

26th annual meeting

SUMMARY REPORT



RUSSIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

July 27-29, 2021 by webinar format



The Subnational Dialogue in Support of US-Russian Trans-Pacific Relations

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RAPP Secretariats' Letter

We thank the participants of the 26th Russian American Pacific Partnership annual meeting.

In its 26th year, RAPP continues as a leading U.S.-Russian bilateral forum partnering citizens and private sector with regional and federal government representatives in a collective exercise strengthening relations and expanding cooperation between Eastern Russia and the Western United States.

The 26th annual RAPP meeting by webinar demonstrated, despite a global pandemic and ongoing differences in our bilateral relations, a constructive dialogue on a common-interest agenda is possible between the US and Russian Pacific regions.

We hope this Summary Report with the recommendations generated at the 26th annual meeting provides fresh perspective on our subnational and bilateral agendas. We appreciated the high level of participation and quality of addresses at this meeting supporting constructive partnership across the Pacific.

Derek Norberg
Director Executive Secretariat RAPP

Boris Stupnitskiy
Director RAPP Russian Secretariat

Joint Report of the 26th Annual Meeting Russian American Pacific Partnership (RAPP)

July 27-29, 2021, virtual meeting by webinar

Executive Summary:

The Russian American Pacific Partnership (RAPP) held its 26th annual meeting by webinar July 27 to 29 (U.S.) and July 27-30 (Russian Federation), 2021, with over 90 public and private sector representatives from Moscow and seven eastern Russian regions (the Republics of Buryatia and Sakha (Yakutia), Primorskiy, Kamchatskiy and Khabarovskiy Territories, the Sakhalin Region, and the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug), and from Washington D.C. and seven U.S. states (Alaska, Washington, California, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, New York), in addition to the US Embassy in Moscow and the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the United States, and from two Prefectures of Japan (Chiba and Niigata). At a critical time in US-Russian relations, the RAPP meeting again demonstrated that, despite ongoing disagreements, a productive bilateral dialogue is possible on topics of mutual interest. **Derek Norberg**, Director of the Executive Secretariat of RAPP, was responsible for organizing the meeting and **Boris Stupnitskiy**, Director of the Russian Secretariat of RAPP, provided support and participated in running the meeting.

Opening plenary session of 27 July:

The opening plenary session was moderated by **Derek Norberg** who welcomed the RAPP meeting attendees and delivered a written address from **Alexei Chekunkov**, Minister for the Development of the Far East & Arctic. Minister Chekunkov welcomed the attendees and noted the important role the RAPP forum plays in maintaining the positive dynamics of Russian-American interregional cooperation. He noted the Russian Far East and Arctic as ideal territories for dialogue, and peaceful and mutually beneficial international cooperation; and he communicated his Ministry's readiness for an open dialogue with, and the support of, American partners. He noted the importance of Russia's having assumed its chairmanship of the Arctic Council in May of this year for the period 2021-2023 and affirmed that the Arctic provides a basis for strengthening international dialogue and cooperation. In conclusion, Minister Chekunkov invited American partners to participate in the 6th Eastern Economic Forum meeting in Vladivostok, Russia, September 2-4, 2021.

Addresses were delivered by:

Sergey Ryabkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, welcomed the meeting participants, noting the long and illustrious history of the RAPP forum. He cited the particularly strong representation at this year's meeting and RAPP's vital role and relevance as an inter-regional platform addressing concrete and practical issues of interest to both countries. He commended this year's meeting agenda that includes a wide range of topics of bilateral cooperation, including energy and energy efficiency, transportation, tourism, trade and investment, and cultural exchange, with particular focus on the Arctic cooperation opportunities. Mr. Ryabkov commented on the state of the bilateral political dialogue that, regrettably, remains far below its potential. He cited the June Presidential summit meeting in Geneva as providing an important basis from which to normalize relations between our two countries while noting that more needs to be done. Despite the political turbulence and sanction restrictions, active business relations continue between our two countries. He noted that President Putin in Geneva re-stated Russia's interest to see an advisory commission of business leaders of both countries re-established, to which RAPP could generate and forward recommendations for consideration. He thanked the RAPP meeting organizers for their tireless efforts to improve relations between the two countries and wished the participants success in support of US-Russian cooperation.

John Sullivan, US Ambassador to the Russian Federation, expressed greetings from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and thanked Derek Norberg for his hard work in organizing the meeting. He noted the strong ties and shared goals between the Russian Far East and the greater U.S. North-Pacific region as important in informing our agenda. Ambassador Sullivan recognized the challenges in the bilateral relationship, but noted that the Biden administration seeks a stable and predictable relationship with Russia. He noted that during the summit meeting in Geneva, President Biden made it clear that our nations should cooperate in areas of mutual interest. Sullivan added that the Russian Far East and American North-Pacific share much in common and present many opportunities for collaboration between our countries. Ambassador Sullivan stated that promoting U.S. businesses and trade is a fundamental mission of the U.S. Embassy. He noted that there are over 1,150 U.S. companies doing business in Russia, including in the Russian Far East. Sullivan noted that during times when our two governments do not see eye to eye on many issues, annual meetings like RAPP assume even greater importance. Such meetings between businesspeople, entrepreneurs, academics and students, and regional and civic leaders serve to explore the many avenues for potential cooperation and provide ballast when the bilateral relationship is strained. Ambassador Sullivan expressed his interest to review the RAPP annual meeting report results. Despite the suspension of public operations at

the Consulate General in Vladivostok, the Ambassador affirmed the U.S. Mission in Russia's commitment to its relationships in the Russian Far East. He further confirmed the commitment to improve the situation for businesses in Russia and for everyone who benefits from good relations between our countries. He drew attention to addressing climate change as another area where our two nations have common interest and noted the recent visit by Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry to Moscow. He reported that our countries have pledged their intent to work together bilaterally on a range of climate-related issues, including satellite monitoring of emissions and removals of greenhouse gases; forests and agriculture; climate and the Arctic, including black carbon; reducing emissions from non-CO2 gases, including methane; enhanced nationally determined contributions and long-term strategies under the Paris Agreement; energy efficiency; climate finance; nature-based solutions; and implementation of joint climate projects. He noted that the Russian Far East is critical for many of these issues, and that environmental protection and addressing climate change will factor heavily in this year's RAPP meeting. In closing, Ambassador Sullivan expressed that it is heartening to see RAPP continuing to bring Russians and Americans together to find areas of mutual interest and collaboration. He stated that he looked forward to receiving RAPP ideas on improving inter-regional cooperation between Russia and the U.S. and on how our two nations can strengthen and deepen our ties today and for years to come. He wished the attendees the greatest success in formulating recommendations designed to open new opportunities and strengthen relations between our countries.

Anatoly Antonov, Russian Ambassador to the United States, welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude in addressing this unique forum. Thanks to the RAPP organizers, this meeting is a round-the-world telebridge that provides direct communications between Moscow, Washington, Alaska, Siberia, the U.S. West Coast, and the Russian Far East. He noted this as testament to the global character of U.S.-Russian ties and our geographic and historical closeness. Ambassador Antonov cited the June Geneva Summit and the "flashes of trust" (as President Putin termed them) as providing the basis from which work on the bilateral relations proceeds. Antonov noted the importance of direct inter-regional ties and their stabilizing effect on our broader relations. He proposed that, when intergovernmental dialogue is impeded, individual U.S. states and subject regions of the Russian Federation may more successfully find common ground, particularly in the Pacific theater, with unique development commonalities and shared interests. Ambassador Antonov cited the coronavirus pandemic, environmental protection, and wildfires as urgent areas for enhanced inter-regional collaboration. He further noted the shared interests of the Arctic members of RAPP in issues of indigenous peoples, circumpolar ecosystem preservation, energy security, and Northern Sea Route shipping development. He mentioned Russia's support for restoring the Bering Strait Regional Commission and academic research between the universities of Alaska and the Russian Far East. He commended the ongoing cooperation in the Bering Strait and Chukchi Sea regions between the U.S. and Russian Coast Guards, and the joint group on oil spill response contingency planning. As examples of shared Russian-American cultural and historical heritage in the Pacific region, he noted the former Russian-American Company trading posts in Sitka, Alaska and Fort Ross, California; and U.S.-Soviet cooperation during World War II and the Alaska-Siberia air supply route. He stressed the potential of sister-city relationships, noting that Alaska alone has six sets of sister-cities with Russia. He called for greater youth and professional exchanges and noted his personal interest to see flight service restored between Chukotka and Alaska. He encouraged greater U.S.-Russian business cooperation and investment and invited U.S. companies to join in the 6th Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok in September.

James DeHart, U.S. Coordinator for the Arctic Region with the U.S. Department of State, thanked RAPP for the opportunity to speak directly to the people on both sides, noting that the Arctic is an area where the U.S. and Russia have numerous productive engagements. Broadly speaking, the U.S. envisions the Arctic as a region free of conflict, where nations act responsibly, and economic development is sustainable, secure, and conducted in a transparent manner, respectful of the environment and the interests of indigenous peoples. Accordingly, a comprehensive approach to the Arctic includes U.S. interests in climate, scientific cooperation, safety, security, economic development, and the needs of indigenous and local communities, as well as in upholding international rules, standards, and institutions with allies in the region. He noted the strength of existing frameworks in the Arctic based on international law governing resource management and national jurisdictions, and the importance of adherence to these established governance frameworks by Arctic as well as non-Arctic states. DeHart cited the Arctic Council, in its 25th year, as the premier forum for international cooperation and governance in the Arctic region, noting that Russia and U.S. share a commitment to the Council's success and to working together to implement the Council's strategic plan. In Reykjavik in May of this year, Secretary of State Blinken welcomed Russia's chairmanship at the Council's Ministerial Meeting. Consensus among member states is a key principal to the success of the Arctic Council, and DeHart stressed that early and frequent consultations with fellow members is needed to keep the forum strong and effective. The U.S. sees opportunities for progress during Russia's chairmanship on issues such as community health, marine litter, response to wildfires, and oil pollution preparedness, with consensus between members and permanent

participants. In addition, the close working relationship between U.S. and Russian Coast Guards in the Arctic needs to continue in a constructive and positive manner on search and rescue, and on environmental disaster response preparedness, both within the Arctic Council and on a bilateral basis. As noted at the Arctic Council's Ministerial meeting in Reykjavik, climate change is a critical issue having a disproportionate impact on the Arctic. He noted some of the worst wildfires on record are currently burning in both the United States and Russia. DeHart noted the issue of black carbon and methane emissions were discussed during Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry's recent visit to Moscow. DeHart stressed that we need to work together through the Arctic Council and with industry to curb emissions and transition to cleaner technologies. He confirmed interest to work with a variety of partners in our Arctic efforts, including at the sub-national level and directly with municipalities and indigenous peoples, who have generations of knowledge on stewardship of the Arctic region. In conclusion, DeHart said that despite concerns in the security dimension, "The Arctic" (as expressed in Secretary Blinken's Arctic Council Ministerial meeting remarks) "is more than a strategically or economically significant region. It is home to our people. Its hallmark has been, and must remain, peaceful cooperation. And it's our responsibility to protect that peaceful cooperation".

