

2022 ARCTIC CIRCLE ASSEMBLY

Infographic by Caroline Boda



When was it?
October 13–16, 2022

Where was it?
Reykjavík, Iceland

How many people attended?
More than 2,000 attendees from over 60 countries



What is the Arctic Circle Assembly?

The Arctic Circle Assembly has been the largest international forum for discussion on Arctic affairs since its inauguration in 2013. Attendees of the conference regularly include heads of state, business leaders, university students and officials, Indigenous leadership, and environmental organizations. Over 200 sessions took place at the 2022 annual Assembly this October to address the wide range of Arctic issues.



What countries are in the Arctic Circle?

Eight countries have territory in the Arctic Circle: Canada, Russia, the U.S., Iceland, Greenland, Norway, Finland, and Sweden. These eight countries alongside six Indigenous organizations make up the Arctic Council, the formal governing body of the Arctic region. Founded in 1996, the Arctic Council focuses on advancing unity among member states and all inhabitants of the Arctic.



What are the Arctic's biggest issues right now?

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Arctic member states have largely shifted their focus to maintaining regional cooperation, peace, and security. Other issues that continue to be at the forefront of Arctic affairs include food insecurity among Indigenous communities, effects of global warming like melting permafrost and coastal erosion, infrastructure development in cold climates, and environmental conservation.



Where do we go from here?

Deliberation within the Arctic Council is currently going forward without Russia. Russia has been Chairman of the Council since 2021 and will continue in this role until it is passed on to Norway in May 2023. Current work is focused on socioeconomic development, environmental protection, and sustainable development. Member states are also closely monitoring worsening impacts on permafrost and coastlines within their borders.

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT



H.E. Múte B. Egede
Prime Minister of Greenland

Voiced the importance of Indigenous voices in Arctic policymaking and addressed Greenland's plans for sustainable infrastructure development to meet tourism projections.



H.R.H. Haakon
Crown Prince of Norway

Communicated the need to continue regional cooperation in the Arctic despite current geopolitical tensions so that scientific progress can further evolve.



H.E. Katrín Jakobsdóttir
Prime Minister of Iceland

Expressed urgency for addressing escalating climate change ramifications including extreme storms, receding glaciers, and record heat levels.



H.E. Alar Karis
President of the Republic of Estonia

Highlighted Estonian scientists' work on climate change and emphasized the need for the Arctic to shift toward sustainable and renewable methods of energy.

"While the future of the circumpolar region remains bright, it also continues to face many challenges, some old and some new. And it will take all of us to ensure we remain on the right path for the benefit of northern Indigenous peoples and everyone who calls the Arctic home."

– Mary Simon, 2022 Arctic Circle Assembly



H.E. Rt Hon. Mary Simon
Governor General of Canada

Research References:

- Arctic Circle
- The Governor General of Canada
- Prime Minister of Canada
- The Wilson Center "On the Horizon 2022 | Polar"
- Arctic Council

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