

Minister of Foreign Affairs



Ministre des Affaires étrangères

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0G2

August 1998

Dear Friends,

In Iqaluit on September 17 Canada will host Foreign Ministers and other representatives of the seven countries that share our Arctic neighbourhood. This will be the first meeting of Arctic Council Ministers since the Council was founded in 1996. It will be an opportunity to set an agenda for the future work of the Council, and an opportunity for Canada to help shape Arctic cooperation and international relations in the region. Through the 1998 National Forum on Canada's International Relations, Canadians have played an important role in shaping our northern foreign policy and our preparations for the Arctic Council meeting.

The work of Canadians at the National Forum meetings this May and June was especially useful in shaping policy and preparations over the summer. The recommendations found in this Report have been carefully considered. Those that can be acted upon now have been incorporated into the formal policy framework of the Department of Foreign Affairs, which will become a public document in coming weeks. Other recommendations, like the value of on-going discussions with Northerners about foreign policy and Arctic international relations, will be acted upon by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development and the Department. Your vision, ideas, and creative recommendations have been very valuable in shaping the northern frontier of Canada's foreign policy.

I would like to thank all the Forum participants for your efforts and commitment to public policy and international affairs. Please continue your interest and your contributions.

It is a pleasure to thank the 1998 National Forum organizers and hosts: Nick Poushinsky and Sally Ross, Yukon College, Whitehorse; Community Organizers, Pamela Kupeuna and Fiona Blondin, Yellowknife; Duncan Cunningham, Nunavut Tusaavut, Iqaluit; Gérard Duhaime, Robert Comtois and Jean François Tremblay, Laval University; Cliff Hickey and Elaine Maloney from the University of Alberta; and the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development for timely contributions to policy development and for outstanding results of public deliberations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lloyd Axworthy".

Lloyd Axworthy

August 1998