

Foreign minister urges international co-operation in changing Arctic

March 11, 2009

WHITEHORSE — Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon says Canada will staunchly defend its sovereignty over Arctic lands and waters but urges international co-operation to deal with changes being brought by global warming.

In a speech delivered in Whitehorse, Cannon calls for a renewed focus on the Arctic Council, the main international forum on Arctic issues.

Cannon says Canada has a robust Arctic foreign policy and is affirming its leadership, stewardship and ownership in the region.

But he says Canada recognizes that issues facing the Arctic, such as the hunt for oil and gas and increased shipping access to open Arctic waters, require working with its neighbours.

Cannon says the Arctic Council is a unique organization that brings together states and indigenous people, and is based on strong, responsible co-operative governance of the region.

The minister also announced that Ottawa is creating 20 graduate-student fellowships to study Canada's role in the circumpolar world.

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