Welcome to Canada’s North

Canada is pleased to welcome meetings of the Arctic Council to our North over the coming two years. We will highlight Canada’s dynamic and vibrant North and showcase its peoples, cultures and stories.

Leona Aglukkaq
Canada’s Minister for the Arctic Council

The Honorable Leona Aglukkaq, an Inuk from Nunavut, is Canada’s Minister for the Arctic Council. Her appointment underlines the priority that the Government of Canada places on the Arctic as well as its commitment to ensure that the region’s future is in the hands of Northerners.

Canada’s chairmanship

The Arctic Council was established in 1996, with Canada witnessing its first chair as chair. Canada is proud to launch its second term as chair. Canada’s chairmanship will put Northerners first.

The theme of Canada’s chairmanship is “development for the people of the North,” with a focus on responsible Arctic resource development, safe Arctic shipping and sustainable circumpolar communities.

Strengthening the Arctic Council

Since its inception, the Council has undertaken important work to address the unique challenges and opportunities facing the Arctic region. As these challenges evolve, so must the Arctic Council.

The Arctic Council Program during Canada’s Chairmanship (2013-15)

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Development for the people of the North

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Sustainable circumpolar communities

Canada has a clear vision for the Arctic, in which self-reliant individuals live in healthy, vital communities, manage their own affairs and shape their own destinies.

The Arctic Council recognizes and celebrates the importance of traditional ways of life for Northern communities and will work to increase regional and global awareness of these ways of life.

The Arctic Council has long understood the importance and value of traditional and local knowledge. This knowledge has enabled Arctic residents to survive in the harsh environment for millennia. The Council will develop recommendations for incorporating traditional and local knowledge into its work.

The Arctic is facing rapid changes in its climate and physical environment, with widespread effects on Northern communities and ecosystems.

Short-lived climate pollutants such as black carbon and methane contribute to Arctic climate change. Addressing short-lived climate pollutants offers the potential for health benefits as well as climate benefits as part of a comprehensive strategy to address climate change.

Across the circumpolar region, communities are adapting to these changes. The Arctic Council will facilitate the sharing of communities’ knowledge and best practices.

By promoting mental wellness, the Council will increase the ability of Arctic residents to thrive and adapt to the many changes affecting the Arctic.

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