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

Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

**Ilulissat, Greenland
May 27-28, 2009**

Report

INTRODUCTION

Peter Goldring, 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 Ilulissat, Greenland, 27, 28 May 2009. The other delegate was Mr. Robert Oliphant, M.P. Accompanying the delegation was Mr. Tim Williams from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament as advisor to the delegation.

The Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region is a parliamentary body comprising delegations appointed by the national parliaments of the 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 Eighth Conference was held in Fairbanks, Alaska, U.S.A., 12-14 August 2008.^[1]

Between conferences, Arctic parliamentary cooperation is carried on by the Standing Committee, which started 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 Arctic Council. The Standing Committee takes part in the work of the Council as an observer.^[2]

MEETING SUMMARY

The Standing Committee agreed to drop agenda item 3 (Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment – Final Report and Findings) and agenda item 6 (Implementation of the Conference Statement from Fairbanks – Cooperation with the University of the Arctic) as the speakers for these topics were unable to attend. The agenda

and the minutes from the previous meeting in Brussels, Belgium, 25 February 2009 were approved. The meeting in Brussels was held in conjunction with the First Parliamentary Forum for the Northern Dimension (25, 26 February 2006). The Standing Committee took note of the final report from the Forum.

Report from the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Tromsø and Presentation of the Program of the Danish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council

Ministers from the eight member states of the Arctic Council meet every two years. The latest meeting took place 29 April in Tromsø, Norway. The Standing Committee is an observer to the Arctic Council, and the Chair, Hill-Marta Solberg, made an intervention at the meeting. The Standing Committee was informed of the outcomes of the meeting, particularly those related to work of the Committee. In addition, the chairmanship of the Council rotates with the meetings, and the Standing Committee was given a presentation of the intentions of the new chair, Denmark.

The Chair of the Standing Committee, who was present at the Arctic Council meeting, gave a brief summary. The Ministerial meeting was preceded by a conference entitled, *Melting Ice: Regional Dramas, Global Wake-Up Call*, co-chaired by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Mr. Al Gore and Mr. Jonas Gahr Støre, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs. As the Standing Committee was told, the conference was presented with high quality up-to-date data that made it clear that the conclusions of the Arctic Council's Arctic Climate Impact Assessment^[3] were too conservative. Ice is melting far more quickly than thought in 2004 when that report was released.^[4]

The Arctic Council is currently completing an assessment entitled Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA). The full report will be completed for the next Ministerial meeting in 2011, however a part of it related specifically to the Greenland Ice Sheet was presented to the Ministers who decided to report on it at the next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (CoP 15, Copenhagen, Denmark, 7-18 December 2009).

Other decisions of note included one to establish a task force on short lived climate forcers (such as black carbon). The intervention of the Chair of the Standing Committee centered on the need for more frequent meetings of the Arctic Council in order to more effectively meet the rapid changes happening in the Arctic. The Council decided that a meeting of deputy ministers should occur in the years when there is no Ministerial meeting.

Mr. Inuuteq Holm Olsen, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Greenland Home Rule Government, then informed the Standing Committee of the program of the Kingdom of Denmark's^[5] chairmanship of the Arctic Council. The emphasis will be on human health and societal needs, a focus that was well received by the Standing Committee. The Chairmanship will focus on:

- Peoples of the Arctic;
- The International Polar Year Legacy;
- Climate Change;
- Biodiversity;
- Integrated Resource management;
- Operational Co-operation; and
- The Arctic Council in a new Geopolitical Framework.

More details of the intentions of the Kingdom of Denmark can be found in the attached draft minutes of the Standing Committee (Appendix I) and in the document entitled "The Kingdom of Denmark, Chairmanship of the Arctic Council 2009-2011."^[6]

A lively discussion ensued centred on the role of the Arctic Council and how to strengthen it in the face of increased interest in the Arctic from non-Arctic states and other bodies. The member from Sweden asked if, though the Arctic Council is always

cited as the relevant regional body for Arctic issues, whether it was really taking the lead on issues or waiting for others with money to do so.

There was agreement that the Arctic Council should take the lead, but that the treatment of observers at the Council was a delicate issue that had been deferred pending decisions on the role of observers. The delegate from Sweden responded that, with all the reports of oil and gas and other natural resources, people were looking to politicians to take the lead. With this in mind the delegate hoped that there would be greater cooperation between the Standing Committee and the Arctic Council.

The Chair of the Standing Committee intervened by stating that the Council is as strong as the Arctic Governments want to make it. It is a young body that is developing in a positive direction. She warned, however, that should it become an exclusive club for the Arctic nations that it would be weak, and that it needed to find a way to involve other countries as observers. It was noted that a similar discussion regarding the role of observers was occurring at the Standing Committee. Better dialogue with observers was seen as positive. She felt that it was in the best interest of everyone to have better contacts with other countries.

The Finnish delegate noted that it was very important for the Arctic Council to take the lead. Observers need to obtain information, but the Council must set the direction for Arctic cooperation.

