**PM’s speeches**

**Kuupik Kleist**

1. **Speech by the Premier of Greenland Kuupik Kleist at the new years reception for the diplomatic body January 13 th 2011 in Copenhagen.**

Honorable ministers, Members of Parliament, your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends.

Happy New Year! I am happy that so many of you, despite your busy schedule, have chosen to honor us with your presence here today. I attach great importance to this reception, as this is one of the rare occasions where the Greenland government gets a chance to celebrate and also express our gratitude for the constructive cooperation and warm ties that exist between Greenland and Denmark as well as with other dear neighbors and friends.

Before I turn to the prospects of the New Year, allow me first to look back to the year that just passed.

2010 was like the previous year, a very exciting year for us in Greenland. Many events took place and new initiatives where taken that will determine Greenland’s development in the years to come.

In 2010, we renewed our relations with our Inuit kin from Alaska, Chukotka-Russia and Canada and celebrated the Inuit ways of life in conjunction with the hosting in Nuuk of the general assembly of ICC, the Inuit Circumpolar Council. I will participate in an Arctic Leader’s Summit that will take place in Canada in February, where we will discuss how to bring the declaration of ICC GA forward and agree on principles and methods for natural resource exploitation in the Arctic.

2010 was also the year, where we all witnessed the disastrous Gulf of Mexico oil spill and saw with our very own eyes the inherent risks and dangers of having an oil-industry. This happened almost at the same time where Cairn Energy found indications of an active hydrocarbon system off the West Coast of Greenland.

With the Golf of Mexico disaster in mind, I was very pleased to see that the exploratory drillings of this summer proved that our logistical and organizational capacity does live up to the highest safety and emergency preparedness standards. I was also assured that we do apply the highest standards at all times and use the best available technologies. I just returned from a good visit to Norway last night. I am pleased to inform you that we have made arrangements with various actors in the Norwegian oil-industry to further strengthen our cooperation and exchange of know-how for environment protection and risk-management in Greenland’s off shore activities.

I wish to thank the Government of Norway for their willingness to cooperation and the warm hospitality we experienced.

With that background, we are quite confident about the signing of yet another 7 licensees off the west coast in the Baffin Bay area. These new agreements, that where signed just a few weeks ago, will bring the total number of exploration licenses to 20. In 2012 and 2013 we expect to be opening up for more areas off the east coast of Greenland

When it comes to mining, prospects for commercially promising projects have developed further. The potentials of exploiting the rare earth minerals’ sites are enormous as these minerals are of global strategic importance. Some of these deposits cannot be exploited without releasing radioactivity levels that exceed the limits set for our zero tolerance policy. My government is adamant about the principle that decisions made on the exploration of minerals as well as of oil and gas wells will not compromise the safety of human health and the environment.

For Greenland it will not make sense to venture into resource extraction that does not have immediate benefits to the involved communities. We therefore put contractual obligation on the licensees in order to insure the use of the local labor force. We have also established a school for Mining and Engineering that will train and educate the workforce for jobs in the oil and minerals sector.

We are extremely excited about these new emerging opportunities for the Greenland economy. As it is today, more than 80 % of our income come from exports based on the fisheries. When we formed our coalition government in June of 2009, we promised that we would put an emphasis on socio-economic development. We established an Expert Commission on Tax and Well-fare that was mandated to analyze the constraints and opportunities for alleviating poverty, the reduction of social inequities and for a general increase of welfare levels.

When the Commission released a preliminary discussion paper in May of 2010, attention was made to the fact that the financing of a welfare society would become increasingly difficult, if not impossible, without a steep increase of income. This again would require a better-educated workforce, profound structural changes and an enabling environment for attracting new businesses and initiating new industry projects. The Commission also indicated the necessity for an open economy, if Greenland is to achieve economic self-reliance and therefore also the need to promote stronger commercial and trade relations with our neighbors and the international business community at large.

I do look forward to welcome the final conclusions of the Tax ad Welfare Commission as it finalizes its work in March this year.

The fact that the oil and mineral sector is becoming a strategic investment area for diversifying our economy does not mean that we are not concerned about global warming. I would in this context like to commend Mexico for the hosting of the recent COP 16 meeting in Cancún. In my opinion Mexico set new standards within international cooperation and diplomacy in its vigorous efforts for integrating the development needs of countries with the necessity for effective global reductions of emissions. Personally, I would also like to thank Mexico for the warm hospitality that they extended to my delegation and myself in Cancun. I think that many will agree that Cancún did restore the faith in multilateral climate processes and thereby raising the probabilities for an even more positive outcome of COP 17 in South Africa.

