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For Immediate Release

World Suicide Prevention Day Message from President Johannes Lampe

Today, throughout Nunatsiavut and across this country, people will gather to show support for suicide prevention, to remember and celebrate the lives of those who have died, and to comfort those that have been left behind to pick up the pieces.

I know firsthand just what it is like to lose a loved one. My son took his life 10 years ago. There's not a day goes by that I don't think about him. Since that tragic day of August 9, 2008, I've endured much suffering and pain. I spent many sleepless nights, trying to figure out what went wrong, what I could have done to prevent it, and trying to understand why people decide to take their own lives.

I knew I couldn't have change what happened; that I couldn't change the past. I also realized that I had to find the courage and strength to carry on – not only for my own mental wellbeing, but for my family and friends, for other suicide survivors and for my community.

World Suicide Prevention Day is an opportunity for all of us, from all walks of life, to come together to promote an understanding about suicide and to raise awareness about prevention activities and initiatives.

This year's, theme, "Working Together to Prevent Suicide", it most fitting because by supporting each other, by working together, we find strength within ourselves – the strength that helps us move forward.

The Nunatsiavut Government has worked very hard over the years to raise awareness of mental health issues. We continue to provide many prevention, intervention and post-intervention programs, and we work closely with other governments, agencies organizations and groups in dealing with this issue.

As we recognize World Suicide Prevention Day it is important to remember that life is to be celebrated and cherished. I encourage all Labrador Inuit to come together as one, to raise awareness and understanding, and to work together to improve the mental wellness of all of our communities.