The speaker noted that strengthening the Arctic Council would not happen over night but incrementally. He noted that the United States recent directive on Arctic Policy gave a lot of weight to the Arctic Council. He also stressed that the real strength of the Council was its scientific knowledge base (the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment was given as an example). He noted that Norway (the previous chair), Denmark and Sweden were cooperating on six consecutive years of chairmanship priorities.^[7]

Some of the limitations of the Arctic Council were noted after an intervention by a Canadian delegate. He applauded the general thrust of the direction of Denmark's chairmanship of the Arctic Council. As a subset of the questions being raised, he posed the question of whether or not such a vehicle was the best for advancing the needs of indigenous populations. The assumption that states were the best bodies to do this might not be correct and that discussion of self-rule, self determination and governance was important.

The speaker noted, however, that such highly political issues were outside of the scope of the mandate of the Arctic Council. The Council was established with a focus on environmental issues but had broadened this to have a more complete picture of sustainable development in the North. It was noted that the Tromsø Declaration included a paragraph recognizing the urgent need for action to support Arctic Cultures and reduce the loss of Arctic indigenous languages.

The head of the Canadian delegation also noted, within the context of the proposed European ban on seal products, that the use of language was important. He noted the use of the word "peoples" as opposed to "indigenous" or Inuit, could be a less divisive

way of referring to those whose culture needs to be protected. The European Parliament position on the seal ban refers specifically to the need to protect the fundamental economic and social interests of Inuit communities.

Since Denmark is only part of the Arctic Council as a result of Greenland, the question was raised of Greenland's role in the chairmanship. A delegate from Greenland noted that there was a perception that they had not been consulted adequately given the importance of Greenland to Denmark's role as chair.

It was noted that the chairmanship was shared between Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Denmark and that it had been developed with Greenland.

Greenlandic Home-Rule on the Basis on the New Agreement

Ms Juliane Henningsen, member of the Parliament of Greenland and of the Standing Committee gave a presentation on the "self rule" act and referendum.

She began her talk by welcoming the Standing Committee to Ilulissat, which is her home town and one that she represents in Parliament. A brief account of the election to be held on 2 June 2009^[8] was also given.

On the 25 November 2008, 72% of eligible voters voted over 75% in favour of "self-rule." Self rule is essentially a continuation of the transfer of powers from Denmark to Greenland that began with Home Rule in 1979. According to the speaker, the vote has brought joy, pride and hope for the future and that it was a clear indication that Greenlanders are ready for self-determination.

The new act was the result of hard negotiations. Up to 32 new fields of responsibility could be eventually transferred to Greenland. However, the constitution, foreign policy the Supreme Court, defence and monetary policy, among others, will remain the responsibility of Denmark. Some of the important responsibilities to be transferred, according to the speaker, include control over natural resources, aliens and border control and food regulations.

Each of the new responsibilities will be transferred only when Greenlanders agree that they are ready. In the words of Ms. Henningsen, Greenlanders will decide which fields and when they will be transferred, so that the pace of transfer will be controlled. This decision will be based largely on the financial capacity to take over the responsibility.

Financing was the result of difficult negotiation. Greenland will continue to receive stable funding of DKK 3.2 billion (CDN 679 million^[9]). Funding for transfer of powers is most likely to come from control over natural resources. The first 75 million DKK from natural resources will remain in Greenland, beyond which revenues will be split evenly between Denmark and Greenland. When the revenues accrued by Denmark match the DKK 3.2 billion transfer, negotiations will commence, though the goal of this negotiation is vague at this time.

The next step will be to decide how a new Greenlandic society can be formed. Ms. Henningsen mentioned a number of priorities including equal opportunity, access to education, expanded trade, strengthening identity, adapting to climate change and addressing the economic crisis. Greenlanders are anxious to take on more responsibility.

An article in the new act refers to Greenland's access to independence, thus the self rule act could eventually facilitate full independence. This would only occur under the act after a Greenlandic referendum on an agreement negotiated between the Danish Government and the Naalakkersuisut (Greenlandic government) consented to by the Danish Parliament and the Inatsisartut (Greenlandic Parliament). Greenland could not unilaterally declare independence under this act. As it stands, the self-rule act will eventually give powers (such as over natural resources and courts) similar to those that Canadian provinces currently have, with some other others including border control, ship regulation and food regulation.

The Chair of the Standing Committee congratulated both Greenland and Denmark governments for the successful conclusion of difficult negotiations.

The member from Sweden brought up the problem of language at higher levels of education. Greenlandic will be the language in elementary school while, acknowledging that there is a need for youth to be able to function abroad, secondary and university levels will also be taught in Danish and English.

The Icelandic representative brought up the question of the state of natural resource development in Greenland. This will be of particular importance since the funding from such development will be necessary for Greenland to take on more fields of responsibility. There are 70 active exploration licences, one or two active mines with a gold mine having been recently closed. Three to five new mines are in the planning stages but the economic crisis has slowed them down.

ALCOA is thought to be planning an aluminium smelter just north Nuuk, the capital of Greenland. It is hoped that exploration may increase with the current economic conditions facilitating cheaper operation and rental of ships. The possibility of uranium mining is being discussed but is very political. Until recently this would have been a joint decision but now will be made by Greenlanders.

It was noted that the presentation by the speaker represented the political view of one party. The question was asked as to whether or not independence was a goal in and of itself or a tool to achieve other goals. Ms. Henningsen noted that her party was known as the "independence party" but that this goal was shared by other parties and that collaboration was possible to achieve the goals of a stronger Greenland. The referendum had pointed out that Greenlanders were not shy.

