

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES UNFCCC COP 11

Montreal, Canada

November 29 - December 6, 2005

AAC Participation in UNFCCC COP 11 had two primary purposes: to bring Arctic Indigenous leaders together to address issues requiring their urgent and immediate attention; and, to fulfill a commitment made on behalf of AAC's Dene Nation member to host an Arctic Leaders Summit in Katlodeeche (Hay River) N.W.T., in 2005.

The importance of climate change to all Arctic Indigenous leaders prompted AAC to divide the meeting into two components: a preparatory meeting to be held on site at UNFCCC COP, primarily focussed on climate change issues and the work of the eleventh conference of the parties; and, the Arctic Leaders summit itself, held in Katlodeeche, to consider the impact of oil and gas developments, to develop an action plan as a basis for future work activities by Permanent Participants to address both oil and gas development and climate change, and to consider opportunities presented by International Polar Year to research both. The subject of this report are activities and outcomes resulting from the first, preparatory meeting of Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit, held in Montreal, Canada.

November 29–30

AAC representatives D. Roddick and B. Vandijken confirm delegate hotel accommodation and set-up site for meeting. Preliminary meetings are held with Arctic Council Permanent Participants.

December 1:

Preparatory ALS Meeting

1. Attendees: (Meeting List – see B. Vandijken)
2. Logistics: The UNFCCC ALS preparatory meeting was held December 1, 2005, in the Hilton Bonnevventure Hotel in Downtown Montreal. Audio tape recording was provided.
3. Meeting (see attached Agenda - Annex B)

The meeting was chaired by Gary Harrison and moderated by Ed Schultz. It began with an opening song by Jerry Alfred, followed by a prayer led by Randal Tetlich. Opening comments were made by Chair Gary Harrison, Circumpolar Ambassador Jack Anawak and moderator Ed Schutlz. A draft text for an Arctic Leaders Summit Declaration was circulated among participants. Interventions by observers and the general public were invited and participants viewed a video presentation and heard statements by representatives of the Arctic Youth Network, including Indigenous representatives. A roundtable discussion of suggested changes to the draft Declaration ensued. AAC International Chair thanked participants and advised that the final draft text would be submitted to representatives of Arctic Council Permanent Participants attending COP11 for consideration and finalization.

December 2–4

AAC representatives held a series of formal and informal meetings with Arctic Council Permanent Participant representatives, representatives of other Indigenous peoples attending COP 11, officials from the Gov-

ernment of Canada (who were preparing their own ‘Arctic Statement’ on behalf of Arctic Council member countries – see Annex C), and the UNFCCC Secretary. Discussions focused on the substance of the ALS Declaration itself, its status as a document in the COP process, whether Arctic Indigenous peoples would be afforded a separate opportunity from that usually accorded to a representative of all Indigenous peoples organizations (IPOs). To make a statement into the COP. On Sunday, December 4, in a meeting between IPO representatives, including AAC International Chair Gary Harrison, and COP President Stéphane Dion, it was decided their would be two presentation, one being lead by the Chair of the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS).

December 5

Arctic Indigenous representatives meet during the morning of December 5 to finalize the Montreal Statement with a view to submitting a final text to the UNFCCC secretariat by mid-afternoon, for circulation to all COP delegates. It was decided that the term “Arctic Leaders Summit” would not appear in the marquee of the Statement itself, as some Permanent Participants differed as to the nature and purpose of the proposed meetings in Montreal and Katlodeeche. AAC Chair Gary Harrison agreed to amend the statement text and affirmed that it was up to each and every Participant to determine what the nature and the purpose of the meetings should be, and take away from them what they will, but that the text of the final statement should represent the views of all Permanent Participants to the COP. This was agreed, together with a suggestion that an oral statement be prepared in addition to the Montreal Statement for delivery at the high-level segment.

The final text of the Montreal statement (Annex D) and the Oral Statement (Annex E) are attached.

