

2011-05-20

RESOLUTION OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENTARY BARENTS CONFERENCE

Luleå, 20 May 2011

On the invitation of the Swedish Parliament representatives of the national parliaments of Norway, Russia and Sweden, representatives of eight regional parliamentary bodies from the Northern regions of those States, the Nordic Council, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, the Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians, the Parliamentary Association of the North-West of Russia, the Saami Parliamentary Council, as well as invited guests and experts from relevant governmental and non-governmental authorities, met on 19-20 May 2011 in Luleå, County of Norrbotten, Sweden.

Main themes of the discussions were Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth, Industry and Commerce including Indigenous Entrepreneurship, and Infrastructural Development. The Conference was opened by the Speaker of the Swedish Parliament, Mr. Per Westerberg.

The participants of the Conference

taking into account the principles and provisions of the Declaration on cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic region (Kirkenes, Norway) as of 1993, which is the basis for multilateral co-operation in the Barents region;

having regard to the Resolution of the Fourth Parliamentary Barents Conference (Syktyvkar, Russia, 26-27 May 2009), again demonstrating the importance of the parliamentary dimension for introducing and promoting various forms of co-operation in the Northern part of Europe;

having regard to the Programme of the Swedish Presidency of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2009-2011, which is focusing on transition to an eco-efficient economy and intensified cooperation regarding renewable energy and energy efficiency

having regard to the Resolution of the First Barents Indigenous Peoples' Congress (Kirkenes, Norway, 4-5 February 2010), underlining that enhanced

participation by the indigenous peoples in the Barents cooperation would greatly contribute to this cooperation

having regard to the Joint Statement of the Second Ministerial Meeting of the renewed Northern Dimension (Oslo, Norway, 2 November 2010), underlining *i.a.* the need for close cooperation between the Northern Dimension Structures and the four Regional Councils in the North, as well as the valuable input that parliaments can bring in the functioning of the northern Dimension policy

having regard to the Conference Statement of the Second Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum (Tromsø, Norway, 22-23 February 2011), which contains a number of significant proposals and requests to the governments of the Northern Dimension cooperation, and confirms the commitment of the parliamentarians to promoting it;

having regard also to the results and the views expressed by representatives of national and regional parliamentarians, state and local authorities, political organizations, indigenous peoples, youth, business, art and education circles, and social and non-profit organizations concerning how continued and further improved cooperation can contribute to a positive development of the Barents region;

conscious of the common geographical and environmental situation, the cultural similarities, the economic interrelationship and shared possibilities and challenges of the Barents region and the countries and nations to which it belongs;

Reaffirm their support for effective use of existing structures provided by the Barents Cooperation on national and regional levels in order to develop common assets and resources and to address common challenges in the region.

Recognize the need for additional measures in order to further improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural situation of the peoples inhabiting the region, including in particular support to the efforts of the indigenous peoples of the region to enhanced participation in the Barents cooperation, to strengthen social and economic foundations of their life, and to protect their national traditions, cultures and mother tongues,

Appreciate that additional possibilities to achieve these goals are provided by updated policies of the Northern Dimension of the European Union, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation, of the Arctic Council, the Nordic Council

of Ministers and the Council of Baltic Sea States, and by coordination and cooperation between those structures and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council.

Recommend national parliaments and regional parliamentary assemblies, as well as national, regional and local authorities

to support measures for environmentally sustainable economic growth in the Barents Euro-Arctic region

to promote new technologies in order to preserve and protect the environment, including better methods of waste management

to promote innovation in the production of renewable as well as non-renewable forms of energy, continuously improving safety standards,

to support projects to increase the use of renewable energy and to improve energy efficiency,

to cooperate in order to facilitate exploitation of natural resources while paying particular attention to the rights of the indigenous peoples and to the special climate and environmental conditions of the region,

to recognize that substantial cuts in the emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses are the backbone of meaningful global climate change mitigation efforts, and therefore to initiate and support development of new technologies, projects and international cooperation designed to reduce such emissions

to recognize that while climate change is a global threat, it will have particularly devastating consequences in the Northern regions and for the traditional livelihood of the indigenous peoples,

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to recognize that cross-border cooperation is crucial to the development of industry and commerce in the Barents region,

to continue efforts, therefore, to facilitate cross-border movement of persons, goods and services, i.a. by simplifying visa regimes and customs procedures

to provide additional support for efforts to cross-border cooperation in sustainable economic development, between regional and local authorities,

between industries, enterprises or entrepreneurs, and between the public and private sectors

to recognize the important role that the EU Structural Funds have played in promoting development and cross-border cooperation in the region, and to work to ensure that the region can benefit from similar programs during the post-2013 planning period

to facilitate extraction and refinement of natural resources, entrepreneurship, and development of tourism, with a special focus on the social and environmental aspects of economic development

to support the development of entrepreneurship among the indigenous peoples, paying particular attention to the opportunities to develop their traditional livelihoods into commercially viable enterprises that may improve the living conditions and social situation of indigenous peoples, while preserving and developing their cultural heritage and their right to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation with their own members as well as other peoples across international borders

to continue to support indigenous peoples' participation in decision-making processes that have a direct impact on the indigenous people

to support the development of effective youth policies in all areas of Barents cooperation, in particular as regards access to modern education promoting creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship as well as access to the labour market, including in advanced industrial and service sectors

to welcome the agreement between Russia and Norway on a visa free regime for residents living in the border area, *i.a.* as a first, but important step towards a common labour market in the region

to support academic and scientific institutions with the highest international standard in the region, and to promote contacts, cooperation and mobility between them, as well as promoting the acknowledgment and protection of traditional knowledge in innovation

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to recognize the need for high-quality transport systems, energy transmission lines and other infrastructure within the Barents area, as well as improvement of transnational and intercontinental transport connections, as a prerequisite for

improvement of living conditions, extraction and refinement of natural resources, and for the development of industry and commerce

to promote multimodal transport strategies and policies that take into account environmental concerns, conducting environmental impact assessments and promoting energy-efficient solutions and high safety standards

to give high priority to creating east-west transport corridors, connecting the Barents region with Asia, thereby improving its competitiveness on the global level

to develop seaports and the corresponding inland transport systems, at the same time promoting measures to improve safety and to reduce harmful emissions from shipping

to welcome the Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic, signed at the Seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council on 12 May 2011

to take additional measures to ensure adequate resources and international cooperation to improve the safety of maritime navigation, and to ensure the capacity to respond to emergencies or accidents, including the rescue of passengers and response to oil spills or other potential environmental disasters

The participants of the Fifth Parliamentary Barents Conference

reaffirm their commitment to cooperation in order to consolidate and further develop the Barents region as a peaceful, stable, innovative and prosperous part of Europe,

welcome with gratitude the offer of the Norwegian Parliament to convene the 6th Parliamentary Barents Conference in 2013 in Norway.