

**Statement by the Senior Arctic Official of the Russian Federation
H.E. Vladislav Maslennikov
on the occasion of the 14th meeting of the Arctic Council**

May 12, 2025

Dear Mr Chair,

Dear Heads of Delegations of the Arctic States and Permanent Participants,

I am glad to see all participants of the Arctic Council at the 14th meeting of our organization.

The importance of the Arctic for the strategic interests of our country is enshrined in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation updated in March 2023. As the largest Arctic State, Russia is persistently committed to maintaining peace, stability and constructive cooperation in the Arctic, as well as promoting balanced social and economic development of the region aimed at improving quality of life in the North. Among other priorities, which, inter alia, Russia was following during our Arctic Council Chairmanship in 2021-2023, are protection of cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples, preservation of biodiversity and unique environment of the Arctic, climate issues, emergency response, facilitation of scientific research in the High North.

The last three years have not been easy for multilateral interaction in the Arctic. Along with increasing confrontation in the High North, once a territory of exclusively peaceful cooperation, most of the regional formats of cooperation have become degraded. The Arctic Council in fact remains the only functioning structure, not working at full capacity though.

The concluding document of today's meeting will be the Joint Statement of the Arctic Council member-states and Permanent Participants. This document is a compromise, which doesn't make it less important. Significantly we've managed to confirm our joint aspiration for a stronger role of the Arctic Council as the key body both for multilateral interaction in the Arctic and for maintaining peace and dialogue in high latitudes. Given the current circumstances, this should not be underestimated.

Next year, 2026, we will mark the 30-years anniversary of the Arctic Council. It is up to us to decide with what kind of results we will approach this milestone. We are convinced that it is in the interests of all people living in the North and all international community in general to resume the full-scale work of the Arctic Council on an equal and non-politicized basis as soon as possible. Without regular Senior Arctic Officials' Executive meetings, Arctic Council Plenary sessions and restoration of political dialogue, it is hardly possible to imagine the effective fulfillment of the AC mandate as outlined in the Ottawa Declaration of 1996 and other founding documents. The activities of the Council's Working and Expert Groups will remain limited and, in fact, "invisible" to the international community. The implementation of much-needed projects and initiatives will be constantly postponed.

It is not in the interests of the Arctic Council itself to continue functioning in this intermediate state. Failure to resume its fully-fledged work in the foreseeable future will not only undermine the Council's international credibility and the trust in it but will also inevitably raise the question of its added value in general. Hopefully, by the time of the Chairship transition from Denmark to Sweden in May 2027 we will have achieved more substantial progress than today.

As President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin stated at the plenary session of the 6th International Arctic Forum "Arctic – Territory of Dialogue" on March 27, 2025 in Murmansk, "we have constantly advocated for equitable cooperation in the region, we are prepared to collaborate not only with the Arctic States but with everyone who like-mindedly share responsibility for ensuring a stable and sustainable future and is capable of adopting balanced decisions".

We are convinced that the Arctic Council still has a potential to restore the "spirit of cooperation". The Arctic States bear primary responsibility for the present and the future of the Arctic and many of the region's challenges require collective and well-considered decisions.

The upcoming two years of the Danish Chairship of the Arctic Council will be truly decisive for the Council's future prospects. We sincerely wish our Danish colleagues strength and good luck in this important role.

The outgoing Norwegian Chairship has done a huge work, which now needs to be followed-up increasingly. Takk, Norge, we thank Oslo and the Arctic Council Secretariat for their efforts.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone on the 80th Anniversary of the Great Victory over Nazism – truly important date for the whole progressive mankind.

Thank you for your attention.