The head of the Canadian delegation congratulated Greenlanders on the result, particularly the percentage of voters who voted for self rule. This resounding result was a clear endorsement of the proposal, unlike a situation where a 50% plus 1% would lead to an ambiguous mandate to move forward with the results of a referendum.

Introduction to the University of Greenland

As the Chair of the Standing Committee stated, the members are very concerned about competence and capacity building in the North, and especially the role that education plays in meeting these goals. The Committee was therefore very interested in the presentation by Ms Tine Pars, Rector of the University of Greenland, on the current status and future plans for the University.

The University is 25 years old and is currently governed by legislation passed in 2007. It has 120 employees, nine institutes and an annual budget of DKK 110 million (CDN 23 million). Of the nine institutes, school teaching and education pedagogics (87 of 120 staff) dominate.

The rector described changes coming and her vision for the University. The 9 institutes will be reduced to three to try and take advantage of more synergies and develop cooperation. The University will also be introducing research-based professional bachelor degrees. One of the challenges that has been faced is to keep students in university until completion. The university graduates, on average, approximately 9 bachelors students each year and 4 masters level students. This has been identified as a key challenge to be addressed.

The rector would like the university to be renowned for Inuit Studies, climate issues, resource management and development issues for indigenous peoples. However, the budget will likely be reduced in the future rather than being increased. Funding is therefore also a priority. Fund raising and renewed negotiations with the Greenlandic government as well as more international cooperation and perhaps European Union research money will be part of the strategy to look for new funding opportunities.

During discussion it was noted that the University was not a part of the University of the Arctic. It costs money to join, but there could be rewards as well. The rector was asked if there were any formal agreements with other Nordic universities. There are formal agreements with all Danish universities but no others. It was perceived that having too many small institutions at the University was an impediment to drawing other universities into agreements.

A Canadian delegate suggested that language programs such as interpretation and linguistics might be important. Language is very important and the chair is very interested in it. It would not be so much about learning Greenlandic, but about the language, such as creating words for new terminology.

The member from Iceland asked about opportunities at the university, as reflected in the graduating class. There are currently many more women than men. The Rector believes that information and communication technology could be used to a greater extent and that it should be a strength of the university.

It was also noted that it must be difficult to keep students in Greenland once they had graduated. The University did not know how many students remained in Greenland following graduation.

Preparations for the Arctic Conference in 2010 in the European Parliament

The secretariat of the Standing Committee, consisting of the support staff of each delegation, met in advance of the Standing Committee meeting to discuss possible topics for discussion and introduced six topics for discussion. At the Standing Committee, it was noted by one delegate that there should be no more than three topics in order to help focus the Conference and allow for plenty of discussion and debate.

The Standing Committee was very supportive of the topic of the use of living resources (fish, seals, whales), particularly in the context of how it relates to the quality of life for the peoples of the Arctic region. The Standing Committee was also supportive, as it has been in the past, of the issues of the International Polar Year, education and capacity building, as it was thought that an integration of these topics could form the basis of interesting discussion. Since the IPY is now finished, the focus would be on the legacy of IPY and how this can be used to improve education and capacity building in the north.

Two other related topics that are of ongoing interest were also discussed. Governance issues such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, strengthening the Arctic Council and the relevance and effectiveness of multilateral environmental agreements were of particular interest. The head of the Canadian Delegation intervened to give support to bringing forward the issue of UNCLOS claims to an extended continental shelf. Increased accessibility of Arctic waters to maritime transport has many associated issues such as safety and the development of new regulations to govern arctic maritime traffic.

The timing of the Conference was of concern since, in the past, it had been held in close proximity to the Ministerial meetings of the Arctic Council so as to maximise the impact of the Conference statement on Ministerial commitments. The Arctic Council has changed the timing of its meetings to the spring from the fall. The Standing Committee still believes that August/September is the best time for the Conference, but that a meeting with the Arctic Council early in the year of a Ministerial meeting will be essential to ensure parliamentary input into Arctic Council is fresh in the minds of governments of the Arctic Council. A suggested time for the next Conference, to be hosted by the European Parliament, is early September 2010.

Discussion on the “Rules of Procedure” of SCPAR

The Rules of Procedure were a topic of discussion at the meeting of the Standing Committee in Brussels, 25-26 February 2009. There were two topics of interest: the election of a vice chair to help with the work of the Standing Committee, particularly for engagements between meetings; and how to better involve observers to the Standing Committee into its work.

It was decided to elect a vice chair at the next meeting of the Standing Committee. Observers will be invited to a special meeting the day before the next Conference.

Appointment of Rapporteurs in SCPAR

The Standing Committee has used rapporteurs in the past, namely for the issue of human health in the Arctic. It was thought that this had been successful at bringing focus to certain issues. Ms Juliane Henningsen, was name rapporteur on the subject of climate change.

Status of the Work of SCPAR

Delegates were invited to report on their country's work with respect to SCPAR. See the attached draft minutes (Appendix 1) for a summary of interventions. The head of the Canadian delegation made an intervention focusing on the issue of the European Union ban on seal products and the UNLCOS procedure for delineating the extended continental shelf (Appendix II).

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Standing Committee will take place in Helsinki, Finland, 19 November 2009. The day before the meeting a workshop will be held on the procedure of the UNCLOS delineation of the extended continental shelf.