Matthew Rojansky, Director of the Kennan Institute at the Woodrow Wilson Center, addressed the meeting on US-Russian inter-regional relations. Rojansky noted his roots in Northern California and his affiliation with several Russian-American initiatives, including the Fort Ross Dialogue, the Stanford University Russia Forum, the Graduate Initiative in Russian Studies at Monterey, and the Lawrence Livermore Lab's Center for Global Securities. Rojansky cited RAPP's mission as complementary to these but also distinct in connecting the Russian and U.S. Pacific facing regions through deepening economic and cooperative ties. Rojansky noted that the current state of bilateral relations is complicated, but emphasized that U.S.-Russian relations are far too important to leave solely in the hands of our governments. He stressed the importance of groups like RAPP and others (including the Wilson Center, Rotary, the World Affairs Councils, and university exchange programs) that are working to build understanding through a common-interest agenda and are not dissuaded by current short-term political differences. Groups like these maintain critical communication dialogues, contacts, and exchanges that are particularly important when government-to-government relations are most strained. Rojansky cautiously posited that we might be on the verge of a broader positive change in the bilateral relationship. He noted that both sides kept expectations of the June Presidential summit meeting low. In Geneva, there was no "re-set" of relations or reincarnation of Presidential or Vice-Presidential commissions, nor signing of memoranda. Instead, the sides acknowledged a willingness to seek to identify areas of shared interests where cooperation may be possible. Rojansky noted President Biden's recent characterization of Russia as "a worthy adversary", indicating recognition that the relationship will remain difficult, but that negotiation and even cooperation in certain areas, where appropriate, is possible. Here Rojansky pointed out the potential of RAPP and its mission to bolster inter-regional relations. Despite numerous constraints and distractions, there are opportunities in our relations in the trans-Pacific and Arctic regions that should not be missed. He noted in particular managing energy extraction, transportation (including via the Northern Sea Route), and disaster preparedness; addressing climate threats and global warming impacts; and expanding dialogue with indigenous populations in the Arctic on the wide range of issues impacting them locally and all of us globally. Rojansky said that RAPP, in partnership with local and national organizations and the governments represented at this meeting, is in an excellent position to help lead on these issues and many others. In conclusion, Rojansky commended RAPP for its accomplishments over 26 years and charged the group with the challenge to seize the opportunities to deepen relationships between the Pacific facing regions of Russia and the United States. Sustaining and promoting inter-regional engagements will require patience and perseverance, particularly should progress towards greater predictability in relations between our respective national centers falter. Rojansky recommended that RAPP strengthen working relationships with multilateral organizations, like the Arctic Council, and, at all times, seek to restore and expand upon bilateral people-to-people exchanges.

Tom Armbruster, US Ambassador (retired), US Consul General in Vladivostok (2007-2010), delivered a video presentation on the history of Americans in the Far East and the Consulate General in Vladivostok. He noted the vast territories rich in natural resource wealth, human cultural and intellectual capital. He referenced Richard T. Greener, Commercial Agent from 1898 to 1905, as the first U.S. State Department representative stationed in Vladivostok, and was also the first African-American graduate of Harvard. Armbruster reminded us of the American Expeditionary force presence based in Vladivostok under General Graves during the Russian Civil War, as well as the accompanying Red Cross. He noted an amazing story of the Red Cross volunteers in Vladivostok caring for 800 displaced children from Petrograd during the Civil War and then, in 1921, taking them across the Pacific to the U.S. and home to Petrograd. He cited the world-famous American actor Yul Brynner's birth in Vladivostok where a statue stands in his honor, and the Brynner family's deep connection to the city, as detailed in his son Rock Brynner's book, "Empire and Odyssey". Among early Americans in Vladivostok was Eleanor Pray,

whose experiences are detailed in her “Letters from Vladivostok 1894-1930”. Armbruster noted that Vladivostok played a key role in deliveries of US lend-lease war supplies to the Soviet Union in WWII, and that an American rail engine of lend-lease origin is on display in the station in Vladivostok. He noted President Gerald Ford and Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev’s 1974 U.S.-Russian summit meeting in Vladivostok, at which a significant arms control agreement was reached. Armbruster cited the importance of the visa-free agreement for Chukchi and Native Alaskan communities on opposing sides of the Bering Strait. Armbruster assessed that American intentions in the Russian Far East can be quite humanitarian, as evident in the goodwill flight by the people of Alaska providing food and supplies to Magadan in the late 1990s. The modern history of the U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok began anew in 1992 with the post’s reopening in the formerly closed city. Early Consul General Jane Miller Floyd noted the extensive non-governmental programs in the Russian Far East in the 1990s and excellent relations with the U.S. Pacific Fleet. A particular feature she noted was the Consulate’s reporting to Moscow as part of the European Bureau with a primary partner in the Pacific, so the Consulate in Vladivostok had to straddle both worlds. While the Consulate’s involvement in community and cultural events is important, the “Far Port” plays a vital role extending the reach of the US Mission and Ambassador across the vast 7 time zones from Moscow to the Russian East. With the Vladivostok Consulate General’s operations currently suspended, Armbruster thanked all the Russians and Americans who served at this important post. He expressed hope that the Consulate would renew operations soon. Russian-American friendships are a key element to the special richness of this unique part of the world. Armbruster commended RAPP and the Council for U.S.-Russia Relations for playing such a vital role over many years in bringing people together, advocating for business and cultural ties, and advancing U.S. and Russian mutual interests through a vast network of people in both countries. Non-governmental organizations like these help our two countries through difficult times between our governments. In conclusion, Armbruster noted there is much work ahead, but stressed the role people can play to help broaden relations.

This concluded the opening plenary session of the meeting.

The RAPP 26th annual meeting resumed 7 hours later at 16:00 hours Pacific Daylight Time July 27 to afford broad participation of attendees in the Russian Far East regions and the U.S. West Coast states.

Derek Norberg reconvened the meeting, remarking on the strength of the speakers and the positive tenor of messaging from both sides at the morning’s opening plenary session. Norberg noted that both governments indicated their keen interest to receive recommendations from this meeting on mutually beneficial cooperation opportunities. Norberg noted that the RAPP forum relies on the input from all attendees and encouraged participants to send in comments and recommendation suggestions by email messages for review by the working session moderators. Norberg noted there are many distractions drawing attention away from our trans-Pacific relations, but stressed the importance of preserving and developing our relations through RAPP. He thanked all the participants for their commitment to this effort.

Norberg then introduced the following addresses:

Kevin Meyer, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Alaska, expressed his honor in addressing the RAPP forum, noting the long-shared history and cultural and economic ties between Alaska and Russia, but emphasizing the need to look toward our future. Our futures, he noted, are intertwined in the Arctic and they bring both challenges and opportunities for us to work together. As the sole Arctic state of the United States, Alaska is America’s Arctic and will play a large role in our Arctic partnerships. He stated that, as the Northern Sea Route continues to develop (predicted to be ice-free by 2030), the Bering Strait increases in global significance. Ice-free trans-polar routes in the late summers are projected by the 2030s, and these changes in the Arctic will provide new opportunities for economic growth, with increases in both cargo loads and passenger travel. He stressed the importance of dialogue on the management of fish stocks in the shared waters to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the fisheries for future generations. In conclusion, Lieutenant Governor Meyer stated that there are bright opportunities on the horizon for America and Russia in the Pacific, and Alaska looks forward to its participation in fostering this partnership.

Schuyler Hoss, Director of International Relations & Protocol read a statement from **Jay Inslee**, Governor of Washington State. In the letter, Governor Inslee extended greetings and best wishes to the participants of the 26th Russian American Pacific Partnership. He expressed appreciation for the work to improve relations between the United States and Russia. He noted the leading role of the Council for US-Russia Relations in promoting dialogue and discussion on the many issues of mutual interest. Governor Inslee encouraged those participating in this meeting to prioritize the absolute need to address climate change. In both Russia and the U.S. there is compelling and irrefutable evidence of the impacts of climate change on our people. He noted that there is no need to list these impacts, as on a daily basis we see the evidence and news reporting of the ravages of climate change. He urged that we take bold and decisive action now in order to slow the devastation and to protect our shared future. Inslee noted that at this year’s UN COP 26 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, he will be

involved in efforts to mobilize the creativity and commitment of regions, states, provinces, cities, and what are often referred to as sub-national governments to demand action on climate. He termed them super-national governments. There are literally tens of thousands of sub-national entities that can effectively join the climate fight. He noted that this bottom up approach is necessary to insure that national governments remain steadfast in their commitments to carbon reduction. All levels of government must demand real action and commit to meaningful changes. Governor Inslee stressed his strong belief that a commitment to new climate technologies is an important economic development and a job-creation strategy. He emphasized that many of the best jobs of the future will come from our fight to prevent the impacts of climate change. In conclusion, Governor Inslee expressed his hope that during this RAPP meeting there will be a realistic discussion on climate change and a demand for all levels of government to protect our people and the planet.

Boris Stupnitsky introduced the following heads of Russian regional government delegations:

Vera Shcherbina, First Vice-Governor & Chair of Government of the Primorsky krai, greeted the participants and thanked the organizers for the opportunity to review issues of cooperation between the Far East regions and the western United States. She noted that over recent years, cooperation between the Primorsky krai and the United States is down significantly, with the U.S. share of the territory's foreign trade currently just slightly over 1%. She reported the region's 2020 trade balance with the US as \$98.8 million. The 11.4% increase in trade over the first five-months of 2021 is due only to a near doubling of the cost of American imported goods while exports to the US declined significantly. U.S. investment in the Primorsky krai economy is quite low and, as an example, she referenced the production plant of Coca-Cola HBC Eurasia Ltd. and one agricultural enterprise with American investment, registered as a resident of the Free Port of Vladivostok, working land in the Khasansky municipal district. Shcherbina noted significant untapped potential in economic cooperation between the Primorsky krai and the United States, but added that sanctions and the decision to close the U.S. Consulate in Vladivostok have been a detriment. At the same time, Primorsky krai accounts for 50% of Far Eastern federal district companies engaged in foreign economic activities and 23% of the federal district's foreign trade. Economic development mechanisms in the region include the Free Port of Vladivostok and the Territories of Advanced Development (TORs), as well as large federal investment projects. The region hosts the largest regional and federal events in the federal district, attracting the attention of foreign partners implementing economic, investment, and humanitarian projects. \$1.8 billion in foreign investment is projected for 88 projects under the Free Port Vladivostok and Territory of Advanced (socio-economic) Development programs, of which 10.7 % has already been invested. The Government of the Primorsky krai is committed to a favorable investment climate and to providing support to investors. The government offers land plots and assistance with the implementation of investment projects. She welcomed cooperation with U.S. West Coast businesses, including those in such areas as tourism, transportation and logistics, agriculture, food industry, science, and education. In the current difficult period in political relations between Russia and the U.S., Shcherbina stressed the need to intensify economic and socio-cultural bilateral cooperation at the inter-regional level. She proposed business mission exchanges as a beneficial activity, which the Primorsky krai already enjoys with partners in many Asian and European countries. In closing, Shcherbina invited all attendees to the 6th Eastern Economic Forum on September 2-4 in Vladivostok, Russia and recalled that the then California Governor Jerry Brown participated in the forum in 2017, following his invitation delivered during the RAPP meeting in San Francisco.

