



NUUK DECLARATION 2017

On the Occasion of the 11th Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council

We, the Ministers representing the eight Arctic States, joined by representatives of the six Permanent Participant organizations, have gathered in Nuuk, Greenland, during the second Finnish Chairmanship, at the Eleventh Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council,

Underscoring the vital importance of maintaining our peace, stability, and cooperation in the Arctic,

Recognizing the rights of all Arctic peoples, and **further acknowledging** the rights, protections, and voices of indigenous populations across this region,

Noting the continued need for sustainable economic development and resource use,

Reaffirming our commitment to protecting the Arctic environment,

Recognizing the serious challenges caused by climate change,

Hereby:

Investment & Industry

- **While lamenting** the changes being seen in the Arctic as a result of climate change and seeking to work towards global policies which will keep temperature increases below 2C above pre-industrial levels, **commit to** adapting to the changing environment by investing in scientific research and technological advancements to enable sustainable economic development of the Arctic, in particular for the benefit of the Arctic peoples including indigenous peoples,
- **Acknowledge** that economic development in the Arctic can benefit all people while also protecting the rights of indigenous peoples (including free, prior, and informed consent) and **commit** to work towards reducing barriers to trade in goods and materials in order to create a free market across the Arctic regions,
- **Recognize** the importance of building on the significant knowledge base and existing capabilities of indigenous peoples and **resolve** to invest in giving local people the opportunity to contribute to their own economic development,
- **Recommend** the implementation of a system of state support and co-financing of the economic development of the Arctic with other states and other economic entities in order to further encourage the growth of the Arctic economy,
- **Encourage** further investments in infrastructure that will improve the health, quality of life, and education of all people in the Arctic region, as it might revert the outflow of labor and turn it north again,
- **Call for** investments in telecommunications in the Arctic, as this will improve the communication both internally across our regions and on a global scale, thereby introducing peoples of the Arctic to a more globalized world,

Tourism

- **Recognize** the increased developments in tourism in many parts of the Arctic and **strive** for further increases in investment and interest,
- **Encourage** closer cooperation between the public sector and tourism industries to ensure sustainable development by establishing an Arctic Chamber of Commerce and Business that includes membership from indigenous circumpolar peoples, with the aim of distributing the volume of tourists across all Arctic destinations to optimize the sustainability of tourism in this region,
- **Understand** the ecological impacts of tourism on an already fragile environment, including the aviation and sea travel involved in travel to, from, and between Arctic destinations,
- **Respect** and **uphold** the rights and ownership of land by indigenous peoples via land claim and other relevant agreements as they apply in international law,

- **Endorse** the further investment in and development of Arctic tourism, and **emphasize** the need for improved infrastructure and transportation in this region, which we as member states agree will encourage the tourism industry to continue to grow,
- **Recommend** the inclusion of other economic entities and stakeholders in the further development of Arctic tourism,

Sustainability

- **Agree** to establish and collectively initially finance an Arctic Research Fund to support universities and teams based in or partnered with entities in the Arctic state(s) in which the work is being conducted, with budgetary approval processes and outside funding opportunities to be evaluated in future ministerial meetings,
- **Agree** to continue to collaborate on research endeavors throughout the Arctic, and **recognize** the need for even more research collaborations with the shared goal of increasing our Arctic knowledge,
- **Acknowledge** that knowledge – including traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples – as well as education are key to establishing sustainable Arctic societies,
- **Remain committed** to supporting activities and ways of life that are sustainable,

Human Dimension & Gender Equality

- **Encourage** the implementation and protection of human rights and gender equality across the Arctic,
- **Emphasize** the importance of gender equality in political and economic decision-making, especially in policy areas related to employment and health care,
- **Express** concern about gender-based and sexual violence and **seek** initiatives and opportunities to protect the rights of all,

Traditional Livelihood, Hunting, and Fishing Practices

- **Recommend** traditional hunting and fishing practices be accepted by all member states as a sustainable economic where it should be possible for indigenous hunters to manage and sell the products of these practices in compliance with national and international laws (including the CITES Agreement) to increase economic developments in indigenous communities, improving equality overall in the Arctic,
- **Promote** the sustainable indigenous ways of hunting (especially seal hunting),

- **Acknowledge** that seal hunting and the manufacturing of seal products are essential to the livelihoods and well-being of indigenous peoples,
- **Recommend** an increase in the level of training for humane harvesting of seals, which could take place in professional training sessions or alternative or traditional learning settings for humane harvesting methods,
- **Express** continued support of Indigenous People's rights to hunt and fish using traditional practices in a sustainable manner,

Education

- **Work** with the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) to develop culturally appropriate education material to aid indigenous peoples within our members states, and especially our youth and children, in the transition to the open society while retaining their unique cultural identities,
- **Establish** a capacity-building program that aims to increase education in public school systems about the diversity, history, and rights of indigenous arctic peoples, not only among indigenous youth but also among non-indigenous populations,
- **Reaffirm** our support of indigenous peoples' rights and thereby **aim** to promote their education by making it more accessible for them to build their talents and achieve their dreams, allowing for transnational pursuits of education among Arctic member states through a binding agreement in compliance with national and immigration laws,
- **Support** the creation and sustained existence of educational exchange programs for Arctic youth,
- **Emphasize** the continued need for investment in and growth of our education systems, and **encourage** novel and impactful investment approaches that promote both child and adult learning,
- **Note** that education is not just a classroom experience and can include life skills, land skills, or sea skills,
- **Acknowledge** that traditional ecological knowledge should be incorporated in scientific research and cultural preservation efforts,

Climate Change

- **Motivate** industries of the signatories to convert more energy to greener energy,
- **Incentivize** creative and environmentally friendly projects, particularly in terms of investments for sustainable infrastructure and those inspired by historical and traditional knowledge and practices, and
- **Respect** the rights of indigenous peoples when discussing climate change.

**Signed by the Representatives of the Arctic Council
on this 16th day of September, 2017**

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Minister of Foreign Affairs

Postory Kristiangen



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