Any Other Business

The Committee was informed of a conference on human health that will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark in early November 2009. Members were invited as a matter of interest rather than an official Standing Committee event.

New Leadership of SCPAR

Ms Hill-Marta Solberg, who has been chair of the Standing Committee for a number of years, will no longer be a parliamentarian as of the 14 September 2009 election in Norway, the result of a decision not to stand for reelection. As such, Ms. Solberg will no longer chair or be a member of the Committee. Mr. Hannes Manninen (Finland) was nominated and elected as the new chair for the period leading up to the next Conference in 2010.

RODEBAY, GREENLAND

In keeping with the Standing Committee's focus on the human dimension of the Arctic (living conditions of peoples of the Arctic region), members travelled for a site visit to Rodebay, Greenland, a fishing village in the middle of Disko Bay 18 km from Ilulissat and accessible only by boat or foot, to learn more about the problems faced there and how challenges are being overcome.

Rodebay is a small fishing village, like so many others in the Arctic, which is struggling to survive. It is a village of 50 inhabitants with approximately 200 working dogs which are used to haul fish. The Committee was informed of the various ways by which Rodebay has so far succeeded in maintaining a vibrant community.

Fishing is still the main industry. A small factory has been established that uses a special drying method, developed locally, for halibut. The industry has established itself

as a unique enterprise with consistent demand for its product. In addition, the natural surroundings are being used as a draw for tourists. A group of people from Ilulissat has helped to purchase a number of buildings that have been turned into a restaurant and a number of hostel-like accommodations.

During the site visit, Dr. Dorte Dahl-Jensen, a key member of the Danish scientific team tasked with producing the Climate Change and the Greenland Ice Sheet portion of the Arctic Council's SWIPA project that will be presented to the CoP 15 in Copenhagen, gave a presentation on the Greenland Ice Sheet. In addition, Lene Kielsen Holm, who is a native of Greenland and a member of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, gave a presentation on her work discovering how the Inuit people have adapted their lives and culture to fit their harsh and changing climate.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P.
Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

^[1] The Conference report is available at: <http://www.arcticparl.org/announcements.aspx?id=3319>

^[2] Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, <http://www.arcticparl.org/> accessed 6 December 2007

^[3] The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment is available at <http://www.acia.uaf.edu/>

^[4] Co-Chair's Summary, *Melting Ice: Regional Dramas, Global Wake-Up Call* Tromsø, 28 April 2009, http://arctic-council.org/workarea/agenda_tromso_meeting_april_2009/filearchive/co-chair_summary_melting_ice_conference.pdf

^[5] Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands

^[6] http://arctic-council.org/workarea/agenda_tromso_meeting_april_2009/filearchive/chair-013-240209-program-final.pdf

^[7] Arctic Council, "Norwegian, Danish, Swedish common objectives for their Arctic Council chairmanships 2006-2012," http://arctic-council.org/article/2007/11/common_priorities

^[8] Ms. Henningsen noted that her party, Inuit Ataqatigiit, a "leftwing" party with eventual Greenlandic independence from Denmark as part of its platform, was doing well in the polls. The party won the election with over 43% of the vote.

^[9] Universal Currency Converter, <http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi>, 17 June 200

Appendix I

CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

MEETING IN ILULISSAT

27 MAY 2009

Venue: Hotel Arctic, Ilulissat

Time: 09.00

Draft minutes

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

APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE SCPAR-MEETING IN BRUSSELS 25 FEBRUARY 2009

The Chair informed the Committee of two changes in the agenda. Agenda item 3 and 6 will be removed as the speakers were not able to attend the meeting.

Decision:

The Committee adopted the agenda and the proposed order of agenda items with the changes presented by the Chair, approved the minutes from the SCPAR-meeting in Brussels 25 February 2009, and took note of the report from the First Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum.

2. REPORT FROM THE ARCTIC COUNCIL MINISTERIAL MEETING IN TROMSØ AND PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAM OF THE DANISH CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL

Ms Solberg informed the Committee about her speech at the AC-meeting focusing on the need for more political involvement in the Arctic Council and more frequent ministerial meetings. She also informed the Committee of the seminar on climate change hosted by Mr. Støre and Mr. Gore.

Mr. Inuuteq Holm Olsen, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Greenland Home Rule Government, presented the program for the Danish chairmanship (Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands) of the Arctic Council.

The peoples of the Arctic will be a priority during the chairmanship. This includes addressing environmental protection, human health, and sustainable use of resources as well as serving societal needs relating to environmental, social, economic and cultural development.

Climate change will also be a major focus of the chairmanship. An Arctic Council project dealing with Snow, Water, Ice, and Permafrost in the Arctic will be finalized in 2011, but a preliminary report on the Greenland Ice sheet will be presented as an Arctic Council contribution to the 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen in December of this year.

The International Polar Year, which started in 2007, has just been concluded. The Chairmanship will work to secure the legacy of the IPY – not only to further strengthening of data collection and scientific cooperation, but also to enable scientists, policy makers and indigenous peoples in the Arctic to continue to work together to address and understand the issues that are of importance to our lives and environment.