December 6

The Montreal statement was delivered to the President of COP during the Government of Canada sponsored “Arctic Day” ceremony. A press release (Annex F) was released to the media and circulated among Permanent Participants.



Chief Gary Harrison presents Stéphane Dion with the *Draft Arctic Leaders Declaration* and a carved mask.

ANNEX A

List of Attendees

Grand Chief Andy Carvill, Council of Yukon First Nations
Chief Gary Harrison, Arctic Athabaskan Council
Chief Darren Taylor, Tr'ondek Hwech'im First Nation
Chief Hammond Dick, Tribal Chief, Kaska Tribal Council
Chief James Allen, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Arctic Athabaskan Council
Chief Darin Issac, Selkirk First Nation
Chief Joe Linklater, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
Chief Robert Dickson, Kluane First Nation
Ed Schultz, former Grand Chief, CYFN
Alex Dickson, carver
Duane Aucoin, drummer, dancer
Stanley James, elder
Jerry Alfred, singer
Tookie Mercredi, videographer Through Arctic Eyes
Alan Code, videographer Through Arctic Eyes
Darcie Matthiessen, community representative
Brandon Kyikavichik, youth representative
Cindy Dickson, director, circumpolar relations CFYN, Arctic Athabaskan Council
Dave Roddick, Advisor, Arctic Athabaskan Council
Bob Van Dijken, climate change coordinator, CYFN

ANNEX B

Agenda: Preparatory Session

ARCTIC LEADERS SUMMIT MONTREAL COP11 PREPARATORY MEETING

December 1, 2005, Montréal Québec

Hilton Bonaventure Montréal
900 de La Gauchetière West
Fontaine C Hall- Banquet Level

ARCTIC LEADERS COP 11 DECLARATION

Agenda – Round Table

8:30 Performance by (Cultural Component)

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chief Joe Linklater	Vuntut Gwitchin, Gwich'in Council International
Stéphane Dion	Minister of Environment, Canada
Vitaliy Churkin	Ambassador-at-Large, Russian Federation
	Chair, Senior Arctic Officials, Arctic Council
Jack Anawak	Canadian Circumpolar Ambassador

10:30 **Coffee Break**

11:00 Discussion on the *Draft Arctic Leaders Declaration*

1:00 **Lunch Break** (not provided)

2:15 Discussions on the *Draft Arctic Leaders Declaration* (cont'd)

4:30 Closing Remarks

Alexander Kobelev	President, Saami Council
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ARCTIC DAY – COP 11

December 6, 2005, Montréal, Québec, Canada

Complexe Guy-Favreau – Salle des Saules

11:30 Presentation of *Arctic Leaders Declaration* to Stéphane Dion, Minister of Environment, Canada

Gary Harrison	Chair, Arctic Athabaskan Council
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11:45 Media

ANNEX C

Arctic Statement – Arctic countries released December 7, 2005

United Nations Climate Change Conference
COP 11 and COP/MOP1
Montreal, 9 December 2005

**CANADA, DENMARK, FINLAND, ICELAND, NORWAY,
the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SWEDEN and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**FRANCE, GERMANY, the NETHERLANDS, POLAND,
SPAIN and the UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN and NORTHERN IRELAND**

STATEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ARCTIC REGION

We, the above mentioned Parties included in Annex I to the Convention are the member states and observer states of the Arctic Council, a regional forum that, in co-operation with the six Permanent Participants the representing Arctic indigenous communities, works to promote the environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainable development in the region,

We wish to draw the attention of all Parties of the Convention to the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA), an evaluation of Arctic climate change and its impacts for the region and for the world that was the result of a four year international scientific effort and includes indigenous knowledge,

We note with concern the impacts documented by the ACIA that are already felt throughout the region. We highlight the finding of the ACIA that climate change, together with other stressors such as ultraviolet radiation, presents a range of challenges for human health, culture and well-being of Arctic residents, including indigenous communities, as well as risks to Arctic species and ecosystems,