Maria Avilova, First Deputy Chairman of the Khabarovskiy krai Government, welcomed the participants of the 26th RAPP meeting, which she views as an effective platform for developing business and human contacts between Pacific Russia and the Western United States. She assessed the issues of discussion as relevant, not only to strengthen existing areas of cooperation, but also to open new ones. She reported that the Khabarovskiy krai has established meaningful economic and humanitarian cooperation with the United States with bilateral trade development, including Khabarovsk exports to the U.S. of petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, and industrial products. She noted the ongoing manufacturing cooperation with American companies in the production of the "Sukhoi Superjet 100" passenger aircraft. In the area of investments, she cited Exxon Neftegas Limited's large-scale infrastructure project in the Khabarovskiy krai, as well as the participation of the joint Russian-American Company Kolymageo in geological exploration, with two gold deposits discovered in the region. In 2020, despite the constraints of the new coronavirus pandemic, three McDonald's restaurants were opened in the city of Khabarovsk, employing the latest in customer service systems. She stated that the Khabarovskiy krai supports McDonald's expansion plans for up to 10 restaurants in the region. Avilova noted that the current Russian-American cooperation is only a fraction of its potential. She expressed confidence that the intensive program of the 26th RAPP meeting will open new directions for mutually beneficial partnerships. She wished the meeting participants every success.

Anton Zaitsev, Deputy Chairman of Government of the Sakhalin Region, welcomed participants on behalf of Valery Limarenko, Governor of the Sakhalin Region. He cited RAPP as probably the only proven mechanism for U.S.-Russian cooperation at the regional level. He noted that the Sakhalin region hosted five RAPP meetings - more than any other region -

affirming Sakhalin's special position in building cooperation between the Russian Far East regions and the western U.S. states. Sakhalin's proximity to the Asia-Pacific region is critical to the region's development, and Sakhalin is the leading Far East region in Gross Regional Product (GRP) per capita - more than three times the Russian average GRP per capita. Sakhalin's total foreign trade last year was over \$12 billion, with the U.S. among the top five trade partners. Total bilateral trade with the U.S. last year was \$70 million, mainly the import of oil and gas equipment. Over the past two decades, the Sakhalin region has been dynamically developing, thanks to the Sakhalin shelf oil and gas projects. The oil and gas complex accounts for almost 83% of the region's total industrial production and 70% of the regional budget tax revenues. The leading players in the sector are Sakhalin-1 (Exxon Neftegas Limited operator) and Sakhalin-2 (Sakhalin Energy operator). Zaitsev stated that there are 51 enterprises registered in the region, with United States participation principally in the oil and gas projects, which generate significant revenues and create jobs for residents of the region. He noted that Sakhalin-U.S. relations are thankfully not limited to business and expressed appreciation for the social responsibility activities of American companies, mentioning Exxon Neftegas Ltd.'s support of charitable projects in numerous fields, and Schlumberger's and Fluor Daniel's contributions to equipping educational institutions. Zaitsev noted that declines in oil and gas markets create risks as well as new opportunities. Pursuant to the Paris Agreement, more than 120 countries have committed to achieving carbon neutrality (a balancing of greenhouse gas emissions and removals) by 2050. Among them, Zaitsev noted, are Sakhalin's closest neighbors – Japan, China, and the Republic of Korea. In 2020, Russia set goals to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions 70 percent (relative to 1990 levels) by 2030. The Sakhalin Region has set an even more ambitious goal for itself - to achieve regional carbon neutrality by 2025. The 2022-2025 initiative, supported by the Russian government, will introduce technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and will launch a system for carbon offset trading. Zaitsev noted that 95% of greenhouse gas emissions in the Sakhalin Region are caused by activities of energy sector enterprises. Thanks to the sustainable management of forests over 70% of the territory, the difference between emissions and removals is about 1 million tons of CO2 equivalents. Sakhalin's goal is to reduce this difference to zero by 2025 by the following measures:

- full gasification of the region (converting all coal-fired boilers to gas) to cut greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere by almost half
- increasing the region's electricity generation by renewable energy sources to 28%
- development of "green" hydrogen, based on wind energy, with a 100 MW wind farm to produce hydrogen for export to the Asia-Pacific countries (30 thousand tons in 2025 to 100 thousand tons in 2030)
- conversion to electric and natural gas-powered vehicles, including constructing 1000 charging stations and adding 10 thousand electric vehicles and 100 thousand natural gas-powered vehicles
- applying carbon dioxide capture and utilization technologies
- construction of the new city of Ecopolis by 2030, employing cutting-edge environmental standards
- production of a range of low-carbon footprint products

Zaitsev reported on the interest of numerous foreign companies on Sakhalin to join in the climate project and reduce their own carbon footprint to zero in the region. As part of the initiative, a carbon market will be launched according to international standards and open for integration with international systems. A draft law on the initiative is before the federal government and will soon reach the State Duma of the Russian Federation. Sakhalin's transition to low-carbon development is projected to create over 11 thousand new jobs in the region, many of them "green" jobs. Sakhalin hopes its low-carbon agenda will create new opportunities both for internal development and multilateral cooperation, which, it hopes, will include the American business community. Zaitsev concluded that, despite the difficult period in political relations between the Russian Federation and the United States, green technologies and climate change initiatives should provide a new basis for cooperation between our two countries at the regional level.

Ivan Alkheev, Deputy Chairman of Government of the Republic of Buryatia, expressed his appreciation to join in the meeting aimed at developing friendly relations and business links between the regions, cities, and companies of the Russian Far East and the West Coast of the United States. The Republic of Buryatia has been participating in RAPP meetings for a number of years. He characterized this year's meeting as a landmark event in developing interregional cooperation among the RAPP constituencies, noting the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. International cooperation is a priority of the Government of the Republic of Buryatia and the Republic is actively engaged with the regions and cities in Mongolia, China, the Republic of Korea, North Korea, and Japan in a variety of fields, including industry, trade, transport development, ecology, education, science, and health, as well as through sister-city relations. Buryatia's advantageous economic and geographic location, abundant mineral resources, and its skilled working-age population make it one of the most promising regions for doing business, developing foreign economic relations, and investing in the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia. Buryatia's great recreational opportunities and natural abundance are uniquely rich for the development of domestic, in-

bound, ecological, and rural tourism. Buryatia is implementing a number of major investment projects in tourism development for a wide array of international visitors. Buryatia hopes that, despite the current political situation and sanctions, there is recognition of the need to advance bilateral cooperation and business ties. Alkheev expressed Buryatia's interest in cooperation with the Pacific region U.S. states' business communities as well as in scientific research, industry, agriculture, tourism, healthcare, education, culture, and more. The Government of the Republic of Buryatia supports investors and a favorable investment climate. Alkheev reported that the legal, infrastructural, administrative, informational, and financial mechanisms supporting investment projects are well-developed in the Republic, including the Regional Development Fund of the Republic of Buryatia resource, which offers complete services to investors on a "one-stop shop" basis. Alkheev noted that, in strengthening our ties, we help improve the broader bilateral relations, and the RAPP meeting is an important opportunity to develop cooperation between Buryatia and the western United States. He stated the Government of the Republic of Buryatia will offer its full support, so that these initiatives are successful. In conclusion, Alkheev confirmed the interest of the Government of the Republic of Buryatia to commence a dialogue on hosting the RAPP meeting in the city of Ulan-Ude in the Republic of Buryatia the next year that Russia hosts the meeting.

Kim Borisov, Deputy Chairman of Government & Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) to the Far Eastern Federal District, thanked the Council for US-Russia Relations for the invitation and cited RAPP as a unique forum for developing relations between the Far East regions and western US states, affording direct dialogue between American and Russian regional administrations, and business and scientific communities. With the current difficulties in the political situation at the governmental level, it is necessary to continue Russian-American relations at the regional level to preserve and expand business, scientific, and cultural ties. The interest of business communities of both countries serves as a basis for fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation in the future. Borisov cited Yakutia's special relationship with the State of Alaska in the framework of the Northern Forum, in which Yakutia and Alaska cooperate on Northern Forum projects on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and telemedicine. The Northern Forum working groups provide an opportunity for American colleagues and experts to participate in studies on a wide range of issues. Sister-city relations and citizen diplomacy play an important role in cooperation between Yakutia and the United States. The first foreign municipality with which Yakutsk established a sister-city relation was Fairbanks, Alaska. A key element of the international relations of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is communication with compatriots abroad, and in the United States the Yakut diaspora is one of the most numerous and organized. Yakutia immigrants in the United States help promote the history and culture of the peoples of Yakutia and assist with research by U.S. museums, archives, and libraries. In 2022, Yakutia plans to hold its first Forum of Compatriots living abroad. The North-Eastern Federal University (NEFU) in Yakutia cooperates with many universities and colleges around the world, including in the United States. The 1991 cooperation agreement with the University of Alaska Fairbanks included an exchange of teachers and students, information and literature, and joint scientific and educational events. There is a huge potential for inter-university scientific and educational cooperation across the entire spectrum of Arctic issues. Since 1998, NEFU has been participating in the international project "University of the Arctic". Among large industrial companies working successfully in Yakutia are Caterpillar and General Electric. The Republic of Sakha is open for the development of constructive partnerships and consultative relations with all countries and regional entities, including the United States, on the basis of mutual respect and interest. This is important not only for our two countries, but for the world. There is great unrealized potential for the development of business cooperation between the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the United States, and the RAPP forum opens significant opportunities for expanding bilateral relations and economic ties. The strengthening of Russian-American economic relations benefits not only the development of the regions and the populations, but also provides greater stability to the broader bilateral relationship. In 2018, at the 23rd RAPP meeting, with the support of the leadership of RAPP and the Mayor's Office of Anchorage, a memorial pillar "Serge" was erected, symbolizing the friendship between the Russian Far East and the United States. The ceremony was attended by the Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz; the Executive Director of RAPP, Derek Norberg, Paul Fuhs of Marine Exchange of Alaska, as a key partner in the project; local citizens; and the craftsmen from the Yakut ethno-cultural association "Elleyaada", under the leadership of Mikhail Yershov. On behalf of the leadership of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Borisov wished the participants of the 26th meeting of RAPP fruitful and successful work.

Natalia Slugina, Head of the Department for International Cooperation & Arctic Affairs of the Office of the Governor of the Chukotka Autonomous Region, welcomed the participants and noted Chukotka's long-standing participation in RAPP activities and its active role in international programs of Russian-American cooperation. In the region, the visa-free travel program for indigenous peoples of Chukotka and Alaska with familial relations has been in effect since 1989. A bilateral agreement on the conservation of polar bears has been in existence since 2000. The work proceeds systematically with the cooperation of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation, and in-person and virtual meetings are

scheduled under the U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission. An annual scientific-practical conference “World of the Polar Bear” is held, at which scientific experts, practitioners of traditional culture, Russian and foreign participants, representatives of non-governmental organizations, ecologists, and government representatives participate. She announced that Aleksey Yakovlev, Head of the Department of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Chukotka AO, will provide details about the 2021 annual “World of the Polar Bear” conference later in the program. Slugina called attention to the Alaska-Siberia air corridor of WWII and the commemoration events being planned for 2022 in Chukotka to mark its 80th anniversary. Olga Rastorgueva, Director of the District House of Folk Art, will present on that topic later in the program. Slugina noted that under the concepts for the development of Arctic zones of Russia, and in conjunction with the Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and Arctic and the Agency for Tourism of Russia, the government of the Chukotka AO initiated a proposal to organize “The Bering Strait Festival” as an Arctic event. Irina Ryabukhina, Assistant to the Governor of the Chukotka Autonomous Region, will present more about this event later. Slugina thanked the participants for their attention to the proposals of the Chukotka Autonomous Region.