The active participation and involvement in the decision-making process of the peoples that are being affected by the decisions is important. Therefore the peoples of the Arctic will retain a prominent role during the chairmanship. Greenland will as chair of the sustainable development working group focus on human health. The state of health especially among indigenous peoples in the Arctic is an issue that needs to be addressed through increased cooperation. The life expectancy among peoples in the Arctic are in many places way below national averages due to the change in lifestyles, which have resulted in increasing obesity, in diabetes, and cancer. There is also a very high suicide rates primarily among the young people. The chairmanship will work to strengthen the cooperation in research, monitoring and capacity building activities among others through the newly established Arctic Human Health Expert Group comprised of health professionals from all the Arctic countries.

With the increased maritime traffic in the region, there is a corresponding need to be able to respond to emergencies and disasters. Dealing with issues like Search and Rescue and emergency response becomes vital in the future maritime traffic as the ice recedes. The chairmanship will continue to support operational cooperation between the Arctic states on preparedness and prevention, and work within existing frameworks and International Maritime Organization to make regulations for shipping in the Arctic mandatory. Such regulations will address issues like ship safety, requirements for ship construction, equipment, training and pollution prevention.

2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity. The Arctic Council will produce an Arctic Highlight Report in 2010, which is hoped to be an important contribution to the International Biodiversity Year. In light of the climatic changes taking place with regard

to biodiversity, it becomes important to secure long term monitoring that will provide us with valuable information on status and trends. Full attention will be given to secure and facilitate implementation of the Arctic Council's Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program.

The increased interest is fuelled by the opportunities and challenges of climate change as well as potentially undiscovered reserves of oil and gas and minerals. The Arctic Council must safeguard the interest of the indigenous peoples, and respond to these new challenges the increased international interest sparks. Securing that the Arctic Council, its permanent participants and member states remains the regional body working for the interest of its nations and peoples will be of utmost importance during the chairmanship. Those who wish to engage the Council in closer cooperation will have to respect the roots and help promote sustainable development for the peoples of the Arctic, rather than creating obstacles to the cultural and economic survival.

There was a general understanding in the Committee that the chairmanship program is promising and looks good. The focus on people and the human dimension is important.

There was a discussion about the role of the Arctic Council. The Arctic Council needs to be strengthened and should be the leading regional body for cooperation in the North. But one should also to realize the limitations of the Arctic Council. An issue like self-determination is not as such a topic for the Arctic Council.

The Danish chairmanship will continue to work on how the observers shall be included in the cooperation. Some members of the Committee pointed at the need to be an open organisation and involve non-Arctic actors in the work of the Council. Other members pointed at the big natural resources in the Arctic and underlined that the Arctic states must take the lead in the development and take the main responsibility for a sustainable development of the Arctic region. We need to involve the observers to exchange information. A strengthened Arctic Council is important when the interest from the outside world is increasing.

The importance of close cooperation with the parliamentarians was underlined, and Mr. Niels Sindal informed the Committee of that the Foreign minister from Denmark wants to meet with the parliamentarians to discuss Arctic matters.

The chairmanship program was developed in close cooperation between Denmark and Greenland. This will also be the situation when executing the program.

A special effort will be made to over look all the reports produced by the Arctic Council and figure out what we know and where there are possible gaps of knowledge.

An important feature of the Arctic Council is that its work is based on scientific reports. This will and must continue.

Finally there will be an Arctic message at the COP 15 as Denmark is having the chairmanship of the Arctic Council and host of the conference. A report on Greenlandic ice cap will be presented, and there will be other Arctic side events as well.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

3. ARCTIC MARINE SHIPPING ASSESSMENT – FINAL REPORT AND FINDINGS

The item was taken off the agenda

4. GREENLANDIC HOME-RULE ON THE BASIS ON THE NEW AGREEMENT

Ms Juliane Henningsen presented the new agreement between Denmark and Greenland on self rule for Greenland.

Ms Henningsen welcomed the Committee to her hometown, Ilulissat and started by informing the Committee on the upcoming elections in Greenland the 2 June. Her party, Inuit Ataqatigiit, is doing well in the polls.

The Denmark-Greenland self rule commission reached an agreement last year and the agreement was adopted in a referendum 25 November 2008. The people in Greenland voted overwhelmingly in favour to go from home-rule to self-rule. Almost 72 percent of the electorate voted. 75.5 percent of the electorate voted 'yes'. The agreement will enter into force 21 June 2009, and has broad support in both Denmark and Greenland.

Ms. Henningsen paid tribute to the Danish contribution to find a new agreement which entails that Greenland can take over another 30 fields of responsibility. When Greenland assumes responsibility of an area they have to finance it themselves. This will create better accordance between rights and obligations.

The sharing of revenues from natural resources between Denmark and Greenland has been settled. Greenland will receive the first 75 million DKK from any revenues from mineral resources. Then the revenues will be shared between Denmark and Greenland until Greenland has paid off half of the annual block grant of 3.2 billion Greenland receives from Denmark.

The new agreement also include wording on future full independence for Greenland.

Greenlandic will be the official language and the Greenlandic people will be accepted as a people under international law.

The great challenge will now will be how they want to form the future Greenlandic society with the new freedom to manage their own affairs.

Members of the Committee congratulated Greenland and Denmark for reaching an agreement.

A question was raised to know what the language situation in schools will be after the 21 June.

Greenlandic will be the basic language in elementary schools, but Danish, English and Greenlandic will all be present in the higher education system.

The Committee wanted more information about exploration of the natural resources.

