



## **Greenland/Denmark Joint Committee**

**10th Annual Meeting – October 7, 2014**

**Washington, D.C.**

### **Factsheet**

- Representatives of the three parties met on October 7, 2014, in Washington, D.C. The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee will be hosted by Denmark in 2015.
- The Parties approved the 2014 Annual Report/Inventory of Projects and Other Collaboration. It is now available on the U.S. Embassy website at <http://denmark.usembassy.gov/gl/jc/ar.html>. A translation into Greenlandic is pending and will be posted as soon as possible.
- All parties acknowledged the importance of the work outlined in that report and the great potential for expanding collaboration in the future. The parties reviewed progress under the Language and Education Working Group, the Science Working Group, and the informal Economic Working Group.
- The Language and Education Working Group highlighted the participation of two young Greenlanders in the U.S. State Department's International Visitors Leadership Program in the areas of small business development and women and entrepreneurship. The group also noted that the U.S. Embassy's English language training program, now in its final year, could potentially be redirected toward building English language skills in support of Nuuk hosting the Arctic Winter Games in 2016.
- The Science Working Group highlighted its work to build on collaboration with the ever-growing international science community working in Greenland and to expand internship and training opportunities for students from Greenland. Denmark's new Forum for Arctic Science will identify challenges and opportunities in Arctic Research and lead to more efficient use of limited resources. The parties approved by consensus a new telemedicine initiative, "The Arctic Transatlantic Telehealth Research Network," intended to improve services to Greenlanders who receive care through the Pipluk telemedicine system.
- The informal Economic Working Group, established during the 2013 annual meeting, reported U.S. publication of an Investment Climate Statement and a Country Commercial Guide for Greenland intended to encourage greater awareness among the U.S. private sector of opportunities in Greenland. The

Danish delegation reported that Denmark's Ministry of Business and Growth will soon publish a report on attracting investment to Greenland.

- The U.S. delegation proposed coordination of a "Direct Line for Business" call, a conference call giving interested American companies a cost-effective opportunity to discuss doing business in Greenland with the U.S. Ambassador in Copenhagen, Greenland's Representative in United States, and the Greenlandic private sector.
- In light of the expanding activities within the informal Economic Working Group, the parties agreed to formalize collaboration on economic development and trade under an Economic Working Group with Greenland's representative in Washington DC serving as the chair. Each delegation will appoint a member to this group.
- Greenland's newly opened Representation Office in Washington, DC, reported that it is quickly building a network of contacts and has plans to expand staffing as budgets allow. Top priorities for the Representation are currently promoting economic development possibilities, political issues pertaining to Greenland-US as well as Arctic issues and promoting greater bilateral relations in general
- The U.S. delegation introduced to the parties to the U.S. Embassy's newly created "Virtual Presence Post," a website dedicated as a resource for the people of Greenland. In the absence of a physical presence in Greenland, the website offers content, with text in Greenlandic when possible, to explain the U.S. relationship with Greenland, offer information on travel and study in the United States, and invite participation and conversation. The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen maintains the website and very much welcomes feedback and suggestions. The U.S. delegation acknowledged the important role Embassy interns from Greenland have played in creating this website.
- The United States Senior Arctic Official briefed the parties on the goals and themes of the upcoming U.S. chairmanship of the Arctic Council. Greenland has shown interest in the areas of improving the living conditions of people in the Arctic, economic issues water security and sanitation, and mental wellness.
- Regarding the possibility of mining for uranium in Greenland, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) briefed the parties on types of technical assistance it could offer. The Committee welcomed the NRC's continued willingness to provide training opportunities through its Foreign Assignee Program. A current Foreign Assignee described the support he has

received from the NRC and the benefits of participating in the program.

- Under new initiatives, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Private Sector Exchanges Robin Lerner of the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs provided the parties with an overview of the J-1 visa program, which designates, monitors, and partners with U.S. organizations to administer the Exchange Visitor Program. These partners include U.S. government agencies as well as American academic institutions, educational and cultural organizations, and corporations. The Exchange Visitor Program welcomes nearly 280,000 visitors each year from outside the United States on cultural exchange programs ranging from au pairs to interns and camp counselors to teachers. DAS Lerner's office can work directly with the government of Greenland to design a special J-1 visa initiative to meet Greenland's needs. Greenland's delegation agreed to consider this opportunity, and the U.S. delegation stands ready to facilitate contact with DAS Lerner's staff should Greenland wish to pursue this.
- A representative of the State of Maine described the state's growing trade relationship with Greenland, highlighting the efforts of the Maine North Atlantic Development Office, a public-private partnership, to further increase this trade, promote cooperation in climate change research, and develop cultural and educational ties with Greenland.
- The North Atlantic Biocultural Organization (NABO) offered the parties insight into research focused on understanding the impacts of climate change on early settlements in Greenland. NABO proposed development of two new field schools in Greenland near Igaliku and Nuuk. The organization is looking for partnerships to pursue these schools.
- Several events also took place on the margins of the annual meeting:
  - The Brookings Institution provided the parties with a briefing on their recent policy papers related to China in Greenland and Arctic Offshore Oil Governance.
  - The delegations received a briefing by the U.S. investment firm PT Capital on what factors influence their investment decisions in the Arctic.
  - Members of the Language and Education, Science, and Economic Working Groups met with the National Science Foundation (NSF), NASA, and the Smithsonian Institute to explore new areas of collaboration, internship opportunities, and a renewed memorandum of understanding between the NSF and the Government of Greenland. Smithsonian Institute representatives, including the director of the

Smithsonian's Arctic Studies Center, offered several opportunities for collaboration with Greenland, ranging from the Folklife Festival to smaller programs, and look forward to feedback from the parties on initiatives that fit Greenland's priorities.