On this festive occasion I will assure you that I will not be commenting on the issue of Wikileaks. But I can inform you that I wall take up the matter with the Danish Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In 2011 An Arctic Council Ministerial will be held in Nuuk. We are pleased that the Ministerial will be held in Greenland at a point where the Council will make some very important decisions for sustainable development in the Arctic. For a few days, Nuuk will become the center of the world’s attention and I am confident that the Council will demonstrate that the governance of the Arctic indeed is in the capable hands of the Arctic peoples and states. For those of you who will come to Nuuk, I will look forward to welcome you in Greenland.

For those of you who will not go to Nuuk in conjunction with the Arctic Council Ministerial, I sincerely hope that you will find your way to come and see us. We are always very happy to receive visits in Greenland. The company of good friends in our own home is a source of enormous inspiration as well as the generation of new ideas and concrete cooperation projects with implications that go way beyond the figures of tourism statistics.

2010 was also the year of the sad passing of the honorable and our most beloved Jonathan Motzfeldt. The first true leader of Home Rule as well as of our Self-Government Commission passed away in late October. We as Greenlanders, will forever feel an enormous gratitude for his leadership in the founding of Home Rule as well as for the many years of Home Rule and the transition into Self -Government. He was the beacon of the Greenlandic peoples' passionate aspiration for Self-Determination while inspiring us for exercising pragmatism and tolerance. As the man he was, he taught us a great deal about the lot of humans - how beautiful and fantastic we are and yet how fragile and fallible we are. I would like to thank all of you who expressed condolences for his family and the Greenlandic people and shared our mourning. Thank you.

Let me finalize my speech by wishing you all a happy and prosperous New Year for yourselves as well as for your countries. I hope that I can count on your continued support in the New Year for the important undertakings that we have on our shoulders in Greenland.

Qujanaq!

1. **2012 New Years speech of Kuupik Vandersee Kleist, chairman of Naalakkersuisut**

Fellow citizens and everyone in Greenland

This morning we woke to a brand new year. The time of darkness is past. I wish everyone the very best for the New Year.

I hope that your Christmas has been peaceful and replenishing of body and soul, so that we can all stand together to face the challenges the New Year will bring.

Thank you for the year we have spent together.

**A historic year**

The year 2012 will be remembered as a very special one in our history, a true milestone.

The desire for Greenland to enjoy industrial and economic development has been expressed for many years, and the way has been long and the challenges great. 2012 was the year when real political steps were made towards making that desire a reality.

I'm thinking, of course, of the legislation passed by Inatsisartut on 7 December, to regulate future large-scale activity in raw materials and industry. This legislation provides the framework for a very necessary development of our economy.

We are working constantly to ensure that Greenlandic society benefits to the utmost from the raw material and other large-scale projects we hope will come to fruition. We know that the legislation now in place gives us a good foundation for guaranteeing our raw material incomes. It's also essential that we always make use of the best possible expertise to ensure that Greenland does not lose out on these incomes in the future. This is why Naalakkersuisut has decided to appoint an international group of experts to advise Greenland on an ongoing basis about how the autonomous administration can ensure the best possible control over its incomes.

2012 was also the year when Naalakkersuisut presented its 2025 plan: "Our future – your responsibility and mine", in which we put forward our ideas for how to ensure a future Greenland that is strong, but also able to afford welfare. No matter whether we develop new industries or not, it is essential that we put reforms in place to make sure we can afford a welfare state in the future. Hence 2012 was also the year in which we began trialogues with employers' and employees' representatives and organisations. I am very grateful for this co-operation.

2012 was also marked by other important political developments.

It was very gratifying recently to note that not only has unemployment stopped growing, but the number of people unemployed has begun to fall. This is also another positive sign of our economy strengthening.

But this is not enough. We still lack new jobs. So in 2013, Naalakkersuisut will redouble its efforts to implement the employment plan and activate the Employment Council.

Happily, good market prices for fish and shellfish have been maintained, which has made it possible to reopen some fish factories, which in turn has brought increased earnings as seen over the past 4-5 years.

We have enjoyed a good, fruitful partnership with the municipalities and KANUKOKA over the past year. We are pleased with the positive impact this has had on business, and we wish to congratulate municipalities for focusing on sustainability in their development work.

Another important reason for calling 2012 a milestone year is that Greenland has assumed a new and important role on the international stage. 2012 was the year when Greenland made its global breakthrough.