About 70 exploration licenses have been given and 3-5 new mines are planned to open. The process has slowed down because of the financial crises. Alcoa is negotiating to open an aluminium smelter North of Nuuk with Greenlandic authorities.

Oil licences has been issued and they will start test drilling next summer just outside Disco bay.

There is also a debate in Greenland if they are to exploit uranium.

Ms Juliane Henningsen confirmed that full independence from Denmark is a long term political goal for her party.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

5. INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GREENLAND

Ms. Tine Pars, Rector of the University of Greenland informed the Committee about current status and future plans for the university.

Established in 1984 the University of Greenland has 120 employees, 9 institutes and a budget of 110 million DKK from the Greenlandic government. The money is mainly spent on teaching, not research.

The university offers education in teaching, social work, nursing, journalism, culture and sociology, language, literature and media, theology, and administration.

Since 1996 the university has produced 50 academic candidates (master), 3, 8 yearly, and 115 bachelors, 8, 8 yearly, which is too little. It is a big challenge to get the students through university.

Ms Pars wish to establish masters' degrees in law, economy and pedagogic psychology. She wants to improve the cooperation with other universities outside of Greenland. The cooperation with universities in Denmark is good, with exchange of teachers and students.

Members of the Committee noted that the University is not a member of the University of the Arctic.

Ms Pars expects closer cooperation with UArctic in the future.

On question from the Committee Ms Pars informed that there are about 400 students at the University and that there are no formal agreements with any universities outside of Denmark. She underlined the need for more internationalisation.

It is not a problem to get EU-grants even though Greenland is not a member of the EU. The University is exploring the possibilities to get more financial support from EU. So far the University hasn't looked for financial support and cooperation with private companies, as the focus has been on keeping an independent university.

The teaching of languages is important and also research on how to use the Greenlandic language in new and scientific terminology.

Ms Pars agreed that it is important with life-long learning and that the university also needs to work more on that topic. There are more women than men studying at the university, and the use of Information and Communication Technology is not as good as it should be.

There are over 500 from Greenland studying in Denmark and the Ms Pars was not aware of the number returning to Greenland after finishing university.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE STATEMENT FROM FAIRBANKS – COOPERATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

The item was taken off the agenda.

7. PREPARATIONS FOR THE ARCTIC CONFERENCE IN 2010 IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The secretary general presented the following possible topics:

1. The legacy of the IPY, research and education
2. Governance of the Arctic
3. Maritime transportation
4. Sustainable use of (living) resources in the Arctic

There should not be more the three different topics discussed at the conference.

The members of the Committee reiterated the importance of remembering the human dimension when choosing the topics.

Sustainable use of the living resources in the Arctic received much support in the committee. Research and education, combined with the follow-up of the IPY also received broad support. Then maritime policy and Arctic governance were mentioned as good topics.

The secretariat was given the task to prepare a draft program based on the discussion before the next meeting in the Committee. This should take place in close cooperation with the European Parliament.

The timing of the Conference was also discussed. The ministerial meeting has been moved from fall to spring, but the Committee still is of the opinion that August/September is the best time to arrange the conference. The Standing Committee should however have a meeting with the Arctic Council where the Committee highlights the results from the last conference. The meeting should take place in the beginning of the New Year, the same year as the ministerial meeting.

Decision:

The Committee suggests to the European Parliament to arrange the conference in September 2010.

8. DISCUSSION ON THE “RULES OF PROCEDURE” OF SCPAR

The Committee continued the discussion on the “Rules of procedure” from the previous meetings in Brussels and Östersund. The Committee decided to invite the observers to a separate meeting in advance of the next conference in the European Parliament.

The Committee also decided to change the “Rules of procedure” in order to elect a Vice-Chair in the Committee. The election of a Vice-Chair could take place at the next meeting of SCPAR.

Decision:

The Committee will hold a separate meeting with the observers to CPAR in advance of the conference in 2010. The Committee decided to change the “Rules of Procedure” to be able to elect a Vice-Chair of SCPAR.

9. APPOINTMENT OF RAPORTEURS IN SCPAR

The Committee discussed the use of rapporteurs.

Decision:

The Committee appoints Ms Juliane Henningsen as rapporteur on climate change.

10. STATUS OF THE WORK OF SCPAR

Mr. Kari P. Højgaard, Chairman of the West-Nordic Council, informed the Committee about the conference “Educational Opportunities for Unskilled Workers” which will take place in Greenland 4th to 7th of August, and invited SCPAR to participate.

Mr. Højgaard further reiterated the recommendation from the West-Nordic Council Annual Meeting last year, to ensure sustainable utilisation of all living resources; birds, fish and mammals. The West-Nordic Council is therefore very disappointed with the decision of the European Parliament to ban trade of seal products in the European Union. The ban threatens the traditional lifestyle of indigenous peoples and other northern peoples.

Mr. Højgaard referred to an Editorial in the Economist May 14, accusing the European parliament for being hypocritical when banning trade of seal products, but not addressing internal animal welfare issues.

Finally Mr. Højgaard questioned the European Union’s role in shaping Arctic policies when they show a total lack of understanding of the Arctic and many of its inhabitant’s way of living, their culture and identity.

Mr. Peter Goldring, Canada, informed the Committee of two parliamentary committees’ reports with recommendations for Arctic policy; regarding the use of the Coast Guard to protect Canada’s interests, and the need for involvement of the people of the North in decision-making.

