

## **Paula Dobriansky, Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, the USA**

### Intervention for Roundtable Discussion 3: Future Perspectives

Thank you Chairman.

#### **Iceland's Chairmanship**

I would like to use a highly complimentary expression from the language of sports, in fact a particular sport of keen interest to many in the Arctic, namely ice-hockey.

Iceland has, in our view, scored a "hat trick" with its three priorities.

- We are fully supportive of the Arctic Human Development Report proposal. I understand that the University of Alaska and Dartmouth College are ready to work on the project.
- And, as I mentioned yesterday afternoon, we believe there is excellent work underway in the Council on human health that can find its way into this new, comprehensive report.
- Innovative uses of information technology have long played a role in sustaining development while protecting the environment in the Arctic.
- Here I might just mention telemedicine applications, aviation safety in the Arctic, distance-learning programs at the national and, now, at the regional level with the University of the Arctic.
- Developments in information technology will help shape a more prosperous future for residents of the Arctic.
- And, we agree, that there are sure to be opportunities to better integrate Arctic research.
- We are taking steps, for example, to electronically link the holdings on Arctic medical research in national libraries in an Arctic wide information

network. We think this initiative on medical research may be ready for consideration during Iceland's chairmanship.

- We are ready to work closely with Iceland during its Chairmanship.

#### **U.S. Priorities for 2002-2004**

The United States has several goals for its participation in the Arctic Council these next two years.

First, we want the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment to be completed in time for the next Ministerial meeting.

- We invite others to do their best to support this objective—first in producing the scientific document and then in preparing both the scientific study in layperson's terms and the policy recommendations.
- We believe it important that policymakers wait for the results of the scientific process and the policy recommendations, not simply assume that the results are a foregone conclusion.

Second, we want the Arctic Council to continue to be a positive model of a partnership for regional cooperation.

- We believe the lead country approach to programs works well in this forum. Where there are several countries interested in an activity that has circumpolar significance, we hope that work can go forward.

Finally, we encourage the SAOs (Senior Arctic Officials) to help expand the participation of other Ministries in the human health activities of the Council. International cooperation can pay high dividends in the area of health.

#### **Finland's Chairmanship**

Let me conclude by saying that Iceland has only to look to Finland for the model of an effective and dynamic Chair.

- Ambassador Stenlund and his team have moved the Council's work program forward as directed by Ministers in Barrow while succeeding in making the

Arctic Council more visible on the international stage.

- They have put the Council on a firm electronic footing, hosted every meeting with the same flair and competence that we have enjoyed here in Inari, and helped all participants bridge what differences crept into our deliberations.

We congratulate Finland and Iceland, outgoing and incoming Chairs of the Council.