

Remarks by Michael Stickman,  
International Chair, Arctic  
Athabaskan Council

Kiruna, Sweden

May 15, 2013

Good morning. My name is Michael Stickman. I'm the International Chair of the Arctic Athabaskan Council, and live in Nulato, a village on the Yukon river in Alaska. With me are Chief Gary Harrison from Chickaloon, also in Alaska, Bill Erasmus the Yellowknife-based Canadian Vice-Chair of ACC, and John English, a well-known academic from the University of Waterloo in Ontario. John is completing a book on the history of the Arctic Council. We'll all want to be in that one!

I have very little time, so I'm going to make three points and end with some comments on observers. First, I want to congratulate CAFF for completing the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment. May I say "at last"? AAC wishes good luck to Risa Smith of Canada, CAFF's incoming Chair. This assessment puts a moral requirement on us to take Arctic

perspectives into global processes,  
particularly to implement the Convention  
on Biological Diversity. I'm an <sup>Athabaskan And A)</sup> American, so  
can I state once more that AAC <sup>CITE222</sup>  
recommends that the US Senate ratify this  
Convention.

My second point is about climate change.  
Four years ago ministers set up a task force  
to look at Short-Lived Climate Forcers,  
particularly Black Carbon. The science is in.  
Reducing Black Carbon emissions will slow  
climate change **and** improve the quality of  
the air we breathe. So, we can and should  
move from research to action. This is why  
AAC in Canada last month petitioned the  
Inter-American Commission on Human  
Rights to encourage Canada to more  
stringently regulate emissions of Black  
Carbon. *FOR YOUR INFORMATION Chief Bill  
ERASMUS HAS COPIES FOR ANYONE THAT WANTS  
ONE*

Most of us around this table were looking for a commitment in the Kiruna Declaration to negotiate an international agreement or instrument to reduce emissions of Black Carbon. This is not what we got. Instead, the declaration establishes a new task force that seems rather like the old task force to “develop arrangements on actions”. I don’t know what that means. With the greatest of respect, may I invite Minister Lavrov to tell us what it means, for Russia has strongly opposed any process leading to an agreement on Black Carbon.

My third point is about marine oil pollution. Once more the Council has not grasped the nettle. We are establishing a task force to establish “an action plan or other arrangement”, when we should be initiating negotiation of an international agreement to prevent marine oil pollution.

I want to finish my short remarks with some comments about observers. Everyone in this room—and more than 320 peoples are registered for this meeting—is concerned about the integrity of the Arctic and its people as a result of emissions of Persistent Organic Pollutants, Greenhouse Gases, Black Carbon, Mercury and other substances. Most of what comes here is from countries outside our region.

So, we need to talk to these countries. We need to persuade them to change their behaviour in order to protect ourselves, our homes, our food, and our cultures. Can we take some of the politics out of this, and talk about how best to engage non-Arctic states with Arctic interests? We should use the Arctic Council to engage non-Arctic states.

I'd like to speak more about this, but I'm sure the Chair wants to move on. Let me end by thanking Sweden and mentioning Gustaf and Andreas by name. Your chairmanship was professionally carried out. I look forward to spending time in northern Canada. My thanks for your attention.