**Transition to sustainable fisheries**

Legislative and administrative fisheries reforms are not yet complete, but must be soon. We plan to implement the necessary remaining measures in the course of 2013.

We still have work to do to establish a shared understanding of the situation in the fishing industry. There remain areas where very detailed negotiations are still needed in order to find solutions that satisfy all parties.

We intend to continue our work in close dialogue with fisheries organisations, employees and employers, as well as other stakeholders in the industry.

**Making better use of the country's resources**

After several years of intensive work towards reforms in fisheries, the time has now come for renewal in agriculture.

Much of sheep farmers' building stock and machinery is superannuated. Some sheep farmers are keeping their heads above water, but we need all of them if we are to improve agriculture.

We have therefore appointed an agriculture commission to examine developments for the coming years.

Among the tasks of the commission will be to make recommendations on:

1) economically self-sufficient and modern agriculture,

2) Agriculture that makes a significant contribution to our self-supply of foodstuffs – not only meat, but also vegetables.

The commission will spend 2013 working intensively, and will present its findings to Naalakkersuisut and Inatsisartut in spring 2014. The plan is for the economic parts to be incorporated in the Budget proposal for 2015.

I also wish to point out that we are working intensively to open up alternative markets for our products from the sea, especially seal skins. We have very high hopes for the new contacts we have made with China and South Korea. There are good grounds for nurturing the Asian markets. From a global perspective, this is where economic growth is happening.

**Basis for our development**

A number of new laws come into force today, 1 January, including some concerning municipal schools and our education system.

I would like here to draw attention to the new provisions regarding children of preschool age.

To give preschool children as good a start in life as possible, all 3-year-olds will be examined by an educationalist and a nurse, and all 5-year-olds will be tested for school readiness.

The municipal schoolshould be even better than it is. We must improve when it comes to implementing the measures already in force, and we must improve when it comes to giving guidance. We must remember that the right guidance and support at the right time can be of great importance, especially for our children and young people.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the NAKUUSA Youth forum. Among the things we will remember 2012 for is the slogan "*suli anaanamik, suli ataatamik*" ("more mother, more father"). You were like a breath of fresh air. You opened our eyes and I have no doubt that your clarion call will resound in the mountains for a long time.

It is my earnest hope that many more of you will pursue higher education than the generations before you when you reach that age. To achieve that goal, we are busy establishing more college places and expanding several institutes of higher education.

The times dictate that we must acquaint ourselves with other languages and cultures, so we want to make it easier for people to go on language study trips and continuing education classes. We hope that many will make use of these opportunities.

I also wish to point out that it has become clear that people are taking more responsibility for their own health. There are also more and more people taking treatment to create better conditions for their families so that they can live better in society. This creates pride and deserves respect. You are role models.

**The future is what matters**

Naalakkersuisut is prioritising education, employment and welfare in its work. These are areas that absolutely must always be emphasised.

Our goal is to get young people making the most of their potential, real jobs that last, and a society that is based on principles of solidarity and partnership.

Firstly, we will work to continue bringing down unemployment. We are working with municipalities, public and private companies. We have high hope for our employment plan, which lasts until 2018.

Secondly, we will extend our building and infrastructure plans to cover the whole country. As we know, there is a chronic shortage of housing, especially in Nuuk. So there is no doubt that 2013 too will be a busy year for building and infrastructure work.

Thirdly, we hope that mineral mining operations will open at Qeqertarsuatsiaat and Killavaat Alannguat. Certainly, our country has plentiful mineral riches, but as long as they are lying in the ground and not being used, they are of no benefit to anyone.

Fourthly, we are busy establishing the basis for ruling on the establishment of new runways and harbours so that Inatsisartut can make these important decisions. This is substantial and complicated work involving the relevant parliamentary committees.

In terms of transport and freight projects, our two highest priorities at the moment are the expansion of Nuuk harbour and preparations for the building of the airport at Qaqortoq.

Fifthly, we intend to renew people's involvement in democracy. Since the large municipalities were established, major changes have taken place in the partnership between the authorities and the populace, so a priority for us is to find solutions strengthening local democracy.

**Our values**

In my New Year Address last year I called on everyone to be more involved in the debate about society.

That call has been well heard. Over the past year, a very lively debate has unfolded around us. It is a very good thing that so many people are making their voices heard.

But I do think that there is one flaw in the way our debating culture has been developing. Verbal combat has become the order of the day, especially among elected representatives. It is not acceptable that political debate gets drowned out in an ever-intensifying struggle for power. It is not acceptable that people feel threatened because of what they believe and think. This is not healthy for debate.

