

Arktisk råds ministermøte, Iqaluit, 24. april 2015

(267 ord, 3 minutter)

Distinguished colleagues,
Representatives,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Leona, I would first of all like to **thank Canada** for guiding us through another successful two years of Arctic cooperation.

As we all know, the Arctic is changing.

The seas are warming and the ice is retreating. This will have an enormous impact – well beyond the Arctic region.

The Arctic Council has **produced ground-breaking reports** documenting these changes.

It is also a **best practice example of peaceful regional cooperation.**

The Arctic states are **shouldering their responsibilities:**

- We have agreed to reduce our emissions from short-lived climate pollutants.
- We have facilitated the establishment of the Arctic Economic Council to promote responsible regional economic development.

These are **important deliverables.**

The Arctic is a region of opportunities and a source of inspiration.

I know that **under John's chairmanship** we will continue to **grasp these opportunities** in a **responsible manner.**

Your team's priorities and preparations fill me with optimism.

We are now **looking ahead to the climate summit in Paris** at the end of the year.

If this is a success, the new climate agreement **could prove to be the most important agreement** in our time. For the Arctic and for the rest of the world.

Fridtjof Nansen once said: ‘The great thing in human life is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving.’

This is **the essence of Arctic Council cooperation: to move forwards responsibly**, guided by the **best knowledge** we can acquire.

I will now leave the rest of Norway’s time to the President of the Sami Parliament, Aili Keskitalo. Aili, the floor is yours.

Thank you.