Natalia Delemen, Deputy Minister of Investments, Industry & Business of the Government of the Kamchatsky krai, on behalf of the Governor of the Kamchatsky krai, thanked the organizers for the opportunity to join in the 26th RAPP meeting. She noted that close cooperation between our territories started long ago, including during WWII when Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky was a transit point for lend-lease deliveries. Kamchatka aspires to again become a transit and refueling point for American ships along the Northern Sea Route. Delemen provided an overview of the Kamchatka Territory as one of the main regions for economic development in the Far East. The peninsula has unique reserves of aquatic biological resources and minerals, and the pristine nature of the region attracts thousands of tourists from all over the world. With a population of 311.7 thousand people, Kamchatka holds the 13th place among all regions of Russia in GDR per capita, at approximately \$12,433 per capita, placing it 5th place in the Far Eastern Federal District. Investments in the Territory are growing yearly and last year amounted to \$ 829.9 million. The foreign trade turnover of the Kamchatka Territory is \$1 billion with 92% being fish products. Kamchatka’s main international partners are in the Asia-Pacific region: the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, and Japan. In 2020, Kamchatka’s trade balance with the U.S. was \$11.96 million (or 1.14 % of its total foreign trade), and consisted of exports of fish and seafood (\$7.2 million) and imports of machinery, equipment, and components \$3.8 million). While Kamchatka Territory’s current trade balance with the U.S. is modest, Kamchatka is favorably positioned to develop cooperation with the United States, thanks to its geographical location at the center of the North Pacific. Kamchatka sees great potential with the U.S. in various areas. At the moment, Kamchatka is experiencing a new stage of development, which opens wide opportunities for investment. Among the priority tasks of the Government of the Kamchatka Territory is integration into the world economic system, leveraging the competitive advantages of the region (geographical location, significant reserves of natural resources, special regimes to attract investment projects, and other federal support for investment activities). Delemen provided details on the Advanced Socio-Economic Development “Kamchatka” (TOR) and the Free Port of Vladivostok in the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky City District, and the benefits they afford resident companies. To date, 115 resident companies have signed agreements establishing activities in the TOR “Kamchatka” with declared investments of 173,350.98 million rubles, projected to create more than 10 thousand new jobs. Current investments to-date are 16,055.57 million rubles, with 5,434 jobs created. 146 residents operate under the free Port of Vladivostok regime in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. Investments under agreements are 13,488. 68 million rubles (including capital investments of 12,526. 09 million rubles), with a projected 2,341 jobs created. To-date, investments received are 8,554. 80 million rubles, with 633 jobs created. Delemen also discussed regional government investment support resources, including the Kamchatka Development Corporation and the “My Business Center”, offering a full range of support services to investment projects, from concept to full implementation. Kamchatka’s investment and economic policies have resulted in Kamchatka’s rise in the all-Russian rating by the attractiveness of the investment climate. Today, Kamchatka rates 12th among Russian regions in comfort of the business environment.

Kamchatka’s pristine nature and environment provide a unique opportunity. Thermal and mineral springs, volcanoes and glaciers, the famous Valley of Geysers, and diverse flora and fauna, all largely untouched by civilization, are the basis for the development of eco-tourism, mountaineering, ski tourism, sports fishing and hunting, charter flights, and cruises. In recent years, tourist visits to the region have grown significantly with more than 240 thousand people per year. Most are Russians, but 36 thousand foreigners visited in 2019 (2020 numbers are not indicative due to the pandemic and travel restrictions). The marketing of tourism and tourist services is a development priority of the Kamchatka Territory. The most popular tour offerings for American tourists are environmental, sports and adventure, sport hunting and fishing. To further develop these, appropriate infrastructure is needed, and Delemen expressed interest in cooperation in investment projects for hotel complexes, ski resorts, thermal spring spa hotels, as well as ecotourism and ethno-cultural centers. Plans to build infrastructure to increase tourism include the creation of a new passenger terminal at the international airport and the construc-

tion of auxiliary facilities to the airport complex, including a hotel, a business center, and shopping areas. The new modern terminal, with a one-million-passenger capacity, is scheduled to be commissioned in 2023, with improved services and conditions for passengers, including international scheduled and charter flights. Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky is ideally positioned as a transit port on the Northern Sea Route and cruise ship routes from North America to Southeast Asia. As the highest-latitude ice-free port on the eastern section of the Northern Sea Route at the center of commercial fishing in the North Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Okhotsk, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky is well-positioned as a logistics center. Plans are to construct the largest sea terminal in the Far East for transshipment of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Arctic carriers to conventional ones; a cruise ship terminal; terminals for transporting drinking water; cargo terminals at Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky International Airport, as well as a transshipment terminal for frozen, refrigerated, and dry container cargoes; and a port complex for servicing fishing vessels. Fisheries currently account for 50% of Kamchatka's total industrial production, and Kamchatka is the leading region in the Far Eastern Federal District, and Russia as a whole, by volume of production (catch) of aquatic biological resources. More than 23% of the marine biological resources of Russia are harvested in the seas of Kamchatka, including all types of Pacific salmon – Pink, Chum, Sockeye, Chinook, Coho, and Massou. Kamchatka fish products are well known in markets of the Asia-Pacific region. Kamchatka seafood is largely exported with low technological processing. Opportunities lie in developing deeper processing of fish products using modern production facilities to produce higher-grade products competitive on world markets. State support is available to investors for projects creating coastal infrastructure, including subsidizing interest rates on loans, administrative support, and the possibility of modern technological equipment. Kamchatka is interested in exploring new markets for fish products with foreign partners. Delemen touched on Kamchatka's green energy strategy, stating that the creation of new infrastructure for the production, transportation, and utilization of "green" hydrogen will create a new hydrogen-based energy economy, with the Russian Federation among the world leaders in its production and export. The potential capacity of green hydrogen energy facilities in Kamchatka can reach 110 GW or the equivalent of 6 million tons of hydrogen per year. The Kamchatka government is creating the conditions necessary to attract investment in its green energy strategy projects. The Kamchatka Territory invites American partners to these various areas of cooperation. Delemen concluded by noting that there are many areas of mutual interest, and that the Kamchatsky krai government is open for dialogue and partnership.

This concluded the addresses by representatives of U.S. states and Russian Far East regions.

Next, the first in the series of expert panel presentations was introduced. Panel #1: **Constructive cooperative engagements across the RAPP geography.**

Experts:

Shelley Beer, President, Exxon Neftegas Limited, noted the consortium's support of the RAPP forum over many years and provided an overview of the Sakhalin-1 consortium and project, including its production and transportation facilities. She noted the company's high standards for safety, including COVID-19 pandemic measures. Sakhalin-1 operates the world's most powerful drilling rigs in the industry – two onshore horizontal reach rigs and two offshore platforms. 8 of the 10 longest wells in the world have been deployed by Sakhalin-1. Using technologies of the highest industry standards, Sakhalin-1 has increased efficiencies and reduced its environmental impacts. A production milestone reached in August of 2020 was one billion barrels safely delivered to international markets, and currently over 1,500 tankers have been loaded from the De Kastri terminal in the Khabarovsk krai. Among the many project benefits are revenues to the Russian Federation; the local economies of operations; and an increase in the employment of Russian nationals, which grew from about 400 in 2006 to over 850 today. The ENL technical trainee program, with leading universities in Russia, has launched the careers of over 370 technical professionals. Localization is a priority and nearly \$18.5 billion in contracts have been awarded to Russian or joint-venture companies in Russia. The project has generated over \$20 billion in budget revenues, as well as \$230 million in transportation and social infrastructure investments supporting operations and benefiting communities in the region. ENL, on behalf of the Sakhalin-1 consortium, has made over \$37 million in charitable contributions to education, healthcare, indigenous communities on Sakhalin and in the Ulchi District in the Khabarovsk krai, youth sports, and environmental projects.

Rudy D'Allesandro, International Cooperation Specialist – Asia/Pacific/Arctic/Russia, US National Park Service, presented on the Shared Beringian Heritage Program (in its 30th year) and the US National Park Service. The NPS Berengia Program started in 1991 with funding from the US Congress. The purpose of the program is to advance local, national, and international understanding of the preservation of the region's resources and to sustain cultural vitality of its indigenous peoples. The program provides funding to scientists and cultural specialists studying and sharing our history and shared heritage. D'Allesandro announced that the program is planning a Beringia Days celebration in Nome in 2023, and they hope that the number of participants will be close to the 220 who participated in the celebration in 2011. D'Allesandro detailed a number of projects being funded by the Beringia Shared Heritage Program.

Irina Ryabukhina, Assistant to the Governor of the Chukotka Autonomous Region, presented on an initiative of the Chukotka Autonomous Region to organize an international Bering Strait Festival. The festival seeks to raise international interest in tourism to the Bering Strait as one of the most interesting places in the Arctic. A variety of sport activities are proposed including the crossing of the strait by rowing vessels, as well as Arctic indigenous peoples sport competitions in traditional kayaks and other indigenous sport disciplines. She invited interested parties from both sides to join in support of this festival initiative.

Mark Dudley, Regional Director North America, InterPacific Aviation & Marketing (IPAM), presented on the building of a more robust aviation system in the context of flight service between the US and the Russian Far East. He provided details of the geography and demographics, including vast territories with little population, as well as climatic challenges. He detailed the seasonal flights between the Russian Far East and Anchorage, Alaska, that his company has organized since 2009. He mentioned the need for improvements to airports (particularly in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky) for international passengers (including transit passengers), as well as in the organization and optimization of schedules of connecting flights to other cities. He provided an overview of general aviation in Alaska that serves as a vital means of transportation for small remote communities, as well as being an important business and an enabler of commerce. He provided details of IPAM's schedule for eight flights in July and August 2022, with ticket sales beginning in November of this year.

Dmitry Sazhin, Senior Expert, Directorate of International Transport Corridors "DITC", presented on the activities of the Directorate of International Corridors, a new organization established by the Russian government addressing the various transportation corridor developments within Russia as elements to ten priority international transportation corridors between Europe, the Asia-Pacific, and Eurasia. He noted the corridors serving the Asia-Pacific should be of interest to West Coast states, ports, and transportation companies. He proposed to include a study of transportation corridor cooperation opportunities in the RAPP agenda. Sazhin announced that, with the support of the Ministry of Transportation of the Russian Federation, the 16th International Forum on the Development of Transportation Corridors, "TRANSTEC" 2021, will be held 21-24 September 2021 in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

Two video presentations completed the day's sessions: one on the rhythmic gymnastics activities of Rose City Rhythmic of Portland, Oregon, with partners in Khabarovsk, Russia; and the other, an address by Evgeny Rusetskiy for the Association of Sister-Cities of Vladivostok.

This concluded the July 27 sessions of day one of the 26th annual meeting.

The RAPP 26th annual meeting resumed Wednesday July 28 at 16:00 PDT (July 29 Russian Far East time).

Derek Norberg opened the session, noting the successful first day of meetings, and introduced Expert Panel #2: **Investment Risks, Mitigation & Legal Protection** addressing factors of investment risk and international best-practices for their mitigation, with a focus on the Russian Far East and Arctic, as well as programs for the attraction of foreign investment. Experts:

Tom Dans, Commissioner, United States Arctic Research Commission, referenced his 30 years' experience in venture capital, including in Russia in the 1990s. He noted that many investment risks in Russia are actually international and common to many markets. Direct investments are inherently risky – risk can be managed but never entirely eliminated. He noted the importance of setting and agreeing on goals, and aligning interests early with your partner(s), including your time horizon for the investment and several exit strategy scenarios. Dans stressed the importance of individuals – key people. He stressed the importance of communication and of learning Russian. He stressed the commitment of time and getting on the ground in Russia (and, if possible, having a residence there). He noted that in difficult times, patience and staying power may be key. However, flexibility is important, and you may need to change plans, or even extract yourself from a deal, should the situation dictate. He discussed his work with the U.S. Arctic Research Commission as an independent agency of the US government that advises the President and Congress on Arctic research policy, reviews federal Arctic research programs, and facilitates domestic and international cooperation on the Arctic, including with Russia.