With the coming elections to all popularly elected assemblies this year in mind, I hope very much that the election campaigns will be about politics and that we do not fall into the temptation of decrying our opponents.

We must insist on our shared values, such as equality and our need for partnership, and we must show tolerance for our fellow man.

I would like to take this opportunity of quoting a poem I like very much. The poem is "Naammanngilarmi ai" (»It is not enough, ai») by Frederik Kristensen, Kunngi.

*People in motion*

*Must have belief*

*Those obstacles on the road*

*Can be overcome*

*Our descendants*

*Be given the strength*

*Requires*

*To pull together*

*For the common benefit*

*Stand up - stand by me*

*Go with me*

*You who have the strength*

*Your country will be renewed,*

*And requires*

*Strength, courage and determination*

*Of his people in motion*

*It continues:*

*To dream the dream*

*About the future,*

*To hope for a*

*Brighter future*

*Using forces*

*With reason,*

*To use wisdom and knowledge*

*In* *our* *benchmarks*

*- It is the way forward.*

So my wish for 2013 is that we use the year to talk about our shared values and to try and live up to them.

**Conclusion**

The current parliamentary term is almost over. As a society, we have reached a crucial point in our development. If we are to live up to our responsibilities, we need to take new actions to secure our shared future. We must have the courage to confront our habits, attitudes and taboos when they do not make a positive contribution to the future of coming generations. No one but us can make these decisions. In an age and a world where we, as inhabitants of this planet, feel ourselves more and more to be sharing a joint fate, we must decide for ourselves which way we will go. If we don't do it ourselves, if we lack the courage and fail to take responsibility, circumstances and the world outside Greenland will decide our future.

Dear countrymen, the time has come for us to show ourselves and the world around us that we have the will and the means to secure a better future than the past we leave behind us.

I want to extend my thanks to everyone we have met and worked with in the year that came to an end yesterday. Thank you for enriching our lives. In particular, I want to thank our older citizens for contributing by giving advice and support in spite of the tribulations age can bring, and I want to call on our young people and their children to take every opportunity to care for the elderly. Even just drinking a cup of coffee together can mean a great deal.

I thank all those I have not mentioned in this New Year Address and beg your forgiveness for the omission. May 2013 bring progress and health to us all.

I wish you all a good and blessed New Year.

*Kuupik V. Kleist*

Chairman, Naalakkersuisut

1. **Interview with Aleqa Hammond**

*Internet source:* <http://naalakkersuisut.gl/da/Naalakkersuisut/Pressemeddelelser/2013/06/Interview-Aleqa-H-060613>

 AH: I’m a daughter of Anna Maria, which raised me together with my three younger brothers in Uummannaq. She was a single mom and she became a widow, a widow at age twenty-seven. She has never re-married and so she had us. And I’m first born and first-borns are normally the ones who are in charge- after mom, and I was very much so. So I was raised in a very traditional home, where the family ties are very strong and we help each other, not only within the family but also within the community. And I decided to leave town quite early. Already at age fifteen I’ve left home to see the world and to get an education and learn other cultures and to learn other languages. I’ve always been very keen to know more and to see more and I have always been a curious person and never really step back on anything that I find interesting and good.

I: Where do you come from- the place you’re coming from is in north Greenland?

AH: I’m from Uummannaq, which I consider to be one of the most beautiful places in Greenland, maybe also on the Earth. Because I’ve seen many other countries and I’m not saying that because I’m from there. But I have learned to see it with new eyes that I actually come from very great place. And I think it is these magnificent surroundings and this view through many, many kilometers of very symbolic … of wanting to see more.

I: And you come from the place where the traditional way of thinking is very strong, still.

AH: Yeah, I think this is something that very much reflects me today. I’m very proud of my traditions, I’m very proud of my culture. It has made me strong. It is what has made as a person. I already have very strong dialect from the North and my habits and customs are very much based on what I saw and was raised with. And, it’s symbolizing a strong Inuit culture that I have from home and has made me a person that I am today. Being a world citizen with my strong words as a person from the North Greenland – I think this combination is great.

I: What did you learn from growing up with only one supporter, your mother?

