



Premiers Strengthen Relationship as Arctic Neighbours

IQALUIT, Nunavut (August 9, 2012) – Greenland Premier Kuupik Kleist and Nunavut Premier Eva Aariak met in Nunavut over the past 3 days as part of their commitment as Arctic neighbours to bolster circumpolar co-operation.

Much of their discussion focused on economic issues and ways in which Nunavut and Greenland can work together to build their respective economies, seize global opportunities and strengthen the self-reliance of Arctic communities.

In addition to a productive bilateral meeting, the Premiers visited Pangnirtung where they met with fishers who are collaborating with their Greenlandic counterparts to enhance the Nunavut fishery, an example of increased cooperation across the Davis Strait.

Premier Kleist and Premier Aariak extend their thanks and appreciation to the people of Pangnirtung, Mayor Sakiasie Sowdloopik and the hamlet council for the warm welcome they received.

The Premiers noted that the return of bi-weekly commercial flights between Iqaluit and Nuuk reinforces this economic relationship by supporting the movement of people, ideas and goods between Nunavut and Greenland. The Premiers are hopeful, therefore, that the air link will be sustainable into the future.

Ownership and management of resources

Premiers Kleist and Aariak asserted that the people of Greenland and Nunavut are in the best position to make decisions regarding the development, management and protection of the resources within their respective boundaries. The devolution of control over lands, waters and resources is, therefore, essential to the on-going development of Greenland and Nunavut.

Moreover, the Premiers affirmed that the people of Greenland and Nunavut should be the prime beneficiaries of this development.

Minerals, oil and natural gas

The Premiers agreed that the responsible development of natural wealth, including minerals, oil and natural gas is crucial to restoring the economic self-reliance of Arctic

communities. They emphasized that development must go hand in hand with high standards of environmental protection.

New opportunities for trade

Premiers look forward to exploring new trade opportunities in the area of locally harvested foods. New trade partnerships would increase food security for Arctic communities.

Increased trade with traditional/local foods will strengthen the health of Arctic peoples, contribute to our economies and create new job opportunities.

Infrastructure

The economic development of Greenland and Nunavut depends on on-going improvements in infrastructure, especially with regards to housing, energy generation, transportation and telecommunications.

The Premiers identified new infrastructure as one of the most urgent priorities for the economic development of Nunavut and Greenland. They expressed their commitment to work with the private sector to develop the infrastructure that will fuel economic growth and contribute to the long-term well-being of Arctic communities.

Training and Work Exchanges

The Premiers acknowledged the importance of skills training to ensure that Kalaallit and Nunavummiut have the qualifications to benefit from the full range of opportunities that the diversifying Arctic economy has to offer.

The Premiers noted that economic development will mean more than just new jobs. Skills training will enable more Nunavummiut and Kalaallit to provide for the economic needs of their families. This will contribute to the well-being and sustainability of entire communities. In this way, skills training contributes to improvements in areas such as health, justice, educational achievement and economic development.

The Premiers agreed that the establishment of training programs alongside the resource economy in both Greenland and Nunavut will open up new opportunities for exchanges of workers across the border.

Arctic Council

The Premiers noted that Greenland and Nunavut are at the forefront of efforts to build closer relationships and co-operation between Arctic peoples and are able to promote greater understanding of their interests and values among all stakeholders.

As public governments representing both Inuit and non-Inuit residents, Nunavut and Greenland have an essential role to play in the Arctic Council.

Greenland and Nunavut support the Arctic Council Permanent Participants in their efforts to communicate the cultural and social values of the Arctic's indigenous peoples.

The Premiers are pleased with the Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic, signed in Nuuk in 2011, and are encouraged by the fact that an Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic is currently being negotiated through the Arctic Council.

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