



STATEMENT TO OUR RESPECTIVE CHURCHES

The ongoing climate change represents one of the greatest environmental, social and economic threats ever facing the planet.

Projected global warming this century is likely to trigger serious consequences for mankind and other life forms, including a rise in sea levels which will endanger coastal areas and small islands, and a greater frequency and severity of extreme weather events.

Besides Oceania, the Northern circumpolar areas and the people living there are already suffering from the effects of the changing environment. This will cause severe social and economical side-effects, also in form of larger scale migration.

The consequences of the Northern sea route are not apparent, but the interest of the multinational companies show that the pressure on the natural resources will increase as the sea ice melts. The risk of pollution and increase in exploitation of fossile energy will deepen the environmental challenges.

We – as participants of the Council of Christian Churches in the Barents Region (CCCBR) seminar focusing to the environmental, social and diaconal responsibility – want to address our deep concern over the global change.

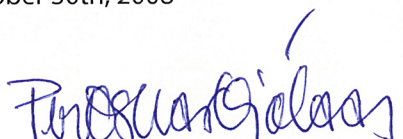
It is a Christian maxim to love a neighbour and respect the nature as a gift of God. We challenge our own churches, as well as the unions and the alliances in which we participate, to focus in their words and especially in practical deeds to address the concern for the future generations' possibilities for a life worth living.


In expressing our concern we wish to remind also ourselves that it is our quest as Christian churches of the Barents Region to sustain hope in order to shed light of the Christ to the world.


*Heaven and the earth belong to you,
the world and everything it contains –
you established them.*

Psalm 89:11

In Oulu, Finland
October 30th, 2008


Bishop Per Oskar Kjølås
CCCBR Chairman


Bishop Samuel Salmi
Oulu Lutheran Diocese


Metropolitan Panteleimon
Oulu Orthodox Diocese