AH: It forced me really to take care for the things in the house early. I helped out to do the dishes, cleaning the house, doing the floor, picking up coal and picking up water, you know, and doing shopping for her and helping many things because she had to work very long hours. And all the children, all of us had the responsibility that maybe parents have between which they share themselves. So, I had duties, a lot of duties in the house, which I find normal. Actually, these duties have thought me to be organized in the house, to be organized to the daily life at very early age. That, compared to many other peers in my age didn’t have. Back then I thought that it was not fair. But today I’m happy that it has been there. Because it has made me what I am now and I can do many things in one day and still be organized. And I have it for home. Today I think I can use this tool to what I want to achieve.

I: Many obligations back then but yet you grew up very close to the nature with your brothers and your mother..

AH: yes, as I am coming from very traditional home I was also raised to become a hunter’s wife. To know how to scrape skin, I learned how to prepare that. And sow gimmicks, saw garments for the hunter’s clothes and all these things I’ve learned from the home and from my grandmothers as well. But at the same time I’ve chosen to live a lifestyle that is very much different compared with many women than at home. And still I have learned the skills that women from there should know. And I’m very fortunate, because I see that many women don’t have that at home any longer at these modern times. And I had a chance already learning it as a young girl… has made me more proud in my history from home. And that makes me think that in many ways I think that I can represent them many more now than I would have done before.

I: And before you went into politics you were already known as this very significant young lady as among few that went to explore the world outside our little country.

AH: I’ve always had this eager to travel. Very early age, maybe I was ten when the urge came and I’ve said to my mother: “I want to travel. I want to go other places. I want to see other countries.” And she had asked me: “What book are you reading?” Because she thought that I have taken it from my book and I don’t. I just had a want to. And we had this ship going to the town every week COLUNGUA back then. And I remember that I saw people leaving the town and I saw people coming on the board and from the shore I had a feeling that I want to be on this boat and leave and see the world. Not that I want to leave the town, because I love the town. It was because of this feeling to get so strong and I started to get little jobs in the town. To do the dishes for some Danes, I’ve picked the children for some parents, and I nannied here and went with the mail from the post office. Every day after school I had two three jobs always. At the end, I had money enough to travel. Back then I had just turned fifteen. I went to Sardinia. I went alone and a backpack. I have never been out of the country and so I had fantastic, great trip and I was away for two months. As I went back I was going back to job right away because I wanted to see other countries as well. .. When I think back, I don’t think that I could not send my daughter away that is fifteen. But then I see what trust there was trust from my mother’s side that I will be all right. And to my travels I’ve noticed that very fast, because I was alone. I’ve learned my strengths and weaknesses very fast. I had no one to ask for so I had to do it myself. So making decisions at very early age and to do that has made me strong and self-confident, at very young age. And I have kept it all the way. And before I have turned twenty-five I had been visiting more than fifty countries. I have spent six and a half years, altogether, just travelling. And I made so many friends, I met so many people, I’ve seen so many great places in the world. I’ve learned many languages, I have learned cookery, I have learned jokes, international jokes and stories, and you name it. You gain all this. And I think it is important to see your country with new eyes. Every time I have come back I’ve seen how countries are dealing with the children. I’ve seen how the countries, how they deal with their social welfare. I’ve seen how countries, how they are dealing with their housing problems and health issues and many other things. It has opened up my eyes on how my country is dealing with these issues. And I think that having these trips have opened my eyes for home country in a different way. And my urge and feeling wanting to be part of the better direction came after these trips. It has been one big bonus in my life because what I have experienced and what I saw has forced me to look inwards. Actually, I am very, very lucky girl because I live in a country like Greenland. I have a country that values family ties. I have a country that has clean air, clean water and fresh fruit. And very, very, good stories and traditions and lifestyles. I’m very fortunate that I am born in Greenland. I am not born in any other country where there is war, where there is hunger, where there is dirty water, where there is, you know, many things. I value what I have in this country and I didn’t feel that, before I saw the other countries. But now, I saw that I was actually born to the one of the greatest countries in the world.

I: So after being young and naïve you’ve got your education, then you came back home. And, what is it that caught your political spirit to begin with?

