

## **YAKUTSK DECLARATION - 2015**

**On the occasion of the 12th General Assembly of the Northern Forum  
Yakutsk, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)  
The Russian Federation, 4-6 November 2015**

We, the governors of the northern regions, gathered in the city of Yakutsk, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia November 6, 2015 at the 12th General Assembly of the Northern Forum, in order to sum up the Chairmanship of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in the Northern Forum,

1. **Confirming** the readiness of the northern regions together to respond to new opportunities and global challenges in the North, noting the need for consolidation of joint efforts for the development of interregional cooperation in the North for the benefit of the peoples of the northern regions,
2. **Noting** the considerable intensification of international cooperation in the Arctic due to the ongoing climate change and opening prospects of development of natural resources, which will have a direct impact on the sustainable development of all regions, not only located in the Arctic, but also those who have close economic ties with them,
3. **Reaffirming** the commitment of the northern regions to the mission of the Northern Forum, aimed at improving the quality of life in the North, support sustainable development of northern regions, as well as protecting the fragile northern nature and biodiversity conservation,
4. **Recognizing** the need to strengthen the role of the governors in the development of interregional cooperation in the North, strengthening the voice of the northern regions in the international circumpolar cooperation and improving the organizational structure of the Northern Forum for realizing the potential of the organization to ensure the sustainable development and efficient cooperation between the northern regions,
5. **Recognizing** the need to develop new models in the implementation of inter-regional cooperation in the North and reset the format of cooperation between regions and partners in the framework of the Northern Forum in favor of strengthening the role of governors

and the premiers of the northern regions and priority support for projects aimed at concrete results for the population of the northern regions,

6. **Acknowledging** the contribution of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in the preservation and strengthening of the position of the Northern Forum in international arena and progress made by the Northern Forum in promoting circumpolar cooperation, as well as **reiterating** the importance of the leading role of the Northern Forum in the development of interregional co-operation, results-oriented for the sustainable development of the North,

**HEREBY:**

#### **CURRENT STATUS AND TRENDS**

7. **Note** that at the start of the Chairmanship of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Northern Forum was in a difficult situation due to lower activity of member regions, the release of certain regions from the Northern Forum, the financial difficulties in the organization, but thanks to the efforts of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia ) as the chairing region managed to preserve the viability of the organization and to strengthen the position of the Northern Forum in the international circumpolar cooperation,

8. **Express appreciation** to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Ambassador at Large, the Senior Arctic Official of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Council, Vladimir Barbin, the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation for all the support of the Northern Forum,

9. **Welcome** the expansion of membership in the Northern Forum and new members: Magadanskaya oblast, Russia, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia, Primorsky Krai, Russia, and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Russia,

10. **Welcome** the entry of the Northern Forum Business Partners Ltd. "Sulus", St. Petersburg and Fur company "sledge", Yakutsk, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)

11. **Call** on other regions who are interested in international co-operation in the North and in the Arctic, to join the Northern Forum for collaboration and unite efforts to address the global and local challenges that are now facing the peoples of the North,

12. **Reaffirm** that the project activities of the Northern Forum is a platform for strengthening cooperation and collaboration among member regions, but at the same time decide on changes to the structure of the Northern Forum and the establishment of working groups at the level of ministries, departments, committees of the regions responsible for activities of governments in the region corresponding to the priorities of the Northern Forum to improve the management of project activities, analysis of issues and problems to be the consolidation of intellectual, material and financial resources of members of the Northern Forum,



13. **Acknowledge** the need to continue those projects that were previously approved as a projects of the Northern Forum and the stepwise of their inclusion in the activities of the newly established working groups,

14. **Reaffirm** the need to create associated secretariats in North America and Northern Europe, along with the main secretariat in the city of Yakutsk in order to better coordinate and strengthen the work with the regions,

15. **Underline** the need for fruitful and constructive representation and strengthen the role of the Northern Forum in the Arctic Council, which is the major intergovernmental forum, defining the main directions of the further sustainable development of the Arctic region,

16. **Express appreciation** to the President of Iceland Olafur Ragnar Grimsson for support of the Northern Forum and the Administration of Akureyri for a successful Regional Coordinators meeting held in October 2014, which made timely measures to improve the organization and thus marked a new stage in the development of the Northern Forum,

17. **Instruct** the Regional Coordinators Committee to develop strategy of development and proposals for the comprehensive reform of the Northern Forum, and make necessary changes and amendments to the Bylaws and the Rules of Procedures of the Northern Forum,

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS COOPERATION**

18. **Welcome** the establishment of the Arctic Economic Council and **express** our willingness to engage in constructive cooperation for the economic development of the northern territories and strengthen the role of regional governments in the development of business cooperation in the North,

19. **Recognize** the need for greater involvement of business partners in the work of the Northern Forum, and to strengthen business cooperation between northern regions,

20. **Acknowledge** with satisfaction successful and fruitful work of the Working Group of the Northern Forum project "Renewable energy for remote communities" and congratulate the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) with success of the annual international conference "Development of Renewable Energy of the Far East of Russia" in Yakutsk in June 2014 and 2015,

#### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH IN THE NORTH**

21. **Note** the fruitful work of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) for the project "Human in the Arctic," in which, on the basis of the assessment report of the Arctic Council Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR I-II) and social indicators (ASI), started development of comprehensive methods for assessment of living conditions of the population in the northern regions,

22. **Acknowledge** successful work of the Northern Forum Working Group on monitoring infectious diseases, and **congratulate** on the successful holding of the symposium with international participation "New priorities in TB control in the circumpolar Arctic regions", held within the framework of the 12th General Assembly of the Northern Forum, 2-3 September 2015 in Yakutsk,

