

Conference Statement

We, the members of the Icelandic Parliament, the European Parliament, the Norwegian Parliament, and the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, with the participation of the Baltic Assembly, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, the Canadian Parliament, the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, the Nordic Council, the Parliamentary Assembly for North West Russia and the West Nordic Council;

meeting in Reykjavík to discuss the development of the Northern Dimension (ND) Policy, with focus on green energy, the sustainable utilization of marine resources in the North, gender equality and social wellbeing;

having regard to the fourth Senior Official Meeting of the renewed ND held in Oslo on 8 April 2014 and the progress report on the development of the Northern Dimension;

recalling the conference statements from the First ND Parliamentary Forum held in Brussels on 25-26 February 2009, the Second ND Parliamentary Forum held in Tromsø on 22-23 February 2011 and the Third ND Parliamentary Forum held in Arkhangelsk on 11–12 November 2013;

confirming the importance of the ND cooperation in order to improve the living conditions, opportunities and addressing the challenges for the people living in the ND area;

stressing the importance of a deeper involvement of indigenous peoples in the ND policy;

encouraging all the Partners to continue regional cooperation enhancing mutual understanding in the interest of the peaceful and sustainable development of the ND region;“

ask Partners and the governments of the ND cooperation;

Regarding the Development of the Northern Dimension Policy, to

1. Increase the ND's contribution to cooperation in the European Arctic area and strengthen coordination of activities with regional councils and organizations operating in the North;
2. Further develop the ND and strengthen cooperation based on common interests.

3. Support the ND Partnership on Culture (NDPC) as a focal point for networks, projects and other cultural activities in the ND area and encourage the Partnership to promote creative cultural industries and to develop new projects in the field of cultural tourism.
4. Support the ND Partnership on Transport and Logistics (NDPTL) as an efficient cooperation tool for the development of the transport system of the region and improvement of the international logistics chains.
5. Support project implementation and the development of new projects with high regional added value using the NDPTL's support fund and enhance its general coordinating role in the field of transport and logistics in the ND area.
6. Encourage the NDPTL to promote development of environmentally friendly transport in the ND area.
7. Enhance synergies between all relevant regional cooperation formats and programmes in the ND area in view of a more systematic approach to cooperation in the Baltic Sea and European Arctic regions.
8. Use the full potential of the ND Institute, ND Business Council, and the contribution of sub-regional and parliamentary cooperation in support of the ND Policy.
9. Support the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) as a highly valued and innovative regional network, significantly contributing to the improvement of peoples' health and social well-being in the Northern Dimension area, including its efforts to coordinate the new NDPHS 2020 Strategy and its Action Plan.
10. Continue the work of the EU-Russia Working Group on Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, aiming to define common themes for cooperation based on joint priorities identified in the "Strategy of Social and Economic Development of the North-Western Region up to 2020" of the Russian Federation and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region;
11. Use the full potential of the Northern Dimension Institute and its coordinators to develop appropriate studies in the ND area.

Regarding Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Green Energy, to:

1. Support technological development in renewable energy, energy storage, and energy efficiency in Northern regions and set renewable energy targets that support sustainable economic growth in the ND area.
2. Work towards an effective, ambitious, durable international climate agreement in Paris in December 2015 that is applicable to all, with the determination to work to limit the increase in global average temperature to below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

3. Support the ND Environmental Partnership's (NDEP) efforts on energy efficiency and environmental protection in the ND area.
4. Recognise the key role of the NDEP in successfully implementing projects with high cross-boundary environmental benefits in the ND region in its environmental and nuclear windows, contributing significantly to the health of the Baltic Sea and reducing the risk of nuclear hazards in the Barents region.
5. Support effective implementation of NDEP projects, noting that as NDEP projects have led to 98.5% of wastewaters in St Petersburg now being treated, the closest attention must be drawn to the swift completion of the Kaliningrad Wastewater Treatment Plant.
6. Take actions for the mitigation of black carbon emissions due to their detrimental impact on the Arctic ice shelf and consider utilizing NDEP experience for the implementation of concrete measures for cutting the black carbon emissions by modernization of heating facilities in the Barents region.
7. Call on International Financial Institutions to find solutions to continue with the financing of new projects with environmental cross-border effect in the whole region within the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership.

Regarding Sustainable Utilization of Marine Resources in the North, to:

1. Encourage mutual understanding of the rights of the communities of the North to utilize their resources in a sustainable way, and the importance of safe guarding their livelihoods by providing access to the markets for traditional products, such as seal products, in line with applicable legislation.
2. Stress the importance of implementing an Ecosystem Based Management approach in the coastal, marine and terrestrial environments of the North.
3. Reinforce regional cooperation of coastal states in order to secure long-term sustainable management and utilization of joint fish stocks.
4. Highlight the detrimental consequences of ocean acidification for global food security, as well as the need to halt ocean acidification, in the current negotiations for a new global climate agreement.
5. Initiate and carry out projects that contribute to the realization of the goals and objectives of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, aiming at achieving good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021 at the latest.

Regarding Gender Equality and Social Wellbeing, to:

1. Focus on human health and well-being with an emphasis on preventative measures and food safety among peoples of the ND area.

2. Recommend that gender based analyses are used in the development, implementation and assessment of relevant policies in the region, as part of creating preconditions for social wellbeing.

3. Conduct research on the causes of the evident emigration of women from some areas in the North and build up policies preventing this trend.

Regarding Human Health, to:

1. Give priority to the implementation of the NDPHS 2020 Strategy and its Action Plan and ensure their active engagement and sufficient financial resources.

2. Take determined action based on scientific knowledge and exchange best practices to promote healthy lifestyles in order to avoid early mortality and chronic conditions leading to the loss of human and economic potential.

3. Work to prevent alcohol related harm, diseases and accidents as use of alcohol represents the biggest health challenge in the Northern Dimension area.

4. Take due note of the threat to social well-being caused by high unemployment, particularly among the young, and look at the possibilities to increase the cooperation to fight this problem.

The Fourth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum:

asks Partners and the governments of the ND cooperation to report at the next Parliamentary Forum on the general development of the policy of the ND;

asks the Chairs of the Partnerships supported by the Partnership's secretariats to report at the next Parliamentary Forum on the results of the Partnerships;

acknowledges the interest and presence of parliamentary observers and representatives from governments and non-governmental organizations at this Conference and recognizes their important role in conveying the relevant messages to their governments and supporting the actions herein discussed;

acknowledges the importance of, and supports, the active participation of indigenous peoples throughout ongoing and future activities;

suggests that the possibility of arranging annual conferences of the Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum is explored;

suggests that the Forum works on developing practical guidelines for the ND Parliamentary Forum that will be put forth at the next conference in 2017;

welcomes and accepts with gratitude the invitation of the European Parliament to host the Fifth ND Parliamentary Forum in 2017.