



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HOKKAIDO DECLARATION

**of the
Second General Assembly
of the Northern Forum**

**Sapporo, Japan
14 September 1995**

1. Preamble

- This declaration was adopted at the Hokkaido Second General Assembly of the Northern Forum in September 1995.
- This declaration identifies the future direction of The Northern Forum based on the present challenges facing its member regions. This declaration contains guidelines or goals for the Secretariat and the member regions.
- This document further enhances the principles set forth in both previous Northern Forum declarations.

2. Introduction

A. Creation of The Northern Forum

The Northern Forum was established as a permanent organization whose aims are to promote exchange and cooperation between northern regions, which shares similar climates and natural conditions.

B. The past five years of The Northern Forum

The Northern Forum was founded in 1991. Members have increased from 14 regions (9 countries) to 21 regions (10 countries). The Secretariat has been strengthened through various measures, including providing staff resources from member regions. Therefore, the Northern Forum has almost completed the consolidation of its organizational structure.

Priority projects, which serve as the center of Northern Forum activities, have increased significantly. These projects address environmental concerns, the economy, sustainable development, culture, transportation science & technology, and education

C. Problems Facing the Northern Forum

Northern regions are exposed to severe environmental conditions and are endowed with significant natural resources. It is generally believed that these regions are the final frontiers of exploitable resources. However; indigenous peoples and northern residents have long lived in northern regions, and have lived in accordance with unique lifestyles and cultures that harmonize with nature.

Northern regions have unique economic and cultural challenges. These issues are as sparse population, poor infrastructures, fragile economic systems, lack of economic vitality and remoteness from central governments to name a few.

In this context, countries in the northern regions, that used to have planned economies, such as Russia and Mongolia, are endeavoring to change to market economies and to decentralize. Whether these regions will be able to conduct such reform smoothly and stably is an important issue not only for them but also for the stability and prosperity of adjacent countries and regions and of the global community as a whole.

At the Governors' Summit of this conference participants not only spent time understanding the status of northern regions but also actively discussed the future course of northern regions. They formalized the results of the Governors' Summit as follows by examining the present problems facing northern regions by field and by examining comprehensive, ideal measures, that The

Northern Forum might adopt to deal with the aforementioned problems.

3. Present Problems by Field and Specific Countermeasures

A. Friendship, Goodwill and Peace

- The Northern Forum is an organization that addresses problems common to northern regions based on mutual cooperation. Prerequisites to doing so include respect, friendship, goodwill and mutual understanding among member regions. Furthermore, it is essential that the people in member regions understand The Northern Forum and cooperate with the organization and its goals.
- Member regions are affected by global. Therefore, the stability and peace in the global community is a prerequisite to The Northern Forum being able to conduct activities smoothly and continuously.
- It is important for The Northern Forum to publicize its activities to the people of the member regions, to promote interest in and understanding of The Northern Forum, and foster a consciousness of the people of member regions about issues of common concern. It is also necessary to take advantage of the existing sister and friendship affiliation between member regions of The Northern Forum.
- The aforementioned relationship between The Northern Forum and the people of member regions strengthens friendship among the northern regions as a whole. It is expected that such a relationship together with the relationships between countries offers a strong foundation for maintaining international peace.
- Specific measures to seek friendship, goodwill and peace:
 - Promoting UN peace activities within member regions to foster peace and friendship.
 - Hold regional conferences of sisterhood and friendship to exchange information and promote understanding.
 - Create The Junior Northern Forum to foster a future generation that will carry on The Northern Forum movement.

- Establish a Northern Forum most-favored citizen status program to promote friendship, goodwill and exchange at the individual level.
- Preparing symbols of The Northern Forum including a flag and logo to strengthen and identify member regions.

B. Industry and Economy

- Northern regions are endowed with rich natural resources. However, many regions have not fully developed these natural resources. They remain economically fragile due to an uneven distribution of labor, technology and capital, poor infrastructure due to geographical and natural conditions.
- It is also necessary for member regions of the Northern Forum to create strong communities by establishing cooperative relationships through which resources, technology, and capital are advantageously utilized
- Specific measures
 - Networks will be created to foster value-added industries. To this end, the Conference for Business People of Northern Regions will be held, and networks for cooperation among economic organizations will be established.
 - Technical and managerial training will be promoted to facilitate smooth change from planned economies to a market economy within regions undergoing such transitions.
 - Efforts will be made to establish an East-West Air Route and Northern Sea Route, both which serve as a base for economic development and trade.

