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Parliamentary Association



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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting  
its participation at the Meeting of the Standing Committee of  
Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region**

**Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association**

**Washington, D.C., United States of America  
March 12-13, 2013**

# Report

## INTRODUCTION

Ryan Leef, M.P., led a Canadian delegation of two to the meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (the Standing Committee) held in Washington, D.C. on 12-13 March 2013. The delegation also included Mr. Dennis Bevington, M.P. Ms. Shauna Troniak from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament attended as advisor to the delegation.

The Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (the Conference) is a parliamentary body comprising delegations appointed by the national parliaments of the eight Arctic states (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, the United States of America) and the European Parliament. The Conference also includes Permanent Participants representing Indigenous peoples, as well as observers. The Conference meets every two years. The Tenth Conference was held in Akureyri, Iceland, 5-7 September 2012. The Eleventh Conference will be held in Whitehorse, Yukon, 9-11 September 2014.

The Conference adopts a statement with recommendations to the Arctic Council (the Council) and to the governments of the Arctic states and the European Commission. The Standing Committee closely monitors how governments implement the Conference Statement, and take new initiatives to further Arctic cooperation.<sup>1</sup>

Between conferences, Arctic parliamentary cooperation is facilitated by the Standing Committee,<sup>2</sup> which began its activities in 1994. The Conference and Standing Committee take initiatives to further Arctic cooperation, and act, in particular, as a parliamentary forum for issues relevant to the work of the Council. The Standing Committee takes part in the work of the Council as an observer.<sup>3</sup>

## MEETING SUMMARY

The agenda for the meeting and the minutes from the previous Standing Committee meeting held 13 November 2012 in Inari, Finland, were adopted.

### A. U.S. Arctic Policy

Mr. Evan Bloom, Director of the Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs in the Bureau of Oceans and Environment and Science at the U.S. Department of State, provided the Standing Committee with an overview of Arctic policy of the United States.

Mr. Bloom first emphasized the multilateral aspect of U.S. policy in relation to the Arctic, stating that the U.S. is active in several important intergovernmental forums and organizations that deal with international Arctic issues. In addition to the Arctic Council, which it is preparing to chair in 2015, the U.S. is an active member of, for example, the International Maritime Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, World

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<sup>1</sup> See: Tenth Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, Akureyri, Iceland, 5-7 September 2012, *Conference Statement*.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the membership of the Standing Committee, see Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, *Standing Committee*: <http://www.arcticparl.org/committee.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, [Home](#).

Meteorological Organization, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. While the U.S. is not a signatory to the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS), Mr. Bloom stated that the U.S. does follow the provisions of the treaty.<sup>4</sup>

The U.S. issued its Arctic Region Policy in January 2009 in the concluding weeks of the Bush Administration; the policy has been carried forth and remains relevant to the Obama Administration.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Bloom stated that the policy is a compass that guides several interagency working groups on a variety of priority objectives, including facilitating scientific cooperation, expanding icebreaking capability, and contributing to the development of an International Polar Code on Arctic shipping.

Mr. Bloom highlighted several key Arctic Council initiatives in advance of the May 2013 Ministerial meeting in Kiruna, Sweden. In particular, Mr. Bloom noted that ministers are expected to sign an agreement on Arctic marine oil pollution preparedness and response, which will represent the second binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Council. Mr. Bloom also highlighted several of the Council's other ongoing initiatives, including research on ecosystem-based management (EBM), the Arctic Maritime and Aviation Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (AMATII), and assessment on ocean acidification.

Mr. Bloom noted that Canada has emphasized the overarching theme Development for the People of the North for its term as chair of the Council from 2013-2015, thereby demonstrating its commitment to developing the work of the Council as it relates to the human dimension. Mr. Bloom also noted that Canada has been working with Arctic states to develop concrete initiatives in preparation for its chairmanship. In addition, Canadian and American representatives met last month to discuss how they might develop their respective chairmanships in ways that are mutually reinforcing.

In discussion with members of the committee, Mr. Bloom stated that the U.S. has welcomed the new role of the Arctic Council in facilitating negotiations on binding agreements among the eight member states, and remains open to new legal instruments, where warranted. He noted in particular the positive interest generated at the last meeting of Arctic Environment Ministers on short-term climate forcers (e.g. black carbon).

