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SIGNING OF THE CANADA/DENMARK ENVIRONMENT COOPERATION AGREEMENT

The Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, and the Honourable Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, Foreign Minister of Denmark, announced today the signature in Copenhagen of an Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark for Cooperation Relating to the Marine Environment, commonly referred to as the Marine Environment Cooperation Agreement. Signing on behalf of Canada was the Honourable John C. Munro, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and for Denmark, the Honourable Tom Hoeyem, Minister for Greenland.

Canada and Denmark have already been cooperating for several years in the study of marine environment factors affecting the waters lying between Canada and Greenland. Exploration for oil and gas beneath these waters, and proposals for new development projects in both northern Canada and Greenland prompted the initiation in 1976 of intergovernmental discussion of ecological implications and consideration of cooperative measures to protect the marine environment. An Interim Canada-Denmark Marine Pollution Contingency Plan was signed in 1977, followed by the Canada-Denmark Marine Pollution Contingency Plan of July 11, 1979. The Marine Environment Cooperation Agreement which supersedes these plans was concurred to in principle in June 1982 and has since been approved by the Canadian and Danish Governments and approved by the Greenland Home Rule Government.

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Conscious of the risk of environmental damage that may result from the expansion of economic activities in the areas of Nares Strait, Baffin Bay and Davis Strait, between Canada and Greenland, the Agreement makes provision for meeting requests from either country to investigate any violations of regulations for the prevention, reduction and control of pollution that may occur in the area. The Agreement also calls for cooperation in scientific research and for the exchange of information and acquired data relating to pollution of the arctic marine environment, and provides for cooperation in the identification, monitoring and review of vessel routing areas outside territorial waters with a view to protecting the marine environment and enhancing the economic and social conditions in the area. Included in the Agreement are two separate annexes dealing with the following situations:

- 1) Pollution incidents resulting from Offshore Hydrocarbon Exploration or Exploitation; and,
- 2) Pollution Incidents Resulting from Shipping Activities.