We have acknowledged within the Arctic Council that the findings of the ACIA, as well as its underlying scientific assessment, will help inform governments as they implement and consider future policies on global climate change. On the occasion of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council, Ministers endorsed the ACIA policy recommendations for mitigation, adaptation, research, monitoring and outreach, and will continue to explore possible areas of cooperation among member states,

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We have acknowledged within the Arctic Council the need to consider the findings of the ACIA and other relevant studies in implementing our commitments under the Convention and other agreements, including through adoption of climate change mitigation strategies across relevant sectors,

We further note that the scenarios used by the ACIA indicate that continued adaptation to the effects of climate change due to both natural and human factors is needed. Adaptation to climate change and its impacts in the Arctic must take into account the especially sensitive and vulnerable natural and human systems of the region. Special attention needs to be paid to strengthening the adaptive capacities of Arctic residents,

We also welcome the International Polar Year (IPY) 2007-2008, co-sponsored by the World Meteorological Organisation and the International Council for Science. The IPY will enhance knowledge of Polar regions, which have significant linkages to climate, ecosystems and communities around the world, and is a unique opportunity to stimulate cooperation and coordination on Arctic research, and increase awareness and visibility of the Arctic region.

As, on the occasion of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council, Ministers recognized that the Arctic climate is a critical component of the global climate system with worldwide implications, we:

Encourage Parties, in view of the findings of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, to consider issues related to the Arctic region in: their work on the mitigation of climate change; their work on the impacts of, vulnerability and adaptation to, climate change; and their efforts to promote the effective implementation of the Convention,

Encourage all Parties to work actively and closely to contribute to the success of the International Polar Year 2007-2008, and

Urge the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to ensure that the issue of climate change in the Arctic region and its impacts are fully reflected in its Fourth Assessment Report.

ANNEX D

FINAL NEGOTIATED STATEMENT: PERMANENT PARTICIPANTS, MONTREAL QUEBEC, DECEMBER 5, 2005

STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVES OF ARCTIC INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ORGANIZATIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE ELEVENTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, MONTREAL CANADA

In unity with the International Indigenous Peoples Forum and the Tiohtia:ke – the Mohawk people – in whose Traditional Territory this statement is delivered;

Declaring that Indigenous peoples have the right collectively and individually to the full and effective enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law;

Supporting the Declaration on Climate Change by the Arctic Youth Network and their call for urgent action to address the lack of public awareness of the risks posed by climate change, and the importance of involving youth in all planning and work affecting future generations;

Welcoming the release of the Science Report of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment and the Arctic Human Development Report and noting with concern their findings that the Arctic is now experiencing some of the most rapid social and climatic changes on earth;

Acknowledging early evidence of the negative impacts of climate change on Arctic flora, fauna and peoples, *inter alia*, coastal erosion due to sea level rising, the warming of land and sea surface temperatures, changes in boreal forest, mountain and riparian ecosystems, including the appearance of invasive species, increased risk to humans and animals from exposure to higher levels of ultraviolet radiation, and the cumulative effects of these changes on the health, societies, culture and well-being of Arctic Indigenous peoples;

Alarmed that the cumulative impacts of climate change and the pace of resource development on the Arctic environment may pose a significant risk for the culture, health and sustainability of the livelihoods of Arctic Indigenous peoples;

Welcoming the commitment by Arctic Council Ministers in the 2004 Reykjavik Declaration and the Arctic Policy Document to enhance access by Arctic residents to information, decision makers and institutional capacity building, including Arctic indigenous peoples;

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Note that for Arctic Indigenous peoples the threshold beyond which man-made greenhouse gases dangerously interfere with the climate system, as set out in Article 2 of the UNFCCC, has already been exceeded;

