

We have also done extensive work in oil and gas exploration and development. Last summer we shipped oil from the Arctic. Lower oil prices have curtailed but not stopped that work. Our research and development in Northern resources is a continuing investment in the future.

When I say we are taking these measures, I mean the federal and the territorial governments, because the governance of our North is a partnership of national and local governments. Indeed, one of the most significant developments in Canada's North is the deliberate and gradual devolution of power and responsibility from Ottawa to Northern governments. Our government has also accelerated negotiations of aboriginal land claims - a complex process of fundamental importance to our northern peoples.

Another trend of enormous importance is growing circumpolar cooperation between countries north of the Arctic Circle.

- in the 1960's, we played a leading role in the formation of the International Permafrost Conference
- in 1971, we participated in the Canadian-Scandinavian workshop on caribou and reindeer
- in 1976 we reached agreement on the conservation of polar bears
- in 1983 Canada and Denmark reached agreement on environmental cooperation
- in 1984 Canada and the USSR agreed on exchanges in Arctic sciences
- in the 1980's, we supported the development of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference
- and most recently, Canada and Norway have intensified our commitment to cooperation in the field of science and technology.

So Canada has been actively involved in northern initiatives for a long time and my government is committed to intensifying its relations with Arctic neighbours.