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CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

**MEETING IN OTTAWA**

 24 February 2014

Venue: **Room 160-S, Centre Block**

 **DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA**

1. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND THE PROPOSED ORDER OF AGENDA**

**ITEMS**

Enclosed:

1.0 Draft program SCPAR meeting in Ottawa 24 February 2014

1.1 Draft agenda, SCPAR meeting, Ottawa 24 February 2014

1.2 Draft annotated agenda, SCPAR meeting, Ottawa 24 February 2014

1.3 Draft timed agenda, SCPAR meeting, Ottawa 24 February 2014

1.4 Draft list of participants, SCPAR meeting, Ottawa 24 February 2014

Decision proposal:

The Committee adopts the agenda and the proposed order of agenda items for the SCPAR meeting.

1. **APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE SCPAR-MEETING IN**

**MURMANSK 19 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Enclosed:

2.1 Draft minutes and list of participants from the SCPAR-meeting in Murmansk, 19 September 2013

Decision proposal:

The Committee approves the minutes from the SCPAR-meeting in Murmansk 19 September 2013.

1. **PRESENTATION BY THE ARCTIC COUNCIL CHAIRMANSHIP**

Enclosed:

3.1 Kiruna Ministerial Declaration

 3.2 Conference statement, 10th CPAR Akureyri 2012

 3.3 Priorities of the Canadian Chairmanship

 3.4 Report from the SAO-meeting in Whitehorse, October 2013

Canada took over as Chair of the Arctic Council at the Ministerial meeting in Kiruna 15 May 2013, and will hold the Chairmanship until spring/summer 2015, to be followed by the USA.

The theme of Canada’s Chairmanship is “development for the people of the North”. The focus is on responsible Arctic resource development, safe Arctic shipping and sustainable circumpolar communities. Canada will also work to strengthen the Arctic Council.

Since taking on the Chairmanship one of the priorities of the Chairmanship has been to establish a circumpolar business forum and a task force was established to lead the work. At a meeting between the Senior Arctic Officials in January 2014 they agreed to establish an Arctic Economic Council which will:

* foster business development in the Arctic,
* engage in deeper circumpolar cooperation, and
* provide a business perspective to the work of the Arctic Council

Another task force works to look at the possibility to reduce emissions and make an inventory of the emissions of short-lived climate forcers (SLCF) in the Arctic. Reduced emissions will slow Arctic and global climate change and have positive effects on the health of the people living in the Arctic. The task force members are discussing if they should negotiate a legally binding instrument between the Arctic Council member states.

In Kiruna the eight Arctic states also agreed to establish a task force “to work towards an arrangement on improved scientific research cooperation among the eight Arctic states”. Its mandate, taken from the original terms of reference, is to “emphasise the need for greater international collaboration to promote knowledge of Arctic marine ecosystems, climate change impacts, adaptation and resilience, and other aspects of the Arctic.” The task force had its first meeting in December 2013.

Finally the Ministers decided at the Kiruna Ministerial to establish a task force on Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Prevention (TFOPP) related to marine oil spills in the Arctic. The mandate for the TFOPP is to work out an action plan, or other arrangements on oil pollution prevention in the Arctic. At the first meeting of the task force in January the participants agreed that they will have a result ready for the Ministerial in 2015, but so far they are both discussing in what form and the content of the product.

Minister for the Arctic Council the Honorable Leona Aglukkaq will present to the Committee the work of the Canadian Chairmanship. Minister Aglukkaq is also the Minister of the Environment and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.

Decision proposal:

The Committee takes note of the information.

1. **THE ROLE OF THE NORTH WEST PASSAGE IN FUTURE ARCTIC SHIPPING**

Enclosed:

4.1 Map of Northern Shipping Routes

The use and possible use of the Northern Shipping Routes, the North West Passage (NWP) and the North East Passage (NEP), has created much attention in and about the Arctic. The main reason is that the Northern shipping routes cut the distance of sea transport dramatically which means reduced time and costs of transportation.