Boris Stupnitsky introduced:

Natalia Prisekina, Professor, Far Eastern Federal University School of Law / Partner, Pepeliaev Group Law Firm, provided an extensive overview of what foreign investors need to know regarding arbitration of business disputes in the Russian Federation. Russian legislation affords most legal protections common internationally, including the use of various forms of investment, the stabilization clause protection against unfavorable changes in legislation, repatriation of profits, compensation in the case of nationalization or requisition of property, and guarantee of securing a settlement of a dispute. Litigation in Russia of ordinary and relatively low value disputes may be a good choice for foreign companies and their sub-

sidiaries to save time and money. The most sensitive and high value disputes are often referred for foreign arbitration, both by international corporates and often by Russia's largest private and even state-owned corporations, which are quite adept with arbitration in many international arbitration centers. But Prisekina noted that recently she sees more and more arbitration being conducted in Russia. In 2018, the Supreme Court of Russia adopted a review of judicial practice, which constituted a pro-arbitral approach on a number of issues. A 2018 federal law on special administrative regions of Kaliningrad and Primorsky Territory allows for disputes in special administrative regions to be referred to an arbitration tribunal. And the 2019 resolution of the Plenum of the Supreme Court specified the development of alternative means of dispute resolution to be a task of the judiciary of Russia. Currently there are three main institutions in Russia eligible to administer commercial arbitration – the International Commercial Arbitration Court at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Arbitration Center at the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, and the Russian Arbitration Center. All three have branch offices in Vladivostok. Prisekina provided some nuanced legal considerations to dispute resolution by alternate arbitration bodies. For example, if the dispute relates to management of a Russian company or shares therein, it qualifies as a corporate dispute, which may only be referred to licensed institutions. In this case, a decision by a foreign non-licensed arbitration body may be unenforceable in Russia. She noted that several foreign arbitration centers, including those in Vienna, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the International Arbitration Center at the International Chamber of Commerce, have received licenses from the Russian Federation Ministry of Justice. She noted that under Russian law, corporate disputes include many issues arising from common merger & acquisition (M&A) contracts as these relate to Russian companies, or shares therein, including share purchase, shareholder, and joint-venture agreements. Since the arbitration reform in 2016, Russia has very complex rules and restrictions on corporate disputes that need to be considered in drafting arbitration provisions in M&A contracts as these relate to Russian companies, or shares therein, factoring that some types of disputes may only be arbitrated in Russia, and/or under special arbitration rules. Where a Russian company qualifies as a "Strategic entity" under Russia's foreign investment legislation, disputes involving such an entity are mostly non-arbitral. Prisekina then turned to Russia's Labor Laws, which she characterized as "pro-employee". The Russian Labor Code governs all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, and, while not dissimilar from labor laws of most European countries, it has some specific features. In Russia, the place where work is performed is determinant in jurisdiction of the labor code. Accordingly, employees of foreign entities working in Russia, whether Russian nationals or expatriate non-Russians with employment agreements signed in accordance with the laws of their home jurisdiction, are entitled to all benefit provisions of the Russian Labor Code. In order that employers avoid potential labor rights violations, it is important to formalize employment agreements of employees working in Russia in accordance with Russian law.

Stanislav Varnakov, Director, Department of Industry Expertise, JSC Corporation for Development of the Far East and Arctic, noted that he previously worked in the private sector, as well as four years with the Far Eastern Agency for the Attraction of Investment and Export Support. From March of this year, by consolidation, the JSC Corporation for Development of the Far East and Arctic was established to support Russian and foreign investors and to advance investments in the Russian Far East and Arctic. He cited President Putin's declaration that development of the Russian Far East is a national priority, and, in accordance, the Corporation for Development of the Far East and Arctic was established to operate in the Arctic zones of the Russian Federation and the Territories of Advanced Socio-Economic Development (TORs) broadly; and to administer the Free Port Vladivostok and TORs in the regions of the Russian Far East and Arctic. He shared the results of the past five years, citing a total of 2,700 resident companies in the TORs, Free Port Vladivostok, and Arctic Zone regimes, with investments under contract over 5 billion rubles, forecasted to create 187 thousand jobs. The actual figures to-date are approximately 1.5 billion rubles investment receipts and 65 thousand jobs created. The Far East provides investors special tax regimes, simplified administrative procedures, and low costs and high return on investment. In the TORs, the government pays the costs of infrastructure construction. In addition, affordable financing is available to resident businesses. All of this, Varnakov said, is helping the Far East develop at an accelerated rate. A complex of measures has been established that include the preferential regimes of the TORs, the Free Port Vladivostok, the Arctic zones, and Social Administrative Region "off-shore" (SAR) on Russky Island, with low tariffs on communal services, and effective interactions with federal agencies and the government of the Russian Federation. Unprecedented programs were established, including a subsidy under the program "Far East Hectare", providing land to citizens of the Far East that affords home (property) loans at a 1% rate. In the Free Port Vladivostok territories, residents enjoy special customs regulations and administrative conditions, and preferential tax benefits (a profit tax holiday for 5 years, social employment tax of 7.6 % for 10 years, land tax of 0% for 3-5 years, property tax of 0% for 3-5 years), as well as the simplified procedures of the free-zone; the opportunity to hire foreign labor; and a system for subsidized interest expense on loans up to the Central Bank of Russia key rate. The same benefits are available at the TORs, but here infrastructure costs are paid at government's expense. The Arctic zones also provide the same tax preferences as the Free Port Vladivostok, but since a change last year, land plots are now provided on a no-bid

basis. Varnakov mentioned the SAR, also known as “Russian offshore”, on Russky Island in the Primorsky krai as established to create financial and administrative conditions for the development of business, and attraction of capital to the Russian Federation for the offshoring of the economy and infrastructure development of the administrative region. Varnakov noted that these reflect the work of the Corporation. Before the pandemic, the Corporation was the bridge for foreign and Russian investment to the Far East regions. They had developed a road show for presentations in the Asia Pacific and participated in numerous business missions promoting investments to the Far East with excellent success. He noted that, of the 1.5 billion investments to-date, half are currently being restructured. He noted the RAPP meeting as providing an opportunity to introduce the Corporation for Development of the Far East and Arctic to the American audience of potential investors. Once pandemic travel restrictions are lifted, the Corporation plans to renew their road show and coordinate with Russian representations overseas to promote and attract investments. Plans include attracting financial investors and lenders (project finance institutions, investment funds, banks) interested in shareholder gains and return on loans; disseminating information through PR partners and mass media on the investment potential of the Far East and Arctic; creating a new website; professional training; and employing best international practices. Varnakov noted the unprecedented conditions today for establishing businesses. The Russian federal government and governments of the Far East regions are interested in business development and stand ready to support projects as never before. Over the past quarter during the pandemic, Varnakov has been on 10 business missions in Asia and Europe. In conclusion, Varnakov affirmed that the Far East is open for business and the Corporation for Development of the Far East and Arctic is ready to provide assistance and help.

Derek Norberg introduced Expert Panel #3 **Arctic Developments and Indigenous Communities** providing perspectives on economic development and indigenous communities, the Alaska experience, and the current situation in the Russian Far Northeast.

Experts:

Kevin Meyer, Lt. Governor State of Alaska, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address the RAPP forum and the issue of Arctic development and indigenous communities in the State of Alaska. As the only U.S. state in the Arctic, Alaska is America’s Arctic. Despite its vast geography, Alaska has only 720 thousand residents, and indigenous people, or Alaska Natives, are approximately 18-20 percent of the people making Alaska home. Shaped over thousands of years of interaction with the Arctic landscape, native culture is perfectly adapted to its environment. Native communities recognize that only through cooperation can people safely and effectively live and work in the Arctic. Meyer stated that maintaining native community lifestyles and traditions, while also improving economic opportunities and creating jobs for our Alaska Native communities and for our state, is a top priority for the Governor and himself. Alaska is blessed with many resources such as oil and gas, timber, mining, fishing, mari-culture, agriculture, and tourism. Many of these resources are in areas where the population is almost all Alaska native, such as the North Slope where 500 thousand barrels of oil are produced daily, and near Kotzebue where the Red Dog zinc mine is located. Developing resources, as reflected in the addresses of other speakers, is a challenge. The availability of trained human capital and the absence of roads, ports, docks, and other infrastructure is a challenge. Permitting, regulations, environmental protection, all can delay a project significantly. Economic viability is a factor in Alaska and the Arctic in general, where everything costs more. And the changing climate is having an effect, including shifting fishing grounds farther north. Overcoming these challenges can be tough. Working with our Alaska native communities and the private sector, we have not only had success but also turned some challenges into positives. For example, the changing climate is extending the season for agriculture and tourism, and for cruise ships in particular. Alaska’s resources are important to the world. Alaska has 27 of the 30 rare-earth minerals needed for batteries and renewable energy projects. Alaska’s development has been going on since the 1880s, but resource extraction of scale is relatively new. The American Medical Association in 2018 published a study the of health impacts on the Alaska Native communities in the Arctic in areas of major oil and gas and mining projects. The study found that life expectancy among the indigenous people living in proximity to the projects increased an average of 8-13 years over the period of study from 1980-2015. The study listed improvements to healthcare, education, quality of water, jobs and family incomes, and affordable natural gas for heat, as some of the benefits of resource development. Meyer concluded that Alaskans have developed their resources and improved the quality of life for all Alaskans.

Rex A. Rock Jr., Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor of Alaska, addressed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). He noted that, with Alaska becoming a Territory in 1912 and a state in 1959, the Alaskan Federation of Natives has advocated for the land claims, culminating in President Nixon signing ANCSA in 1971. ANCSA afforded land claims and the regional Native corporations with shareholders managing the lands and natural resources. While noting that reaching consensus within the communities can be challenging, ANCSA and the corporations deliver socio-economic benefits to communities, including educational resources, travel opportunities through schools, scholarships, and job and skills training.

Rock expressed that education and opening new economic opportunities for Alaska Native communities are essential to their viability and should not be characterized as contrary to traditional values. Rock sees choosing between responsible development and the preservation of traditional ways of life as a false choice. The question of adaptation of native communities to a changing world is not whether they adapt but how, with the priority to provide native communities the best opportunities to succeed.

Boris Stupnitsky introduced:

Andrey Zakharov, Deputy Director Department of Social Development, Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East & Arctic, presented on the Ministry's plan of activities in connection with the Russian chairmanship of the Arctic Council transferred to Russia at the 12th Ministry of the Arctic Council for 2021-2023. Russia's chairmanship is run under the slogan "Responsible management for the sustainable development of the Arctic". In addition to official events, the plan includes initiatives on the most relevant areas of work in the Arctic, including increased attention to issues of indigenous peoples living in the Arctic. A section of the plan is dedicated to the preservation of traditional ways of life, the development of economic activities, and the popularization and preservation of the cultural and linguistic heritage of indigenous peoples of the North. In May 2009, the Russian Government approved a list of regions and their territories with places of traditional residence and traditional economic activity of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the Russian Federation. Of the 257,000 indigenous people living in the Russian Federation, more than 102,000 live in the Arctic zone. With the adoption in 2020 of the Federal Law "On state support for entrepreneurship in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation" and the development of entrepreneurship in the Arctic zone with investors interested in Arctic zone projects, the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia is working on the interaction of business and indigenous peoples of the North. In this regard, the Ministry of Regional Development of Russia has approved the "Standard of responsibility of residents (investors) of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation in relations with indigenous peoples living and carrying out economic activities in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation". The Ministry of Regional Development of Russia monitors the compliance of Arctic zone residents with the standard of responsibility in interactions with indigenous peoples.

