

POSITION PAPER OF CANADA ON THE 3rd DRAFT

PREFACE

We, Canada, highly appreciate the initiative of the Forum for the 21st century and would like to emphasize our gratitude for the opportunity to participate on the negotiations concerning the Arctic.

The Arctic is undergoing change at a startling pace, in the near future, there is an inevitable development that has ramifications for the Canadian north. Canadian Arctic policy is faced with some of the most intriguing, yet complex, challenges in its history. Never before has the very nature of the Canadian Arctic region been altered by such a widespread set of factors. Perhaps the greatest current challenge for Canada is the worldwide realization that the Arctic is melting, and so it is more accessible than ever before. Consequently, Canada must prepare for the outside world's entry into the Arctic. With international challenges to Canadian control of the region now emerging, Canada needs to ensure it has healthy northern communities. But it also needs to ensure that the international community respects Canadian interests. The Arctic issue is an essential part of the foreign policy of Canada. Its economic development is in Canada's best interest, as the impact of unleashing of the resource-based potential of the North is tremendous. Canada will enhance its national sovereignty, protect the land, airspace and territorial waters, all in the terms of the environmental protection of the unique Northern environment. Furthermore, Canada is willing to focus more on improving the living standards of the Inuit.

NOTES ON PROPOSALS

Political division

Regarding the political division, Canada agreed to stick to the United Nations Convention (UNCLOS) on the Law of the Sea. Canada distinguishes six maritime zones according to the UNCLOS and is willing to focus on the Exclusive Economic Zone and proposes to extend Canada's territorial waters in the Arctic to 200 nautical miles, to both assert Canadian sovereignty over shipping and to enforce anti-pollution rules. The main

change would be that all ships bound for the Canadian Arctic would have to report to Canadian authorities. Canada welcomes the negotiations with the aim to conclude the international

agreement concerning the boundary issues in accordance with international law.

Security dimension

Canada ensures that in the interest of the all mankind Arctic shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of the international discord. Secondly, all of the Arctic nations shall prevent military actions in the Arctic area. Military occupation shall be authorized by the Arctic Council and shall only be temporary.

Transport

Regarding the Canadian Northwest Passage and the Russian Northern Sea Route, Canadian government recently made it mandatory for all foreign vessels entering Canadian Arctic waters to report their presence. This allows Canadian officials to ensure that these vessels are operating in compliance with our Arctic environmental laws and regulations. Tourists, tourist agencies shall present themselves with a valid license and a letter of support while travelling. There is an initiative from the International Maritime Organization to draft mandatory International Code of safety for ships operating in the polar Waters, Canada strongly supports this initiative.

Natural resources

Natural resources coming under the jurisdiction of its arctic territory will be an object of the scientific research, exploitation and subsequent yielding. Regarding the natural sources exploitation, Canada encourages its interest in investing in the Arctic infrastructure and opening the Arctic to the capitalist development while enhancing safety and protection of life, health, property and marine environment.

Environmental issues

Canada is equally concerned about climate change, environmental protection, strict pollution regulation and new fishing trends in northern waters and is committed to the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act. Building of the Arctic Research Centre for the Incessant Cooperation (ARCTIC), active under the Arctic Council is not considered as a priority and shall be an object of the further negotiations.

Canada fully supports the creation of a Research Fund financed by all the Arctic states as well as non arctic states having an observer status in the Arctic Council. The Research Fund will cover all the research activities in the Arctic.

Protection of autochthonous inhabitants

Canada shall ensure protection of cultures, eco-systems and livelihood and dignity of the Autochthonous inhabitants by following the UN Declaration of the rights of indigenous peoples and the Nuuk declaration. Furthermore Canada is willing to participate on the education of the autochthonous people in order to help them overcome changes rising from the ongoing transformation of their living environment. Canada have indicated that it will be respectful of the northern interests of other Arctic nations, only as long as these interests do not conflict with its own.

Canada calls for the reinforcement of the efficiency of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) whose main focus is concentrated in improving of environmental, economic and social conditions of Arctic population.

Canada is also willing to support the development of knowledge of the indigenous people and is willing to provide experts and professional staff to help people assimilate to the changing environment in the Arctic.

Establishment of legally binding agreement

Canada agrees on establishing one legal complex binding document concerning hereinbefore mentioned issues.



FORUM FOR
THE 21ST
CENTURY

Model Conference - Modelová konferencia

Canada welcomes the initiative of the *Forum for the 21st Century* and is eager to negotiate about the hereinbefore mentioned issues in order to achieve, formulate and sign a legally binding document serving and helping all nations in keeping peace, continuity and prosperity in the Arctic.