Request that Parties give special consideration to the inclusion of Arctic Indigenous perspectives within the ongoing research and decisions of the UNFCCC, and the dissemination of information about the results of scientific research, on global warming and its impacts; this special consideration should include provisions for Indigenous peoples within developed countries to access United Nations programs and funding for regional and national climate change mitigation and adaptation activities;

Welcome the discussion on SBSTA agenda item 3 on the **Scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of impacts of, and vulnerability and adaptation to, climate change** and efforts made by Parties to enhance and enable the participation of Indigenous peoples in its programme of work, and specifically relating to adaptation planning, measures, actions and specific activities;

Urge Parties to give full and fair consideration to the views of Indigenous peoples, through timely and effective consultation, especially with regard to vulnerability and impacts, adaptation planning, measures and actions, specific activities, and their integration, within the work program of the Conference

STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVES OF ARCTIC INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ORGANIZATIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE ELEVENTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, MONTREAL CANADA

In unity with the International Indigenous Peoples Forum and the Tiohtia:ke – the Mohawk people – in whose Traditional Territory this statement is delivered;

Declaring that Indigenous peoples have the right collectively and individually to the full and effective enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law;

Supporting the **Declaration on Climate Change** by the Arctic Youth Network and their call for urgent action to address the lack of public awareness of the risks posed by climate change, and the importance of involving youth in all planning and work affecting future of generations;

Welcoming the release of the Science Report of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment and the Arctic Human Development Report and noting with concern their findings that the Arctic is now experiencing some of the most rapid social and climatic changes on earth;

Acknowledging early evidence of the negative impacts of climate change on Arctic flora, fauna and peoples, *inter alia*, coastal erosion due to sea level rising, the warming of land and sea surface temperatures, changes in boreal forest, mountain and riparian ecosystems, including the appearance of invasive species, increased risk to humans and animals from exposure to higher levels of ultraviolet radiation, and the cumulative effects of these changes on the health, societies, culture and well-being of Arctic Indigenous peoples;

Alarmed that the cumulative impacts of climate change and the pace of resource development on the Arctic environment may pose a significant risk for the culture, health and sustainability of the livelihoods of Arctic Indigenous peoples;

Welcoming the commitment by Arctic Council Ministers in the 2004 Reykjavik Declaration and the Arctic Policy Document to enhance access by Arctic residents to information, decision makers and institutional capacity building, including Arctic indigenous peoples;

Note that for Arctic Indigenous peoples the threshold beyond which man-made greenhouse gases dangerously interfere with the climate system, as set out in Article 2 of the UNFCCC, has already been exceeded;

Request that Parties give special consideration to the inclusion of Arctic Indigenous perspectives within the ongoing research and decisions of the UNFCCC, and the dissemination of information about the results of scientific research, on global warming and its impacts; this special consideration should include provisions

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Urge Parties to give full and fair consideration to the views of Indigenous peoples, through timely and effective consultation, especially with regard to vulnerability and impacts, adaptation planning, measures and actions, specific activities, and their integration, within the work program of the Conference.

ANNEX E

REMARKS TO UNFCCC COP 11 HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT: GARY HARRISON

Thank you Mr. President. I would like to start by acknowledging the traditional territory of the Tiohtia:ke - and thanking the Mohawk people for having us here on their land. I would also like to thank Canada for all their efforts in addressing climate change.

I am Chief Gary Harrison. I am one of the Traditional Chiefs of the Athabaskan nation and I live in Chickaloon, Alaska. I am also the International Chairman of the Arctic Athabaskan Council, and the present Chair of the Indigenous People's Secretariat at the Arctic Council. The Arctic Athabaskan Council is one of six Arctic Indigenous Peoples Organizations that are "permanent participants" to the eight-nation Arctic Council. Others include the Aleut International Association, Gwich'in Council International, Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Sami Council, and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North. Our political status in the council is unique in intergovernmental affairs, and enables us to operate in the council on virtually the same basis as states. Today I am speaking on behalf of all six permanent participants.

