

Sweden

Let me begin by (joining the choir) with some words of appreciation for the Norwegian chair-ship of the Council. You have guided us through some difficult times. Those times, unfortunately, remain with us. Nevertheless, the Council has been able to resume some of its work, and maybe the most important work, which is carried out in the working groups. Furthermore, we have a joint statement which manifests that we, the eight Arctic states and the six Permanent Participants, remain strongly committed to the Arctic Council as the pre-eminent forum for Arctic cooperation. We welcome this. So, thank you Norway, thank you Morten and Solveig and the whole Norwegian team. Our thanks also to the Secretariat for your valuable support.

We hope this progress can continue during the next chair-ship and would like to take the opportunity to welcome the Kingdom of Denmark as the new chair. Sweden supports you in your role and the work you have outlined in your work-program, which coincides so well with the Arctic Council Strategic Plan 2021-2030. We look forward to a close coordination with you. As incoming chair 2027, we intend to take our role as “supporting act” seriously.

As Arctic states, we have a joint responsibility towards the Arctic region, its’ sensitive environment and the people living there. The Arctic is a place affected by what happens globally and what happens in the Arctic has global consequences, not least, but not only, as regards climate change. In these volatile times, the role of the Arctic Council as the primary forum for coordination of our management of the region may be more important than ever. We need to safeguard this role.

Sweden has a strong and unwavering commitment to the Arctic Council. It is manifesting cooperation between eight Arctic states, in close partnership and dialogue with the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, in a way that transcends national borders. It is a unique and invaluable body.

Finally, let me finish with where I started. I would like to repeat our appreciation for the work that has been conducted in the working groups. This has been indispensable - you are the engine room, so to speak, of the Council. Without you we would lose our momentum in steering the Council forward. So, thank you and keep up the good work!

Thank you