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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation
at the Fourth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum
and the meeting of the Standing Committee
of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region**

Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

**Reykjavik, Iceland
May 10-12, 2015**

Report

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Dennis Bevington, M.P., attended the meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region¹ (SCPAR) held in Reykjavik, Iceland, 12 May 2015. The meeting of SCPAR was held in conjunction with the Fourth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum² (NDPF), 10-11 May 2015.

FOURTH NORTHERN DIMENSION PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

After the welcoming remarks of Mr. Einar Guofinnsson, Speaker of the Icelandic Parliament, the President of Iceland, Mr. Olafur Ragnar Grissom addressed the forum participants. He highlighted the importance of the roles that parliamentarians play in their respective legislatures in this era of early stages of Arctic cooperation. The current cooperation spirit among Arctic nations represents a great change from the conflictual Cold War's militarization period.

The work of the NDPF was divided into four sessions.

- Development of the Policy of the Northern Dimension;
- Green Energy Opportunities and Challenges;
- Sustainable Utilization of Marine Resources in the North; and
- Gender Equality and Social Well-Being.

A. Development of the Policy of the Northern Dimension

The following participants addressed the forum:

- Mr. Gunnar Bradi Sveinsson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iceland;
- Mr. Jorn Dohrmann, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the Delegation for Relations with Switzerland and Norway, and of the Delegation to the EU-Iceland Joint Parliamentary Committee and the European Economic Area (EEA) Joint Parliamentary Committee;
- Mr. Eirik Sivertsen, Member of the Norwegian Parliament, and Chair of SCPAR; and

¹ Background information on the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (CPAR) and its Standing Committee (SCPAR) is available at <http://arcticparl.org/committee.aspx>

² Fourth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum: <http://baltasam.org/en/1544-4th-northern-dimension-parliamentary-forum>

- Mr. Georgy Karlov, Member of the Russian State Duma, Committee on Natural Resources and the Environment.

The speakers underlined the importance of partnerships among members of the Northern Dimension. These partnerships would take world-level's goals related to environmental protection and resource development down to the regional level details. They also called for greater cooperation on green energy development.

Mr. Karlov indicated that there are no unresolvable conflicts in the Arctic. Russia is open to Arctic cooperation and has developed a program for the Arctic, funded until 2020. Its priorities are economic development, environmental protection and social well-being. Russia called for EU sanctions related to the conflict in Ukraine to be discontinued in order to facilitate new Arctic cooperation projects.

A report on three partnership working groups: environment, cultures and transport, and logistics, was also presented.

B. Green Energy-Opportunities and Challenges.

Mr. Dennis Bevington moderated the discussion in which Mr. Eirikur Hjalmarsson, Head of Communications, Reykjavik Energy, and Ms. Helga Ogmundardottir, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Iceland, took part.

Discussions centered on rights issues around energy utilization and deployment. Human rights to affordable non-polluting energy were also debated. Iceland was cast as a model where green energy is supplied to all homes and businesses through the actions of the State. Although initial costs were very high, the end result has been worth it. The concept of the democratization of energy was discussed. Barriers included vested interests, political and legal inertia, and prevailing perceptions and traditions.

C. Sustainable Utilization of Marine Resources in the North

The panel consisted of Mr. Johann Sigurjonsson, Director General, Marine Research Institute; Mr. Steingrimur Jonsson, Professor of Physical Oceanography at the University of Akureyri, and Dr. Julian Burgos, Marine Research Institute, Marine Environment Sector, Benthic Ecology Group.

Discussion ranged from a presentation on fisheries management in northern oceans to science and impacts of harvest strategies in northern oceans. Fisheries effects on coral growth in locations between Iceland and Greenland have led to fishing restrictions in certain zones. Greater cooperation was called for in understanding and mitigating effects of fisheries on marine resources in Arctic waters.

D. Gender Equality and Social Well-Being

Ms. Marju Lauristin, Member of the European Parliament, Estonia, moderated this fourth session with the participation of Mr. Hoskuldur Porhallsson, President of the Nordic Council and Member of the Icelandic Parliament, Dr. Giedre Purvaneckiene, President of the Baltic Assembly and former Associate Professor at Vilnius University, Lithuania, and Mr. Auour Ingolfsson, Assistant Professor of Social Sciences, Bifrost University, Iceland.

