

Sixth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum

Conference Statement

1. Members of the Icelandic *Althingi*, the European Parliament, the Norwegian *Storting*, the *State Duma* and the *Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation*, met in Bodø on 19-20 November 2019;
2. With the presence of indigenous peoples' representatives, regional inter-parliamentary organizations, governmental institutions and councils of the North, at the Sixth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum to discuss the development and progress of the Northern Dimension cooperation;
3. *Celebrating* the progress and the successes during 20 years of Northern Dimension cooperation, including 13 years of the renewed Northern Dimension as a shared policy of the four partners: the European Union, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation, on the basis of equal partnership;
4. *Underlining* that the Northern Dimension policy is a unique multilateral framework and a successful model to promote stability and cooperation in the area, and that the activities within the partnerships have contributed considerably to the cross-border dialogue and cooperation;
5. *Stressing* the importance of meetings on a political level and supporting the convening of a ministerial level meeting within the Northern Dimension in 2020 to give new perspective to the cooperation;
6. *Recognizing* the mutual value in increased and improved cross-border cooperation to realize the potential in the Northern areas of Europe; and *encouraging* the continuation of such cooperation between the EU, its member states, Iceland, Norway and Russia in the period 2021-2027, as well as broader involvement of partners in various formats of cooperation; *highlighting* that the Arctic has long been an area of constructive international cooperation and *stressing* the importance to keep the Arctic as a low-tension area;

7. *Acknowledging* that the regional forums for cooperation in Northern Europe have improved their cooperation, and that continued and improved coordination will benefit all partners; and *highlighting* that global challenges need global solutions and coordinated cooperation of all European, national, regional and local authorities of Northern Dimension countries and the European Union;
8. *Recognising* the positive effects of increased cross-border cooperation and people-to-people programmes to promote sustainable growth and social development in the Northern Dimension region;
9. *Stressing* the need to develop programmes and activities, which focus on the overall aims of the Northern Dimension policy, with regard to the relevant policies and strategies of the EU, Iceland, Norway and Russia; and to *ensure* sufficient funding in all partnerships of the Northern Dimension;
10. *Recognizing* the need to pay particular attention to the rights and special needs of indigenous people living in the Northern Dimension partner territories, including in the spheres of transport and logistics, culture, health, social well-being and environment;
11. *Encouraging* the Northern Dimension to incorporate voices of the youth in venues and engagements organised by the Northern Dimension.

The sixth Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum asks all partners of the Northern Dimension to;

Regarding the Cooperation and Partnership on Transport and Logistics

12. *Recognizing* the need for a strong digital communication net and satellite navigation systems to enhance cooperation, promote compatibility, commerce, scientific collaboration and culture in the Northern Dimension region;

13. *Stress* that partners in all major infrastructure development should consider how such development contributes in reducing greenhouse emissions and encourage the partners to proceed with the ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets;
14. *Stress* that climate change and its consequences need to be resolutely addressed by all partners, and *underline* the importance of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement, and *taking* particular notice to its article 2, paragraph 1(a): «holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce risks and impacts of climate change»;
15. *Strengthen* sustainable cross-border cooperation that promotes business development and commerce by connecting ports, railways and road transport;
16. *Continue* the work to promote the Northern Dimension area as one of the core areas for development of global transport routes and as a testing ground for new transport technology;
17. *Cooperate* in developing coordinated transport plans;
18. *Strengthen* the cross-border cooperation on preparedness and response to improve the safety for the people and the environment;

Regarding the Partnership on Environmental Cooperation

19. *Continue* to develop the successful cooperation on wastewater treatment for healthier oceans, and *explore* the possibilities to address other environmental challenges, such as marine litter pollution, building on the Northern Dimension model of cooperation;
20. *Continue* cooperation in the nuclear dimension of the partnership, and the important work of cleaning up and decommissioning nuclear waste;

21. *Continue* to explore ways of carbon binding by forestation, soil conservation and various other methods under development;

Regarding the Partnership on Culture

22. *Recognize* the importance of culture in building strong and prosperous societies and attracting young people to the region;

23. *Acknowledge* culture as a key instrument to develop the identity and attractiveness of the Northern Dimension region, which will benefit cultural tourism and growth;

24. *Underline* the importance of cross-border exchange and cooperation to build understanding and trust between people;

25. *Use and develop* the partnership on culture to connect cultural institutions and creative industries;

26. *Welcome* the establishment of the Secretariat of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture in Riga, which will further enhance the cooperation, and greet the success of the Partnership's Annual Forums in St. Petersburg;

Regarding the Partnership on Public Health and Social Well-Being

27. *Recognize* the multi-sectoral nature of health determinants and the profound effects of policies made in all sectors on people's health;

28. *Underline* the importance of international cooperation in addressing the factors that shape human health, especially regarding healthy ageing, integrated care, digitalization and climate change as well as non-communicable diseases, including alcohol and substance abuse and mental health, and calls on the Northern Dimension Partnership on Health and Social Well-being to contribute strongly in this crucial work in the future action plans;

29. *Urge* the partner countries to increase awareness of global health impacts such as antibiotic resistance and to encourage best practices among the general public, health workers and policy makers to avoid the further emergence and spread of antibiotic resistance;

30. *Contribute* to the development of the new NDPHS Strategy that will guide the Partnership's work after 2020 and *collaborate* towards the implementation of the Strategy once it is adopted;

31. *Acknowledge* the Northern Dimension Business Council's efforts in supporting economic cooperation in the Northern Dimension area, *welcome* the XI Annual Northern Dimension Business Forum to take place in St. Petersburg in April 2020 and *take note* of the interaction between the Business Council and the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture;

32. *Welcome* the kind invitation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation to host the Seventh Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum in 2021.