



“The subjects to be discussed at the National Forum meeting are ones that are important to Yukoners. We have been and will continue to be involved in the circumpolar arena on a variety of these matters, as well as inputting on the national agenda. I feel it is important that federal, territorial and aboriginal governments and northerners in general work together toward common circumpolar objectives.

I see this Forum as an important first step in greater involvement of northerners in the development of a Canadian circumpolar policy. I look forward with interest to the discussions on May 9th.”

Piers McDonald, Government Leader, Yukon

Public Participation in Foreign Policy / Public Diplomacy

Policy Options

- 1.1 The federal government should review its traditional role in policy making and work towards increasing its emphases on facilitating the links already established between circumpolar groups and regions, and fostering the growth of new relationships. The traditional top-down Ottawa driven approach tends to underestimate the uniqueness of existing and emerging relationships among circumpolar peoples. In addition, the federal government should activate strategies for encouraging networking and consensus building among northerners. Of particular importance is the support of existing networks among northern scientists, businesses, NGO's, arts and First Nations. (Whitehorse)
- 1.2 The federal government should work toward the development of a new model of foreign policy that focuses on cooperative relations, joint collaboration and the betterment of all parties. This approach already characterizes such areas as land claims resolution in the north, the “soft” approach to the devolution of responsibilities, and such institutions as the Arctic Council. As embodied in today's north this model is a “people-to-people” approach that is community based and embraces such elements as gender equality, cultural diversity, environmental integrity and sustainable development. Consistent with this recommendation, it is strongly recommended that the exchange of people and ideas, whether internationally or within the country, should be an anchor for the policy process. (Whitehorse)