A member from Canada noted that the statement adopted at the last Conference in Akureyri contained specific items on Arctic governance, including the potential for annual ministerial meetings. Mr. Bloom expressed interest in the evolving governance role of the Council and noted, as positive developments, the recent decisions to hold Deputy Ministerial meetings in the interim years and to establish a permanent secretariat in Tromsø. In addition, Mr. Bloom noted that a decision may be taken on new state and non-governmental observers to the Council at the Kiruna Ministerial Meeting in May 2013.

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<sup>4</sup> *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 10 December 1982, 1833 UNTS 3, 21 ILM 1261 (entered into force 16 November 1994).

<sup>5</sup> National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD-66)/Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-25), *Arctic Region Policy*, 9 January 2009.

The U.S. delegation inquired as to what Arctic parliamentarians can do to advance the work of the Arctic Council. Mr. Bloom replied that the Conference statements provide helpful signals to the eight member states as they develop policy by consensus through the Senior Arctic Officials; and the U.S. remains open to such signals as it develops the themes for its Council chairmanship.

On a question from the Canadian delegation regarding international cooperation on Arctic fisheries, Mr. Bloom stated that the U.S. is promoting talks among the five Arctic coastal states toward greater regulation of commercial fisheries beyond their respective Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), and has reached out to Canada on this initiative.

## **B. Alaskan Perspective**

Mr. Mead Treadwell, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Alaska, updated the Standing Committee on key Arctic policy issues in Alaska. Mr. Treadwell highlighted two current needs common to all Arctic states: greater economic investment and marine safety in the Arctic region. He noted that the Arctic might be, as it was recently described, the world's final and possibly most attractive emerging market.<sup>6</sup> Arctic states can ensure the safety and prosperity of the region by working together on these issues.

At present, Mr. Treadwell noted, the Arctic is attracting an unprecedented level of interest from global capital. By way of example, he highlighted several recent developments in Alaska's North Slope, including oil exploration activities conducted by the Spanish company Repsol, and an agreement between Exxon Mobil and Russian firm Rosneft over natural gas development in the Point Thomson field. He stated that Arctic states must develop competitive tax structures, basic infrastructure and other measures to improve the investment climate in the region.

Mr. Treadwell noted efforts underway in Alaska to develop national policy around Arctic shipping and marine safety. These include the recent launch of a \$200,000 study at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks on identifying needs related to the development of shipping in the state, including infrastructure development and measures to improve marine safety. Other recent developments include the creation of a body within the U.S. Department of Transportation that will coordinate the development of a national Arctic shipping policy, and which has recently released a study on this issue.<sup>7</sup> At the state level, the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission will hold its first meeting later this month.

Mr. Treadwell pointed to a need for greater cooperation in managing marine transportation in the Bering Strait. In this regard, he highlighted the Saint Lawrence Seaway between the U.S. and Canada as a possible model for international cooperation.

In discussion with members of the committee, Mr. Treadwell noted that, with an estimated 13% of the world's oil and 30% of its natural gas, the Arctic economy is based on the exploitation of natural resources. Arctic states and oil and gas companies in these states are competing for this investment; and, in the process, these actors are

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<sup>6</sup> Scott Borgerson and Scott Miner, "Time to Take Alaska Out of the Icebox" *The Wall Street Journal* (22 July 2011), online: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304569504576405801640378640.html>.

<sup>7</sup> For more information, see the website of the U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation System: <http://www.cmts.gov/Default.aspx>.

also collaborating and building confidence with investors. He further stated that Arctic states must focus less on direct incentives through mechanisms such as tax credits and focus more on developing a more certain and secure overall investment climate in the region.

A member from Canada asked whether more international cooperation is needed in the Arctic to help deal with the effects of marine transportation on, for example, ecosystems and the livelihoods of the region's population, and what form this cooperation should take. Mr. Treadwell replied that now is the right time to set the rules in place, based on sound science, and to support greater coordination among shipping authorities to build awareness among those in the shipping industry as to the effects of their activities.

The U.S. delegation noted the current U.S. moratorium on commercial fishing in the Beaufort Sea above Alaska, and inquired as to the particular role of parliamentarians in protecting and ensuring sustainable fisheries across the Arctic region. In response, Mr. Treadwell stated that Arctic parliamentarians have a key role in ensuring scientific research is properly resourced, and in forging partnerships to do this research and promote reciprocal access. He also emphasized a need for further research in the law of the sea, which he described as a precursor for good practice and the application of good science in the Arctic.

### **C. U.S. Arctic Research Goals and Objectives**

Mr. John Farrell, Executive Director of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission (USARC),<sup>8</sup> provided an overview of U.S. Arctic policy research. Research is important to parliamentarians, he stated, because we operate in a knowledge economy where good information supports sound decision-making. To this end, parliamentarians should do what they can to help achieve efficiencies and promote investment in the knowledge economy. More research is needed in, for example, mapping (only 11% of Arctic land and sea is mapped to modern standards), assessing the impacts of resource development, and determining the best approaches to sustainable development in the region.

Mr. Farrell presented the U.S. government's interagency five-year Arctic research plan, which was released in February 2013.<sup>9</sup> The plan identifies seven overlapping research themes that "will inform national policy and benefit significantly from close interagency coordination":<sup>10</sup>

1. Sea ice and marine ecosystems
2. Terrestrial ice and ecosystems
3. Atmospheric studies of surface heat, energy, and mass balances
4. Observing systems
5. Regional climate models

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<sup>8</sup> USARC is an independent federal agency that advises the President and Congress on U.S. and international Arctic research. See U.S. Arctic Research Commission website: <http://www.arctic.gov/>.

<sup>9</sup> See *Arctic Research Plan: FY 2013-2017* (February 2013):

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/2013\\_arctic\\_research\\_plan.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/2013_arctic_research_plan.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, page 1.

## 6. Adaptation tools for sustaining communities

## 7. Human health

Mr. Farrell emphasized the need to promote greater international cooperation and coordination in advancing scientific research in the Arctic. Mr. Farrell highlighted the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program as a successful example of such international cooperation.<sup>11</sup> There is a particular need, he stated, for an internationally coordinated observing system to obtain scientific data and information in a number of research areas (e.g. climate). This has been discussed within the Arctic Council but scientists have not to date seen an integrated program developed.

In addition, Mr. Farrell drew attention to USARC's daily newsletter<sup>12</sup> and a recent compilation of research on oil spills in Arctic waters that includes recommendations for further research.<sup>13</sup>

In discussion with members of the committee, Mr. Farrell noted that the melting of Arctic sea ice likely affects weather systems in the Arctic and elsewhere; however, current research is in its early stages and results are not yet conclusive. USARC's latest annual "Goals" report explores the climate implications of the loss of Arctic sea ice.<sup>14</sup>

### **D. Institute of the North**

Mr. Nils Andreassen, Executive Director of the Institute of the North, provided an overview of the work of the institute on Arctic issues in Alaska, nationally and internationally.

Mr. Andreassen indicated that the institute is an Alaska-based non-governmental organization that is focused on the human dimension of sustainable development in the Arctic, and in particular on the building of healthy, prosperous and resilient Arctic communities. The institute works to sustain national and international networks, conduct public outreach and education activities, and promote the development and application of U.S. Arctic research.

Mr. Andreassen highlighted recent work, coordinated by the institute, of the Arctic Maritime and Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (AMATII).<sup>15</sup> This multi-stakeholder initiative builds on the work of the Arctic Council on Arctic infrastructure development, including the 2009 Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment. Work undertaken to date is viewable at AMATII's website;<sup>16</sup> other proposed activities are scheduled to be reviewed by ministers at the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting in May 2013.

Mr. Andreassen also noted the role of the institute in supporting the development of Alaska's Arctic policy and international policy at the Arctic Council. For example, the

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<sup>11</sup> See website of the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program: <http://www.iodp.org/>.

<sup>12</sup> USARC, *Arctic Update*: [http://www.arctic.gov/arctic\\_update\\_archive/index\\_general.html](http://www.arctic.gov/arctic_update_archive/index_general.html).

<sup>13</sup> USARC, *Oil Spills in Arctic Waters: An Introduction and Inventory of Research Activities and USARC Recommendations*: [http://www.arctic.gov/publications/oil\\_spills\\_2012.html](http://www.arctic.gov/publications/oil_spills_2012.html).