This session focused on gender equality issues in Baltic nations. A philosophical discussion also took place on the nature of male dominated imagery of northern development.

Following the two days discussions, a Conference Statement was adopted. This Statement includes an amendment proposed by Canada to the Green Energy section (Annex 1).

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

On 12 May 2015, the meeting of SCPAR took place. Following the adoption of the agenda for this meeting and minutes of the meeting of 10 March 2015, in Washington, D.C., the following items were discussed.

A. Arctic Policy of Iceland and Outcome of the 2015 Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Iqaluit

Mr. Stefan Haukur Johannesson, Permanent Secretary of State, Iceland, presented the Icelandic Arctic policy to the Committee as well as the main conclusions of the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, held in Iqaluit on 24 April 2015. Topics discussed by Mr. Johannesson included a plan for prevention of oil pollution in Arctic waters, a framework for black carbon and methane emission reduction, and marine protected areas networks.

The Secretary of State outlined the main actions of the Arctic Council under the Canadian Chairmanship, and the three priorities of the U.S. Chairmanship program: Arctic Ocean stewardship, climate change and improving Arctic living conditions.

He also mentioned the gender equality report, which came out of Iceland's efforts at the Arctic Council.

Questions from the Canadian delegate on security versus cooperation elicited a response that there is a complete consensus that the Arctic should remain a zone of cooperation involving all Arctic states.

On the Arctic policy of Iceland, Mr. Johannesson noted that the policy from 2011 was adopted by consensus in Parliament. The Secretary of State laid out a number of priorities for Iceland:

- Promote and strengthen the Arctic Council;
- Secure Iceland's position as an Arctic Coastal State;
- Resolve differences on Arctic issues based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);
- Develop greater and closer cooperation with Faroe Islands and Greenland;
- Support the rights of Indigenous peoples who need support and direct involvement on a regional basis; and
- Open consulates in Greenland and in Faroe Islands.

The Secretary of State mentioned that a comprehensive report on the Arctic is being prepared and will be launched in October 2015. He added that Iceland has reached an agreement with the Faroe Islands on free trade and is discussing with Greenland to get a similar agreement. He went on to underline the importance of cooperation in research and in sharing research results. Mr. Johannesson also emphasized the need for increased cooperation on Search and Rescue (SAR) issues and indicated that Iceland aims at becoming a hub for SAR in the Arctic.

B. Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

Mr. Hugi Olafsson, Chair of PAME Working Group, made a presentation. He stated that 70% of the Arctic is oceanic, a truly unique environment. He outlined PAME's work plan established for 2015-17. The plan focus is on Arctic Ocean shipping safety, increasing resource utilization, security and stewardship. There are expert groups on shipping, ecosystem management and offshore oil and gas development.

Regarding marine protected areas, the plan will assess existing recognized areas. A progress report on the use of an ecosystem approach along with a Systems Safety Management and Safety Culture Report will be delivered.

The Canadian delegate asked whether there was any work being done on the impact of ice breaking on the environment and traditional harvesting. The answer was negative.

A Canadian will take over the chairmanship of PAME for the next two years.

C. Presentation of the Second Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR)

Dr. Niels Einarsson, Director of the Stefansson Arctic Institute, presented the Second Arctic Human Development Report which updated the 2004 report. The Second Report

identified changes and trends in the Arctic, and outlined the importance to learn about the peoples and cultures of the Arctic.

The report found that the population in the Arctic has stabilized around four millions. It is a region with high costs of living and experiencing increased tourism and natural resources development activities. There are also growing devolutionary pressures coming from regions towards central governments.

Low levels of educational achievement persist in the Arctic, and human health is a major concern. Direct and indirect effects of climate change, food safety, cost of living and mental health issues are dominating issues. Resource governance is also growing in complexity and, with globalization, there is increased pressure for resource development activities. Finally, this Second Report followed up on well-being issues of young people in the context of rapid changes in society and the environment.