In accordance with the standard of responsibility, when residents of the Arctic zone interact with indigenous peoples of the North, the main principles are:

- promoting the sustainable development of indigenous peoples, improving their quality of life and preserving their native habitat;
- participation of representatives of indigenous peoples in decision-making on issues affecting their rights and interests in the development of natural resources by new investors in places of traditional use;
- cooperation between residents of the Arctic zone and representatives of indigenous peoples in improving the socio-economic situation;
- transparency of activities of a resident of the Arctic zone, so that you can always see how the work is conducted;
- minimization of the negative impact of a resident's economic activity on the life and foundations of traditional locales and economies of indigenous peoples.

As Stanislav Varnakov has already noted, we have created conditions favorable to attracting investors to implement projects in the Arctic zone. The processes of preferences and benefits for an investor in the Arctic zone are maximally simplified, as they are for the Far East, and are attracting new investors every day. In addition, in April 2022, the Russian Government approved its "Program of state support for the traditional economic activities of indigenous and small-numbered peoples of the Russian Federation carried out in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation". An action plan for its implementation includes:

- Improvements to the legal regulatory environment;
- development of industrial and technological infrastructure of traditional economic activity;
- promotion of goods, works and services produced within the framework of traditional economic activity to the domestic and foreign markets;
- development of the tourism industry in places of traditional economic activity;
- training of personnel for the implementation of traditional economic activities;
- expanding the use of renewable energy sources by indigenous peoples;
- promotion of entrepreneurial activity among indigenous peoples.

The Ministry for the Development of the Far East and Arctic of Russia is interested in cooperation and exchange of experience to improve the quality of life of indigenous peoples.

Mikhail Pogodaev, Deputy Minister for Arctic Development & Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, Government of Sakha Republic (Yakutia), made a presentation on Arctic development and indigenous peoples of the North. He noted that he is him-

self an Even, an indigenous person by nationality. The Republic of Sakha has 16% of the indigenous peoples of the North of Siberia and the Far East of Russia – roughly 40 thousand people. He identified some of the main indigenous groups as Evenks, Evens, Yukagir, Dolgan, and Chukchi, and noted that over the period from 1988-2010, the population of indigenous peoples in the Republic increased by 60%. Indigenous peoples live in 72 settlements across 21 districts of the Republic of Sakha. The number of tribal communities of indigenous peoples has increased from 91 in 2011 to over 203 currently. The primary traditional activity of the tribal communities is reindeer herding, as well as hunting and fishing. The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was one of the first in the country to adopt a regional strategy on the social-economic development of the Republic's Arctic territories for the period up to 2035. A main objective of the strategy is to improve the quality of life of residents of the Arctic while applying modern technologies to preserve the fragile Arctic environment. In the strategy, special attention is devoted to the development of indigenous communities of the Arctic. Last year, the "Concept of Sustainable Development of Indigenous Peoples of the North of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) through 2035" was developed. Success depends on the active and direct involvement of the indigenous communities themselves in the program. Among the key elements to the strategy is raising capacity through education, and Pogodaev noted the importance of education being delivered in the native indigenous languages. He provided details of the regional and federal financial assistance with grant support resources available for indigenous program activities, including language preservation, free medicine, reindeer husbandry assistance, as well as programs providing early pension and tax privilege benefits for indigenous peoples. He mentioned the Federal Law "On State Support for Entrepreneurial Activity" and outlined the efforts currently underway in the Republic to organize tribal groups to register their commercial entities as residents in the Arctic Zones of the Russian Federation in order to receive the tax and other privileges therein afforded. He noted that more than half the Republic of Sakha are areas designated as "Territories of Traditional Nature Use" (TTPs), which afford certain protections of indigenous peoples' traditional activities. Pogodaev mentioned the serious threat of climate change, noting the historic forest fires currently burning in the Republic that are destroying reindeer habitat as well as hunting grounds. While most of the resource extraction projects in the Republic are currently in the South, plans for resource extraction in the North are underway. Under the 2010 regional Law "On Ethnological Expert Review", 26 expert reviews have been conducted assessing the impact of development projects on the indigenous peoples and determining compensation to be paid to the indigenous groups affected. This work is ongoing with over a half billion rubles in compensation assessed and some 20 new projects now under review. The Ethnological Expert Review mechanism is an important tool to ensure a civilized interaction between the project developers and indigenous groups in accordance with the law. In addition, a registry of indigenous peoples of the North is being created to ensure indigenous peoples the rights duly afforded them by legislation. Russia is now chairman of the Arctic Council, and the Republic of Sakha has initiated, and is actively participating in, several projects under Russia's chairmanship. Among such programs are the Digitalization of the Linguistic and Cultural Heritage of the Peoples of the Arctic in order to document and preserve the knowledge, and cultural and linguistic heritage of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, and "Children of the Arctic" aimed at improving the education opportunity for children in some of the most remote of Arctic regions. Referring to the Northern Sea Route (NSR) development, Pogodaev proposed that the indigenous peoples of the Arctic be provided export opportunity of indigenous food and other products to international markets by the NSR. They have developed "Aellu", an international project jointly developed with the Arctic Council, to bring modern technologies for the processing of traditional indigenous products to international standards for export. The project enjoys support at all levels of the federal government. He thanked the RAPP organizers for the opportunity to speak to the council.

Vyachislav Shadrin, Chief, Council of Yukaghir Elders, and Vice-President, Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North of the Sakha Republic, Senior Researcher, Institute for Humanities and Indigenous Peoples of the North, Russian Academy of Sciences Siberian Branch, opened with a special greeting to all the Arctic indigenous brothers and sisters in Alaska, with whom they closely cooperate and enjoy close relations and a long history. He addressed in his presentation the rights of indigenous peoples of the North in the implementation of development projects in the Arctic. He noted that the indigenous peoples of the North in Russia have special legal status according to the Russian Constitution and a host of federal legislative regulations determining those rights. He explained the criteria for recognition as indigenous peoples of the North, which includes: numbering less than 50 thousand, living on traditional lands, preserving traditional livelihood, and independent self-identity. In Russia, there are currently 40 indigenous groups so recognized, totaling approximately 240,000 persons living in 34 regions of Russia. They typically live very close to, and as a part of, nature. Accordingly, the rights of the indigenous peoples dealing with the protection of the environment and lands are extremely important. The rights, and federal and regional laws, mainly address the protection of traditional indigenous economies and the preservation of traditional farming, reindeer husbandry, fishing and hunting as a basis for preserving the traditional lifestyles, languages, and cultures of the indigenous peoples. For this reason, priority for land rights and natural resource management, grounded in Russian Law, is

extremely important for the indigenous peoples. There exists special legislation at the federal and regional level affording first priority for hunting grounds, reindeer ranging, and access to fishing grounds specifically to local indigenous peoples. Shadrin explained the federal and regional program support of traditional indigenous reindeer husbandry and fishing industries. Noting Arctic development mentioned in many of the other presentations, Shadrin noted that the bulk of development in Russia is currently slated for its Arctic regions. He estimated that some 80% of water resources, 90% of forests, 100% of diamonds, and over 90% of oil, gas, coal, and other mineral deposits of the Russian Federation are located in the territories of its indigenous peoples. Shadrin identified the problem of industrial development for the indigenous peoples of Russia as threefold – the loss of traditional lands to development activities, the degradation of those lands through exploitation, and the diminished availability of lands for traditional activities. For these reasons, developing legal instruments defending the rights of indigenous peoples are needed, and in particular those establishing and protecting land rights as the basis for preservation of our peoples. Shadrin highlighted some of the legal instruments currently available to indigenous peoples of the North, including Territories of Traditional Nature land use (TPPs), the practice of Ethnological Expertise similar to impact assessment, and social and economic cooperation agreements between developers and indigenous communities. Shadrin noted the intense interest in industrial development is proceeding along with accelerated threats from climate change. For the indigenous peoples living so close to nature, changes to normal weather patterns and the unpredictability of nature are grave threats. In addition, shoreline erosion, permafrost melt, and the shortened season of ice roads, forest fires, and floods, are all serious concerns. He characterized these as life threatening for indigenous communities of the North, and stressed the need for federal programs to assist these communities to adapt to climate change. In addition to climate threats, he cited several human-caused environmental disasters over the recent past, citing the incident last year of the Norisk Nickle diesel spill in the Vilyu River feeding the Lena River in the Sakha Republic. He noted the need for companies to be held to greater responsibility for their impact on the environment. He noted that certain problems still need to be resolved with the TPPs, including not reliably affording indigenous tribes their rights of priority use of these lands; problems in ensuring traditional fishing rights; and TPP ? status? not providing sufficient protection powers to local communities. He noted some positive recent steps on indigenous rights, such as including procedures established for the compensation for damages to indigenous peoples that result from industrial development on indigenous traditional lands; the "Standard of responsibility of residents (investors) of the Arctic zone"; and the federal program that supports traditional activities of indigenous peoples.

Presentations were delivered by the following representatives from the Chukotka Autonomous Region:

Aleksey Yakovlev, Head of Department of Natural Resources & Ecology, Government of the Chukotka Autonomous Region, greeted the meeting on behalf of the Chukotka AO government and noted that the development of the Arctic is interconnected with scientific research on the condition of the environment. Since 2016, the government of the Chukotka AO has been holding an annual international applied-science conference "The Universe of the Polar Bear" in Chukotka to draw attention to the traditional ecological approaches and knowledge of the indigenous peoples of Chukotka and Alaska. Scientific research and providing for international cooperation between countries are essential to the utilization and preservation of polar bears. In 2016, for the first time in Russia, the project employed technologies for a visual count by aerial photography of polar bear populations of the western Chukotka and eastern Siberian Seas. Yakovlev noted that, we now have detailed data on the polar bear populations, as well as on their food sources in their habitat. After verification, the statistics are applied to set the quotas for traditional polar bear and seal harvests by indigenous peoples in Chukotka. The aerial polar bear population assessment is again planned for 2022-23 and may require a coordinated methodology with American experts to render a comprehensive assessment of the Chukotka-Alaska polar bear populations, like what was done on walruses in 2005-2006 and on seals in 2012-2016. In addition, over the period 2001-2016, there have been a series of important and effective projects conducted in Chukotka on the satellite tagging and genetic monitoring of marine mammals, including bowhead, gray, and beluga whales, and Pacific walruses and seals. These were performed under the US-Russian Protection of the Environment and Monitoring intergovernmental agreement. The results were published in a variety of scientific journals and provided the basis for determining quotas for traditional harvests by indigenous communities. Yakovlev provided details on the sophisticated analysis of a number of health factors of marine mammals performed under the obligations of the Russian Federation and the International Commission on Whaling. Blood tests provided data for an assessment of reproductive hormone levels, indicators of stress, and others, and for an annual assessment of heavy metals toxicity. Currently a DNA and RNA analysis is planned for a deeper understanding of the health conditions and risks to the marine mammal populations. In closing, Yakovlev noted that ecological education across generations is an important part of his work, which includes public awareness campaigns, and lectures in universities, colleges, and schools.

