you also comment on whether the exemptions in the ban, which are intended to support indigenous people, work effectively? Thirdly, are you joined with the Canadian Government in welcoming the progress made on this matter in recent Canadian negotiations with the European Union?

**Terry Audla:** Thank you for those questions, my Lord Chairman. I will qualify my remarks by saying that they are without prejudice to ongoing litigation regarding the legislation. There is one more appeal before the European Court of Justice to be decided upon. It deals with the case of our organisation, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, against the implementing measures of the seal ban, which was rejected by the General Court in April 2013. The court has not yet set a date for hearing that appeal.

Inuit in Canada have rights to harvest wildlife and to use wildlife for our everyday needs. This includes the need to carry on our livelihoods from the subsistence hunt. Europe and

societies elsewhere need to be cognisant of the fact that most indigenous people across the world still depend on wildlife resources and practices that have sustained them for millennia. Inuit require healthy markets to make this possible in a globalised economic environment. If one attacks hunting and trade, our livelihoods and modes of living are attacked. As the UK Arctic policy dictates, relations between the United Kingdom and Inuit should build on the basis of mutual respect and shared interest. Whatever the discrepancies in overall economic and political clout between Inuit, the UK and the EU, evolving principles of international law mean that Inuit are a necessary partner in Arctic affairs.

Regarding the exemption in the ban aimed at supporting Inuit, I must say that this feature has always seemed to us very much designed to ease European consciences—

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EU consultants dispatched to Canada and Greenland to assess the impacts of the ban on Inuit reported that the regulation system contemplated for seal exports would impose substantive costs on Canadian Inuit. Days before legislation was to come into force, the EU published details of the Inuit exemption that institutionalise the very hardships its consultants identified.

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**Terry Audla:** Are we back on?

**The Chairman:** Yes, we are. I think you have notes on that question. We missed some of that and I do not want to start again. If you could let us have those and e-mail them to our clerk, that would be very useful. If you want to finish the question, then please do. Your notes would be useful as well. Thank you.

**Terry Audla:** Sure. Thank you, my Lord Chairman. I will send them to you right after this presentation. Continuing with the question, Inuit responded to all this by bringing a lawsuit,

stating that the Inuit exemption regulations failed to meet the very modest “do no harm to Inuit” requirements of the enabling legislation.

As for recent Canada-EU negotiations, we await an invitation to take part in the design of any measures that may affect us. As we have said from the beginning, the only exemption that would have a chance of working for Inuit would be one negotiated with Inuit to the satisfaction of Inuit and providing guaranteed access for Inuit to the European market. From the very beginning we have always said that any ban on the seal trade has to be based on science. If you were to look at all the bans around the world, starting with the 1972 ban by the United States, that ban was ill informed and again based on morals. The question I would shoot back is: whose morals trump whose morals? That is the very issue of the principles around the seal ban. I would not necessarily go into the UK and do that.

**Q298 Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** Could I just ask whether you accept, or not, that in theory an exemption that was properly applied and did not impose additional costs on you but did certify that the products being produced by Inuit people were able to be traded into Europe would be useful to you if it could be done?

**Terry Audla:** If it was done to the full extent of its possibilities. If you look at the geographical area on the map behind me, we have always relied on the east coast seal market in the south, off the coast of Newfoundland, based on the fact that they had all the capital infrastructure requirements for the processing and tanning of the seal products. Now, because of the ban, we are going to have to look realistically at how we will take advantage of the exemption and whether or not the market will open up once again so that it becomes more profitable for the Inuit. Again, everything that we have done with respect to our wildlife has never been reliant on the market; what we hunt is for subsistence purposes.

The spin-off to that would be the market value of the pelt. If the European Union was serious it would assist in the marketing of the Inuit seal products: put them on the Italian and Paris runways, Italian shoes made out of seal skin, what have you. The leather seats that you sit in could be made out of seal products. That would again be something that Inuit would seriously consider as a success.

I grew up in communities that had a healthy vitality based on the fact that they were able to go out on their subsistence hunts and were able to sell the fur at fair market value. We were very self-reliant, but because of the bans that have happened since the early 1970s we are now turning to our Governments with our hands out and are becoming wards of the state because of the welfare system. Again, this is something that we need to seriously look at. If you are to ban a product, you need to think seriously about the science and the facts behind it. Can you not leave it to the consumer to decide whether or not they want the product? Should it be legislated? This is where the House of Lords, the parliamentarians and everyone else are selected to be the deciders: the ones who decide whether or not it is true, factual and for the common good—

**The Chairman:** I think we are going to need to move on in just a second.

**Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** Thank you very much. That is a very full and useful answer.

**Terry Audla:** I could go on. Thank you for the question.

**Q299 Baroness Neville-Jones:** Mr Audla, could we turn to the Arctic Council, which is obviously an important body in the Arctic context? We would be very grateful to hear what you think about the way the views of the indigenous communities are represented. Do you feel that the council is able and willing to take proper account of the views that are expressed to them by the Permanent Participants? Do you feel that the means extended to the Permanent Participants to represent indigenous peoples are adequate? There are costs

involved. I would be interested to know what you feel about how effectively you are able to make your role and your views felt in the Arctic Council.