<sup>14</sup> See *USARC Report on the Goals and Objectives for Arctic Research 2013–2014* (March 2013): [http://www.arctic.gov/publications/2013-14\\_usarc\\_goals.pdf](http://www.arctic.gov/publications/2013-14_usarc_goals.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> See Institute of the North, Arctic Maritime and Transportation Infrastructure Initiative: <http://www.institutenorth.org/programs/arctic-advocacy-infrastructure/arctic-transportation/amatii/>.

<sup>16</sup> Arctic Maritime and Transportation Infrastructure Initiative, Home: <http://arcticinfrastructure.org/>.

institute is involved in developing an awareness campaign in Alaska on the Arctic Council. He cited a recent public opinion survey published by the Munk-Gordon Arctic Security Program which found that a minority of people in the U.S. are aware of the Arctic Council and its work.<sup>17</sup>

Members of the committee discussed the role of the institute in facilitating networks and exchanges among international stakeholders. The institute's Circumpolar Policy Tours were noted as an effective means of exchanging information and strengthening cooperation among business, policy and community leaders.

### **E. Topics for the Standing Committee until the Conference in 2014**

Members of the committee considered possible topics for discussion in advance of the next Conference in 2014. One topic in particular may be the focus of a paper to be drafted to present at the 2014 Conference.

Topics under discussion included:

- Business and infrastructure development
- Cooperation in education and research
- Gender equality and gender-based analysis
- Integration of local knowledge in managing biodiversity (e.g. Article 8(j) of the *Convention on Biological Diversity*)
- Responsible Arctic resource development
- Development and security of infrastructure

Members generally agreed that issues of particular importance included business development, education and training opportunities (particularly for Northerners) and increasing the participation of local communities in decisions affecting the Arctic.

Members agreed to continue discussion with a view to identifying key issues and concrete measures and approaches to these issues. A representative of the University of the Arctic in attendance indicated that this institution would be prepared to assist in this process.

Members also discussed the need for continued follow-up with members' respective governments on the Standing Committee's 2012 Arctic governance paper<sup>18</sup> and 2012 Conference statement.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Munk-Gordon Arctic Security Program, *Rethinking the Top of the World: Arctic Security Public Opinion Survey* (January 2011): [http://gordonfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/publications/24-05-2011%20Rethinking%20the%20Top%20of%20the%20World%20\(3\)%20\(3\)\\_0.pdf](http://gordonfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/publications/24-05-2011%20Rethinking%20the%20Top%20of%20the%20World%20(3)%20(3)_0.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, [Arctic Governance in an Evolving Arctic Region: A Proposal by the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region](#).

<sup>19</sup> Tenth Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, Akureyri, Iceland, 5-7 September 2012, *Conference Statement*.

## **F. Election of new Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee**

Members of the committee agreed to postpone the election of a new Vice-Chair to the next meeting of the Standing Committee in June 2013.

## **G. Participation in meetings of the Standing Committee**

Members of the committee discussed possibly expanding the number of participants from members' delegations in meetings of the Standing Committee, including potential benefits and disadvantages. Some delegates noted that increasing participation in the meetings may inform more parliamentarians about Arctic issues. Others noted that such expansion may change the character of the Standing Committee by making it more formal and less efficient and flexible.

Other options to engage more parliamentarians in the Standing Committee's work were also discussed. These included possible working groups, seminars and additional conferences. Members also discussed possibly extending a meeting of the Standing Committee in the year between Conferences to accommodate greater participation from members' national parliaments.

It was generally agreed that options to increase participation in the Standing Committee's work without formally expanding its membership should be explored. Members of the committee agreed to re-visit the issue at the next meeting of the Standing Committee in June 2013.

## **H. Status of the work of the Standing Committee**

Delegates provided updates on developments in their respective countries in relation to the Arctic. Further details on these presentations are provided in the minutes of the meeting (attached as Appendix 1).

The delegation from Canada provided the Standing Committee with an overview of Canada's preparations to chair the Arctic Council from 2013 to 2015. The overarching theme for Canada's term will be Development for the People of the North. There are three sub-themes: Responsible Arctic Resource Development, Safe Arctic Shipping and Sustainable Circumpolar Communities. The incoming Chair of the Arctic Council will be Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health and the Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, and the holder of a special ministerial portfolio created for the Arctic Council. The Chair of the Standing Committee, Mr. Morten Høglund, recently met with Minister Aglukkaq,<sup>20</sup> and opportunities for parliamentary engagement will continue to present once Canada officially assumes the chair in May 2013.