Olga Rastorgueva, Director, Chukotka District House of Folk Art, delivered a presentation on the 80-year commemoration of the Alaska-Siberia flight route that was launched with the first flights from Fairbanks on the 7th of October 1942

across the Bering Strait. From this date, the route was engaged in the delivery of US aircraft to the Soviet war effort. The delivery of the first aircraft to Krasnoyarsk took roughly a month, after which they were sent on to the Stalingrad front. After the arrival of the American planes, the air advantage of the fascists over Stalingrad was reversed. According to various documents, approximately 8 thousand US single- and double-engine military aircraft were delivered by the Al-Sib route. In the USSR, 16 military airports had to be constructed along the route in only a matter of months – a monumental task that would normally take years to complete. Chukotka was the first Soviet region to which the planes arrived after crossing the Bering Strait. Accordingly, it was decided to make the 80-year commemoration of the air route a primary cultural event of the region in 2022. The commemoration is to include a series of events that, taken together, will serve as a powerful anti-war initiative for the education of youth and, for those who participated in the route, an opportunity to celebrate the glory of this monumental, historic event of cooperation between countries and people. Rastorgueva noted that in one month, at the Eastern Economic Forum, the Chukotka Region will display an interactive video model, which supports moving the aircraft and interacting with the cities, towns, and air bases along a virtual replication of the Al-Sib route. Starting from October 2021, a cultural educational media program “Al-Sib - Day by Day” is planned to be carried as a recurring radio show on the Purga regional FM station (the most popular media outlet for Chukotka’s 50 thousand inhabitants, many in remote communities across the vast territory). The episodes of “Al-Sib - Day by Day” will also be posted on the websites of the radio station, as well as Forum Chukotka. A variety of printed publication materials commemorating the route, including books, pamphlets, posters, postage stamps, etc. are also planned. All these events are to build to the main celebration, which is planned to include the Chukotka AO government and the Regional Heritage Museum of Chukotka, collections from municipal museums and archives, the creation of a road-show version of the exhibit, and a multimedia resource for accessing the exhibition online. The main commemoration event is planned for September 7, 2022, with a proposal to establish a regional “Al-Sib Day”. Rastorgueva closed with an invitation for all interested parties to join in this historic commemoration activity initiative.

Derek Norberg introduced Expert Panel #4 **Small Planes, Big Dreams** addressing issues of the development of general Aviation – a vital, and often the only reliable, means of transportation to remote locations across vast, but sparsely populated regions of North-Eastern Russia and Alaska. Experts discussed issues of general aviation within and between our countries.

Experts:

Ivan Lukin, Chairman, Association of Small Aviation of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), was unable to attend and provided a presentation delivered on his behalf by Mark Dudley. Lukin cited the RAPP meeting as one of the most significant Russian-American meetings of the year and an important event for fostering mutually beneficial ties between the aviators of Alaska and the Republic of Sakha. He characterized aviation as the circulatory system of a country or region, consisting of large, medium, and small blood vessels, corresponding, in the language of aviation, to long-haul, regional, and small airlines. A lack of light aviation is like a blockage of the capillaries which, if not rectified, threatens the entire organism. For 30 years, light aviation in Yakutia has suffered a lack of necessary attention from the authorities that resulted in tens of landing strips closed, hundreds of aircraft lost; infrastructure for the service and production of light aviation in Yakutia was ruined, and the priceless experience of Soviet light aviation is nearly gone. With regret, Lukin assessed that light aviation as a branch of air transportation in Yakutia is effectively non-existent and must be rebuilt from scratch. He cited his association’s goal to facilitate the development of light aviation in Yakutia, and Alaska’s general aviation experience as a critical resource tool. The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is the largest region in Russia, more than 20% of the country, with 629 settlements with populations of 100 to 11,000 across a territory twice the size of Alaska. Yakutia’s population of 955,000 (1.3 times Alaska), is currently afforded regional air transportation by only ten old AN-2 aircraft, utilized by 3 enterprises, 2 state-owned and 1 private, which is grossly inadequate for the demand. Until very recently, federal aviation rules prohibited the use of privately owned aircraft and helicopters for scheduled passenger flights, cargo, or mail. Under the prior civil aviation regulations, creating a light aviation company was practically impossible because the regulations for small airlines were the same as for large carriers. After repeated and persistent appeals to federal government and authorities, including by Lukin’s light aviation association, on November 19, 2020 order number 494 was signed by the Minister of Transport authorizing light aviation aircraft and helicopters to conduct 44 types of aviation work, including the transportation of customer staff and cargo, and starting on March 1, 2022, light aircraft will be permitted to conduct commercial transportation of passengers, mail, and cargo. Another major obstacle to light aviation in Yakutia is the lack of production in Russia of light aircraft. Lukin stated that they are considering importing aircraft and helicopters from other countries, including Cessnas that have flight, technical, and efficiency characteristics suitable to Yakutia. Another hurdle is financial, most notably the Russian tax system in the area of civil aviation that increases the operating cost of small aircraft. Lukin reported his association participated in developing recommendations to the Committee on Economic Policy of the Federation Council on improving the financial/economic conditions for small aviation that were adopted May 18, 2021.

Lukin emphasized that they are in critical need of colleagues in the State of Alaska to share their experiences in operating light aircraft in areas with similar natural and climatic conditions to Yakutia and cited the following areas of need:

1. Development of a system to ferry aircraft from the US along the Al-Sib air route
2. Development of a supply chain of US aircraft, with spare parts, fuel, oil, and equipment for their technical servicing
3. Ability to conduct aircraft overhauls in Alaskan technical service centers
4. Access to training and internships for flight and technical staff in the state's educational institutions
5. Frequent flights from Anchorage to Yakutsk for efficient deliveries of parts, materials and equipment

Further, he noted the need for information on the systems and principles of government regulation of light aviation in Alaska, and infrastructure financing and subsidizing of light aviation airlines, in particular He identified the need for information about the following areas:

1. Government regulation, and local and federal budget financing of airports and landing strips
2. The system and nature of airport fees, tariffs, and ground handling at airports and landing strips
3. The system of taxation of airlines and airports, including tax rates and revenue generated
4. The provision of navigation and meteorological services, and supply of fuel for light aircraft
5. Government subsidies for passengers, cargo, and mail under the US DOT "Essential Air Service" program, ensuring residents of small remote settlements access to the national airline network
6. The system of initial training, and qualification maintenance training, of flight and technical staff
7. Opportunities for Yakutia flight crews and technical staff to gain practical experience through internships with small air carriers in Alaska
8. The experience of light aviation associations in Alaska, such as the Alaska Airmen's Association
9. The systems of selling used and new aircraft, parts, fuel, oil, and other equipment for light aviation

In concluding, Lukin noted that in the current complicated situation in relations between the U.S. and Russia, RAPP is one of the few remaining means for a constructive trade and economic dialogue, and, in particular, between the Republic of Sakha and the State of Alaska. He wished the meeting participants success in their work.

John Dahlen, US / Russia Liaison, Alaska Airmen's Association, thanked the organizers for the opportunity to address the meeting and especially thanked the simultaneous interpreters providing interpretation of the meeting. He provided details on the comparison of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the State of Alaska, noting Yakutia's greater territory and population, but with a 33% lower population density. He noted that developing general aviation can open new opportunities for remote regions to share their rich cultural heritage with the world and deliver benefits to local economies. He noted that Alaska today has some 9,500 registered aircraft and 8,000 licensed pilots. The Alaska Airmen's Association is excited to be helping, in our own small ways, to develop general aviation between Alaska and the Russian Far East. The association was created in 1951, a full 8 years before Alaskan statehood. One of our projects is the planning of the annual group VFR (Visual Flight Rules) flights from Nome to Provideniya, Russia, known as AK2RU flights. Dahlen explained that these flights provide opportunities for pilots to be goodwill citizen ambassadors and enjoy a flight with the added safety of a group flight format; to demonstrate that the flight route is operational for GA (General Aviation) craft; and to maintain and expand direct GA connections with our neighbors in the Russian Far East. Dahlen reported that interest among aviators in Alaska in participating in the AK2RU flight is increasing, even though the flights have been cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021. Currently, 117 pilots and crew have signed up in anticipation of the next AK2RU flight. Dahlen noted an increase in GA flights in Alaska and expressed his optimism for increased GA flights between the U.S. and the Russian Far East in the future. Dahlen stated that it appears to be a good time to develop GA services and infrastructure in Yakutia and the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, which should increase GA aviation tourism in the region. Dahlen then provided a list of recommendations that could help develop a safe and growing GA system in the Russian Far East and Yakutia that included the following:

Group A: Visas, Permits, & other Regulatory suggestions:

1. A new Letter of Agreement between the U.S. & Russia, with written procedures for VFR flight route KR824
 2. A new special visa and Chukotka Border entry permit for one-time, brief (8-10 day) visits
 3. Reduction of the processing and return time for tourist visas & entry permits from the current 75 days (currently up to 14 days for a Russian tourist visa, followed by 60 days for entry permit)
 4. Authorization for U.S. pilots with an FAA-approved "Basic Med" medical qualification to fly in Russian airspace
 5. Creation of an online website providing the most current Russian federal and local COVID travel requirements
 6. Opening U.S. borders to allow reciprocal opportunities for Russian general aviation pilots to visit us
- Dahlen noted this may take much longer to achieve but is an important goal of the Association.

Group B: Flight Safety and Services:

1. Install automated weather observation and reporting stations that regularly and frequently broadcast current observa-

tions 24x7, similar to AWOS and ASOS systems, to automatically provide current weather data for pilots

2. Install webcams that broadcast live weather pictures, especially from remote airports and remote areas used by general aviation aircraft
3. Implement a program like Alaska's Enhanced Special Reporting Service ("eSRS") that links a pilot's flight plan with an onboard satellite tracker (InReach, Spot, Spider Tracks, etc.) to more immediately verify an emergency signal, initiate a search and rescue, and locate persons in need of emergency care

Group C: General Aviation Tourism and Economic Stimulation:

1. Plan possible new AK2RU VFR group flight destinations, such as Anadyr (UHMA), Beringia National Park remote areas, Egvekinot (UHME), perhaps Magadan (UHMM), and others
2. Continue to develop the Alaska Airmen's Association's "Youth Aviation Initiative" program in the Russian Far East, engaging with local Russian general aviation pilots
3. Conduct good economic impact studies to quantify the value of economic development generated by general aviation tourism to build support for continued development of general aviation

This concluded the presentations at the RAPP 26th annual meeting. Parties interested in receiving copies of individual presentations may send requests by email to the RAPP Executive Secretariat.

Moderated Working Session:

Through sessions on July 28 and 29 at 4pm Pacific Time (July 29 and 30 Russia time), RAPP attendees participated in two working sessions identifying issues and proposing recommendations aimed at improving cooperation between the Russian East and the Western U.S. The co-moderators, **Tatiana Konko** and **Mark Dudley**, led proceedings covering topics including Energy, Energy Efficiency, the Environment, Arctic cooperation, expansion of educational programs and exchanges, tourism and aviation, and general bilateral cooperation relations between Russian Far East and the West Coast U.S.

During the session, Derek Norberg provided a briefing on the conclusion of the RAPP Working Group established at the 24th annual meeting of the Russian American Pacific Partnership (RAPP) in Khabarovsk, Russia in 2019, assessing the basis for creating a bi-national Russia and United States Bering Pacific Arctic Council (BPAC). The volunteer co-chairs of the working group, Paul Fuhs, President Emeritus of the Marine Exchange of Alaska, and Professor Boris Krasnopol'ski, Senior Economist of the Far Eastern Branch of the Economic Research Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, delivered summary reports to RAPP on their conclusions in December 2019.

