

Denmark

- Greenland
- *Faroe Islands

Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting. 9-10.10.2002.

Round Table Discussion 2 – **New Focus on Arctic Human Development.**

The Governments of Denmark, the Faroe Islands and Greenland welcome the Arctic Human Development Report project, the priority during the Icelandic presidency. We are particularly pleased to know, that a major source of inspiration has been the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic, SLICA, which was initiated by Greenland in 1998. These two projects will complement each other very well in contributing to our knowledge of living conditions in the Arctic.

In the further work on this project we would like to point to the valuable results and experiences gained at this summer's Taking Wing conference. The delegation from Greenland representing the Kingdom and headed by the Minister for Social Affairs and Labour returned with many new ideas for future initiatives in this area. Currently, efforts are made to identify sources of gender specific statistical data on the web, which has a relevant bearing to the follow up of the conference.

It is thus our hope that the Arctic Human Development project will get a successful start, and that we will be able to secure funding in order to participate meaningful and on the basis of our own perception of the various societies within the Kingdom.

I'll use the opportunity to thank Finland for an outstanding job in coordinating and promoting the role Arctic in the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development process. Not least a thank to a very able man – Mr. Stenlund for all his initiatives. It was in Johannesburg that our own initiative to establish new focus on human development in the Arctic was announced. We – that is The Danish Government and the Greenland Home Rule Government - jointly launched the Partnership on Indigenous Peoples, Rights and Sustainable Development initiative.

The Partnership proposal is rooted in a long-standing cooperation between the Governments of Denmark and Greenland concerning the rights of indigenous peoples, which has led to the recent establishment of the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples within the United Nations.

It is our hope that this new development will help promote active policy with respect to organizations and forums such as the EU, Arctic Council and the UN, and thus contribute to the human development in the Arctic.

Thank you