D. Fulbright Cooperation in the Arctic

Ms. Belinda Theriault, Executive Director of the Icelandic Fulbright Commission, made a presentation outlining the Fulbright Arctic Initiative which will give 17 scholars from all Arctic Council member states the opportunity to work together across academic and national boundaries. The initiative's focus is on energy, water, health and infrastructure issues. Fulbright scholars will attend several Arctic meetings including the Arctic Circle in Reykjavik, Iceland, in October 2015.

E. Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region 2016

The Russian delegation informed the Committee that the venue for the 12th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (CPAR) will be in Ulan-Ude, near Lake Baikal (five-hours flight from Moscow). It will take place either at the end of August or the beginning of September 2016.

The four topics considered for the Conference are the following:

- Economic Development;
- Green Sustainable Growth;
- Arctic Science; and
- Human Dimension.

F. Next Meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region

The next meeting of the SCPAR is scheduled for 3 December 2015 in the European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. David Tilson, President
Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

The Fourth ND Parliamentary Forum

FINAL VERSION

Conference Statement

We, the members of the Icelandic Parliament, the European Parliament, the Norwegian Parliament, and the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, with the participation of the Baltic Assembly, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, the Canadian Parliament, the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, the Nordic Council, the Parliamentary Assembly for North West Russia and the West Nordic Council;

meeting in Reykjavík to discuss the development of the Northern Dimension (ND) Policy, with focus on green energy, the sustainable utilization of marine resources in the North, gender equality and social wellbeing;

having regard to the fourth Senior Official Meeting of the renewed ND held in Oslo on 8 April 2014 and the progress report on the development of the Northern Dimension;

recalling the conference statements from the First ND Parliamentary Forum held in Brussels on 25-26 February 2009, the Second ND Parliamentary Forum held in Tromsø on 22-23 February 2011 and the Third ND Parliamentary Forum held in Arkhangelsk on 11–12 November 2013;

confirming the importance of the ND cooperation in order to improve the living conditions, opportunities and addressing the challenges for the people living in the ND area;

stressing the importance of a deeper involvement of indigenous peoples in the ND policy;

encouraging all the Partners to continue regional cooperation enhancing mutual understanding in the interest of the peaceful and sustainable development of the ND region;“

ask Partners and the governments of the ND cooperation;

Regarding the Development of the Northern Dimension Policy, to

1. Increase the ND's contribution to cooperation in the European Arctic area and strengthen coordination of activities with regional councils and organizations operating in the North;
2. Further develop the ND and strengthen cooperation based on common interests.
3. Support the ND Partnership on Culture (NDPC) as a focal point for networks, projects and other cultural activities in the ND area and encourage the Partnership to promote creative cultural industries and to develop new projects in the field of cultural tourism.
4. Support the ND Partnership on Transport and Logistics (NDPTL) as an efficient cooperation tool for the development of the transport system of the region and improvement of the international logistics chains.
5. Support project implementation and the development of new projects with high regional added value using the NDPTL's support fund and enhance its general coordinating role in the field of transport and logistics in the ND area.
6. Encourage the NDPTL to promote development of environmentally friendly transport in the ND area.
7. Enhance synergies between all relevant regional cooperation formats and programmes in the ND area in view of a more systematic approach to cooperation in the Baltic Sea and European Arctic regions.
8. Use the full potential of the ND Institute, ND Business Council, and the contribution of sub-regional and parliamentary cooperation in support of the ND Policy.
9. Support the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) as a highly valued and innovative regional network, significantly contributing to the improvement of peoples' health and social well-being in the Northern Dimension area, including its efforts to coordinate the new NDPHS 2020 Strategy and its Action Plan.
10. Continue the work of the EU-Russia Working Group on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, aiming to define common themes for cooperation based on joint priorities identified in the "Strategy of Social and Economic Development of the North-Western Region up to 2020" of the Russian Federation and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region;
11. Use the full potential of the Northern Dimension Institute and its coordinators to develop appropriate studies in the ND area.

