



Arctic Youth Summit

ROVANIEMI DECLARATION

October 11, 2018



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The 11th of October, 2018, Rovaniemi, Finland

On behalf of the participants representing the youth of the eight Arctic States of the inaugural Arctic Youth Summit, convening in Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland, joined by the representatives of the observer states Germany, Singapore, and India,

Establishing the commitment for the Arctic Youth Summit to work towards conservation of biodiversity, cultural equality, and mitigation of anthropogenic climate change through constructive cooperation in the Arctic,

Recognizing the commitment of the Arctic Council and all its member states and permanent participants to respond jointly to new opportunities and challenges in the Arctic, **noting** the substantial progress the Council has made to strengthen circumpolar cooperation, and **echoing** the important leadership role of the Council in taking concrete action through enhanced results-oriented cooperation,

Recognizing the youth voice and the unique perspective such voices hold in the sustainable and equitable development of the Arctic, and **encouraging** participation and opportunities for youth in the present day for innovation and creative resolutions, and **recognizing** the need for youth to develop capacity to become both the leaders of tomorrow and the leaders of today,

Noting indigenous peoples' rights to self governance as a core mandate and **recognizing** their crucial role to drive diverse economies, cultures, and societies, while **confirming** our commitment to seek the free, prior, and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned,

Recognizing that indigenous knowledge should be considered of equal importance to western knowledge constructs within policy and research contexts,

Ensuring our commitment to sustainable development in the Arctic region, adhering to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as set by Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly working within an Arctic framework,

Recognising that detrimental climate change symptoms and habitat degradation are threatening Arctic biodiversity, and **stressing** that impacts on the Arctic lead ultimately to effects at the global scale which are not restricted to Arctic borders,

Noting conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem protection as a core mandate of the Arctic Youth Summit, and recognizing the need for environmental education, awareness, and management with respect to Arctic environments, and **recognizing** the crucial role the environment plays in all aspects of the sustainability of Arctic life and economy,

Recognizing the opportunities and challenges resulting from climate change in the Arctic, including the associated uncertainties

Empowering Youth Voices

Recognizing the stake of youth in the future of the Arctic and the importance of including youth in the policy process,

Establishing a platform for the youth of the Arctic who value conservation of Arctic biodiversity, cultural equality in the Arctic, and elimination of anthropogenic climate change,

Acknowledging the body of youth as a gathering of current and future leaders who make change within their own communities, and that the organization serves as a unique perspective on questions concerning the Arctic,

Ensuring this body of youth serves as a platform for young people in the Arctic to share ideas, perspectives, and opinions on common issues affecting their way of life,

Ensuring the organization seeks to be representative of young people in the Arctic, by adopting a Diversity Strategy which includes a variety of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religions, regions, culture, interest, physical abilities and experience,

Employing this distinctive organization to further strengthen Arctic youth's substantial work within the Arctic,

Recognizing the need for the organization to gain observer status in the Arctic Council and **emphasizing** the need for the Council to see the organization as a resource providing youth input and action

Increasing Opportunities in Communities

Reaffirming the council's commitment to knowledge sharing, educational resources, and telehealth and their important to successful communities and a successful Arctic,

Noting with significant concern that several communities in the Arctic lack access to affordable, high-quality broadband thus hindering access to telehealth resources, educational resources, knowledge sharing, and economic opportunities and **encouraging** the Council to better Arctic communities by addressing the lack of high-quality, affordable broadband,

Recognizing the Arctic Region is facing a mental health crisis among its' people, particularly their youth, and **encouraging** improving access to telehealth in rural areas as a means to provide baseline services and support in situations of emergency and ensuring wellbeing when in-person professional care is not readily accessible,

Recognizing the internet provides many educational resources without rural youth having to leave their communities thus improving their quality of life, increasing their opportunities and giving them the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in the 21st century while allowing them to maintain stronger ties to their home and culture,

Reiterating the role broadband access can play in raising awareness by sharing stories and experiences, particularly those of indigenous culture and **recognizing** the importance of sharing knowledge between northern and southern communities,

Noting the current efforts being made to expand broadband and **encouraging** the Arctic Council to support further development by implementing the Arctic Economic Council's "Recommendations for an Interconnected Arctic,"

Raising Awareness About Arctic Issues

Noting that the impacts of climate change are already impacting Arctic and non-Arctic communities and **encouraging** the shift of conversation from addressing climate change as a future issue to addressing climate change as a current issue,

Implementing a strategic communication plan that educates the globe on Arctic Issues and encourages ambitious action for nature conservation both within and beyond Arctic borders,

Ensuring that the information reaches the public, the youth, scientists and policy makers and be easily understood by people of all education and professions and **noting** that the information should include target-group oriented recommendations for effective actions.

Photo on cover by Eva Wu



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