

## ARCTIC COUNCIL 3RD MINISTERIAL MEETING

Saariselkä, Inari  
October 9-10, 2002

### **Mr. Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland**

#### *Theme Discussion 2: New Focus on Arctic Human Development*

- Thank you all for very interesting and valuable contributions. I think this has been an extremely useful discussion and I hope it will be adequately reflected in the Inari Declaration which we will be adopting tomorrow. I think we all listened particularly closely to the presentation of the ACIA. The finalization of ACIA will be eagerly awaited by all of us and I'm sure none of us would have anything against having the final report earlier but we all also realize it is a rather time demanding task and we just have to be patient and wait for the results. But meanwhile I think it was extremely useful for all the Member States of the Arctic Council, and also countries outside Arctic to hear these new results and therefore I want to thank warmly Dr Corell for this excellent presentation. I hope we all can use this information in our own countries in furthering the discussion and debate on climate change. This presentation forms the factual basis on which we must base our policies in the future.
- Even if man and nature in the Arctic can't be considered separately the Arctic Council has faced the need to strengthen its activities regarding socio-economic issues. The new initiative to prepare an Arctic Human Development Report is an important response to these expectations.
- In the review of the structures of work the future role of SDWG was carefully studied. The offer by Canada to host a SDWG Secretariat is great news and will contribute to the systematization of our promotion of sustainable development. Finland will contribute with a fair share to the budget of the Secretariat.
- In view of expanding exploitation of hydrocarbons, metals and minerals Arctic states will face challenges in securing that these developments benefit also the local population, including indigenous communities