

Statement of Canada to the 3rd DRAFT

We, Canada, highly appreciate the initiative of the Forum for the 21st century and we would like to emphasize our gratitude for the opportunity to participate on the discussion about the Arctic issue which is crucial for Canadian society. We would like to express our gratefulness for considering and examining Canadian proposals and proposing the 2nd draft concerning the Arctic issues. Our north, our heritage, our future – these words sum up our relationship with the Arctic zone. We are a northern country and the Arctic is a fundamental piece of our national identity. The Arctic which is embedded in Canadian history, culture and in the Canadian soul is home to many Canadians, including indigenous peoples. We honestly declare that our vision for the Arctic is a stable, rules-based region, with clearly defined boundaries, dynamic economic growth, vibrant Northern communities, and healthy environment. Canada appreciates the proposal of the Forum for the 21st century to look for the solution concerning the development for the people of the North as the main theme of our chairmanship with a focus on responsible Arctic resource development, safe Arctic shipping and sustainable circumpolar communities.

In the section proposals:

Research, Climate and Environmental Change

- i. Canada approves the reinforcement of current research capacities by establishment of the long-term research group, which would consist of the worldwide experts and research workers. Canada welcomes the discussion about the reinforcement of the current Arctic research capacities. We call upon international scientists from Arctic but also non Arctic states to participate in the mutual research. Canada highly emphasizes the importance of international cooperation which contribute to the development and dissemination of the knowledge needed to face the impacts of climate changes. The great potential for the cooperation is present in that area.

We endorse creation of the research group as a special organ of the Arctic Council. We accept the proposal of the Forum to establish that body as the umbrella organization covering national research organization. That special body should cooperate with national research organizations including The Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS). CHARS will be a world-class Arctic research station that will be on the cutting edge of Arctic issues, including resource development and environmental science. Although the station will be built by Canadians, it will be there to serve the world. Station will be located in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut due to the scientific, technological and economic potential. The new station will provide a suite of services for science and technology in Canada's North including a technology development center, traditional knowledge center, and advanced laboratories. Opening of the CHARS is foreseen in 2017.

- ii. Canada agrees with the creation of a Research Fund, financed by all the Arctic states as well as non-arctic states, which have an observer status in the Arctic Council, to



support the effective research activities in the Arctic. Simultaneously, Canada sees the most effective way how to finance that kind of research cooperation by means of the voluntary contributions which principally will come from the private investors. We consider the private initiatives as the basis of the current global research but at the same time, Canada does not exclude any form of state investment in that research fund.

- iii. Regarding the creation of a new, legally binding international agreement on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions mandatory for all the states, Canada highly emphasizes the proposal. We want to appeal to all present countries to start the negotiation concerning that issue, but we suggest solving the problem on the global level and therefore we propose to postpone official negotiations until 2015 when the Climate Conference in Paris will be held. If we do not prevent the global warming, the cooperation in the field of research will be baseless.

Population and indigenous people

- i. We highly appreciate the proposal of the Forum concerning the position of indigenous population due to the main theme of our chairmanship – development for the people of the North. We concur the maintenance of the questions of the indigenous people of the Arctic would be governed under the Canadian national policy. Despite all that mentioned, Canada, as the current chairman of the Arctic Council, proposes to initiate the negotiations with the aim to create the minimal living standards for indigenous people. Our intention is to secure the basic human rights for local communities. The disparities between arctic communities in terms of living standards, income, and education are decreasing, although the gaps remain large in most cases.
- ii. Canada concurs with the reinforcement of the efficiency of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG), which main aim is to improve the environmental, economic and social conditions of Arctic communities. Arctic cultures, languages and health are the main priorities of SDWG. Populations are changing and northern regions are becoming more tightly related economically, politically, and socially to national mainstreams. Life expectancy has increased greatly across most of the Arctic in recent decades. The prevalence of indigenous language use, however, has decreased in most areas; with several languages in danger of disappearing in coming decades. The Arctic states should not forget to deal with the cultural question.
- iii. We also support the development of knowledge of the indigenous people of the Arctic and broadening their educational opportunities, by setting up educational institutions and sending qualified teachers and professors. Canadian participating schools are already sending teachers and students to promote knowledge in the Arctic within the program ArcticNet.