## **I. Next meeting of the Standing Committee**

The next meeting of the Standing Committee will be held in the Svalbard Islands, Norway, on 3 to 5 June 2013.

## **Briefing from Administration Officials**

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<sup>20</sup> Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, *Dinner with Minister Leona Aglukkaq* (22 January 2013): <http://www.arcticparl.org/announcements.aspx?id=5373>.



Patricia Cogswell, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for the National Security Staff Transborder Directorate, briefed the Standing Committee on the Obama Administration's strategic efforts in the Arctic region.

Ms. Cogswell stated that the Administration expects to release a national strategy for the Arctic in advance of the Ministerial Meeting in May, observing that such a strategy is needed to help coordinate and provide strategic guidance to the 20+ federal agencies currently engaged in some capacity on Arctic issues. It will also, she noted, serve to prioritize Arctic issues at the federal level.

In discussions with members of the Committee, Ms. Cogswell noted that the U.S. is increasingly looking to engage and partner with other nations on a variety of Arctic issues, and re-thinking how it engages with non-state actors (e.g. multinational entities).

Ms. Cogswell also stated that the Administration supports formal U.S. accession to the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*.<sup>21</sup> In 2012, Secretary of State John Kerry, then the Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, presided over a series of hearings on issues surrounding the U.S. ratification of this treaty. While formal accession remains a divided issue in Congress, Ms. Cogswell noted that the U.S. has generally abided by the provisions of the treaty since the time of the Reagan Administration.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. David Tilson, M.P.  
President, Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

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<sup>21</sup> *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 10 December 1982, 1833 UNTS 3, 21 ILM 1261 (entered into force 16 November 1994).

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Washington, D.C., United States of America
<b>DATES</b>	March 12 and 13, 2013
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Dennis Bevington, M.P. Mr. Ryan Leef, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Shauna Troniak, analyst
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$5,037.56</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$2,469.42</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$0,00</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$768.48</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$0,00</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$0,00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,275.46</b>

## Appendix



CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

## **MEETING IN WASHINGTON**

12 March 2013 at 9.30 am

Draft minutes

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

Decision:

The Committee adopted the agenda and the proposed order of agenda items.

### **2. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE SCPAR-MEETING IN INARI 13 NOVEMBER 2012**

Decision:

The Committee approved the draft minutes from the SCPAR-meeting in Inari 13 November 2012.

### 3. US POLICY ON THE ARCTIC

Mr. Evan Bloom, Director of the Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs in the Bureau of Oceans and Environment and Science at the U.S. Department of State, introduced the Committee to the US Arctic Policy.

The US will take over as Chair of the Arctic Council in 2015 and has started the preparations.

The US has not ratified UNCLOS but follows the provisions of the treaty.

Another important international event is the work in the International Maritime Organization and its work with the Polar Code.

The current US Arctic Policy Directive is from January 2009 and has been adopted by the current administration.

Icebreaking capabilities will be continued to be addressed in US Arctic policy.

Mr. Bloom underlined the expected agreement on oil spill response to be signed in Kiruna, the work on ecosystem-based management, Arctic Maritime and Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (AMATI), the Arctic Ocean Review and the initiative on Ocean Acidification as interesting initiatives under the Arctic Council.

The work on short lived climate pollutants will be a follow-up from the Arctic environmental ministers meeting in February 2013.

The US will try to find an agreement with Canada on the continental shelf – look to Norway and Russia for inspiration.

The US looks forward to Canadians chairmanship and will try to link it with the US Chairmanship where it's natural. An interagency group looks on possible new initiatives in the US chairmanship.

On questions from the Committee, Mr. Bloom underlined that even though the US is not a part of UNCLOS they still collect data about the continental shelf and analyze this as if they were a member of the treaty.

With regards to possible new legal agreements between the Arctic countries, Mr. Bloom underlined that the US has found the cooperation in the Council rewarding and is open

to the idea of legal instruments where it makes sense. He further pointed to the positive interest in black carbon at the environmental ministers meeting.

Members of the Committee referred to the many articles in the conference statement from Akureyri on Arctic governance. An example is the wish for yearly ministerial meeting as the situation in the Arctic has changed since the inception of the Council.