Regarding Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Green Energy, to:

1. Support technological development in renewable energy, energy storage, and energy efficiency in Northern regions and set renewable energy targets that support sustainable economic growth in the ND area.
2. Work towards an effective, ambitious, durable international climate agreement in Paris in December 2015 that is applicable to all, with the determination to work to limit the increase in global average temperature to below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.
3. Support the ND Environmental Partnership's (NDEP) efforts on energy efficiency and environmental protection in the ND area.
4. Recognise the key role of the NDEP in successfully implementing projects with high cross-boundary environmental benefits in the ND region in its environmental and nuclear windows, contributing significantly to the health of the Baltic Sea and reducing the risk of nuclear hazards in the Barents region.
5. Support effective implementation of NDEP projects, noting that as NDEP projects have led to 98.5% of wastewaters in St Petersburg now being treated, the closest attention must be drawn to the swift completion of the Kaliningrad Wastewater Treatment Plant.
6. Take actions for the mitigation of black carbon emissions due to their detrimental impact on the Arctic ice shelf and consider utilizing NDEP experience for the implementation of concrete measures for cutting the black carbon emissions by modernization of heating facilities in the Barents region.
7. Call on International Financial Institutions to find solutions to continue with the financing of new projects with environmental cross-border effect in the whole region within the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership.

Regarding Sustainable Utilization of Marine Resources in the North, to:

1. Encourage mutual understanding of the rights of the communities of the North to utilize their resources in a sustainable way, and the importance of safe guarding their livelihoods by providing access to the markets for traditional products, such as seal products, in line with applicable legislation.
2. Stress the importance of implementing an Ecosystem Based Management approach in the coastal, marine and terrestrial environments of the North.
3. Reinforce regional cooperation of coastal states in order to secure long-term sustainable management and utilization of joint fish stocks.

4. Highlight the detrimental consequences of ocean acidification for global food security, as well as the need to halt ocean acidification, in the current negotiations for a new global climate agreement.

5. Initiate and carry out projects that contribute to the realization of the goals and objectives of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, aiming at achieving good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021 at the latest.

Regarding Gender Equality and Social Wellbeing, to:

1. Focus on human health and well-being with an emphasis on preventative measures and food safety among peoples of the ND area.

2. Recommend that gender based analyses are used in the development, implementation and assessment of relevant policies in the region, as part of creating preconditions for social wellbeing.

3. Conduct research on the causes of the evident emigration of women from some areas in the North and build up policies preventing this trend.

Regarding Human Health, to:

1. Give priority to the implementation of the NDPHS 2020 Strategy and its Action Plan and ensure their active engagement and sufficient financial resources.

2. Take determined action based on scientific knowledge and exchange best practices to promote healthy lifestyles in order to avoid early mortality and chronic conditions leading to the loss of human and economic potential.

3. Work to prevent alcohol related harm, diseases and accidents as use of alcohol represents the biggest health challenge in the Northern Dimension area.

4. Take due note of the threat to social well-being caused by high unemployment, particularly among the young, and look at the possibilities to increase the cooperation to fight this problem.

The Fourth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum:

asks Partners and the governments of the ND cooperation to report at the next Parliamentary Forum on the general development of the policy of the ND;

asks the Chairs of the Partnerships supported by the Partnership's secretariats to report at the next Parliamentary Forum on the results of the Partnerships;

acknowledges the interest and presence of parliamentary observers and representatives from governments and non-governmental organizations at this

Conference and recognizes their important role in conveying the relevant messages to their governments and supporting the actions herein discussed;

acknowledges the importance of, and supports, the active participation of indigenous peoples throughout ongoing and future activities;

suggests that the possibility of arranging annual conferences of the Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum is explored;

suggests that the Forum works on developing practical guidelines for the ND Parliamentary Forum that will be put forth at the next conference in 2017;

welcomes and accepts with gratitude the invitation of the European Parliament to host the Fifth ND Parliamentary Forum in 2017.

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Fourth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum and Meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region
DESTINATION	Reykjavik, Iceland
DATES	May 10-12, 2015
DELEGATION	
SENATE	--
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Dennis Bevington, M.P.
STAFF	--
TRANSPORTATION	\$3,946.15
ACCOMMODATION	\$615.60
HOSPITALITY	\$0
PER DIEMS	\$319.20
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$0
TOTAL	\$4,880.95