

Arctic Council Chair

Senior Arctic Officials 6 – 7 November, 2001

October 16, 2001

Paper prepared by the Chair

JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 2002

1. The Senior Arctic Officials in Rovaniemi, June 2001

The Senior Arctic Officials gathered in Rovaniemi on 12 - 13 June 2001 and discussed how to influence on the preparations for the Johannesburg 2002 Summit on Sustainable Development and agreed on the following initial steps:

? **The Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) welcome “The Conclusions of the Chair at the 10th Anniversary of Arctic Environmental Cooperation , Preparing for Johannesburg 2002 – An Initial Arctic Message” (MD 4) and endorse them as a springboard for the AC’s preparations for the Johannesburg 2002; World Summit on Sustainable Development. The SAOs encouraged the Chair to consider preparations within the Arctic Council of supplementary contributions to the Johannesburg process as the preparations unfold. Statements made on behalf of the AC will be coordinated in advance and agreed by the SAOs.**

? **The SAOs noted the background paper (MD 10) prepared by the SDWG as a tentative work plan for preparation of participation in the WSSD process and requested the SDWG to update the plan if needed.**

? **The SAOs encouraged the Host Country and other AC parties to raise Arctic issues at the relevant occasions of the preparations of WSSD in line with the Barrow Declaration and on the basis on the Rovaniemi conclusions and possible other documents prepared later in relation to the more specific themes of the WSSD.**

? **The SAOs invited all the working groups and permanent participants to identify for themselves relevant themes in the preparations for the WSSD and prepare within their respective mandates substantial material as building blocks for the overall AC message to the Johannesburg process. The SAOs also welcome the UNEP’s initiative on having a special Arctic preparatory meeting for the WSSD.**

At the Anniversary Meeting of the Rovaniemi Process on 11 June 2001, the Host Country delivered the Conclusions of the Chair as an initial Arctic message to Johannesburg to the representative of UNCSO,

Mr Lowell Flanders. **The Rovaniemi discussions and this message has been acknowledged by the UN Secretary General in his report to the Fifty-Six Session of the General Assembly (Para 16)** (advanced unedited version 14 September, 2001).

The Johannesburg Summit website www.johannesburgsummit.org has a report on the Rovaniemi Anniversary Meeting in the section “Calendar of Preparatory Meetings for the World Summit”, including a link to the Arctic Council website.

2. Actions taken

In accordance with the mandate given in Rovaniemi the Host Country in close cooperation with the Arctic States and Permanent Participants and the IPS raised the Arctic voice at the UNECE Regional Ministerial Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Geneva, 24 – 25 September 2001. On the basis of the Rovaniemi Conclusions of the Chair the Host Country suggested with the support of all Arctic states, the Permanent Participants as well as the European Union to include in the Ministerial Statement a specific paragraph on sustainable use of Arctic natural resources. This Arctic paragraph was adopted (Para 12). The Permanent Participants supported by IPS were successful in their efforts to attach the attention of the meeting to the policies of Arctic indigenous people(s). The leader of the delegation of the Host Country, Minister Kimmo Sasi paid attention to the Arctic in his speech. The UNECE meeting can be considered as a **political breakthrough** for the Arctic. For the first time an UN institution recognizes specific Arctic concerns within the Rio process.

3. Next steps

The Arctic has become visible in the UNECE region. The next challenge is to raise Arctic concerns at the global level. **The UN Secretary General report to the General Assembly can serve as a stable stepping-stone.**

UNCSD 10 is serving as the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit. Three meetings are ahead of us:

1. 2nd PrepCom New York 28.1. – 8.2. 2002
2. 3rd PrepCom New York 25.3. – 5.4. 2002
3. 4th PrepCom Indonesia 27.5. – 7.6. 2002

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO) and the Center for the Study of Marine Policy, University of Delaware organise the conference “Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10 “ in Paris on December 3 through 7, 2001. The Chair of the SAOs has been invited to participate in a panel titled “ The Regional Scale of Ocean Governance: Examining Key Ingredients for Success in Regional Cooperation.”

A high level brainstorming event will be organised in New York 16 – 17.1. 2002.

The Arctic Council and its subsidiary bodies could influence on the further preparations for Johannesburg as follows:

1. Coordinated action among Arctic States, the Permanent Participants and interested Permanent Observers at the official preparatory meetings. Coordinated action could include exchange of information and preparation of possible proposals prior to official preparatory meetings via e-mail, informal meetings in the margins and coordinated actions as appropriate at the meetings.

2. Preparation of information material to be circulated at official preparatory meetings. This material should present Arctic interests and concerns in a nutshell and give emphasis to Arctic goals in the negotiations. The information package should correspond with the agenda of the Johannesburg 2002 Summit. The substance of the package could be up-dated as the preparatory process unfolds.

At the Espoo Meeting the SAOs should continue discussions on the main message of the Arctic Council, which should be developed on the basis of existing ministerial positions. At the meeting in Geneva the Rovaniemi Conclusions of the Chair were circulated. This document served well and was actively used as a source of information on basic Arctic concerns during the negotiations of the Ministerial document. The SAOs should discuss whether this document is still valid for up-coming situations and how it could be supplemented by additional documentation. One practical way forward could be to complement this document with specific facts sheets on relevant themes on the Johannesburg agenda. These fact sheets should be prepared by the Arctic Council Working Groups and other subsidiary bodies and endorsed by the SAOs. The fact sheets could largely be based on existing material and information already gathered.

The agenda of JS 2002 is still open. The UNECE ministerial meeting identified the following priorities:

- ?? Poverty eradication
- ?? Sustainable management and conservation of the natural resource base
- ?? Making globalisation work for sustainable development
- ?? Improving governance and democratic processes at all levels
- ?? Financing sustainable development
- ?? Education, science and technology for decision-making
- ?? Environment and Health
- ?? Sustainable consumption and production patterns

An Arctic angle could certainly be identified under most of this themes. It seems however more productive to concentrate Arctic Council activities on the more relevant ones. It should be kept in mind that the final agenda and the goals of the JS 2002 may change considerably at the world wide level. At this stage a need to prepare at least three fact sheets can be seen:

1. Environment and Health (AMAP and SDWG)

2. Sustainable management and conservation of the natural resource base (CAFF, PAME and SDWG)

3. Improving governance and democratic processes at all levels (the Arctic as a case, including the cooperation between governments and indigenous people(s)). (Host Country and SDWG)

The existing AMAP fact sheets on POPs, heavy metals and radioactivity should be used in relevant situations. Fact sheets prepared for a world target group should be compressed and popularised and avoid descriptions of AC internal structures and preparatory processes.

The Arctic Council Secretariat will serve as the focal point in these preparations. The WG:s are requested to deliver there contributions to the Secretariat **by the end of this year**. A first version of an Arctic Information Package should be finalized **by January 15, 2002**.

3. Actions in Johannesburg

The SAOs should follow-up their discussions at the meeting in Oulu in May 2002. This meeting should agree upon actions in Johannesburg.