AH: I’ve never been active in political debates. I’ve had never kept back if I had opinion on something that we may should have. So I have been a little bit in the media, because I have wrote something non-political, but just and opinion. And I stood up for politics in 2005. I wanted to go to elections of the parliament. And I have never been approached by anyone regarding politics. This was my own decision, my own consideration and my own choice. And I have been looking through the political programs of all parties for some time. And what I saw, the principle and values that are seen and assumed I saw myself in it. I think that this is the party that I want to support and take part in it and it’s a very good decision. And I want to be the tool if people need me. And I ran on the elections and I had very good elections- I was top five most elected in my own party as was the first candidate, which is quite unusual. And my issues are the children. My issues are the children that are neglected and need attention. A lot of parents are not that good parents as we want them to be and lot of children were out on the streets at late night. I didn’t like that. I wanted to be part of this making change and I want to be part on speaking their voice. That’s really what made me to come into politics. I became a minister of family and justice. I was the first female that became minister right away. And I started to concentrate on information, heightening the information on the neglect of children in this country. And sexual abuse and neglect of children were agenda one. We started a massive, nation-wide campaign about children neglect and sexual abuse and many other issues that were more or less a taboo in this country many years back then and it was a good initiative. It was well received back by all municipalities, well received among social workers, well received among schools and many other places. And I was very happy to see that other countries also went on this. I made sure that the children got their own budget and other governments also carried on with that and we also carried on with this this time. I think that there are too many taboos in this country. That really actually are the core, the main core of the problems. And I want to be a tool and breaking these taboos and to be honest about our problems, be honest about our challenges, also from the government side.

I: How would you describe the Greenlandic political development- the outcome, the consequence of that to our situation as a people as a nation?

AH: I see , I see, ehm.. No, let me put it this way. I want to die free. I want to have lived my life where I fight for independent Greenland. I want to die free and I want to experience the day where we are singing our national hymn and we are raising our national flag and on that day there will be a world-wide press release saying “Today Greenland has become independent”. I want to experience that day. You can’t dream of a greater day when you are a person that is born and raised colonized and under another country. And I think that this aim and goal is enormous, it’s great, it’s inspiring and it is a natural thing to do. And I think that this is my drive, my force in my work as premier.

I: Why is it so important to become independent?

AH: I think that country that has been under colony and wants to become independent-it’s fair, it’s natural, it’s a natural wish. But also, I see the men, I see the women out there, where they are telling me that they would like to be in a country where they are not under anything. Both economically wish, also personal wish, traditional wish, cultural wish and proud people are not under anything. And I think that this is very important. And also that I see that this wish was one of the main issues as we were discussing and negotiating the self-rule act. 80% of this country, of the people of this country want greater autonomy. The one we take more responsible areas from the Denmark, the one we have more independet economy. It‘s no doubt about that the majority of these people want that. And can I be part on this process? I do so. A lot of people are discussing that at all level in this country. I noticed that 10 years ago, none of us was using the word independence. It was not even in our vocabulary. When somebody was using the word, they were looking at: “What? Are you talking about independency?” But now after 10 years, it’s a natural issue. It’s a natural thing to discuss and I think that this is nation-building. We are taking advantage of our own possibilities and we’re wanting more as a people. Thriving for more and wanting to achieve greater achievement and taking more responsibility of our own country of all actions at all levels. We could grow as people. It makes us stronger. And I think that this will unify our country more than ever did before-putting our own needs at higher level than any other needs anywhere. And this is fair, and this is natural and that’s a great thing to want that, both at political level and also at the personal level of course.

I: And yet again, we also get political question to reply: Can we get and independent country, yet the only income we have is from the fisheries?

AH: I think it is very important that we discuss what sort of independency we want. And I think it is very important to see independency- is it something we have to earn economically first? Or is independency many things? And I believe that independency is many things: it’s also economic independency, personal independency, political independency. And independency requires to take charge, it requires to take responsibility, and if it’s only about economic independency, there is no problem; we could only make a deal with Denmark in how to achieve that. But many other things are very important. But first, it is very important that people have that in their mind, in their hearts that they want that- they want their independency because this is not only political issue. This is an issue that we want as a people. This is an issue we want as families, as communities, as a society. And I think that once people feel that they want independent country; that I feel that I want to work for my own country. I want to be part of the whole machinery; I want to feel part wanting to achieve an independent country, taking charge responsible in my own life; take responsibility as a community to support my family, to support my community, to support my country.. I think that this means that everybody has to work on this. Everybody has to feel the ownership of this journey. And it means we need everybody. Everybody has to have a job, everybody have to be in part in responsible for their own economy, for their life, for their own housing, for their own family, for their own everything. And I think that it’s a big job, it’s a big goal but it’s possible if people want that. And I’ve seen different kinds of arguments on how people want independency. A lot of people are saying: “We don’t have to be rich to become independent.” A lot of small countries and huge countries have become independent where they had lost everything, but still they have gained all. That’s freedom. And independency-how much does that cost? Independency-do we have to be millions of people first? Independency-who are we going to do allies with? So there are many questions that have to be answered, still very important. I see an independent country, but how this will form us allying with which countries and what sort of independency we want is still to be discussed. I will be a head of this government where we are forming our constitution. This first report on what sort of constitution we want and will have. I will represent it to the parliament the next spring. It will be my honour and I’m sure that it will be a very emotional moment, because I’m sure that this is big. And I’m very proud that I am a prime minister to this country presenting the first edition of our work on the Constitution. And I think that it will set new standards about the debate over the new independence of this country.