The Canadian government has developed a Northern Strategy that integrates many policy areas and rests on four pillars:

- protecting environmental heritage;
- promoting economic and social development;
- exercising sovereignty; and
- improving and devolving governance.

There are many difficulties faced by the peoples of Canada's North, 50% of whom are Inuit, First Nations or Métis. Canada's Northern Strategy is focused on addressing these difficulties and improving the economic and social welfare of northerners. Canada therefore deeply regrets the recent adoption of a ban on seal products by the European Union, which will make life worse, rather than better, for our northern communities. Canada is strongly opposed to the ban and has pledged that it will fight it at the World Trade Organization.

Mr. Goldring expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in Tromsø. At the Arctic Council meeting, Canada announced that it will be opening a Canadian International Centre for the Arctic region in Oslo, Norway.

Mr. Hannes Manninen, Finland, reported of regular meetings in the Finnish delegation where they receive reports from the Finnish representatives in the Arctic Council. Recently they have many issues regarding the future of the Northern areas – especially the Barents area. This is a good way of working nationally.

Ms Sinikka Bohlin, Sweden, informed the Committee of the three seminars on the Arctic arranged in the Swedish parliament. This has taken place in good cooperation with the Swedish IPY-committee. The seminars have been very well attended.

The day in advance of the Nordic Council session in Sweden (26 October 2009), an environmental meeting will take place in the Swedish parliament. The objective will be to give parliamentary input to the COP 15 in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Ms Hill-Marta Solberg, Norway, informed about the government paper on the development of the Spitsbergen Islands, which will be debated in the parliament before it closes for the summer.

The Arctic and the High North is still a top priority of the Norwegian government and the dialogue with Russia has been very good.

Ms Gudfridur Lilja Gretarsdottir, Iceland, said that even though the country has been severely hit by the crises, it is still alive and kicking.

The national election in the end of April resulted in a change of government. The Left-Green movement went from 9 to 14 seats and has formed a government together with the Social Democratic Alliance.

There are 43 % women in the new parliament. The new Arctic policy in the parliament is getting increasingly important, together with subjects as maritime safety and pollution. There are many opportunities in the future Arctic, but the ban of seal products in the European Union is wrong. Ms Gretarsdottir stopped by thanking the Faroe Island in their help during the crises.

Mr. Vasily Usoltsev, Russia, reported on the activities in the Russian parliament, especially social dimension. The impact of the financial crises has hit Russia. The decreasing demand and sinking prices for mineral resources gives lower income to the ministries. A program to fight the crises in the North has been established.

Improving the legislation for the indigenous peoples in Northern Russia is an ongoing process. In the territories where the indigenous peoples live, special legislation, such as tax relief for the indigenous people, to improve the living situation for the living conditions.

Mr. Usoltsev predicted that the interest in the Arctic from the non-Arctic states will decrease as the prices of natural resources is decreasing and makes it is less profitable to do business there.

Ms. Eva Jejlid, Saami Parliamentary Council, informed about the election to the Saami Parliament in Sweden. The election didn't bring big changes, and the new parliament will meet in August to discuss the results.

There will be an election to the Saami Parliament in Norway in connection with the national Norwegian election September 14.

Mr. Henrik Olsen, European Parliament, informed about the upcoming elections 4-7 June 2009.

A debate on governance of the Arctic in the European Parliament was postponed.

The current development of the new Arctic policy in the EU is unclear at the moment. The Swedish presidency needs to take it further.

11. NEXT MEETING

Decision:

The next meeting of SCPAR will be in Helsinki 19 November 2009 with a workshop the day in advance.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair informed the Committee of a possible meeting on human health in Copenhagen in the beginning of November. The Committee is positive to the idea and leaves it to each member to decide whether or not to participate.

Decision:

The Secretary General stays in contact with the AC chairmanship to explore the further opportunities.

13. NEW LEADERSHIP OF SCPAR

The Chair of SCPAR Ms Hill-Marta Solberg is not running for re-election in the national election in Norway 14 September 2009. The meeting in Ilulissat was her last meeting in SCPAR.

Mr. Hannes Manninen was proposed as the new Chair of SCPAR until the next conference of Arctic parliamentarians in 2010.

Decision:

The Committee unanimously elected Mr. Hannes Manninen as Chair of SCPAR until the CPAR in 2010.

CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION
THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

MEETING IN ILULISSAT
27 May 2009

Draft

List of participants

MEMBERS

Canada

Mr. Peter Goldring, MP

Mr. Robert Oliphant, MP

Dr. Tim Williams, Science and Technology
Division, Parliamentary Information and Research
Service

Denmark

Ms. Juliane Henningsen, MP

Mr. Peder H. Pedersen, Adviser

Ms. Jonna Sandø

EP

Mr. Henrik Olsen, Principal Administrator, Inter-
Parliamentary Relations

Finland

Mr. Hannes Manninen, MP

Mr. Guy Lindström, Deputy Director

Iceland

Ms. Gudfridur Lilja Gretarsdottir, MP

Ms. Arna Bang, Adviser

Norway

Ms. Hill-Marta Solberg, MP

Russia

Mr. Vasily Usoltsev, MP

Mrs. Irina Kuzmina, Secretary

Mrs. Valentina Anufrieva - expert

Sweden

Ms Sinikka Bohlin, MP

Ms Eva Hjelm, Senior Officer

PERMANENT PARTICIPANTS

Saami Parliamentary

Ms Eva Jejlid, Saami

Parliamentary Councill

OBSERVERS

West-Nordic Council

Mr. Kári P. Højgaard, President of the West-Nordic Council, MP from the Faeroe Islands