Geopolitical division and resource management

- i. Ecosystem-Based Management Experts Group and Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna are the key existing bodies of the Arctic Council dealing with the question of resource, fauna and flora management. For Canada, developing the Arctic is a strategic choice in order to create a strong resource-based industry for our national economy. We need to incorporate detailed environmental standards into the economic development of the territories' resources due to the sensitive flora and fauna. This sensitivity of the environment coupled with a short growing season, can result in a very long recovery time in the case of an environmental disaster. Our resource development refers to the extraction of potential oil, gas and minerals in the Arctic. The minimum provisions for environmental integrity in the development of sea-based resources are set by The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas but specific standards which will take into consideration the fragile Arctic environment are needed. There is a room for the Arctic Council, which can play a very important role in compiling the research and policy recommendations on environmental standards that are necessary for activities, including methods of mining, standard for mining the minerals and contingency plans in the case of a disaster, such as an oil spill.
- ii. Canada welcomes the negotiations with the aim to conclude the international agreement concerning the boundary issues in accordance with international law. Canada is anxious to avoid the model of legal regulations of the Antarctic accordingly to the strong and long standing historical, cultural and social connections with the Arctic region and therefore we are calling for international ensuring our territorial claims. We support the sector principle of the division of the Arctic. We emphasize the importance of negotiation concerning this exclusive issue.

Canada in December 2013 applied to extend its seabed claims in the Atlantic Ocean as it is allowed due to the United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea, issuing some preliminary Arctic claims, but more time is needed to prepare a claim that would include the pole. That submission lays the groundwork for the future country-to-country negotiations over competing territorial claims in the Arctic that could take more time to resolve.

Law of the Sea and Arctic waterways

- i. Canada expresses its agreement that the Arctic tourism strategy that should support the development of the region and creation of the new working opportunities for indigenous people with regard of the environment and wellbeing of the people.
- ii. We highly support the establishment of the monitoring body within the Arctic Council structure. Opening the Arctic Sea Route could cause the increase of smuggling activities in the field of guns, drugs and people and potential terroristic attacks. The body would be based on national and international security monitoring system to



prevent potential threats. Its main objective would be to monitor the situation and send information to all stakeholders through the network of satellites and harmonize the national existing systems to the extent possible.

Each country defines its own National Implementation Plan to meet the common monitoring objectives. Monitoring projects are carried out within each of the participating countries and across borders under bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Efforts are made to harmonize existing and new programs with respect to methodologies and quality assurance. Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is the example of that bilateral cooperation between US and Canada. And it can serve as a model form of cooperation.

- iii. Shipping activity in the Arctic is on the rise, including tourism and exploration activities, necessitating the need for reliable communication and monitoring. That question is highly active from the economic point of view.

As recommended in the 2009 Arctic Marine Shipment Assessment published on behalf of the Arctic Council, increasing shipping activities in the Arctic necessitate access to reliable communication and monitoring systems. It also provides guidance on enhancing Arctic marine safety, protecting Arctic peoples and environment, and building Arctic marine infrastructure. This and other AMSA recommendations are currently being followed up within the Arctic Council. Nowadays International Maritime Organization is developing a draft mandatory International Code of safety for ships operating in polar waters and Canada strongly supports that initiative.

Canada also assumes responsibility for providing navigational warning and meteorological services to facilitate the safe management of marine traffic. Through this initiative, Canada will deliver services that help mitigate the risks associated with increased Arctic shipping. These services will also enhance environmental protection of the Arctic marine environment, support Northern residents in their maritime activities, and provide necessary services for coastal and marine-based resource development.

Canada welcomes the discussion proposed by the Forum for the 21st Century with enthusiasm. Cooperation, diplomacy and respect for international law have always been Canada's preferred approach in the Arctic. At the same time, we will never waver in our commitment to protect our North.