I: By the time Greenland is not just as we used to know it as when we were kids. Our situation, development and actual constitutional status within the state of Denmark have caught the interest of many foreign countries. Greenland has become one of the most visible countries when you look at the world atlas today and what is it that binds so many foreign countries to our country?

AH: First of all, people were also discovering that Greenland is also many things. Greenland is one big ice-sheet. Greenland has many potentials that they can gain of. First of all, due to climate change, the world is looking at our ice cap. It has been there for thousands of years but they are just discovering it and it’s melting and it’s giving challenges to many countries. So, Greenland has been spotted in many ways. But due to climate change, the ice retreating has given new opportunities for other countries, has given new challenges for other countries to be part of and that is our hunt for the minerals. The world demand on minerals is rising and Greenland is country that is very rich on minerals. We not only have gold, we have many other valuable resources in Greenland that are of great economical interest not only for us but also for the countries outside. So it means that focus on minerals we have is rising. It’s growing even more as Greenland has adapted the Self Rule Act in 2009, where we had our own right to make decision on our own mineral resources and living resources. So the world’s interest to talk to the government and to talk to the parliament and to come to the Greenland has risen enormously. It’s important to be aware what our country has to offer to give and have and to be aware of that. And it’s also important to have a legislation that will protect for more people owning this enormous source of wealth. So, a new legislation and a good by-law will be the protection for the people to gain of this new possible economic boost in this country. And I think and I’m sure that this new boost of economy based on non-living resources will be the main issue for many different years ahead-it will change us economically, it will change us personally, it will change us traditionally, it will change us culturally, it will change us globally. It will have an enormous impact on us in our lives because it’s new, it’s different, but also because it will do changes in our new standards in this country. And being premier in time when these new option, new possibilities are arising make me want to make a legislation that will protect us so that we can come out as the winners of this new option for this country and not experiencing what many other countries had expericed- it was like a curse to them. It is important that we make it a win-win situation both for the Greenlanders, for the country and also for the companies that have shown an interest to the Greenland. It is very important to me that we find a fair solution; we find a solution that is both sustainable for the culture and the people but also for the companies coming from outside. There are many companies saying that it is easier in many other countries and that it is more accessible in the other countries and I think that their infrastructure is stronger, but we also have to bear in our minds that Greenland is in fact, we are not to compare to any other countries. That’s why you cannot demand many other standards that other countries are offering. Greenland is different. We have many other challenges that we are already living under and therefore we have to have other agreements maybe not necessary those that they have in other countries because this is a very different country.

I: What differences are you talking about?

AH: The difference is that our ports are not as great as many other countries ports have, and minerals are not necessarily just around the corner, it’s hundred kilometers in the fjord or many other things. And geographical challenges itself; the boundaries that they have to face and the labor market in here is very low, little compared to many other countries, because we’re only 56 000 including non-Greenlanders. So that means that negotiations regarding the labor here is very delicate thing. A lot of people are talking about that there might come Chinese people, there might come Polish people and many other nations might come into Greenland. We can’t avoid that. But how it can influence us as the people as the society, we have to be aware of the too. Because as there might be thousands of people coming from outside it may be seen it and the people must not feel that they are overwhelmed by the other nations in their own country. And it’s very important that people are feeling we’re doing it for them; we’re doing it for the people- for the Greenlanders with the little help from the others from outside. And finding a good balance in this debate and discussion is very important. I think that it is important to have the labour market in this, I think it is important to have a local club of many areas and layers in this country have to feel the ownership on the decision. We have to feel comfortable on the new path that we are facing. And I think it is important that the people will see the good in this, ownership in this, and a natural thing to do so. But it takes time and I think that this time is well thought if we include it.

I: Considering abroad countries’ increased interest in Greenland we need to prepare ourselves for that. How do that then the big country with the smaller population with limited resources prepare facing big changes that is about to happen in our nearest future?

