



**The Northern Forum  
XI General Assembly**

**MOSCOW DECLARATION**

**Moscow, Russian Federation  
October 18, 2013**

**A. MISSION AND PURPOSES**

It is the the mission of the Northern Forum to improve the quality of life of Northern peoples and support sustainable development.

Purposes:

- to provide Northern regional leaders a means to share their knowledge and experience in addressing common challenges;
- to implement cooperative socio-economic initiatives among Northern regions;
- to organize international forums and implement projects.

**B. BACKGROUND**

The Eleventh General Assembly of the Northern Forum was conducted in the City of Moscow of the Russian Federation on October 18, 2013. The quorum of members of the Board of Governors at the General Assembly was present: 7 regions out of 9 took part. The representatives of the following Northern Forum member regions took part in the Assembly: Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Khanty-Mansyisk, Chukotka and Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrugs (Russian Federation), Hokkaido Prefecture (Japan), Gangwon Province (Republic of Korea), City of Akureyri (Iceland), as well as Arkhangelsk and Sakhalin Oblasts, Kamchatka and Zabaykalsky Krai, City of Saint-Petersburg (Russian Federation), Lapland (Finland), Dalarna (Sweden), several international, national, and regional organizations.

**C. COMMITMENT TO CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

**C.1. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOGNIZED**, with appreciation, fruitful work of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), which took up chairmanship of the Northern Forum in a difficult period of significant decline in the organization's activity and resignation of many members from the Northern Forum, on implementing urgent reorganizational measures to optimize all directions of activity and restore the reputation of the Northern Forum in the international arena.

**C.2. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOGNIZED** timeliness of relocation of the Northern Forum Secretariat from Anchorage (Alaska, USA) to Yakutsk (Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russian Federation), which allowed to solve not only the issue of maintaining the organization's activity at a proper level but also the issue of the accumulated debts payment.

**C.3. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION** to the Government of Quebec (Canada) for successful holding of the Regional Coordinators Committee meeting in April 2010, which took timely measures to improve the organization and, thereby, inaugurated a new stage of the Northern Forum's development.

**C.4. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION** to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Ambassador-at-Large, Senior Arctic Official of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Council Anton Vasiliev for his support of the Northern Forum in every possible way.

**C.5. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS WELCOMED** resumption of Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug's membership in the Northern Forum and joining of Murmansk Oblast in the status of an Observer.

**C.6. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS WELCOMED NEW BUSINESS PARTNERS:** Tiryakh LLC, First Association of Credit Organizations, Yakutsk, Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russia.

**C.7. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOGNIZED** that the organization has been experiencing significant difficulties with implementing projects under all programs related to the transition period and lack of funding. At the same time,

**C.8. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION** to the Government of Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug-Yugra (Russia) for successful holding of the International Conference on Rural Development and Sustainability in Khanty-Mansiysk in September 2011 and supports the adopted recommendations.

**C.9. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION** to the business partner of the Northern Forum – Carnivore Center Gronkiltt (Orsa, Dalarna, Sweden) for supporting the Northern Forum projects and successful holding of Brown Bear and Northern Zoos Cooperation workshops in Orsa in September 2011.

**C.10. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** active work of the Water and Climate Change Working Group and congratulates on holding a scheduled workshop in St. John, Newfoundland, Canada in March 2012.

**C.11. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION** to the Government of Quebec (Canada) for a new initiative on studying climatic changes and successful holding of Permafrost Degradation Workshop in Quebec in April 2012.

**C.12. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION** to the Government of Yukon (Canada) for successful holding of Youth Eco-Forum in Whitehorse in August 2012 and for providing a detailed report of the event. 40 participants from Yukon, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Quebec (Canada), Hokkaido (Japan), Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug (Russia) attended the forum.

**C.13. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS WELCOMED** cooperation on infectious diseases monitoring and active participation of Khanty-Mansiysk and Yamal-Nentes Autonomous Okrugs and Sakha Republic (Yakutia) in the workshop on tuberculosis within the Arctic Network for Surveillance of Infectious Diseases of the Arctic Council and in the XV International Congress on Circumpolar Health in Fairbanks, Alaska, USA in August 2012.

**C.14. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION** to the Government of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) for successful holding of the workshop on the Protected Areas Development Project in Yakutsk in September 2012 and supports the adopted resolution.

**C.15. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** active work of the Northern Zoos Cooperation Working Group and congratulates on successful holding of the scheduled V workshop in Krasnoyarsk in September 2012.

**C.16. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR GRATITUDE** to the Government of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and the Northern Forum Secretariat for active work on establishing cooperation with the Arctic Council and successful holding of the extended meeting of the Arctic Council Working Group on Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna in Yakutsk in February 2013.

