

“ We’re committed to helping the region and its residents realize their true potential.”

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, March 10, 2008, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Canada recognizes and values the important role Northern governments, Arctic Indigenous organizations at the Arctic Council (known as Permanent Participant organizations) and other Northerners have played, and will continue to play, in shaping Canada’s international actions. Canada’s Arctic foreign policy bolsters our domestic efforts for strong governance in the North in the following three ways.

First, Canada will engage with Northerners on Canada’s Arctic foreign policy. Through the Canadian Arctic Council Advisory Committee, Northern governments and Indigenous Permanent Participant organizations in Canada⁴ will have the opportunity to actively participate in shaping Canadian policy on Arctic issues. We will continue to meet regularly in Canada’s North to find common ground and work towards common objectives.

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Second, the Government of Canada will continue to support Indigenous Permanent Participant organizations in Canada, including financially, to contribute to strengthening their capacity to fully participate in the activities of the Arctic Council. Furthermore, Canada will encourage other Arctic Council states to support the participation of their Permanent Participant organizations. Canada will also support the continued unique status of Permanent Participant organizations at the Arctic Council, which was created to provide for their active participation and full consultation. As interest by non-Arctic players in the work of the Council grows, Canada will work to ensure that the central role of the Permanent Participants is not diminished or diluted.

⁴ There are six Arctic Council Permanent Participant organizations, of which three have significant membership in Canada. These are the Inuit Circumpolar Council, the Gwich’in Council International, and the Arctic Athabaskan Council.