



The First Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum

25-26 February in the European Parliament, Brussels

The Northern Dimension as an important element of EU policy was first recognised at the Luxembourg European Council in December 1997. Over the years, enlargement of the Union has increased the presence of Northern and Baltic states in the EU, and substantially lengthened the common border of the EU and the Russian Federation.

The Northern Dimension addresses the specific regional challenges of these regions and aims to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the EU and its member states, the northern countries associated with the EU under the EEA (Norway and Iceland) and the Russian Federation. The Northern Dimension is implemented within the framework of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Russia.

On 24 November 2006 in Helsinki, Norway, Iceland, Russia and the EU adopted a new Northern Dimension Policy and welcomed the establishment of a Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum.

The Northern Dimension Parliamentary Conference, held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 28 February to 1 March 2007 brought together parliamentarians from the region calling for preparations to begin for a Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum, to be held every two years in order to discuss issues of common concern and examine the evolution of the new Northern Dimension policy.

The main theme of the Forum should be the development of the Northern Dimension Policy in the Baltic Sea region and in the Arctic region. The Forum aims at coordinating the policies of the parliamentary bodies within the Northern Dimension region.

The parliamentary assemblies invited to the Forum are representing all the national parliaments in the Northern Dimension Region, including Canada and the United States of America as well as the EU institutions and governmental bodies from the region.

FIRST NORTHERN DIMENSION PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

25 - 26 February 2009
European Parliament
Brussels
PHS Anna Lindh Room 1A002

DRAFT PROGRAMME

The Northern Dimension

First Session

Wednesday 25 February 2009

15.00 Opening of the Forum by Mr Hans-Gert PÖTTERING, President of the European Parliament

Co-Chairs: Mrs Sinikka BOHLIN (t.b.c.) and Mrs Christina GESTRIN

Addresses by and exchange of views with:

- Mr Sergey LAVROV, Foreign Minister of Russia, Chair of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (t.b.c.)
- Mr Jan KOHOUT, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, representing the President-in-Office of the EU Council
- Mr Alexander STUBB, Foreign Minister of Finland (t.b.c.)
- Mrs Benita FERRERO-WALDNER, Commissioner, the European Commission (t.b.c.)
- Ms Diana WALLIS, Vice President of the European Parliament
- Ms Lisa MURKOWSKI, US Senator, Alaska (t.b.c.)
- Ms Christina GESTRIN, President of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference
- Ms Ingibjörg Sólrún GÍSLADÓTTIR, Foreign Minister of Iceland (t.b.c.)
- Mr Jonas GAHR STØRE, Foreign Minister of Norway (t.b.c.)
- Ms Sinikka BOHLIN, President of the Nordic Council

- Ms Hill-Marta SOLBERG, President of the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (t.b.c.)
- Mr/Ms....., representing the Council of the Baltic Sea States (t.b.c.)

18.30 Meeting of the Drafting Committee
PHS 1A002

20.00 Dinner hosted by Mr Hans-Gert PÖTTERING, President of the European Parliament (**Invitation only**)
Members' restaurant

Thursday 26 February 2009

08.00 Meeting of the Drafting Committee
PHS 1A 002

The Northern Dimension

Second Session

09.00-12.00 Opening of the Session by Ms Bilyana RAEVA, Chair of the European Parliament Delegation (t.b.c.)

Co-Chairs: Mrs Hill-Marta SOLBERG (t.b.c.) and Mrs Bilyana RAEVA (t.b.c.)

Continuation of the debate

12.00-12.20 Adoption of a Final Statement by the First Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum

12.30 Closure of the First Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum