

Forum for 21st century

on the Arctic issues

Propositions to 3st Draft

The People's Republic of China appreciates the initiating of the third annual convention of the *Forum for 21st Century* focusing on the development in the Arctic area. We consider the proposals stated by the board of economic issues as a very important and therefore we emphasize our full support towards finding possible solution.

Political division

China welcomes the proposal to divide the Arctic area according to the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS). In addition, we would like to emphasize that the Arctic is a treasure of humankind and a global community; therefore we reinforce the notion that littoral and non-littoral states are all affected by the changes underway in the Arctic.

We reaffirm our support to further development and research in the Arctic area, and hence the building of *the Arctic Research Centre for the Incessant Cooperation*. China has to learn more about Arctic climate change and to understand impacts on China by such climate change.

Starting its Arctic scientific research in the 1990s, China has conducted research on high-altitude physics, climate change, ecological and marine aspects in the Arctic, and has established a preliminary observation system and formed a high-quality team of experts. China has also actively participated in various activities of the International Polar Year. China cannot have conducted all these Arctic research without cooperation with the Arctic countries.

Security dimension

China wishes to make its contribution to the peace, stability, environmental protection and sustainable development in the Arctic. China respects Arctic states' sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction according to international law, and wishes to strengthen mutually

beneficial cooperation on Arctic-related issues with various parties. We highly respect the provisions of the international law and the *UNCLOS*, but we do not support the monitoring of the military presence and activities by the *ARCTIC*.

Transport

China is concerned about potential impact on global shipping and trade brought by Arctic ice melting, and hopes to engage in pragmatic and win-win cooperation with the Arctic countries. Since the Arctic ice melting and the Arctic navigation are of global significance, it is natural and reasonable for non-Arctic countries to show their concerns over the Arctic issues.

For the same reason, if in the future the Arctic routes are navigable, this will add another dimension of cooperation between China and the Arctic countries. Because the voyage from America and Europe to Asia will be greatly shortened, the European and North American countries will certainly make good use of the Arctic routes to conduct their trade with Asia, and this will also be the case for China and other Asian countries. The voyage from Rotterdam to Shanghai via the Northern Sea Route will be 22% shorter than the one via the Suez Canal. The voyage from the north tip of Norway to Lianyungang Port in China via the Northern Sea Route is 6,500 nautical miles long while the one via Suez Canal is 12,180 miles. To navigate the Northern Sea Route is fuel-saving and cost-efficient and brings benefits to all parties. Of course, all the countries must comply with related guidelines and regulations for Arctic navigation.

In short, either in trade and investment of energy resource, or in the use of Arctic routes, the international law, the regulations on trade and investment and guidelines for Arctic navigation must be abided by.

Environmental issues

China attaches importance to changes in natural environment in the Arctic, and actively cooperates with countries concerned to engage in Arctic scientific research. Since China is a country in the northern hemisphere, the cold air activities in the Arctic region and changes in atmospheric circulation in high altitudes have a direct impact on weather and climate in

China, and have significant influence on China's ecological environment, agricultural production and other social and economic activities. The sea level rise in the world caused by speedy melting of Arctic ice affects economic and social development in China's east coast. Because the Arctic affairs are related to many natural, economic and social aspects in China as well as China's sustainable development, China attaches great importance to Arctic affairs. We would appreciate the strengthening the scientific activities in the regions as well as conducting joint research projects with arctic states.

Protection of autochthonous inhabitants

We express the respect to the values, interests, culture and tradition of the Arctic aborigines and other inhabitants in the region. We respect the protection under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Nuuk declaration. Also, we would welcome the establishment of the Tribal Consultation Policy. We support the building of International Fund for Protection of Autochthonous Inhabitants (IFPAIN) that shall help the autochthonous people ensure their rights and protection of their natural environment, which shall interrelate with the economic progress of the Arctic area. The People's Republic of China appeals all the participating countries to do so.

Establishment of the legal binding agreement

China is willing to promote the establishment of a win-win relationship of cooperation between the Arctic and non-Arctic states. So far as the relationship between the Arctic and non-Arctic states is concerned, the Arctic states have bigger interests since they enjoy sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the Arctic region, and they should, as a matter of fact, play a bigger role in Arctic affairs. Non-Arctic states have the rights to navigation and scientific research, and they have reason to show their concerns for the Nature's change in the Arctic and the opening of the Arctic routes. The Arctic and non-Arctic states have common interests in cross-regional issues, and they should increase their communication and cooperation. To recognize and respect their respective rights in the Arctic region and concerns on the Arctic issues should constitute the basis for dealing with the relations between the Arctic and non-Arctic states. China, as a non-Arctic state, takes part in the Arctic affairs mainly through international cooperation and in particular through cooperation with the Arctic

states. China would like to promote the establishment of a cooperative partnership of mutual respects, mutual trust and mutual benefits between the Arctic and non-Arctic countries.

In conclusion, China's Arctic policy would like to contribute to peaceful development of the Arctic for the benefit of mankind and to the mutual respects and enhanced understanding and trusts. China would welcome developing a normal relationship of win-win cooperation with the Arctic countries and the international community in the common endeavor to maintain and promote peace, stability and sustainable development in the Arctic, so as to make the Arctic part of the harmonious world.