

The Moscow Declaration

V Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit

«Industrial development of the Arctic under climate change – new challenges for indigenous peoples»

Moscow

14-15 April 2010

We, the representatives of the indigenous peoples of seven circumpolar countries, gathered on 14-15 April in Moscow, have discussed the prospects of developing our peoples in connection with intensifying industrial development in the Arctic under the climate change conditions.

We call upon all Arctic States to approve, endorse and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in order to ensure that industrial development in the circumpolar Arctic accords fully with the principles of sustainable development and self-determination of indigenous peoples, and provides for free prior and informed consent.

We confirm the right of our peoples to own our ancestors land, to manage our resources, to protect our ecosystems which guarantee our survival and safeguard our unique culture, to protect the sacred sites, archaeological and historic objects that are situated on the original aboriginal territories.

Yet again **we declare** the right of indigenous peoples to social economic and cultural development that should be realized on the basis of traditional management methods that do not upset the balance between our communities and nature and therefore can be called entirely sustainable.

We confirm all the demands and messages formulated in the declarations adopted previously at different kinds of the world's indigenous peoples' forums dedicated to climate change and aggravating industrial impact on the vulnerable Arctic nature. At the same time a combination of industrial development in the Arctic, a growing interest to its resources shown by the transnational companies and countries including non-Arctic ones, requires additional assessment of the current situation and elaboration of measures to protect indigenous peoples and their way of development.

We fully understand that there are rich mineral reserves in the Arctic region that the global economy needs. Industrial development of Arctic resources should not upset the ecological balance, destroy livelihood of indigenous communities and impede their development.

We attach special importance to elaboration of sustainable Arctic development strategies. Our demands and suggestions are formulated on the basis of analysis of current trends in the Arctic region industrialization and new risks for Arctic indigenous peoples which result from industrial development and climate change.

Arctic industrialization together with climate change aggravates existent threats and hazards to the Arctic indigenous peoples and creates new ones. Climate warming leads to increased human and animal sickness rates, arctic ecosystems destruction, washing of a coastline and permafrost degradation, results in changing of traditional food storage conditions

which means the destruction of traditional management techniques of indigenous peoples. Besides, climate warming in the Arctic creates ripe conditions for its industrial development therefore a list of inevitable climate change consequences includes increased industrial loading of the territory.

Warming significantly multiplies ecological hazards that have been produced already by the existent industry: level of environmental pollution grows, landscape and geological changes can cause hazardous waste storages destruction, oil pipelines ruptures. The greatest danger of industrial Arctic development is the initiation of unknown and unpredictable changes that can prove fatal for region's nature and the indigenous peoples of the Arctic.

We declare the necessity of preserving and developing the Arctic economic activities regulation system and also the necessity of elaborating strategy that will secure preservation and development of traditional culture in the context of climate change and industrial growth in the Arctic regions.

We demand to guarantee the participation of the indigenous peoples at all stages of creation of such strategy: from research to implementation; and also their participation in any kind of decision-making that affects somehow the situation in the Arctic, including obligatory ethno-ecological expertise with indigenous peoples' participation.

We are convinced that such strategy should be based on traditional knowledge and take into account flexibility of traditional culture, its mechanisms of adaptation to changing climate and ecologic conditions.

We appeal to the United Nations and its relevant agencies, bodies, institutions to include into current programs (or create additional ones if necessary) objectives of analyzing possible consequences of industrial development in the Arctic in the context of global warming.

To stimulate a creation of the system that will monitor industrial development impact on nature of the Arctic and on traditional culture of its indigenous peoples.

To guarantee participation of the experts which represent the organizations of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic in research and monitoring. To provide experts' training if needed.

To apply traditional knowledge of the indigenous peoples equally with the expert one in researches and monitoring. To recognize the information obtained with the help of traditional knowledge entirely equivalent to the expert one. To take into account during the research and monitoring observations made by the indigenous Arctic peoples.

To stimulate the development of new, stricter international standards of the indigenous peoples' rights and interests protection and environmental protection in the Arctic.

To develop and adopt the documents that will not simply restrict the activities of transnational corporations which affect the environment but will restrict the Arctic activities of specific national industrial companies.

We acknowledge and will continue to participate in the ongoing dialogue between Arctic Indigenous Peoples and the European Union.

We appeal to the international financial institutions, including the World Bank, to impose more rigid requirements to protect the natural environment and to acknowledge and respect the rights of indigenous peoples in investment programs.