Mr. Bloom expressed interest in evolving the governance of the Arctic and the fact that they now have deputy minister meetings in the year in-between the Ministerial meetings and that an Arctic Council secretariat recently was established.

As for the question regarding new observers to the Arctic Council, Mr. Bloom hoped for a decision on this in Kiruna at the Ministerial meeting 15 May.

When it comes to scientific cooperation with Russia, Mr. Bloom referred to the work taking place in the working groups of the Arctic Council and an initiative from President Obama on science cooperation with Russia which also includes polar science.

On the question of what the Arctic parliamentarians can do to advance the work of the AC, Mr. Bloom underlined the important input through the conference statements to policy development. The statement must be presented to the governments which are open to new ideas.

Finally Mr. Bloom informed about an initiative from the US for the 5 Arctic Coastal states regarding no fishing in the Arctic waters beyond national borders before there is enough knowledge and science about the waters and its potential fish stocks.

#### Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

#### **4. ALASKA PERSPECTIVE**

Mr. Mead Treadwell, Lt. Governor, State of Alaska, updated the Committee on important Arctic issues seen from Alaska.

The two main headlines in Mr. Treadwell's interventions were:

- Investments in the Arctic
- Appeal on marine safety

The Arctic will need large investments over the coming years and has been described as the world's final emerging market. Many international companies are working to explore the region. The policy must prepare for this. The companies interested in the Arctic should to some extent work together, and the governments should prepare by getting basic infrastructure in place.

Transport, energy resources and tourism are likely to be important areas.

Mr. Treadwell also informed about a new study on Arctic shipping on USD 200 million which will be conducted by the University of Fairbanks and look at how Alaska can prepare for increased shipping along its coastline.

As half of the food in Alaskan villages come from the waters, maritime safety is important.

There is a need for better information about the ships passing the coast of Alaska, and there are important steps in the right direction in the Arctic Council with regards to maritime safety. We should look more into regional cooperation for maritime safety as well such as the cooperation between US and Canada on the Great Lakes.

Mr. Treadwell expressed strong support for US ratification of UNCLOS.

The new Arctic Policy commission in Alaska will meet for the first time next week.

There is also a need for closer cooperation with Russia on fishing of salmon in rivers. In 2013 it is 25 years since the opening of the US-Russia boarder. This should provide for an opportunity to look at where the US – Russia cooperation across the Bering Strait can be improved.

On question from the Committee if the lower 48 are aware of the business opportunities in the Arctic and willing develop the natural resources, Mr. Treadwell replied that opening of new areas for oil and gas exploration has been a long discussion in the US. However in Alaska it is a matter of how to do it right, not whether to develop them or not.

People need be comfortable with the North and certainty for the investments.

As for how Alaska works to attract oil companies to invest in the region, Mr. Treadwell pointed to the importance of a good infrastructure (as gas transportation system) and the education system to get a good work force. Educational exchanges in UArctic are important in this connection, also for capacity building in the North to help people in the North to take part in the economic development in the region.

As new transportation routes are opening up new opportunities for shipping and tourism, we will see an increased marine activity. Areas should be closed for fishing and prepare the science before opening up. As both the Bering Sea and the Barents Sea are both very important for global fisheries there should be closer science cooperation. The consequences for marine mammals of shipping and other activities in the Arctic waters should also be looked closer into.

Finally Mr. Treadwell mentioned the need to have a common approach the prevention between the Arctic states.

#### Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

## **5. US ARCTIC RESEARCH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Mr. John Farrell, Executive Director of the US Arctic Research Commission talked about the goals and objectives of US Arctic research.

Why should the parliamentarians care about research? Because knowledge is the basis for making the right decisions to achieve sustainable development and environmental protection. Governments need to continue to invest in research to develop a knowledge economy.

Economy is an important driver of Arctic change. The rich natural resources and new sea lanes are important factors in a more accessible Arctic. Knowledge economy is important to make the right choices when developing the Arctic.

Mr. Farrell moved on to telling about the US Arctic Federal Research Policy and the recently adopted 5 years Arctic Research Plan. The plan has 7 research themes:

- Sea Ice and Marine Ecosystems
- Terrestrial ice and ecosystems
- Atmospheric studies
- Observing systems
- Regional climate models
- Adaptation tools for sustaining communities
- Human health (food security, water and sanitation)

Mr. Farrell expressed concern about the current cuts in research in the US (1000 M USD), and pointed to the fact that science need predictable and stable funding to function at best.

