

Arctic Council, 10th Ministerial meeting, 11 May 2017, Fairbanks, Alaska

Statement by Mr. Børge Brende, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs

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In the Arctic, we have found ways of working together - based on common interests and respect for international law.

The result is that the Arctic today is a region of peace and stability.

Our number one priority is to make sure it stays this way.

Only then will we be able to use its vast resources - and protect its fragile environment - to the benefit of future generations.

Faced with the rapid changes and the many opportunities in the Arctic, we need even closer regional cooperation.

Arctic resources must be managed based on the best available knowledge.

We must strike a sound balance between economic activity and environmental concerns.

Most important, we must ensure that change and opportunity do not become sources of tension and conflict.

This is why we today, more than ever, need a robust Arctic Council:

A council that is firmly supported by member states and observer countries;

-that allows us to find common solutions to common challenges;

-and that contributes to the prosperity and well-being of the millions of people living in the Arctic.

Under the US chairmanship, the Arctic Council has grown stronger and more effective.

Over the next years, we will be working with Finland - and the other Arctic countries - to further strengthen its work.

Together we are not only making a major contribution to stability and prosperity in the Arctic.

We are turning the Arctic into a global model for peace and sustainable development.

Thank you.

(I am pleased to give the floor to the President of the Sami Parliament, Ms. Vibeke Larsen).