



To that end, we are committed to continue to conduct and improve the annual National Forum as an opportunity for citizens to participate in useful policy development, using a community-based, multi-sector format. Your ideas are most welcome. As well, we will work closely and cooperatively with the new Circumpolar/Indigenous Peoples branch of the department and with Arctic Ambassador Mary Simon to undertake ongoing and regular foreign policy discussions with Northerners. And we are committed to undertake our own follow-up policy development discussions with Northerners in the coming year. We have also commissioned the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (working with others) to undertake the first round of 1998 National Forum follow-up research and studies on various areas including the application of both scientific and aboriginal knowledge and sustainable development in the Arctic.

Many people made important contributions to the thinking, planning and conduct of the 1998 National Forum. The planning committee included Bill Graham, M.P. and Mora Johnson, Ambassador Mary Simon, Gerry Schmitz of the Library of Parliament, Sigi Johnson of the policy planning staff of the department. Wayne Lord, Sebastien Seguin and David Malone were department participants at Forum meetings. Ingrid Knutson and Stephen Wallace of CIDA provided important information on aid to Northern Russia, Paul Koring was provocative, as we asked. Christine Lee and Robert Kadas provided valuable advice. Professor Heather Smith at the University of Northern British Columbia (Prince George), and Professor Edna Keeble at St. Mary's (Halifax) and their colleagues and students contributed lively discussions. Recently a Couchiching panel continued the northern identity discussion. Doreen Reidel opened her memories and personal archives for a glimpse of her father, Capt. Henry Larsen, and his times. Elder Muriel Bestina travelled Yellowknife to participate. Mohan Denetto set the scene in Quebec and Edmonton with the realities of big city life in Siberia.

The success of the National Forum depends on its community-based nature, and for that I am extremely grateful for the outstanding work by the host community organizers. Finally, Forum organizers Penny Kerrigan and Michael O'Shaughnessy and editor Nasreen Bhimani deserve special recognition for their success in making this happen in the small window between the end of northern winter and the need to have policy impact and policy development over the summer, before the Iqaluit Ministers' meeting in September.

Those who have taken part in the 1998 National Forum, and other readers, are invited to share their comments and suggestions for the future. You are also invited to take part in and propose future foreign policy development projects and community activities. Your participation in the growing policy network/community across the country will be most welcome. From work, home or your public library you can find further information at our web site address: www.cfp-pec.gc.ca. You are encouraged to become and remain involved in shaping a Northern Vision and in contributing ideas and policy options for the exciting challenges in developing Canada's foreign policy.

Sincerely,

Steve Lee
National Director