Other important steps would be to declassify data from the military to the public, use the existing satellites in a better way and encourage international cooperation and coordination when doing Arctic research.

Finally Mr. Farrell made the Committee aware of the report “Oil spills in Arctic Waters” and the “Arctic Update” from USARC [www.arctic.gov](http://www.arctic.gov)

On questions form the Committee Mr. Farrell clarified that the cuts (sequestration) will hit all research on an equal basis.

Mr. Farrell also noted that the changing of the ice in the Arctic likely influence the weather systems other places on the planet, but that the research on this is in its very early days and will have to continue to find out in an exact way.

#### Decision:

The Committee takes note of the information

## **6. PRENTATION BY THE INSTITUTE OF THE NORTH**

Mr. Nils Andreassen, Executive Director of the Institute of the North, introduced the Committee to the work of the institute.



The institute brings people together, nationally and internationally, for seminars and information exchange.

Energy and Transportation infrastructure are important topics in the work of the institute.

The Arctic Maritime and Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (AMATII) is done in cooperation with the Arctic Council and likely to be endorsed by the ministers in Kiruna at the Ministerial meeting. Much is already available through the website [www.arcticinfrastructure.org](http://www.arcticinfrastructure.org)

Arctic Energy Summit will take place in Akureyri, Iceland in 8-10 October 2013 and Mr. Andreassen invited the committee to participate.

Finally Mr. Andreassen recognized the work of the Arctic parliamentarians as Arctic ambassadors.

Members of the Committee noted that the work done by the institute to raise awareness, generate information and facilitate exchange is very important. It also makes it easier to have an engaged and informed debate on the situation and the needs of the Arctic.

#### Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

## **7. TOPICS FOR SCPAR UNTIL THE CONFERENCE IN 2014**

The following issues were mentioned by the members of SCPAR when discussing topics for SCPAR to work on until the conference in 2014:

- Continue to promote the report on Arctic governance “Arctic governance in an evolving Arctic region”.
- Support the exchange of students in the Arctic
- Business forum
- Gender and gender equality – how to make young women stay and return after studies

- The Convention on Bio Diversity art 8 concerning indigenous peoples and a global perspective
- Economic development – environmental development
- Capacity building of local residents to enable them to make use of new opportunities
- Responsible Arctic resource development
- Transportation and security of transportation
- Education and innovation

The Chair Mr. Høglund also pointed to the importance of following up the statement from the conference in Akureyri in September 2012.

When the Committee decides on a topic that doesn't exclude other topics from the agenda of SCPAR.

Summing up the main focus of this report shall be economy, infrastructure and education.

The gender perspective should be included as well as local and international perspectives.

University of the Arctic members will be ready to assist in this process.

#### Decision:

The Committee decided to work with economy, infrastructure and education.

The gender perspective should be included as well as local and international perspectives.

## **8. ELECTION OF NEW VICE-CHAIR OF SCPAR**

#### Decision:

The Committee postponed the election of Vice-Chair until the next meeting of SCPAR.

## **9. PARTICIPATION IN SCPAR MEETINGS**

The State Duma of Russia, Denmark and Canada expressed support of extending the number of participants in the SCPAR meeting, while Sweden, Finland and the Russian Council of Federation were reluctant to enlarge the number of participants.

All the members of the Committee were positive to explore new ways of including more MPs in the work of SCPAR for example through working groups, seminars and other conferences.

The main argument against extending the number of participants in SCPAR was that this might change the character of the Committee, and make it less flexible and open, and more formal.

The main argument in favor of enlarging the number of members of SCPAR is that the interest in Arctic issues have increased in the national parliaments and that it would be good to have someone to discuss with in the home parliament.

Some of the members also pointed to the possibility to have an extended meeting of the Standing Committee in the year between the conferences with a broader participation from the national parliaments.

### Decision:

The Committee will explore new ways to include more representatives in the work of SCPAR without enlarging the number of SCPAR members from each member parliament.

## **10. STATUS OF THE WORK OF SCPAR**

The Russian Council of Federation reported that RAIPON still needs to make amendments in their bylaw and register once again as an organization with the Ministry of Justice.

RAIPON is suspended until 13 April 2013.

