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CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

**Meeting of the**

**Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region**

**Thursday, October 12th**

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

Enclosed:

1. Draft Program, SCPAR meeting in Reykjavik, 12 October, 2017

2. Draft Agenda, SCPAR meeting in Reykjavik, 12 October, 2017

2.1. Draft Annotated Agenda, SCPAR meeting in Reykjavik

3. Draft List of Participants, SCPAR meeting in Reykjavik

The Committee adopted the Agenda. Proposed order of agenda was changed, so that agenda number eight was changed with nr. seven.

1. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE SCPAR MEETING REYKJAVIK, 12 OCTOBER, 2017

Enclosed:

The Committee approved the minutes from the SCPAR meeting in Reykjavik. Noted, that national reports can be added by the secretaries of national delegations, in written form.

1. SCPAR COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

Enclosed: 1.2. Working Group Document

* Presentation/ Ms. Aaja Chemnitz-Larsen & Ari Trausti Guðmundsson
* Discussion

The committee approved the suggestion of the communications-working group.

Aaja Chemnitz-Larssen informed the committee of the work done by the working group. Social media good way to communicate to the communities. Use of hashtags would help the committee to follow better what themes are trending.

Ari Trausti Guðmundsson; conventional media approach also valuable in reaching out to public, especially during years when there is no conference. In Iceland, committees have to submit a report & abstract to the media.

Lisa Murkowski; no similar practice in the US. Highlighted the need to carefully plan & discuss the best way to distribute information.

Katri Kulmuni; social media could be used. Annual reports back to the parliament is being used also in Finland.

Larry Bagnell warned that if there is not much depth in the reports regarding what the committee does, media might distribute this in not so favorable way.

Sara Karlsson; twitter could be useful tool in relation reaching out to the media. Suggested also that the number of hashtags could be narrowed down.

Eirik Sivertsen; Proposed the re-using the information. Facebook could be one tool. Took note of considerations what we are going to present (from Larry B). Narrow down the Twitter; Arctic matters- is Eirik’s choise.

Aaja; Supported the Arctic matters hastag.

The committee agreed to operationalize the plan and create the accounts. Step by step approach, to see if useful. Committee planned to test this for a year. SG will coordinate.

1. NEXT MEETING OF SCPAR
* Next SCPAR meeting will be held in Finland, Helsinki 23. – 24. November.

Approved

1. ANNIVERSARY PUBLICATION: 25 YEARS OF ARCTIC PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION (1993 – 2018) BOOKLET

Enclosed: 1.3. Draft Table of Contents

The Committee approved the TOC. English and Russian languages versions. The AC shall be asked to contribute. Planned to be ready for the Inari Conference. Short, two – three page stories. Pictures used also. Norway agreed to cover the expenses of the booklet.

1. UN TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE RIGHTS AND CULTURE OF THE ARCTIC INDIGENOUS PEOPLE – Information/ proposal from Ari Trausti Guðmundsson

Enclosed: 1.4. UN Training program

Ari Trausti told about the UN cooperation in Iceland. Aspirations to get the UN to add one training program for indigenous people. Where the indigenous people would be the teachers and politicians would be the pupil. Maybe under the auspices of the AC.

Aaja informed about the combination of local traditional knowledge and science, this could be one example.

Larry B; There are over 600 recognized First Nations governments or bands with distinctive cultures, languages, art, and music in Canada. Big group a challenge, how to coordinate among these, since each community has its own challenges.

Katri; suggested that the AC could contribute in pursuing this goal, as the UN is already involved in the work of the Arctic Council.

Igor Chernychenko; Russia has established Arctic Universities. Russia supported the idea of the program. Agrees also with Larry B, different issues for every community.

Lisa; Greater focus for the indigenous people has become very important in Arctic.

Ari; proposed 40-50 indigenous people representatives could be invited, financed by the UN. Maybe through the AC to the UN.