**C.17. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR GRATITUDE** to the Government of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and the Northern Forum Secretariat for active work on establishing constructive interaction with the regions of the Circumpolar North and organizing the presentation of the Northern Forum in 7 regions of Finland, Sweden, and Norway in May 2013.

**C.18. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THEIR GRATITUDE** to the Government of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and the Northern Forum Secretariat for active work on establishing constructive interaction with large companies and successful holding together with RAO Energy Systems of the East JSC of the international Conference on Renewable Energy in the Isolated Systems of the Russian Far East in Yakutsk in June 2013.

**C.19. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** excellent results of the Brown Bear Working Group in conducting genetic research of the Pacific Rim bears and welcomes active participation in the conference of the International Association for Bear Research in Provo, Utah, USA in September 2013.

**C.20. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS WELCOMED** more active work on the Telemedicine Development Project and congratulates the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) (Russia) and Gangwon (Republic of Korea) on successful holding of a joint workshop in Yakutsk in October 2013.

#### **D. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

**D.1. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS ANNOUNCED** that it was decided to liquidate the Non-profit Corporation Northern Forum Inc. legally registered in Anchorage, State of Alaska, United States of America, that used to function as the Northern Forum Secretariat. Thus, the Northern Forum becomes an international association of northern regions without legal registration in any country. All activities of the Northern Forum will be regulated by the Bylaws, Rules of Procedure, declarations and resolutions of the Board of Governors and Regional Coordinators Committee as well as international legislation.

**D.2. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS DECLARED** that the mission and purposes of the Northern Forum originally oriented at supporting sustainable development and improvement of the quality of life of people are becoming more topical than ever, and they must be preserved in the long-term. The mission and purposes of the Northern Forum are consonant with those of the Arctic Council, which allows securing close cooperation of all structures at the international and interregional level.

**D.3. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** significant activation of international cooperation in the Arctic in relation to the occurring climate change and opening prospects for natural resources exploration, which will directly impact sustainable development of all regions, not only those located in the Arctic, but also those having close economic links with them.

**D.4. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** positive shifts in the development of the Northern Forum and presence of good prospects for stronger cooperation and joining of regional efforts in producing a consolidated approach and strengthening of a regional voice in the decision-making processes within Arctic cooperation. The Northern Forum occupies an excellent niche of a circumpolar regional organization, and it is necessary to not only maintain but also stimulate regional cooperation to attract attention to the issue of socio-economic development of Northern territories, preservation of natural ecosystems, improvement of living standards, and creation of comfortable living conditions for all citizens.

**D.5. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** unstable financial situation in the leading countries of the world that will impact regional development as well and may become a disincentive factor for implementing the plans, and **EXPRESSED** its decisiveness to take all necessary measures for a successful promotion of programs and projects. Financial situation in the organization has significantly improved after payment of all debts, and in the future membership dues and funds attracted from other sources will be used only to support the activity of the Secretariat and the approved projects and events.

## **E. STRUCTURAL REFORMS**

**E.1. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS INVITED** to a more active participation in the activity of the Northern Forum municipal entities, business structures, scientific and public organizations, state and public figures, experts in various fields of expertise within the newly established Business Council and Advisory Council.

**E.2. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS CALLED UPON** all members to actively participate in the establishment of the International Secretariat by sending its specialists to work in the Secretariat on a rotating basis using the regional budgets funds, which will allow to actively involve all members and enhance the organization's potential.

**E.3. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOGNIZED** the need for improving the forms and mechanisms of the organization's management and will support the establishment of Associate Secretariats and/or additional target purpose offices in the Northern Forum member regions.

**E.4. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** the need for a scheduled rotation of the Northern Forum's chairmanship. The State of Alaska (USA), Landsdelsutvalget (Norway), Sakha Republic (Yakutia) (Russia), Lapland (Finland), Khanty-Mansyisk Autonomous Okrug (Russia), Yukon and Nunavut (Canada) chaired the Northern Forum in the previous years. At that, the transfer of chairmanship to the next region or the prolongation of the chairing region term were decided upon just before or right during the General Assembly, which caused certain indefiniteness in maintaining the organization's progressive development. In this relation, taking into account the experience of chairmanship transfer in the previous years as well as the fact that the number of regions had already chaired the Northern Forum, but at the same time, recognizing the need for providing the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) with sufficient time for finalizing all reorganizational arrangements, **THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HAND OVER** the chairmanship to the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) for the period from 2013 to 2015 and **ASSIGN** the Regional Coordinators Committee to prepare principles and order of rotation of the Northern Forum's chairmanship.