**Terry Audla:** Thank you for that question. As I mentioned, the Inuit of Canada belong to a broader organisation known as the Inuit Circumpolar Council, which includes representation of Inuit from Alaska, Greenland and northern Russia. For the next four years, Canada holds the chairmanship of the ICC. The international chair is Okalik Egeesiak. For a unique period in our history, the Government in Canada also concurrently hold the chairmanship of the Arctic Council. A Canadian Inuk, Minister Leona Aglukkaq, has been named to that post. ICC has observer status at the United Nations and is a Permanent Participant at the Arctic Council.

The ITK works closely with the ICC and with its Canadian arm, ICC Canada. I mentioned earlier that I am vice-president of ICC Canada, so I am pleased to be able to provide you with some insight. We have been active in various working groups and programme areas of the Arctic Council and within the United Nations and its various subsidiary bodies. However, it is fair to say that funding has not kept pace with the increasing attention on the Arctic, the demands of the Inuit in Canada and the ability of the circumpolar region to respond. There is an almost overwhelming amount of important work going on in the Arctic Council. With our limited resources, we struggle to keep up. We do not currently have the capacity to attend and contribute to working groups and activities as we would like, but we do work closely with fellow Arctic Council Permanent Participants, including the Saami Council, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, the Aleut International Association, the Gwich'in Council International and the Arctic Athabaskan Council. It is fair to say that all Arctic indigenous organisations face similar ongoing financial challenges.

Interestingly enough, the ICC pre-dates the Arctic Council by about 20 years. It is critical that the ICC continues to play a strong role in such fora, including the Arctic Council, which is the most active intergovernmental forum on regional issues. As Inuit, we have always understood that change in the Arctic brings opportunities as well as challenges. Based on that fact, and as we participate as Permanent Participants, another thing that we need to look at is how other observers would affect our voice in the Arctic Council.

**Baroness Neville-Jones:** Are you worried about others joining in as observers? Do you think that might dilute your influence? It might strengthen the body, of course.

**Terry Audla:** Our voice might potentially be diluted, but we maintain that permanent observers to the Arctic Council must demonstrate a fundamental respect for the values of the member states. For that reason, Inuit oppose the entry of the European Union to the Arctic Council as it continues to defend its unlawful seal trade ban. We feel that any observer coming into the Arctic Council has to be able to show that it can make decisions that are intelligent and based on scientific fact, as well as to be inclusive with respect to the traditional knowledge of the indigenous people who live in the Arctic.

It is worth noting that the chief architect of the Arctic Council was another Canadian Inuk, Mary Simon, who is also a former president of the ITK, over which I now reside. Mary has said that the inclusion of indigenous peoples as Permanent Participants was key to the design of the Arctic Council. When the Arctic Council was created in 1996, such recognition of the role of indigenous groups was a revelation. However, since that time the ranks of permanent observers has grown to the point where observers now outnumber the member states and Permanent Participants. Above all else, the role of permanent observers, including observer states, should be to support the work of Arctic nations to respect the

participation of indigenous peoples and to encourage greater capacity for participation by indigenous representatives ahead of their own objectives.

**Baroness Neville-Jones:** Can I ask one supplementary, Lord Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Mr Audla, we will be short of time soon. A number of Members want to ask you supplementaries. Perhaps we can keep the questions and answers relatively short for the rest of the session so that we ensure we get through the topics.

**Baroness Neville-Jones:** My supplementary, if you do not mind, is to try to pin you down a little on your view of EU observer status. As things stand, are you opposed to the EU's application for observer status, on the grounds that you have stated? You have called the ban on seal hunting "illegal". What view do you take on EU observer status?

**Terry Audla:** The Inuit first recommended that we decline the EU's application for observer status based on what we felt was an illegal seal ban. If we could extend that to the United States—they were the first ones to ban the seal trade—we would try to do that too, but that is not necessarily possible at the moment. One thing we want to emphasise is that if the seal ban is going to try to develop its exemption clause to the fullest so that Inuit seal products are exempt, we would seriously reconsider based on how serious they are. But again, our principled approach has always been that if you are going to make decisions based on morals, we are not interested in your participation. What we want are for true, scientific, factual observations to be included in the discussions.

**Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** So there are four members of the Arctic Council that you consider to be improperly members of the council because they ban seal products: the United States, Denmark, Finland and Sweden. But the EU, which is after all not floating in the ether—it is just the representative of its 28 member states, of whom three are on the council—is somehow in a different category. Why so?