23. **Congratulate** the Northern Forum project working group on the fight against dangerous dependence with success of the seminar on the fight against alcoholism among indigenous peoples held in Yakutsk,

24. **Recognize** the need to strengthen cooperation between the northern regions in the field of science and education, and **note** with satisfaction the establishment of close cooperation between the Northern Forum and the University of the Arctic in the framework of the signed agreements on cooperation,

25. **Welcome** the initiative of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) on the creation of the International Center of Culture and Arts at the Arctic State Institute of Culture and Arts, and **support** the work of the center as part of the project work of the Northern Forum,

26. **Support** the project of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) on the creation of the Arctic International School, which will implement the new technologies and provide a global standard education and **express** readiness to render all possible assistance to promote the project and receive support from the Sustainable Development Working Group of the Arctic Council, attract members of the Northern Forum to participate in the activities of the newly established Arctic International School,

#### ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

27. **Express appreciation** to Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) for the success of the "Youth Ecological Forum" held in Yakutsk in June 2014 and **encourage** member regions of the Northern Forum to continue the successful practice of "Youth Eco-Forum" in the regions,

28. **Congratulate** the Khanty-Mansisky Autonomous Okrug - Yugra with the success of the International Ecological Action "To Save and Preserve" in 2014 and 2015,

29. **Acknowledge** activities of the Northern Forum project working group on development of protected areas, and **congratulate** on the successful holding of the seminar "Mechanisms to ensure the regime of protected areas" in St. Petersburg, Russia, with the support of the Government of Leningrad region, and **support** the adoption of its resolution,

30. **Express appreciation** to the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) on the successful environmental campaign "Nature and Us" in 2014 and 2015, which was designed to ensure broad public participation in environmental protection, and to provide opportunities for environmental education of the younger generation,



## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

31. **Acknowledge** the need to strengthen cooperation with Indigenous Peoples organizations and engage their representatives in the work of the Northern Forum to ensure that the voices of local communities of indigenous peoples taken into account in decision-making relating to the legitimate rights and interests of these peoples, and in implementation of joint projects and initiatives,

32. **Note** that there is a need to strengthen cooperation between the northern regions to preserve and develop traditional livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples - reindeer herding, hunting and fishing,

33. Express appreciation to the Khanty-Mansiysky Autonomous Okrug - Ugra and Park of predatory animals in Orsha, Sweden, for successful festival "The bears and indigenous peoples of the North", held in village Kazim, Khanty-Mansiysky Autonomous Okrug - Yugra, and for success of the exhibition on the results of this festival in the town of Orsha, Sweden,

## PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

34. **Assign** the Regional Coordinators Committee and Secretariat of the Northern Forum to prepare proposals for strengthening the role of the Northern Forum in the Arctic Council to change the status and working more closely with the working groups and the structures of the Arctic Council in addressing the pressing challenges of sustainable development of the North,

35. **Reaffirm** the importance of participation in the annual international forum of the Arctic Circle, which is held in Reykjavik, Iceland, under the patronage of the President of Iceland Olafur Ragnar Grimsson and **express** gratitude to the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Secretariat of the Northern Forum, the University of the Arctic and the Arctic Portal for the success of breakout sessions on the activities of the Northern Forum and the development of interregional cooperation in the North,

36. **Underline** that there is need for further development of fruitful cooperation with the agencies and bodies of the United Nations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Health Organization (WHO) and others.,

37. **Reiterate** the need for increased participation of the Northern Forum in the work of Global Forum of Regional Associations (FOGAR), the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4sd) and **instruct** the Regional Coordinators Committee and Secretariat to develop the forms and mechanisms of cooperation with these organizations,

38. **Emphasize** the need to strengthen cooperation with the European Union and its institutions, the University of the Arctic, the International Association of Social Science of the Arctic, the International Arctic Science Committee, the World Wildlife Fund, the Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council - indigenous and other organizations, and

**note** that the Northern Forum is ready to implement joint projects and activities for mutual support of initiatives aimed at sustainable development and improving the quality of life,

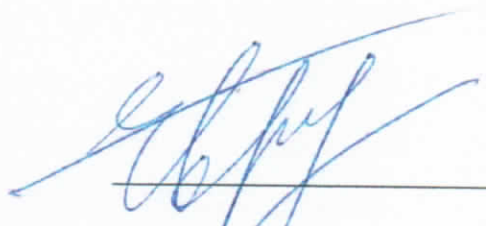
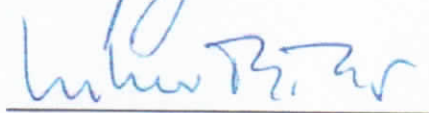
39. **Acknowledge** the need to establish close cooperation with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council. Due to the fact that the Barents Cooperation covers the regions of North-West Russia and Scandinavia, and Northern Forum for the rest of the circumpolar North, it is natural to establish a strategic partnership with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and Barents Regional Council and propose an agreement on cooperation,

40. **Express appreciation** to the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Secretariat of the Northern Forum for preparation of the XII General Assembly of the Northern Forum in Yakutsk,

41. **Express appreciation** to the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) for its fruitful work as the chair of the Northern Forum, to the Vice Chairs of the Northern Forum and **wish** success to Krasnoyarsky krai with the chairmanship in the Northern Forum in 2015-2017.


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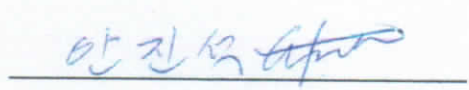
  


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Signed and approved by November 6, 2015  
in Yakutsk, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russian Federation