AH: I think that the Greenlanders are very good in adapting. I think that Greenlanders have been very good in adapting to the new situations that have an effect on our lives, and that is the reason why we could live for so many years where other cultures have already give up. That’s our ability to adaptation through the new challenges and new lifestyles. And I think that Greenlanders already made very big choice by introducing the home rule government in 1979 when we were children and that was wanting new changes and taking charge of their own life and destiny. And we took the next step in 2009 as we introduced a Self-Rule Act. And I think that the Greenlanders are very much aware of the changes themselves. These changes are something that we have chosen ourselves both as the people but also as governments. So the changes that are coming are not the changes that are coming at us, it’s the changes we decide. That’s very important. And these changes we decide are the changes that we implement the Self-Rule Act new by law, saying that the Greenlandic people have the right to their own income from what comes from the underground. So this change was a political wish for the people and it was very clear for them to refer on that. So the changes are to be in the same tempo and the speed as the official Greenland wants. And we are preparing already fulltime. We’re already preparing the first by-law for mining right after Self-Rule Act was introduced. So we’re working fast. Some other countries’ new by-law and new act whereas the new legislations are coming years after, whereas we work very fast in Greenland because we want the changes. And it’s going very fast. Even some are saying it’s going too slow but I personally think that we’re having the speed that is at max speed. We have to remember ourselves in it. We have to hear everybody in it and we have to involve as many people as possible and it takes time. But it’s with a good conscience that Greenland is facing and it’s coming with the new challenges. And Greenland is welcoming the outside interest companies and countries that want to be part in the new changes Greenland’s now undergoing. So this will be both in the understanding in the official Greenland and the people of Greenland and together with the companies and the countries from outside. I see it already. Like I am talking already to a new ambassador almost every day. And it means that the interest in the Greenland is increasing very fast. And that is because we’ve changed our course to something different in Greenland. And I’m very happy that this interest is there because the changes are not only for us, the changes are also for the benefits of them. So the biggest challenge for me right now is to make sure that both interests are coming out with an outcome that is win-win situation for the both.

I: And concerning our culture, how about our culture?

AH: I think we have a strong culture, we have a strong urge to define our own lifestyle and own life with the values we have as the people and principles; these are very important. And I think that it’s also very central to mention that the changes we’re going to face in Greenland are not to be taken whereas we have to give up something. The changes are extras coming to Greenland. We’re not giving up our culture, we’re not giving up our lifestyle, we’re not giving up our rights and principles and values. Anything new to Greenland will be a bonus coming on top, if we are aware and are prepared.

I: Madame prime minister presented the coalition goals with the first hundred days of the new government recently and concerning the content of these goals which assignment does the coalition particularly emphasize regarding Greenland cooperation and partnership with abroad countries in the next 4 years?

AH: We have a way too high unemployment rate in Greenland and Greenland is using all its energy and all its possible funds and budgets to fight it. And to come out of this problem and to stop the increasing unemployment rate in Greenland we need to create new jobs. And creating new jobs means not only that we educate new people and we make fisheries more efficient than it is and we would like some more tourists to come into Greenland; but besides that the mining industry will have a very important role. And the mining industry had to be established with the corporation companies from abroad. And that thought it is important that the local problems that we have with the unemployment in Greenland and the economy that is not that strong; we need the companies from outside that has shown the interest in taking part in this new journey that Greenland is facing. And we’ll be solving the problems locally, we’ll be solving problems in the long terms and also we’ll be solving a lot of other problems that we need to make changes to in Greenland, where the companies are also at the same time gaining from it. So I think it’s a good constellation; we can’t do the changes without the help from outside. And help from outside doesn’t mean that we have to give up everything. We have to find the good balance, to make sure that Greenlandic people and Greenland are the winners of the new changes..

I: And yet our economy is still based on the fisheries.

AH: Yes. Our economy will be based on the fisheries for many years ahead. I think it’s very important that we have strong economy both in fisheries, also in mining, also in tourism; and also in our lifestyle and in general. It’s important that we’re strong in everything what we’re doing. Mining should not come into Greenland where other parts of the industry have to fail. It is important that mining industry will be added bonus to the country. That’s very important. Not Norway, Norway has managed to show that as industry nation they are at the same time also being a fishing nation. And the climatic issues are almost the same as Greenland. So they face the same challenges, but they managed to show their best practice and how legislation can be made so everybody is winning and all part. And also at the same time the economy is being at strong point because it is three-fold economy. That is the best practice that Greenland is looking at also and finds inspiration in that. But we have to do that. We have to look at the other countries how they managed to organize themselves, so we don’t have to go through the same mistakes but learn from others and make it to our own.

I: Madame prime minister thanks for your time.

AH: You’re welcomed.