



# ONLINE MODEL ARCTIC COUNCIL

OMAC  
DECLARATION

DECEMBER 2021



# OMAC DECLARATION

## On the occasion of the Second Ministerial Meeting of the Online Model Arctic Council

1. **WE**, the Ministers of the Arctic States of the Online Model Arctic Council (OMAC), joined by representatives of the Indigenous Permanent Participant organisations of OMAC;
2. **HAVING GATHERED** online on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at the Second Ministerial Meeting of OMAC;
3. **CONFIRMING** the commitment of OMAC to raise awareness of the Arctic as a region; promote respect for Arctic peoples and their Indigenous rights; and enhance understanding of the diverse societies, economies, cultures and ecosystems of the Arctic;

### HEREBY DECLARE:

#### Passing on Indigenous Knowledge from elders to youth

4. **RECOGNISING** that there is a lack of appreciation and awareness in Western states and culture for Indigenous Knowledge, which is valuable and relevant;
5. **ACKNOWLEDGING** the decline in the numbers of Indigenous languages and Indigenous knowledge-holders as a result of a period of colonisation and assimilation in the twentieth century, and **FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING** the urgent need to mitigate this decline;
6. **RECOGNISING** the threat that climate change poses to the applicability of Indigenous Knowledge in the Arctic, and **REAFFIRMING** commitment to international climate-change agreements such as the Glasgow Climate Pact in order to mitigate drastic change and damage to Indigenous homelands and practices;
7. **UNDERSTANDING** that there is an imbalance between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge in Arctic State education curricula, which has contributed to a fundamental loss of cultural identity and high rates of substance abuse and suicide amongst Arctic Indigenous communities, as well as to a lack of qualified

teachers who are familiar with Arctic Indigenous languages and culture and who are available to teach in Arctic Indigenous communities;

**HEREBY RESOLVE TO:**

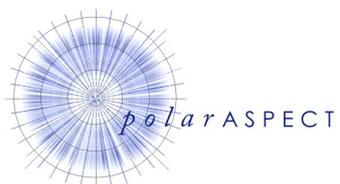
8. **FULLY SUPPORT** and **ENCOURAGE** educational authorities in Arctic States to invest new or repurposed budgetary resources, in proportion to Arctic State GDP, to teach Arctic Indigenous languages in Arctic Indigenous communities, including the provision of digital and physical infrastructure to provide Indigenous children in remote communities with the opportunity to develop their languages and cultures, in keeping with the right of quality education for all;
9. **SEEK** ways for Arctic Indigenous elders who hold Indigenous Knowledge to pass down their knowledge more efficiently, in particular by calling for educational authorities in Arctic States to create bodies responsible for designing teaching systems that allow such elders to make their knowledge more widely available, and by proposing that educational authorities in Arctic States incorporate the teaching of Arctic Indigenous culture within optional extracurricular programmes in Arctic schools;
10. **ENCOURAGE** leading scientific organisations involved in Arctic research to establish relationships with Arctic Indigenous knowledge-holders in all Arctic States focused on bringing valuable Indigenous Knowledge to bear on the accelerating problem of climate change, provided that Arctic Indigenous peoples have given confirmed and informed consent, and through a balanced, collaborative and human-rights-based approach;
11. **DIRECT** the Sustainable Development Working Group to investigate how new industrial developments in Arctic Indigenous homelands negatively impact the livelihoods of Arctic Indigenous peoples, or how they accelerate climate change and thereby in turn impede the applicability of Indigenous Knowledge;
12. **DIRECT** the Sustainable Development Working Group to undertake a project, led by Iceland in collaboration with the Aleut International Association, to encourage and support an Arctic Indigenous cultural presence on social media;
13. **ENDORSE** the formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in each Arctic State to investigate racism and discrimination faced by Arctic Indigenous peoples, promote psycho-social healing and health by drawing lessons from historical racism and discrimination, help prevent future racism and

discrimination, and promote United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions;

14. **SEEK** measures to strengthen border cooperation between Arctic States, to allow Arctic Indigenous peoples the right of ancient passage, and to facilitate the sharing of Indigenous Knowledge between Arctic Indigenous communities;
15. **UNDERTAKE** wherever possible to include Arctic Council Permanent Participant organisations in delegations to other international meetings dealing with Arctic matters and cooperation, so as to recognise and promote valuable Arctic Indigenous knowledge and culture on a global scale.

### **Disclaimer**

This OMAC Declaration represents the collective agreement of the student delegates to the December 2021 Online Model Arctic Council (OMAC), an educational initiative for secondary schools, and it does not necessarily reflect the views of Polar Aspect.



ONLINE MODEL ARCTIC COUNCIL IS AN EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE OF POLAR ASPECT