



## STATEMENT ON CANADA'S ARCTIC FOREIGN POLICY

Canada's vision for the Arctic is of a stable, rules-based region with clearly defined boundaries, dynamic economic growth and trade, vibrant Northern communities, and healthy and productive ecosystems.

The international  
dimension of Canada's  
NORTHERN STRATEGY



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada

# CANADA'S ARCTIC FOREIGN POLICY

provides the international platform from which to project our national interests in the world across all four pillars of the Northern Strategy: EXERCISING OUR SOVEREIGNTY, PROMOTING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, PROTECTING THE ARCTIC ENVIRONMENT, AND IMPROVING AND DEVOLVING GOVERNANCE. We will pursue our interests at the international level through leadership and stewardship.

# OUR APPROACH

- ▶ Canada will show leadership and work with others to demonstrate responsible stewardship to build a region responsive to Canadian interests and values, secure in the knowledge that the North is our home and our destiny.
- ▶ Canada will maintain control of our Arctic lands and waters and will respond when others take actions that affect our national interests.
- ▶ Canada will never waver from our commitment to protect our North. Cooperation, diplomacy, and respect for international law will remain hallmarks of Canada's approach.

# EXERCISING CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY

Exercising Canadian sovereignty is our number one Arctic foreign policy priority. Canada's Arctic sovereignty is long-standing, well-established and based on historic title. Canada will focus on the following priorities:

- ▶ seeking to resolve boundary issues
- ▶ securing international recognition for the full extent of our extended continental shelf
- ▶ addressing Arctic governance and related emerging issues, such as public safety





## PROMOTING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The people of the North are at the heart of Canada's Arctic foreign policy. Canada will actively promote Northern economic and social development internationally on three key fronts:

- ▶ taking steps to create the appropriate international conditions for sustainable development in the Arctic region
- ▶ seeking trade and investment opportunities that benefit Northerners and all Canadians
- ▶ encouraging a greater understanding of the human dimension of the Arctic to improve the lives of Northerners

## PROTECTING THE ARCTIC ENVIRONMENT

The Arctic environment is being affected by events taking place far outside the Arctic but having a significant impact on the region's unique and fragile environment. Canada is demonstrating stewardship in this magnificent ecological region. We are pursuing action internationally in the following priority areas:

- ▶ promoting an ecosystem-based management approach with our Arctic neighbours and others
- ▶ contributing to and supporting international efforts to address the causes and effects of climate change in the Arctic
- ▶ enhancing efforts on a range of environmental issues, including the promotion and strengthening of international standards
- ▶ strengthening Arctic science and the legacy of the International Polar Year



# IMPROVING AND DEVOLVING GOVERNANCE

The Government of Canada is committed to providing Canadian Northerners with more control over their economic and political destiny. Canada's Arctic foreign policy bolsters our domestic efforts toward strong governance in the North in the following three ways:

- ▶ providing opportunities for Northerners to actively participate in shaping Canadian foreign policy on Arctic issues
- ▶ continuing to support the participation of Indigenous Permanent Participant organizations at the Arctic Council
- ▶ providing Canadian youth with opportunities to participate in the circumpolar dialogue





## OUR STRATEGY

The rapid pace of change and growing importance of the Arctic requires that we strengthen our capacity to deliver on Canada's priorities on the international scene. Facing the region's challenges and seizing its opportunities often requires finding ways to work with others: through bilateral relations with neighbours in the Arctic, through regional mechanisms like the Arctic Council and through other multilateral institutions.

### Enhancing key bilateral relationships

Canada will pursue a more strategic engagement with the U.S., our premier partner in the Arctic, and will work closely with Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and in priority areas. The Arctic has also attracted the interest of non-Arctic states and entities. The key foundation for collaboration will be acceptance of and respect for Arctic states' sovereignty and the perspectives and knowledge of Northerners.

### Pursuing a strengthened Arctic Council

The Arctic Council is the leading forum for cooperation on Arctic issues. Canada's key priorities for strengthening the Council include pursuing a greater policy dialogue, ensuring that research continues to focus on key emerging issues, and engaging with other member states to address the structural needs of the organization.

### Working through multilateral institutions

Canada will work through all relevant multilateral institutions toward global solutions for issues such as polar shipping regulations, climate change and mercury emissions.



Canada's Arctic foreign policy  
statement can be found on Foreign  
Affairs and International Trade  
Canada's circumpolar website:  
[www.circumpolar.gc.ca](http://www.circumpolar.gc.ca)

For Canada's Northern Strategy please  
see Indian and Northern Affairs  
Canada's website:  
[www.northernstrategy.ca](http://www.northernstrategy.ca)

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Catalogue number: 978-1-100-50355-4  
ISBN FR5-44/2009 [BCI-067-2010]

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