So far the use of the NEP has increased more than the use of the NWP. In 2013 approximately 71 ships travelled across the North of Russia, compared to 4 in 2010. Most of the traffic is still destinational traffic within the Russian territory, connected to the big rivers in the North of Russia. Russia is planning for huge investments to improve the infrastructure along the NEP with the aim develop the sea route as an alternative to the Suez Canal.

The traffic through the NWP has been more limited so far. In September 2013 the first commercial bulk carrier traversed the route. Ships passing through the Northern Sea Routes will all pass the Bering Strait.

To meet this development the International Maritime Organization (IMO) is negotiating a draft mandatory International Code of safety for ships operating in polar waters, Polar Code, to cover the full range of design, construction, equipment, operational, training, search and rescue and environmental protection matters relevant to ships operating in the waters surrounding the two poles. An agreement within the IMO on a mandatory polar code which covers these issues will be an important step in achieving safe Arctic shipping. The Secretary General of the IMO Mr. Koji Sekimizu has announced that the IMO aims for an adoption of the Polar Code in 2014 with implementation in 2016 or 2017.

Another aspect of shipping in the NWP and the NWP is the legal interpretation of their status within the Law of the Sea. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), often called the constitution for the oceans, provides a set of rules inter alia for the sovereignty over different maritime zones, such as internal waters and international straits. The general rule is that the Coastal state has a large degree of sovereignty over the internal waters and that international straits are subjects to free transit passage.

Broadly speaking we can say the Canada and Russia claims that the waters north and between the islands off their northern coast lines, are respectively Canadian and Russian internal waters. The view of the USA is that these waters are international straits and subject to free transit passage.

UNCLOS Article 234 about “Ice-covered areas” is also often mentioned in the discussion of the possibility for Coastal states to adopt and enforce non-discriminatory laws and regulations “for the prevention, reduction and control of marine production from vessels in ice-covered areas”, also in the exclusive economic zones of the coastal state.

Canada has made their NORDREG Regulations mandatory on 1 July 2010 for passing through the NWP. The cornerstone of the NORDREG Regulations is the requirement for prescribed vessels - whether domestic or foreign - to submit, prior to entering the NORDREG Zone, certain information and to obtain clearance.

Representatives from Transport Canada and Department of Fisheries and Ocean will introduce the members to the role of the North West Passage in future Arctic Shipping.

Decision proposal:

The Committee takes note of the information.

COFFEE BREAK

1. **MENTAL WELLNESS IN CANADA’S NORTH**

Enclosed:

5.1 The Evidence-Base for Promoting Mental Wellness and Resilience to Address Suicide in Circumpolar Communities – an Arctic Council project.

The Canadian Chairmanship of the Arctic Council has “sustainable circumpolar communities” as a priority of the Chairmanship. One way of addressing this topic is to promote mental wellness by increasing “the ability of Arctic residents to thrive and adapt to the many changes affecting the Arctic”.

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| At the latest Senior Arctic Official meeting in Whitehorse the Arctic Council approved the project “Evidence-Base for Promoting Mental Wellness and Resilience to Address Suicide in Circumpolar Communities”while underlining the importance of keeping close contact with all the Permanent Participants s as the project evolves, and taking note of the concerns expressed by the ICC which underlined the importance of proceeding carefully when dealing with a sensitive issue such as suicide. |

The enclosed project outline gives a good insight to some of the challenges especially facing the indigenous population in the Arctic and background information about previous Arctic Council engagements on the topic.

Representatives from Health Canada will introduce the work in Canada to promote mental wellness in Canada’s North.

Decision proposal:

The Committee takes note of the information.

1. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE NORTH**

Enclosed:

6.1 “Economic Development and Capacity Building in the North” 4th draft

 6.2 Report from the University of the Arctic

“Economic Development and Capacity Building in the North” has been pointed to as one of the subjects for the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region in Whitehorse 9-11 September 2014. As a part of the preparations for the Conference the Committee has decided to make a report where the topic is addressed. Based on the input from the Committee at meetings in Svalbard and Murmansk an enclosed fourth draft is prepared for this meeting.