**Terry Audla:** I have been asked that a number of times. The Russians have a seal ban as well. I gave the example of the US having banned the seal trade back in the early to mid-1970s. If the Inuit had been as organised as they are today, given that we are better organised and that the information goes out to all parts of the world at light speed—here I am presenting before the House of Lords through videoconferencing—if we had the same technology back then we would have fought tooth and nail against these bans. If we wanted to fight Russia we would have to look at our options. Is fighting Russia going to get anywhere? Do diplomatic discussions with Russia accomplish anything? When it comes to the EU, being that it represents all those states, we felt that that was a perfect fight, based on its sheer size and the fact that it comprises democratic countries that listen to reason. We felt we would have a better approach with respect to that. We are not trying to use the EU as an example.

**The Chairman:** Thank you. I think that is a good answer. I need to move on to a couple of supplementaries on this general area.

**Q300 Lord Soley:** It is clear from your answers that the ICC is important to you. How important is the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat? I gather that the ICC is one of the six permanent groups supported by the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat. How important is that organisation? When you refer to lack of resources, are you thinking of organisations such as that?

**Terry Audla:** I am sorry, you were cutting in and out. I caught part of that question. Is it specific to the ICC?

**Lord Soley:** It is a question about the importance of the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat, of which the ICC is one of the six permanent groups it supports. How important is that organisation? Were you thinking of it when you talked about lack of resources?

**Terry Audla:** Yes, it is very important. I have mentioned that our chair, Okalik Eegeesiak, who was recently appointed this past summer, is from Canada. ITK, the organisation that I represent, also participates at that level. I sit as the ICC Canada vice-president. But as I mentioned, because of what I called the interests of the world with respect to the Arctic, our views are very important. We are sought after to gain our views, but there are just so many of us. At the same time we have limited resources with respect to being able to travel or participate at certain conferences and/or working groups through the Arctic Council. We are being stretched. We feel that the role of the ICC has to be given more weight and resources to be able to fully participate.

**Lord Soley:** It might be useful if you could send us a short note on how the resources are necessary and what resources are necessary to make either the IPS or the ICC more effective.

**The Chairman:** We would be very grateful if you could do that.

**Lord Oxburgh:** I have a couple of factual questions, please. You mentioned that you have about 60,000 people. Is that population static, growing or declining? Secondly, related to that, what proportion of that 60,000 tries to follow the traditional way of life? Thirdly, do you have many people going south and leaving your communities?

**Terry Audla:** Thank you for those questions. We have one of the highest birth rates in Canada; that figure of 60,000 is growing. It is going to increase quite rapidly over the next few decades or so, based on the high birth rate. Not many are going south. With respect to reliance on our traditional way of life, two-thirds of our diet is reliant on the bounty of the land and sea in the area. If we did not have that two-thirds, you would see third-world situations in Canada's Arctic just based on the exorbitant cost of southern-made products being shipped up north by either—

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**Terry Audla:** Very quickly on that last question, we feel that our way of life is very dependent on our traditional hunts. A large majority still exercise that lifestyle.

**Lord Oxburgh:** So if your population continues to grow, it will become more difficult.

**Terry Audla:** That depends. When the Save the Arctic movement and people want a moratorium on oil and gas development, mineral development or fisheries, that limits our ability to become self-reliant. We do not want to be a burden to society. We want to be able to increase our self-reliance and be able to take full advantage of all the resources at hand, be they renewable or non-renewable.

**Lord Oxburgh:** Thank you very much indeed.

**The Chairman:** Did you have one last question, Lord Soley?

**Q301 Lord Soley:** Yes, one last one. You mentioned Russia and the difficulties of dealing with Russia. Can you tell us a little about how the Inuit population in northern Russia are able to relate to the Russian Government? Is there any effective voice for them there, or are they reliant on just working through the Arctic Council? How do they make their voice heard, if at all?

**Terry Audla:** That is a very good question. They are included in our Inuit Circumpolar Council, but they are not recognised as well as they should be in northern Russia. The member states of the Inuit Circumpolar Council—Alaska, Canada and Greenland—have to do fundraising drives to ensure that their voices are included and that they participate at our own general meetings when it comes to the ICC. In that respect, they are not recognised or resourced enough.

**Lord Soley:** Thank you for that.

**The Chairman:** Mr Audla, thank you very much. I am sorry about the communication difficulties on occasions, but we are very grateful for your participation. If you were able to send us a copy of your notes, I am sure that they would be useful as well. We intended to publish our report in February. First nations and indigenous peoples will be an important part of that. Thank you very much indeed for having contributed that evidence. We will work through our recommendations between now and February. Thank you very much indeed. I bring this public session of the Committee to an end.