C. Environment

- Northern regions are vulnerable to damage because pollutants can accumulate in the environment. Regions must actively take measure to preserve the global environment. It is very difficult to restore ecosystems affected by

environmental imbalances, and the fragile northern environment is particularly sensitive and vulnerable.

- It is important for northern regions to promote sustainable development. Therefore, it is necessary to understand and exchange information on the status of the environment and cooperate in preserving bio-diversity.
- Specific measures
 - Environmental monitoring will be conducted.
 - Each region will focus on the health of the environment; promote exchange of information; and work to establish an emergency response system for environmental protection to deal immediately and properly with accidents which greatly affect the environment.

D. Life, Culture and Education

- Northern regions' climate challenge mankind. Therefore, to improve quality of life, specific measures should be promoted to improving housing, transportation, urban services, education, public health and medical services and leisure and recreation facilities.

It is also important to raise youth who will be strong enough to live and work in northern regions with severe environments.

- Specific measures
 - Member regions will hold festivals and events of northern culture, including traditional culture, to maintain and develop traditional culture and to offer an opportunity to understand varied cultures.
 - Member regions will hold various events, including winter sports and leisure events, and snow and ice festivals, to improve goodwill between the people of the northern regions and to develop winter skills and to promote winter sports and leisure activities.

- Member regions will promote exchanges between people of the northern regions to raise the consciousness of the people regarding lifestyles of enjoying snow and winter.

4. Program for Implementation

- A. To implement goals of this declaration, the priority projects of The Northern Forum will be utilized. New projects to improve the lives of people in the northern regions and to maintain and develop industry and the environment will be developed to supplement existing efforts.

Projects will be promoted in accordance with the Guidelines for Priority Projects. Regions that make proposals (hereafter called “sponsor regions”) will provide lead planning and fiscal support and will carry out projects efficiently without delay.

- B. The Northern Forum Secretariat will be strengthened through the following efforts:

- Staff members of the Secretariat should assist in the coordination of priority projects and communicate with the project coordinators of the sponsor regions, receive progress reports from them, and endeavor to promote the projects.
- The functions of Associate Secretariat Offices will be clarified with specific guidelines for their operation.
- The services that the Secretariat provides to member will be strengthened.
- The organizational structure of the Secretariat will be improved so that the Executive Director may actively initiate and conduct original activities. Including involvement in all of the activities of The Northern Forum, cooperation with Associate Secretariat Offices and supervision of staff members.

- C. Utilization Of Private Funds

To secure funds for projects and other activities of The Northern Forum, organizations which may support The Northern Forum through the donations of funds will be identified. The member

regions that are in the same region as the target organization(s), will play a leading role in explaining the activities of The Northern Forum to them, so that the Forum can request support through the donation of funds.

Securing funds and diversifying sources of funds will be improved. Priority projects will be promoted to private enterprises and the organizations to enhance support of the Northern Forum efforts.

D. Cooperation With Each Central Government

The central governments have jurisdiction over many issues of concern to the Northern Forum. Many issues will be addressed at the federal level. Therefore, it is necessary to provide information on the Northern Forum to appropriate agencies of central governments, so that these agencies may recognize the activities of the Northern Forum and, if necessary, cooperate with the organization in conducting various activities.

E. Relationship With International Organizations

Cooperation with United Nations, The Arctic Council and other international organizations will be strengthened. The Northern Forum will request that the UN accredit The Northern Forum as an NGO of the Economic and Social Council to strengthen the independence of The Northern Forum as an international organization. The Northern Forum will work towards appointment as a participant in the Arctic Council.

The Northern Forum will request that the Arctic Council accredit The Northern Forum as a permanent member participant to facilitate communicating the regional perspective in the Arctic Council activities. The Arctic Council and The Northern Forum will mutually supplement and cooperate with each other by clarifying each other's role as an organization of nations or of regions.