

RESOLUTION
THE FOURTH PARLIAMENTARY BARENTS CONFERENCE

Syktyvkar, **27 May 2009**

Invited by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the elected representatives of parliaments of Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, representatives of legislative bodies from 14 Northern regions of those States, representatives of the Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, 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, the Barents Euro-Arctic Regional Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Arctic Council met on May 26 – 27, 2009 in Syktyvkar, the capital of the Komi Republic, Russia, to discuss sustainable development of the Barents/Euro-Arctic region, including its social and economic aspects (health, culture, education), environment protection and support to indigenous peoples.

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 that paved the way of the modern multilateral collaboration in the Barents region;

the Resolution of the Third Parliamentary Barents Conference (Rovaniemi, Finland, 11-12 June 2007), which confirmed the significant role that the parliamentary dimension plays in promoting cooperation within this part of the European continent;

the Programme of the Russian Chairmanship in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2007-2009, which prioritizes the promotion of sustainable development of the Barents region, focusing on the social and economic aspects closely linked with environmental compliance, as well as support to indigenous peoples;

the Political Declaration on the Northern Dimension Policy and the Northern Dimension Policy Framework Document, adopted in Helsinki on October 24, 2006, stating the common responsibility of its participants for sustainable development and well-being of the Northern Europe;

the First Ministerial Meeting of the new Northern Dimension (Saint-Petersburg, 28 October, 2008), at which the substantive provisions of this policy were further developed;

the Conference Statement from the Parliamentary Conference on the Northern Dimension as of March 1, 2007 and the first Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum, February 25-26, 2009, that affirmed the firm commitment of the European parliamentarians to assist in implementing that policy;

The outcomes and the exchange of views resulting from various meetings of regional and national legislative entities and alliances where state and local authorities, political organizations, indigenous peoples, youth, representatives of business, art and education circles, social and non-profit organizations as well as the media discussed the way forward for developing our region in a comprehensive way;

Pursuant to the common geographical and cultural environment, economic interrelationship and

similar challenges these countries and nations are facing;

Emphasizing its firm commitment to contribute to further consolidating the Barents region as a peaceful, stable, dynamic and prosperous region on the European continent,

Recognizing the need for additional measures to support indigenous peoples residing in the Barents Euro-Arctic region, strengthen social and economic foundations of their life, and protect their national traditions, cultures and mother tongues;

Stressing additional opportunities to achieve the goals generated by the updated policy of the Northern Dimension of the European Union, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation,

Encourage the representatives of national parliaments and regional legislation assemblies, as well as national, regional and local authorities in their activities

To support measures for sustainable development of the Barents Euro-Arctic region, with a special focus on the social, economic and environmental issues, and comprehensive improvement of the living conditions of indigenous peoples:

In the area of economic cooperation

Continue to recognize the cooperation as the very core of the Barents Cooperation,

Continue to support the cooperative cross border efforts between and within public and private sectors in sustainable development in the economic sphere, i.e. in infrastructure aimed at improving transport conditions, extraction and refinement of natural resources, entrepreneurship, customs procedures, visa regimes and tourism,

Continue to support the effective use of existing structures provided by the Barents Cooperation on national and regional levels created to develop common assets and resources as well as tackle the common challenges in the Barents Region.

In the area of health and social well-being

Continue to implement the second Cooperation Programme on Health and Related Social Issues in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region 2008–2011 prepared and adopted by the Joint Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues of the Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, prioritizing the prevention and control of infectious diseases, development of primary health care and social services, and efforts aimed at working with and for children and youth at risk, and advocating a healthy lifestyle as well,

Support the sub-programme «Children and youth at risk » geared to enhancing the capacity of regional authorities and social welfare agencies providing assistance to that group of young people and endorsing specific projects to integrate into society persons who have committed offences,

Continue to support the implementation of the sub-programme on HIV/AIDS that is aimed at strengthening national potential for combating this evil and promoting specific projects to reduce the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate,

Continue to work towards the fulfillment of the objective stated in the Declaration adopted at the meeting of heads of government of the Barents Region and the European Commission "Barents Euro-Arctic 10 year anniversary" in 2003, that was to gain full control of the spread of tuberculosis in the Barents Region within 10 years,

Encourage the Joint Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues (JWGHS) to continue its cooperation with the Northern Dimension Partnership in health care and social well-being.