Aaja, good way to raise awareness; could discuss this also at the coming conference.

Eirik; knowledge about the Arctic is missing in most parts of the world. Both from everyday life and from the life of indigenous people. Education, raising awareness important.

The committee responded positively to Ari’s suggestion. Discussions with the PP of the AC possible. Their views and suggestions. University of the Arctic could be involved also. Committee tries the UN track one more time, Ari should contribute on this. Consider if discuss this with the Finnish chair.

The Committee took note of the information

1. STATUS OF THE WORK OF SCPAR
* Report from the secretariat

The SG informed about the SAO meetings and the conference.

The committee took note of the information.

1. UPDATES BY MEMBERS, MEMBER DISCUSSION

Greenland; Model UN in Greenland. Raising the awareness why the AC is important. Aaja back also in Greenlandic parliament. Additional funding for the Greenland in defense and border guard. Access to internet under discussions, could satellites help to improve the situation. Greenland opening representation in Iceland 2018.

Iceland, new elections in October. Iceland will follow Finland as Chair of the Arctic Council in 2019 and has already begun consultations on its programme. For Iceland, the Arctic is a key foreign policy priority but it is also important in the domestic realm. Iceland emphasizes international cooperation regarding the environment, particularly the marine environment; sustainable resource management; renewable energy and socioeconomic conditions in the Arctic.

Finland; Presentation of the AC chairmanship; Environmental protection, Connectivity, Meteorological cooperation and Education are the priorities of the Finnish chairmanship period

Environmental protections can be viewed as the most important aspect in Arctic Cooperation. This means focusing on biodiversity conservation and pollution prevention as well as mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

In connectivity, the idea has been continuing the Arctic Council’s work on telecommunications and exploring ways to enhance the connectivity and availability of broadband services in the Arctic.

Deepening meteorological and oceanographic cooperation helps in developing better services and forecasting of meteorological phenomena in the Arctic and contributes to making climate change scenarios as accurate as possible.

In Education, the key partner is University of the Arctic. Finland hopes to see that modern methods such as digitalization of education will be at the core of this effort. Fair educational opportunities in remote areas are the key for creating sustainable development and building resilience in Arctic communities.

Finland will look into possibilities of strategic planning and setting of long-term goals for the Council and is also considering the possibility of an Arctic Summit during the Chairmanship. Convening of a summit would require favorable conditions in international relations and an agenda, which is appropriate for a summit.

Canada:

On 14 August 2017, the Canadian government, the government of Nunavut and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association announced an agreement to create a new national marine conservation area in the Canadian Arctic. The Tallurutiup Imanga/Lancaster Sound conservation area, the biggest protected area ever established in Canada, is located on the eastern approach to the Northwest Passage and will cover more than 109,000 km2 (slight larger than the size of Iceland). It will protect major feeding and breeding habitats for polar bears, walruses, bearded seals and bowhead whales.

Inuit traditional knowledge will inform future decision making for the management of the conservation area and Inuit harvesting rights are guaranteed under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The respect for the rights of local Indigenous peoples’ sustainable harvest of living marine resources reflects Recommendation 18 of the 2016 Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region in Ulan-Ude, Russia. Once it is officially designated, this new conservation area will be permanently off limits for any exploration for and exploitation of hydrocarbons, minerals, aggregates, and any other inorganic matter.

The Lancaster Sound conservation area is a step towards meeting Canada’s target of protecting 5 percent of its marine and coastal areas by 2017 and 10 percent by 2020. Once completed, it will add about 2 per cent towards these targets. The conservation area would also contribute to the pan-Arctic network of Marine Protected Areas initiated by the Arctic Council.

On 27 August 2017, the federal government announced a total investment of $175 million to protecting Arctic waters as part of its $1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan. The $175 million will be divided into five different areas with the bulk of the money, $94.3 million over five years, focused on making Arctic resupply operations safer and more efficient.

