



Tromsø Declaration 2021

On the occasion of the XVIII Session of the BARENTS EURO-ARCTIC COUNCIL

We, Ministers representing the six Member States and the Representative of the European Union, joined by representatives of the Barents Regional Council, Indigenous Peoples, regional bodies, observer states and invited guests, have assembled in Tromsø on 26 October 2021 for the XVIII Session of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), marking the conclusion of Norway's Chairmanship.

Underlining the importance of regional cooperation, fostering mutual understanding, building trust, contributing to peace and stability, promoting collaboration between professionals and people-to-people contacts across borders in the Arctic since the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration in 1993,

Expressing satisfaction with the successful achievements despite complex global and regional circumstances, in key areas of cooperation, e.g., environment, health, culture, emergency and rescue services, tourism, forestry, education and research, sport, sustainable and efficient cross-border transport solutions,

Noting with concern the serious challenges climate change represents to the societies, infrastructure, environment, biodiversity and ecosystems of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (the Region), **reaffirming** the importance of enhanced action to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and **recognising** the need to take the necessary steps to achieve emission reductions and climate resilience in key economic sectors, including industry, transport, forest sector and the enhancement of natural carbon sinks,

Supporting the global negotiations under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), calling on states to adopt and implement an ambitious Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as actions reverse the biodiversity loss, and **welcoming** progress in reducing the number of Barents environmental hot spots, highlighting the benefits for health and nature of improved environmental performance, and **calling** for renewed commitment and continuation of the successful cooperation to eliminate those that remain,

Recognising the rights and the vital role of Indigenous Peoples in the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation and **noting** the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

Acknowledging the value of the good dynamics between the national and regional levels, and of continuous practical cooperation between neighbouring countries and regions, based on mutual interests as the core foundation of the Barents cooperation, **recognising** the significant role of the Barents Regional Council,



Noting with concern the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on people, communities and, in particular, on people-to-people cooperation, striving for sharing of data and scientific evaluations of vaccines in the interests of lifting international and, in particular, cross-border travel restrictions, **recognising** that vaccines are the only exit strategy for this pandemic and that we need to share doses and data to enable global access to vaccines, **acknowledging** with appreciation the online sessions 'Barents Euro-Arctic region versus Coronavirus' initiated by Murmansk,

Recognising that the Barents Euro-Arctic Region is rich in resources, as well as in opportunities for sustainable economic growth, and in human capital,

Acknowledging the important role played by young people in the Barents cooperation and **expressing satisfaction** with the established practice of including young people in various areas of the Barents cooperation, **welcoming** the Youth Summit taking place in Tromsø on 26 October 2021,

Recognising the administrative reform of the working groups to ensure that they work through dual national/regional chairmanships to help enhance synergies in the Barents cooperation,

HEREBY

Reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that the Barents cooperation continues to be characterised by political dialogue, evidence-based knowledge, practical cooperation and people-to-people contacts based on respect for the rule of law, democratic values, human rights, gender equality and the fundamental freedoms,

Recognise the importance of developing viable Barents communities that offer good health and welfare services, and high-quality education as well as strong cultural and sports sectors for the people living in the Region,

Welcome investments in innovation, entrepreneurship and modern technology for job creation and competitiveness to enhance opportunities for sustainable economic activities,

Reiterate our commitment to the protection of the environment and the unique biodiversity of the Barents Region, and encourage further efforts in this area in order to safeguard the nature values of the region for the future generations, **stress** the importance of immediately reducing the emissions of greenhouse gas and short-lived climate pollutants, including black carbon, as well as strengthening adaptation and risk prevention measures.

Adopt the updated Action Plan on Climate Change and **encourage** efforts to implement the Action Plan in the Region, to drive the transition to new low carbon solutions, contributing to the introduction of circular economy and environmentally sustainable waste management, and the use of clean and renewable energy,

Emphasise that the dialogue among and with Indigenous Peoples is one of the cornerstones of Barents cooperation, **welcome** the United Nations International



Decade of Indigenous Peoples' Languages 2022-2032, **encourage** activities that will serve to preserve and strengthen the Indigenous Peoples' languages in the Region and **note** the importance of the III Barents Indigenous Peoples Summit, held on a digital platform on 8 June 2021,

Welcome efforts that will reduce the negative ecological footprints in the Region, **contribute** to a green and blue economy based on innovation, jobs creation and competitiveness,

Approve the Barents Financial Mechanism (BFM) aimed at strengthening the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation by providing seed money for projects in the region, **encourage** the working groups of the Barents cooperation to fully use the potential of the BFM and **express appreciation** to the Norwegian chairmanship for this initiative,

Emphasise the need to work for a sustainable, safe and efficient transport system in the Region, by exploring digital and intelligent transport systems, aiming for connected and automated mobility across borders, and **aim to develop** low carbon transport solutions, as envisioned in the Draft Joint Barents Transport Plan,

Recognise more and better knowledge as vital for a more sustainable and prosperous Barents Euro-Arctic Region and **encourage** dialogue in education and research through student mobility, networking and public - private cooperation,

Acknowledge the development of cultural life as essential for social and economic development in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, and **underline** the importance of the Barents Scholarship for Cultural Cooperation,

Endorse the Barents Framework Programme on Health and Related Social Issues, and continuous collaboration on the prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases in the Region, **encourage** information exchange on new technologies, including e-health solutions, and working methods for health care in sparsely populated areas and on the improvement of the situation for children and youth at risk,

Reiterate our commitment to improve safety for all Barents inhabitants and visitors by further enhancing cross-border cooperation on rescue and emergency preparedness, and **welcome** Barents Rescue 2022 in Norway,

Urge the Committee of Senior Officials to continue to raise awareness and the visibility of Barents cooperation and **reiterate** the need for cooperation with other multilateral cooperation formats in the North (Arctic Council, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Nordic Council of Ministers and the Northern Dimension) by seeking synergies with their respective chairmanship programmes, and **recognise** Kolarctic and Karelia and Northern Periphery and Arctic cross-border cooperation programmes as valuable for Barents projects,

Take note of the 10th Barents Parliamentary Conference organised on a digital platform in Norway on 22 June 2021,



Note with satisfaction the efficient functioning of the International Barents Secretariat (IBS) in supporting activities under the auspices of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Regional Council,

Welcome the strengthening of the IBS and the adjustment made in communication activities,

Express gratitude for the Chairmanships of Norway in BEAC and Västerbotten, Sweden, in BRC and **welcome** Finland and Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Russia as incoming chairs, encouraging their efforts to drive the Barents cooperation forward.

Signed by the representatives of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council,
26 October 2021, Tromsø, Norway.

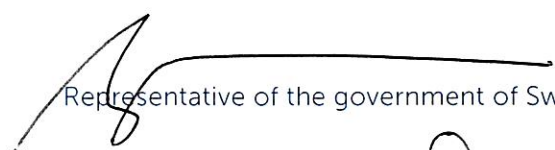

Representative of the government of Denmark


Representative of the government of Finland


Representative of the government of Iceland


Representative of the government of Norway


Representative of the government of The Russian Federation


Representative of the government of Sweden


Representative of the European Union