



CONFERENCE STATEMENT

We, the elected representatives from Canada, Denmark/Faroe Islands/Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the European Union;

In collaboration with the indigenous peoples of the Arctic;

Meeting to discuss Arctic Cooperation in Light of COP 21 in Paris, Inhabitants in a Developing Arctic, and New Possibilities in the Arctic;

Considering the transformative change now occurring in the Arctic driven by the forces of climate change and globalization resulting in tighter economic and geopolitical links;

Stressing the role of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic and the respect for their parliament/council and government structures, from which the developments in the Arctic should stem;

Considering the Arctic as a region of peace, global cooperation, and great economic potential;

Noting the importance of joint response of the Arctic states to the current challenges, and collective action to take advantage of new opportunities;

Acknowledging the constructive and important role of the Arctic Council celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2016;

Emphasizing the role of the parliamentarians in the Arctic Region to advise and contribute to the work of the Arctic Council;

Ask the governments and the parliaments in the Arctic Region, the Arctic Council and the institutions of the European Union, where appropriate:

Regarding Arctic Cooperation in Light of COP 21 in Paris to:

1. Organize an Arctic Council meeting between the ministers responsible for climate to take new initiatives to reduce emissions of CO₂ and short-lived climate forcers;
2. Explore new ways to involve the observers to the Arctic Council in the work to combat climate change by reducing emissions of CO₂ and black carbon;

3. Continue the work in the International Maritime Organization with guidelines regarding the use of heavy fuel oil in the Arctic, and continue to support the development of renewable energy suitable for the Arctic to drastically reduce black carbon emissions;
4. Intensify collaborative work towards sustainability and adaptation to climate change in the Arctic;
5. Emphasize the importance of scientific work between Arctic countries and other relevant stakeholders to ensure the continuation of the research cooperation, including appropriate funding;
6. Intensify multidisciplinary research concerning the role of the Arctic in the global climate system and ensure that research outcome and results are openly shared internationally;
7. Raise a strong Arctic message to communicate the consequences of climate change in the Arctic at all relevant international meetings;
8. Promote the development of national, regional and local climate change adaptation plans in the Arctic, including the work on building resilience.

Regarding Inhabitants in a Developing Arctic to:

9. Maintain strong international cooperation to further peace and stability in the Arctic region where more than 4 million people live;
10. Create an Arctic Circumpolar Mobility Program to encourage the mobility of students as well as scientists among the Arctic Council member states and observers with a focus on mutual understanding, collaboration, innovation and sustainable economic development;
11. Support relevant capacity building, particularly through education and training, to ensure that local communities will continue to benefit from economic development;
12. Strengthen the work to improve and monitor Arctic living-conditions and work actively towards finding real solutions to issues concerning human health and well-being in the Arctic, especially mental health;
13. Continue the work on adaptation and resilience in a changing Arctic, including climate change mitigation, focusing on new possibilities for the people and the region;
14. Acknowledge the importance of creating future socio-economic possibilities to entice youth, particularly young women to stay or return and fully participate in their local communities;
15. Promote, protect and further develop the languages of indigenous peoples in the Arctic;

16. Investigate solutions to the issues of food security in the Arctic;
17. Take note of the negative consequences which (seal) bans of products of living resources from indigenous communities have;
18. Acknowledge that sustainable harvest of living marine resources in the Arctic is fundamental to the current and future welfare of the inhabitants in the Arctic.

Regarding New Possibilities in the Arctic to:

19. Strengthen environmental safety and sustainable economic cooperation between the Arctic states, regions and local communities to increase employment, prosperity and quality of life while applying the highest environmental standards;
20. Continue the work to assess the large fresh water resources in the Arctic, including management and local, regional and global implications;
21. Establish an Arctic innovation system which links the scientific community, the business sector, political society, local populations and Arctic research data, for instance through an Arctic mentorship and mobility program;
22. Promote the work of the Arctic Economic Council as an independent organization that facilitates Arctic business-to-business activities and responsible economic development;
23. Exchange experiences and best practices about how industrial projects and traditional practices and industries can coexist and benefit from one another;
24. Promote cooperation in order to develop new technological solutions and the highest technical standards for a more sustainable mining industry in challenging Arctic conditions and respecting the Arctic environment;
25. Find mechanisms to incorporate Corporate Social Responsibility – CSR – for companies doing business in the Arctic Region through cooperation with representatives of the business sector, such as the Arctic Economic Council;
26. Explore the potential of voluntary mechanisms to encourage high industry standards in social and environmental performance, such as highlighting 'best performances' in an Arctic Corporate Responsibility Index based on for instance the Arctic Business Investment Protocol and UN Global Compact Initiative;

27. While developing new industries in the Arctic region, remembering a continuous focus on a sustainable use of our living resources, especially a close international collaboration regarding the Arctic fish stocks;
28. Further develop close collaborations across the Arctic concerning experiences and best practices within the sector of sustainable tourism in the Arctic region;
29. Together stimulate new innovative solutions, research and local competence building which address the needs of future Arctic communities;
30. Develop further access and improve safety for the people working, visiting or living in the Arctic using the highest standards with a continuous focus on the development of new infrastructure and communication solutions with technology and satellites.

Regarding the 20th anniversary of the Arctic Council to:

31. Secure the role and participation of the Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council and provide mechanisms to increase their financial and human resources to participate fully in all the activities of the Arctic Council;
32. Address the issue of the Observers in the Arctic Council, and the possibility for these observers to speak and interact directly with states and Permanent Participants at Arctic Council meetings and its Working Groups, without diminishing the leading role of Arctic States and Permanent Participants;
33. Ensure that observers that represent Arctic peoples and organizations maintain the possibility to speak and be directly involved in the Arctic Council work;
34. Establish an adequate and stable budget to support the work and future goals of the Arctic Council;
35. Include more voices from the peoples living in the Arctic, such as regional organizations, into the work of the Arctic Council to make sure that they can influence the direction of the Arctic cooperation;
36. Reinforce links and cooperation with other international bodies and policy frameworks which focus their activities on cross-border cooperation in the Arctic region, like the Barents Euro-Arctic Council / Barents Regional Council and the Northern Dimension;
37. Exchange best practices and explore new ways on how to nationally involve regional and local governments in decision-making processes in the Arctic Council;
38. Hold an Arctic Summit involving heads of state and governments of the Arctic Council member states, as well as the heads of the Permanent Participants;

39. Follow-up on the conclusions from the international audit about the work in the Arctic Council.

Furthermore the Conference:

40. Acknowledges the importance of, and supports, the active participation of indigenous peoples throughout all ongoing and future activities and processes in the Arctic Region;
41. Acknowledges the interest and presence of parliamentary observers and representatives from governments and non-governmental agencies at this Conference, and recognizes their important role in relaying the messages and supporting the actions herein discussed;
42. Welcomes the forthcoming Finnish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council and looks forward to continued cooperation with the Arctic Council;
43. Welcomes and accepts the invitation of the Parliament of Finland to host the thirteenth Conference in 2018.