To inspire the members of the Committee in the further work with the report, Mr. Ken Coates and Mr. Lars Kullerud will to present the topic to the Committee. They have been challenged to think about what the Arctic societies shall live from in addition to the natural resources in the region.

Mr. Coates is the Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, and co-Director (Research) for the International Centre of Northern Governance and Development, University of Saskatchewan and was raised in the Yukon Territory. Mr. Kullerud is the president of University of the Arctic with an extensive knowledge about education in and about the North.

Mr. Coates and Mr. Kullerud have prepared a paper to introduce the Committee to the topic.

Decision proposal:

The Committee takes note of the information and gives the Secretary the task to implement new ideas and proposals into the report.

1. **PRESENTATION BY WORLD WILDLIFE FUND CANADA**

Enclosed:

7.1 Information about WWFs Arctic activities

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is recognized by most as an important organization for providing environmental information about the Arctic. For 20 years WWF has had an Arctic program, and has through this work become an important contributor to the Arctic cooperation.

Mr. Alexander Shestakov, director of the WWF Global Arctic Program, will present the Arctic program to the Committee.

Decision proposal:

The Committee takes note of the information.

**LUNCH AND VISIT THE QUESTION PERIOD**

*In Camera*

1. **CONFERENCE IN WHITEHORSE 9-11 SEPTEMBER 2014**

Enclosed: 8.1 Draft program, Whitehorse conference

 8.2 Draft conference statement, Whitehorse

The 11th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region will be hosted by the Canadian parliament in Whitehorse, 9-11 September 2014.

An updated program for the conference and a first draft of the conference statement is enclosed. The Committee will have the opportunity to give comments on the draft program and the structure of the conference statement, to guide the further preparations for the conference in Whitehorse.

The four main agenda items are:

1. Sustainable Infrastructure Development
2. Governance Models and Decision-Making Processes
3. Enhancing Northern Economies: Responsible Resource Development and Capacity Building
4. Environmental Challenges

The Canadian delegation will at the meeting in Ottawa give a presentation about the conference and which includes some of the practical arrangements with regards to the conference.

The Committee should also appoint rapporteurs for the conference in Whitehorse. At the meeting in Murmansk Mr. Dennis Bevington indicated his interest in being rapporteur on the topic “Sustainable Infrastructure Development”.

The secretariat has also been informed that Mr. Eirik Sivertsen is willing to take on a topic as rapporteur, possibly: “Enhancing Northern Economies: Responsible Resource Development and Capacity Building”.

The enclosed draft statement is a product made by the secretariat. The different delegations may start their internal process to provide input to the draft statement which can be put forward at the next meeting of SCPAR in June.

Decision proposal:

The Committee approves the draft program and draft statement with the proposals and comments from the members at the meeting.

The Committee appoints rapporteurs for the conference in Whitehorse.

1. **ELECTION OF NEW VICE-CHAIR OF SCPAR**

Enclosed:

 9.1 The Rules of Procedure of SCPAR

At the meeting in Murmansk the Committee decided to postpone the election of Vice-Chair of SCPAR. The Chair asked the members to prepare for a vote at the meeting in Ottawa.

The Committee has two candidates for the position as Vice-Chair, Mr. Bevington and Mr. Leef, both representing Canada in the Committee.

The election between the two candidates will take place by a secret ballot. Russia, Canada and the USA can have two members voting as they have a two chamber parliament. The other member parliaments have one vote each.

Decision proposal:

The Committee elects a new Vice-Chair of SCPAR by a written ballot.

1. **STATUS OF THE WORK OF SCPAR**

* + Report on Arctic activities by members
	+ Report by the secretariat
	+ General exchange of view
1. **NEXT MEETING OF SCPAR**

The delegation from Denmark/Greenland invites the Committee to Copenhagen 10-11 June 2014.

Decision proposal:

The Committee decides to meet in Copenhagen 10-11 June 2014.

1. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**