

in Canada, Alaska, Greenland and northern Russia have re-established ties that had nearly been lost. Contacts among northern peoples across the circumpolar Arctic strengthen cultural identity and also offer benefits for understanding and redress of common problems. Canada is actively fostering this important work through the Arctic Council and other means.

CIRCUMPOLAR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

The period since the Cold War ended has witnessed an unprecedented process of institution-building to foster circumpolar co-operation in tackling the Arctic's problems and aspirations. Canada has played a leadership role in this process, most recently through the establishment of the Arctic Council. As its first Chair, Canada helped to integrate the AEPS into the Council and to develop rules of procedure and terms of reference for its Sustainable Development Program. At the broadest level, Canada has assumed a leadership role in Arctic institutional development out of a concern that the region in which it has such wide-ranging interests should enjoy co-operative good governance and democratic development for all its peoples. Canada's northern foreign policy in this area rests on a number of core objectives.

Strong Circumpolar Commitment to Institutional Development for Arctic Co-operation

The effort Canada has invested in the AEPS and Arctic Council reflects its strong national interest in multilateral co-operation in Arctic affairs. It recognizes that the really important Arctic problems can be successfully managed only by co-operative action. Also, multilateral co-operation offers Canada and each of its neighbours a means to rationalize and achieve economies in relation to the cost of addressing common problems in the region. Thus, strengthening co-operative institutions and processes in the Arctic is a central element of Canada's northern foreign policy.

A Strong Northern Aboriginal Voice in Arctic International Decision Making

Canada's successful effort to have Permanent Participant status accorded to northern Aboriginal peoples' organizations in the Arctic Council reflected the conviction that northern Aboriginal peoples must have a meaningful voice in the work of the Council. Canada is also committed to opening participation for northern Aboriginal organizations not already represented as Permanent Participants, as well as including the territorial governments on its own delegation to the Council.

Enhanced Human Rights for Northern Aboriginal Peoples

The Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including those living in the north, have travelled a long road in having their Aboriginal and Treaty rights recognized by Canada. Because of that struggle, Canadian Aboriginal organizations have reached out to support the democratic aspirations of Aboriginal peoples in other countries. To that end, Canada has contributed significant funding for Aboriginal institution-building assistance projects. It has also broadened its own concept of human rights to accommodate the right to live in a clean environment, a vital concern in the