In the area of cultural cooperation

Continue the implementation of the second programme "New Winds in the Barents Region" under the Joint Working Group on Culture (JWGC) for 2008-2010, aimed at developing multilateral and bilateral collaboration in the area of culture, promoting cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, and the use of culture as a tool for social and economic development of the Region,

Consider the outcomes of exchange of views during the representative International Forum «Culture of the Barents region» (Arkhangelsk 16 -18 June 2008),

Highlight the protection of cultural heritage and traditions of indigenous peoples in the Barents Euro-Arctic region,

Develop cultural cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic region in collaboration with other international bodies, including within the Northern Dimension policies, with the view of possible new Partnership on this field, as well as with the Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Council of Europe,

Support the development of interconfessional dialogue between the BEAC member states,

Endorse the idea to establish panarctic electronic library "Electronic Memory of the Arctic".

In the area of education

Support the actions to promote "academic and scientific mobility" between scientific and research institutions on the region, to that end using the existing international instruments and programmes, approve and recommend to expand the experience of direct collaboration among academic institutions and "cross-border universities",

Assist in holding regularly the Forums on education and research in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region that would be aimed at addressing specific tasks in the fields of health care and social affairs, environment, culture, youth and indigenous peoples issues,

Support the initiative of the International Conference of the Member States of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and the European Union on Cooperation in the Field of Higher Professional Education (17-20 November, 2008, Petrozavodsk, Russia) to reinvigorate the Joint Working Group on Education and Research.

In the area of environment protection

Support the priorities identified by the BEAC Working Group on Environment (WGE), namely: the study of, adaptation to and mitigation of climate change; the reduction of polluting emissions and waste

management; the conservation of biodiversity, protection of biotope and strengthening the network of protected areas; the ongoing work on elimination of the 42 remaining environmental "hot spots"; promotion of "cleaner production" principles; water management,

Support the initiative of the **Working Group on Environment to prepare the Cross Sector Conference: Climate Change - Adaption Measures for the Barents Region** (September 2009, Alta, Norway),

Recommend the further implementation of the project on studying the impact of climate change on biodiversity in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region under the BEAC and the Nordic Council of Ministers; join efforts with the Arctic Council and other regional organizations in the field of environmental activities,

Consider the findings of the forthcoming Conference of the Ministers of Environment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region as the follow-up of the similar Moscow meeting (8 November, 2007) and the basis for future cooperative work in this field.

In the area of support to indigenous peoples

Perceive the support to indigenous peoples development in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region as a priority for legislative and executive authorities, regional councils and other cooperation organizations,

Support the Working Group of Indigenous Peoples (WGIP) in the implementation of 2009-2012 Action Plan aiming at the improvement of living standards and well-being of those inhabitants of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, their greater involvement in cooperation in the fields of education, health, environment protection, promotion of traditional crafts and improved infrastructure in their places of residence,

Continue the implementation of joint projects of the BEAC and the Nordic Council of Ministers focused on the indigenous peoples in the Barents Region,

Contribute to the establishment of independent cooperation bodies of indigenous peoples, in particular, support the work of the Indigenous Peoples Office in Lovozero (Murmansk Region), the media and the publication of literature in the local languages.

Conference welcomes the decision of the Barents Regional Council, May 13, 2009, that it becomes a stronger political forum.

Conference welcomes the proposal of the Swedish Delegation to convene the 5th Parliamentary Conference in 2011 in Sweden.