Mr. Thordur Thorarinsson, Secretary General

Nordic Council

Mr. **Niels Sindal**, MP, Denmark

GUESTS

Mr. Inuuteq Holm Olsen, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greenland

Ms Tine Pars, Rector, University of Greenland,

Ms Dorthe Dahl-Jensen, Professor, the University of Copenhagen

Ms Lene Kielsen Holm, ICC, Greenland

Mr. Per Rosing Petersen, MP, Greenlandic parliament

Ms Ruth Heilman, Speaker, Greenlandic parliament

SECRETARIAT

Mr. Bjørn Willy Robstad, Secretary General

Appendix II

SPEAKING NOTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION, ILULISSAT GREENLAND,

27 MAY 2009: AGENDA ITEM 10 – STATUS OF THE WORK OF SCPAR

Canada has always been an Arctic Nation and power. The Arctic is central to our identity and our future. However, with the rapid changes occurring there and international interest increasing in the Arctic, from both Arctic and non-Arctic countries, Canada's Parliament and government are increasingly seized with the challenges of our North.

Just recently two parliamentary committees released reports with recommendations for Arctic policy; regarding the use of the Coast Guard to protect Canada's interests,⁽¹¹⁾ and the need for involvement of the people of the North in decision-making.⁽¹²⁾ Other parliamentary Committees are actively pursuing issues related to Canada's North, including the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence.

Each of these Committees has a mandate to study specific aspects of Canadian policy. The government, however, which has also placed the Arctic on its list of priorities, has developed a Northern Strategy that integrates many policy areas and rests on four pillars:

- protecting environmental heritage;
- promoting economic and social development;
- exercising sovereignty; and
- improving and devolving governance.

I know that James Bezan, who was at the last meeting of this committee, gave a detailed description of this Strategy, so I won't repeat everything he said, but I would like to stress some important aspects.

As you know from your own experiences, and as this Committee has often discussed, there are a great many difficulties faced by the peoples of Canada's North, 50% of whom are Inuit, First Nations or Métis. Canada's Northern Strategy is focussed on addressing these difficulties and improving the economic and social welfare of northerners. Canada, in particular its northern population, is putting a great deal of effort into improving living standards in the North. Canada therefore deeply regrets the recent adoption of a ban on seal products by the European Union, which will make life worse, rather than better, for our northern communities.

Many remote northern communities depend on the hunt for a significant part of their income. The Inuit and other indigenous peoples hunt the seal for all the resources it provides, including the skin, which they can sell to supplement their limited incomes. A

ban, even with exemptions for Inuit and other indigenous peoples, will destroy any market for seal products and will significantly impact all communities, including the Inuit, which have long-term cultural and economic ties to the hunting of seals. Canada is strongly opposed to the ban and has pledged that it will fight it at the World Trade Organisation. Meanwhile, communities around the circumpolar North, not just in Canada, will suffer.

On a more positive note, Canada is pleased with the outcome of the April Arctic Council Ministerial meeting. The implementation of the Ministerial recommendations in the Tromsø Declaration, many stemming from the valuable assessments of the Council, will help greatly to address many of the challenges in the Arctic. (I note in particular the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment and subsequent recommendations to make aspects of the IMO Guidelines mandatory, something that the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region has also called for⁽¹³⁾). Engagement at the Arctic Council is a cornerstone of Canada's foreign policy.

In addition, at the Arctic Council meeting, Canada announced that it will be opening a Canadian International Centre for the Arctic region in Oslo, Norway. The Centre will enhance Canada's ability to promote Canadian interests, influence key partners and better understand emerging issues.

Regarding what might be termed sovereignty issues, Canada recognizes that, among the generally agreed upon jurisdictions of the Arctic, there are still some small points of contention. Canada is, however, satisfied that there is an international process in place for dealing with these issues, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. As stated in the Ilulissat

Declaration, Canada "remains committed to this legal framework and to the orderly settlement of any possible overlapping claims." The application of UNLCOS is very much of interest to Canadian parliamentarians and, given the media attention, the Canadian public. I therefore very much look forward to the next meeting of this Committee in Helsinki, Finland, where a workshop on this subject will be held.

⁽¹¹⁾ The Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, *Rising to the Arctic Challenge: Report on the Canadian Coast Guard*, May 2009.

⁽¹²⁾ Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, *With Respect, Canada's North*, May 2009.

⁽¹³⁾ See Fairbanks Statement, paragraph 10: Ask governments in the Arctic Region, the Arctic Council and the institutions of the European Union: Regarding development of an Arctic maritime policy for safety at sea, to:

10. Take an active role in updating the "Guidelines for Ships Operating in Ice-covered Waters" within the International Maritime Organisation, and making these guidelines mandatory.

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region
DESTINATION	Ilulissat, Greenland
DATES	May 27-28, 2009
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P. Mr. Robert Oliphant, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Tim Williams, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 21,366.25
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 3,931.10
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,659.63
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 31.79
TOTAL	\$ 26,988.77