The rest of the funding will be devoted to the construction of an Arctic National Aerial Surveillance Program Complex ($29.9 million) in Iqaluit, Nunavut; expanded marine training for Indigenous people and Northerners ($21 million over five years); setting up an Office of Incident Management to allow the government to better respond to and coordinate during emergency situations ($16.89 million); and the expansion of Transport Canada’s Community Participation Funding Program ($13.4 million) so Indigenous groups can better participate in discussions around Canada’s marine transportation system.

The report Impact of the Inuit Arts Economy, commissioned by the federal government, revealed that, in 2015, the Inuit art economy contributed $87.2 million to Canada’s GDP. Visual arts, particularly carvings and crafts, have long been a way to generate personal income and to work flexible hours, something important to the lifestyle of Inuit subsistence hunters.

Arts and crafts sustain 2,700 full-time jobs and an estimated 13,650 Inuit artists are involved in arts and crafts production in Canada. These numbers indicate that 26 percent of the Inuit population aged 15 years and older is engaged in the production of visual arts and crafts.

The report also found that men tend to produce carvings and jewellery, more profitable art forms that dominate the traditional retail and wholesale markets, whereas women tend to produce more sewn goods and textiles that are prevalent in the direct-to-consumer trade, particularly in fast-growing, online sales.

Sweden: 2018/ September elections, debate on this on focus. Seden passed a climate law this June. Goal is to be carbon neutral in 2045. Transport cut 70 % by 2040. Regulations that demand cutting the emissions. Minorities in Sweden under discussion. Strengthen the structure of consultation when affecting the Sami. More support to Sami culture.

Russia: Meeting in Washington in June important. In Sabetta, President Vladimir Putin sent a message of greetings to participants and guests of the 7th International Meeting of Representatives of Arctic Council Member States, Observer States and Foreign Scientific Community. In September, the third annual Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) was arranged in Vladivostok.

In the Duma, legislation where trans-border cooperation is highlighted. Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Karelia can benefit from this cooperation. 2035 Program for social development. In Jamal, the liquid gas plant starting end of this year. Over the couple of years, issues dealing with transborder and arctic issues has been received high and positive attention. By 2018 Russia will be able to present a report on the outlook on the Arctic.

From the Sebate; 2017 year of ecology in Russia. One priority is Arctic. 4000 units have been gathred/ recycled in the Arctic. Under Russian legislation; four regions are entirely in Arctic and four partially. In Karelia 4 new communities have been defined as Arctic. Yakutia is aspiring to have the recognition. More support for the Arctic communities. Nuclear icebreakers; 2 new breakers are been launched. By 2030, 30 million tons of oil and gas wil be distributed via the Northern Sea Route. New generation icebreakers under plan. China and other Asian countries showed interest towards Russian Arctic. Good cooperation with Norway and Finland. Countries from the Middle East also shown interest.

US: making headway in arctic infrastructure. Because not all of the people in the new administration is yet in place, it is difficult to say what kind of role the Arctic gets. Secretary of State, Mr. Tillerson attended the ministerial meeting. Secretary of the Interior visited in Alaska. Identified that US should have minimum of six icebreakers. Funding of one has started. President has large infrastructure plans for the country. Alaska feels that it is important to build new infrastructure, ports and roads. Navigational aids important. Senator Lisa Murkowski taking up the initiative to update the Arctic strategy. Looking to include how to use the indigenous people expertise and knowledge. In broadband some good development, undersea cable.

Norway; elections in Norway, government continues. Norway Finland and Sweden discussing about the Sami convention. Aspiration for same rights in all countries. Broadband discussion ongoing, Eirik has proposed that go on with the satellite project. Arctic Frontiers end of January.

West Nordic Council; strategy for the AC under work. Hosting a breakout session for the Arctic Circle. Tourism important theme.

1. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee decides the next meeting/s

Spring meetings; Sweden will host the meeting in springs. We ask EP to host another. Russian meeting in late autumn.