The representative from the Sami Parliamentary Council (SPC) underlined the important role for RAIPON an important partner in the Arctic cooperation. SPC was glad to hear that there seems to be a timeframe and that the issue will be solved by next meeting of SCPAR.

The representative from the Russian State Duma informed the Committee of a big ecological conference which will take place soon in St. Petersburg.

The Canadian delegation informed about the preparations for the coming Chairmanship of the Arctic Council which has “Development for the people of the North” as the main theme with several sub-themes. Minister of Health Ms. Leona Aglukkaq has been given the Arctic Council added to her ministerial portfolio.

There is also taking place a review of the Arctic policy of Canada and a report should be ready some time in advance in the Kiruna meeting.

The representative from the Nordic Council reminded the members of the theme session last spring on the Arctic. In conjunction with a big meeting on security cooperation in Stockholm in April, the Nordic Council of Ministers will have a one day seminar 9 April on the topic “Sustainable use of Arctic resources”.

The representative from the University of the Arctic informed the Committee about a report which addresses the strengths and weaknesses of UArctic and they will work to respond to the findings in the report.

The US delegation informed about the work to get the new Secretary of State engaged in Arctic issues. Secretary Kerry is a strong supporter of US ratifying UNCLOS and they will continue to address the issue in the Senate.

The delegate from the Sami Parliamentary Council informed about the ongoing negotiations about the Nordic Sami Convention. A new mineral strategy of Norway will be presented in the near future and the delegate expressed hope that the Sami people will have a say in the process of mining in Norway.

The delegate from Denmark represents the Faroe Islands in the Danish parliament and informed about the situation in the Faroe Islands. Statoil is active outside the coast of Faroe Islands with good prospects of finding petroleum resources.

There is an ongoing dispute on mackerel between the Faroe Islands, EU and Norway, and EU have prepared a framework for sanctions.

The parliament of Greenland passed a law last September permitting possibly 5000 workers from China to may come to Greenland and work in a mine. This has created intense debate in Folketinget (Danish parliament) and is a main topic in today's local election in Greenland.

The delegate from Sweden referred to the latest debate on foreign affairs in the Swedish parliament which included Arctic issues.

Sweden is at the moment holding the presidency of both the Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The delegate from Finland referred to the conference on regional cooperation in the Arctic last November.

A new Arctic strategy is also being prepared by the Finnish government and it is expected to be ready before the summer.

The delegate from Norway informed about an upcoming visit from the Norwegian delegation on Arctic cooperation to Finland 8-10 April.

There has also recently been a debate in the Norwegian parliament on the role of the Arctic Council. Mr. Høglund also had a meeting with the incoming chair of the Arctic Council Ms. Leona Aglukkaq and ended by encouraging the members of the Committee to convince their respective governments to find a solution to the observer question in the upcoming Ministerial meeting in Kiruna 15 May 2013.

The representative from the West-Nordic Council informed the Committee about a report presenting the findings from the latest theme conference of the Council regarding health care.

A new conference on "common understanding of the utilization of the living resources" will take place in the South of Greenland this coming August.

## **11. NEXT MEETING OF SCPAR**

The next meeting of SCPAR will be in Svalbard 3-5 June 2013.

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.



CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

**MEETING IN WASHINGTON**

12 March 2013

**Draft list of participants**

MEMBERS

Canada                      Mr. Ryan Leef, MP  
   Mr. Dennis Bevington, MP

Ms. Shauna Troniak, Analyst, Parliamentary Information and Research Service, Library of Parliament

Denmark                      Mr. Sjúróður Skaale, MP,  
Mr. Peder Pedersen, Head of Section  
Ms. Joan Ólavsdóttir, Adviser

European Parliament              Ms. Eva Palatova, Liaison Officer



West-Nordic Council      Mr. Thordur Thorarinsson, Secretary General

University of the      Mr. Brian Rogers, Chancellor University of Alaska, Fairbanks  
Arctic                      Ms. Outi Snellman, Vice-President

SECRETARIAT      Mr. Bjørn Willy Robstad, Secretary General

GUESTS      Mr. Evan Bloom, Director of the Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs in the  
Bureau of Oceans and Environment and Science at the U.S. Department of State

Ms. Fran Ulmer, US Arctic Research Commission

Mr. Mead Treadwell, Lt. Governor, State of Alaska

Mr. Nils Andreassen, Executive Director, Institute of the North