**F. PROGRAM ACTIVITY**

**F.1. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** the propriety of program approach to the selection and support of projects, but noted the need for reconsideration of the programs' number and names, criteria of selection, monitoring and assessment of each program and project results. Supported projects should have practical orientation, be of innovative nature and yield tangible benefits to the participating Northern Forum members. The results should be easily measurable and represent a report with analysis and practical recommendations, arrangement of concrete events, implementation of know-how, new technologies, various publications, establishment of joint ventures, etc.

**F.2. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOMMENDED** that the Regional Coordinators Committee and the Secretariat conduct consultations and develop recommendations on the establishment of Program Committees on the level of the relevant regional ministries, departments, and committees, with participation of representatives of the newly established councils in order to improve the program activity management, analyze the issues and problems requiring consolidation of intellectual, material, and financial resources of the Northern Forum.

**F.3. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOMMENDED** that the Regional Coordinators Committee and the Secretariat reconsider the criteria of selection, monitoring and assessment of the projects approved for implementation within the Northern Forum.

**F.4. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** the need for establishing cooperation with other international organizations to implement integrated joint projects.

**G. PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**G.1. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOGNIZED** the priority of establishing a constructive and fruitful cooperation with all structures of the Arctic Council based on long-term agreements, the need for regular confirmation of the Northern Forum's status of the Arctic Council's observer organization, the need for enhancing its capacity and conducting a target work to raise the status of the organization in the Arctic Council with the purpose of representing the regions' interests. The XI General Assembly frameworked the signing of the first Agreement with the Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Working Group Electronic Memory of the Arctic Project, and the Northern Forum will continue working in this direction.

**G.2. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS SUPPORTED** the initiative of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) on the establishment of the International Arctic School. The Northern Forum will provide all possible assistance in promoting this project, in organizing a presentation and receiving support from the Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Working Group, and involving the Northern Forum members in the newly established International Arctic School's activity.

**G.3. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** positive dynamics in the development of cooperation with the United Nations Environment Program and Global Environment Facility and **CONFIRMED** a preparedness to act as a strategic partner in regional coordination and implementation of large-scale integrated projects on maintaining sustainable development and preserving natural ecosystems of the Arctic regions of Russia. The Northern Forum Secretariat is authorized to represent the interests of its member regions in negotiations and arrangements, including international ones, related to the issues of cooperation, upon agreement with the Regional Coordinators Committee.

**G.4. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** the need for establishing productive cooperation with the United Nations Environment Program and the United Nations Development Program based on long-term agreements and expressed its readiness for involving the whole potential of the Northern Forum to implement joint activity on developing Northern regions for the benefit of all northerners.

**G.5. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOGNIZED** the need for activation of the Northern Forum's participation in the work of the Forum of Global Regional Associations (FOGAR), Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4sd) and **RECOMMENDED** that the Regional Coordinators Committee and the Secretariat develop the forms and mechanisms for cooperation with these organizations.

**G.6. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOTED** the need for strengthening cooperation with the European Union and its structures, University of the Arctic, International Arctic Social Sciences Association, International Arctic Science Committee, World Wide Fund for Nature, permanent participants of the Arctic Council – organizations of indigenous peoples and other organizations, and expressed its readiness for the implementation of joint projects and events for mutual support of the initiatives aimed at sustainable development and improvement of the quality of life.

#### **THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**Expressed their appreciation to the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and the Secretariat for their efforts to prepare and host the Northern Forum Eleventh General Assembly,**

#### **Adopted the proposals**

- Sakha Republic (Yakutia) to hold the XII General Assembly of the Northern Forum in 2015 in Yakutsk.
- City of Akureyri, Iceland to hold the meeting of the Northern Forum Regional Coordinators Committee in 2014 in Akureyri.

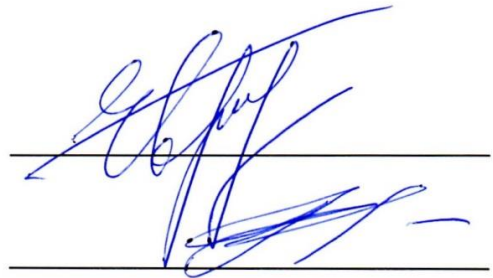
**Signed and approved this 18<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2013 in Moscow, Russian Federation**

**MOSCOW DECLARATION**

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**EGOR BORISOV**

President, Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russia



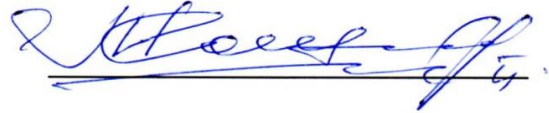
**ROMAN KOPIN**

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