The Arctic is a vulnerable place stressed by many factors. Climate Change threatens the health, the cultures, and the lives of Northern Indigenous people. Many indigenous communities are living with conditions that are similar or worse than those faced by developing countries. We feel that the UN should give special consideration to the Arctic and to the indigenous people in those developed countries so they may access UN programs and funding agencies. They need the help of the International community.

As we have for thousands of years, Arctic Indigenous Peoples remain close to the land and its animals. Our well being is determined by the health of the natural environment. Inuit culture and lifestyle is being threatened by the disappearance of sea ice. Storms threaten the Aleut people. The disruption of oil development and climate change threaten the caribou on which the Gwich'in people rely for food, clothing, and spirit. The movement of the treeline threatens the traditional lifestyle of Sami and the lives of the reindeer on which their culture depends. The increased reliance on non-traditional foods, accentuated by climate change, affects the health of Russian Indigenous Peoples. Melting glaciers change the landscape of traditional Athabaskan territories and inhibit hunting and gathering of traditional foods.

We must adapt to unavoidable climate change. But the scope and speed of climate change in the Arctic is becoming overwhelming, and there are limits to adaptation. Inaction or insensitive mitigation strategies are equal to asking us to adapt ourselves out of existence. This we are not prepared to do.

I would like to call attention to the leaders that are gathering in Hay River next week and wish them a successful summit. Global warming shows that mother earth has a temperature. She is sick, just like human beings when they run a temperature. Mother Earth is trying to heal herself and we need to help her for all humanity. May the creator guide your footsteps.

ANNEX F

ARCTIC DAY, COP 11 SIDE-EVENT: 6/12/05

NEWS RELEASE

Arctic Indigenous Peoples Unveil Statement on Climate Change

Arctic Indigenous leaders from the circumpolar world today unveiled their statement to the high-level segment of the Eleventh Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The statement was released during Arctic Day at the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP11) being held in Montreal, Canada.

Chickaloon Village Chief Gary Harrison, representing Arctic Indigenous organizations presented a statement today to UNFCCC COP11 President Stéphane Dion, challenging nation states to recognize the impact global warming on the Arctic environment and to accelerate actions on mitigation and adaptation. The presentation included the gift of a Tlingit hand-carved mask of Mother Earth Weeping.

“Our bottom line is that climate change threatens to deprive us of our rights, of our rights to sustain ourselves as we have done for thousands of years,” *said Harrison, who is also International Chair of Arctic Athabaskan Council.* “Arctic Indigenous peoples are threatened with the extinction or catastrophic decline of entire bird, fish and wildlife populations, including species of caribou, seals, and fish critical to our food security”, *he said.* “Changes in habitat, the loss of reindeer pasture, and migration routes for fish, wildlife, and migratory birds are the inevitable consequences of the disappearance of Arctic ice and the warming of the Arctic region. This has the potential for catastrophic damage to millennia-old Arctic indigenous cultures.”

The statement, prepared by representatives of Arctic Indigenous peoples organizations gathered in Montreal prior to a meeting of Arctic Indigenous leaders and representative organizations taking place in Hay River, N.W.T. next week, calls upon delegates to the COP to give special consideration to Arctic indigenous perspectives and the needs of the region in terms of the ongoing research and decisions of the UNFCCC.

“We urge countries to take the necessary action that will lead to a reduction in change,” *added Chief Harrison.* “There is no question that we would rather see no change in our climate, but we know that change is coming; we already see its effects. We are alarmed about the cumulative impacts of climate change and the increasing pace of resource development, and the significant risk this poses for the survival of our cultures. We need help now, to adapt our traditional economies and occupations to the new realities.”

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Leaders and representatives of Arctic Indigenous organizations will meet in Hay River, Northwest Territories, December 11 & 12 to discuss Arctic oil and gas development, a follow-up plan of action to COP11, and opportunities presented by International Polar Year to address both issues.

For more information, contact:

Gary Harrison

International Chair

Arctic Athabaskan Council

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