



RESOLUTION:

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC**

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting  
In Zagreb, Croatia, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2015

### **Recognising that:**

- The US Geological Survey estimated in 2008 that 22% of the global oil and gas resources awaiting development were located above the Arctic Circle;
- Since 1979, the size of the summer polar ice cap has shrunk more than 20 percent, opening up new trade routes in the Arctic and increasing maritime traffic;
- The Arctic Council, consisting of eight nations, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the US, is the primary body for circumpolar regional cooperation. The EU is granted status as an observer to the Arctic Council;
- The overarching legal framework governing the Arctic is the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

### **Acknowledging that:**

- The 2013-report of the European Commission, "European Arctic Initiatives Compendium," emphasizes the lack of knowledge on Arctic affairs in the EU, and the need for a more coherent EU Arctic policy framework;
- While European businesses and institutes are already contributing to and investing in the Arctic, there is a further need to stimulate entrepreneurship and cross-border business in the region;
- One must respect the wishes of the sovereign governments of the Arctic region who attempt to pursue sustainable economic development within their jurisdiction;
- Russia has been increasing its military presence in its northern reaches by rebuilding Soviet-era military bases and deploying forces such as naval vessels and heavy bombers.

### **YEPP Calls for:**

- Arctic States to respect international law principles by securing safe transport routes for international shipping and refraining from introducing any arbitrary unilateral obstacles;

- The establishment of a permanent EU Arctic Information Centre, in order to create a structured mechanism for collecting Arctic information;
- The EU Commission to stimulate, as an observer member of the Arctic Council, the formation of a long-term perspective on the economic and environmental developments in the Arctic;
- EU Member States and EU programmes, such as the Horizon 2020 framework programme, to increase their contribution to Arctic research programmes.