The perceived basis for Bering/Pacific-Arctic Region (BPAC): In the Atlantic sector, numerous Euro-Atlantic international structures function, while in the Pacific sector, no such international structures have been created at all. The creation of the BPAC could provide permanent working contacts and information exchanges between these macro-regional Arctic councils (Atlantic and Pacific), as well as with the Arctic Council and other international Arctic organizations.

The question of determination of the jurisdiction and geography of the BPAC were assessed, and three types of territories were proposed in the BPAC assessment:

1. Territories (subjects of the Federation, States) that are the direct objects of the BPAC activity, which have just been discussed. In Russia - Chukotka, Kamchatka and Yakutia; in the U.S. - Alaska.
2. "Complimentary" non-contiguous regions and states supportive of the Russian-American partnership in the Pacific sector of the Arctic, i.e. southern Far East Russia - Sakhalin oblast, Khabarovsk and Primorsky Territories and Washington and Oregon States
3. Observer countries such as Canada, North-East Asian countries (China, Japan, South Korea) and others with interests in the Bering Strait zone and in the use of the Northern Sea Route

The Working Group assessed input from the Chukotka Autonomous Region, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Kamchatka Krai: All three key regions have agreed, in one form or another, to continue working on the feasibility of establishing the Bering/Pacific-Arctic Council (BPAC). However, the Working Group from the Russian side stated that it had failed to receive official written confirmation for the key regions to join the Bering/Pacific-Arctic Council (BPAC). The Working Group on the Russian side stated that its activities were reduced mainly to the formation of public opinion in Russian regions, government departments, and public organizations related to the development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF). This is very important at the initial stage in the implementation of such a large project, involving the national interests of two major Arctic countries in such a difficult time in the relations of these countries. The Working Group's efforts over a short 6-month period achieved maximum results. The RAPP ad-hoc working group for the assessment of the creation of BPAC concluded in Dec 2019 with the reports from the two co-chairs. RAPP expressed its gratitude to Professor Boris Kras-

nopolsky, Paul Fuhs, and Alexander Voronenko for their hard work.

In addition, Paul Fuhs, co-chair of the working group for the US-side provided the following statement:

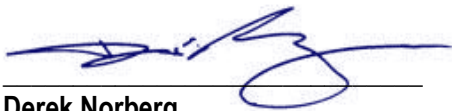
“On the formation of the Bering Pacific Arctic Council: The need for such a council remains strong and is even more important now given the low level of diplomatic discourse between the US and Russia. This formalized structure could endure regardless of extraneous issues between the countries. Our efforts to promote and advocate for its formation was interrupted by COVID-19 and the disruption of visa services. Now that we can travel again, I will be planning a trip to Russia to renew discussions on its formation, including Moscow, Yakutsk, Chukotka, Khabarovsk, Petropavlosk-Kamchatsky, Magadan, Vladivostok and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. From written communications they all welcome continuing discussions on this initiative. We have discussed organizing a forum on the BPAC in Vladivostok at the Federal Far East University, which I will pursue. There is also support for this in the State of Alaska and among our local Native Alaskan groups.”

RAPP Closing Plenary Session:

At the closing plenary, both Moderators Konko and Dudley delivered a summary of the working session results to the meeting's Co-Chairs as a basis for the working session report. The working session report developed at this 26th annual meeting is included separately following this Summary Report and is available to the U.S. and Russian governments for distribution to the relevant ministries, departments, and agencies. The report recommendations also serve as a basis for the current and following year RAPP program priorities.

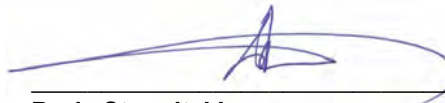
The RAPP secretariats delivered concluding remarks. The Executive Secretariat of RAPP thanked the government representatives, the panel participants, as well as all the attendees for joining in the meeting. The 2021 RAPP sponsors providing critical financial support of the RAPP activity were Ted Stevens International Airport, Exxon Neftegas Limited, InterPacific Aviation & Marketing and InterAviation Japan, K&L Gates, and Rose City Rhythmic. The organizers expressed deep thanks to the meeting's simultaneous interpreters, Natasha Kharikova and Kseniia Topolnyak, for their tremendous work.

As of the closing of the 26th annual meeting, no site was yet determined for the 27th annual meeting of RAPP in 2022. The Executive Secretariat of RAPP stated that the city and dates for the next meeting will be announced before the end of the year.



Derek Norberg

President, Council for U.S.-Russia Relations
Director Executive Secretariat RAPP



Boris Stupnitskiy

President, Primorsky Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Director RAPP Secretariat in the Russian Federation



Working Session Report

26th Annual Meeting Russian American Pacific Partnership

July 29, 2021

Working session Moderators: **Tatiana Konko** for the Russian-side and **Mark Dudley** for the US-side

During two sessions on 28 and 29 July, the following were discussed:

- I. The interests of indigenous communities on both countries were discussed, including their involvement in decision-making processes of development projects affecting their cultural heritage, economic prospects, and community well-being. Remote indigenous communities require support in accessing renewable energy resources, including small-scale hydropower, wind, solar, geothermal, as well as environmentally sustainable timber harvesting technologies;
- II. Climate change was a recurring theme through the meeting and was recognized as an existential threat that demands greater bilateral and international cooperation;
- III. The Arctic was recognized as providing a wide range of opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation. During discussions, participants noted the need for greater military-to-military dialogue and transparency to avoid possible misunderstandings of actions or intent involving military assets or personnel in the Arctic;
- IV. A briefing was provided on the RAPP Initiative Working Group assessment of the feasibility for a Bering/Pacific-Arctic Council (BPAC) that concluded in December 2019;
- V. The low level of bilateral business and investment cooperation was noted as a factor of instability in U.S.-Russian relations. Greater economic interdependencies would both benefit entrepreneurs and decrease the likelihood that either government engages in actions jeopardizing economic relations. Significantly expanding opportunities for bilateral trade and economic cooperation is in our mutual interests. A suggestion was made to explore the possibility for trans-border special economic zone(s) in the Far East and Bering Strait regions;
- VI. Issues of the Northern Sea Route (NSR) including vessel tracking, emergency response, search and rescue, and maritime safety, information sharing, vessel emissions standards (reduction), and port development projects, were discussed. It was proposed to repeat the recommendation that the US take steps necessary to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas;
- VII. A suggestion was made to study the prospects to increase shipping volumes between the Russian Federation and the United States, including transit cargo traffic between US and European and Asian markets, via the various international transportation corridors now under development in Russia. It was suggested that a proposal be prepared identifying both organizational (scope), objectives and financial requirements of the proposed study;
- VIII. A number of activities were discussed as of potential interest to increase people-to-people contacts and exchanges including the renewal of the Beringia Days festival, an Alaska Siberia air route commemoration event, the International Scientific conference "World of the Polar Bear", Sister City and other bilateral community initiatives, as well as youth exchanges and various study programs. The idea for a master calendar of events was made;
- IX. The need for increased federal financial support by the US, Russia and other Arctic nations of Arctic research studies and international university exchange programs including the North2North international exchange program at the bachelors and masters levels;
- X. Issues of general (light) aviation (GA/light aviation) were reviewed including the status of its development in Russia as well as the need to develop safe travel corridors for GA/light aviation aircraft, including: the installation of meteorological cameras and weather reporting equipment, optimization of permitting and visa issuance systems, fuel supply, information exchange, enhanced special reporting service, economic impact studies, and flight integration between Russia and Alaska were discussed;



Working Session Report

26th Annual Meeting Russian American Pacific Partnership

July 29, 2021

- XI. Discussions on environmental protection highlighted the need for wildlife protection and habitat preservation, the importance of cooperative programs on oil spill response as well as other activities of environmental impact mitigation;
- XII. The tourism potential of the Russian Far East is significant but requires development. Practical areas for address include: improvement of air travel connections to and within the Russian Far East, streamlining of visa procedures, review of region-specific travel authorizations; consideration of "visa-free travel" between specific communities or groups and the possibility to expand them. Consideration by the Russian government to support the Russian Far East regions to more effectively promote RFE tourism in the US;
- XIII. Participants discussed visas, fisheries and fisheries research, and scientific research more broadly.

Recommendations advanced are as follows:

1. Recommend the U.S. and Russian governments establish a work plan to harmonize their respective Arctic policies in areas including, but not limited to, maritime transportation, security, cooperation in emergency response, natural resource development and extraction, scientific research cooperation, environmental protection and territorial rights. The greater harmonization of US-Russian approaches to the Arctic, in accordance with multilateral international organizations including the Arctic Council and the United Nations, will ease mutually-beneficial cooperation in the region;
2. Recognizing the existential threat of global warming to life our planet, and that developments in the Arctic are proceeding, we recommend the US and Russian governments and all nations make available the best technologies required for the utmost operational safety with least environmental impact to development projects anywhere in the Arctic. Where sanctions prevent the export of such technologies to Arctic projects, we urge their reconsideration as contradictory to the higher-order interest that Arctic developments have the best technologies to limit emissions contributing to global warming. We request the assistance of the US Arctic Research Commission and the office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the United States in considering to advance this recommendation with the US government;
3. We urge US western states and Russian Far East regions to conclude voluntary state-to-region or collective multi-party sub-national agreements on the mitigation of global warming. RAPP offers its assistance in advancing this effort to any region or state;
4. Recommend that the US State Department and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs restore full consular visa services at their embassies and consulates as soon as possible and consider optimizing procedures for application submission and processing in compliance with necessary security requirements;
5. We call on the US State Department and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to consider restoring diplomatic compound assets in both countries and reauthorize the Consulate General of the Russian Federation on the western coast of the United States and, on the basis of parity, allow the opening of an additional US consulate in Russia;
6. Recommend the US Embassy in Russia open the US Consulate General in Vladivostok as soon as possible, and, towards that end, consider the possibility of appointing an interim acting Consul General;
7. Recommend that the Visa-Free Travel regime in the Bering Strait Region be extended in order to preserve the shared heritage and further relations between the Beringian indigenous populations of the Chukotka Autonomous Region and Alaska;
8. Consistent with the recommendation by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to transition away from heavy fuel oil (HFO) to liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the Arctic, recommend the



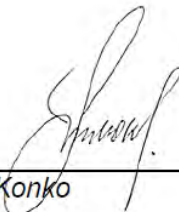
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governments of the United States and the Russian Federation mandate that clean energy fueled tankers be employed for ocean transportation of hydrocarbon fuels with deliveries by heavy fuel oil (HFO) tankers prohibited in the Arctic, the Bering Strait and, as broadly as possible, in the North Pacific;

9. In order to develop Russia's light aviation sector and international aviation opportunities, we recommend the regional governments of Chukotka AO, Kamchatsky Krai, Magadan Oblast, and Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) coordinate with the Federal Agency for Air Transport (Rosaviatsia) and the Ministry of Transportation to assess general aviation flight routes (VFR) in northeastern Russia, including the possibility for airport and technical flight support improvements including to weather reporting, webcams, air traffic control, fuel supply, and search-and-rescue systems;
10. Recommend the regional Ministries of Transportation (Magadan, Sakhalin, Chukotka, Kamchatka) work with local carriers on the synchronization of their flight arrivals to Kamchatka to improve transfer connections, ideally the same-day, to international flight(s) including to Anchorage;
11. Recognizing adverse impacts of sanctions on the citizenry of both countries, recommend the United States and the Russian Federation resort to sanctions or counter-sanction measures only after having exhausted all other means of dispute resolution. Further, each government should undertake periodic review of existing sanctions and counter-sanction measures and ease or rescind them where their unintended negative effects outweigh their practical utility;
12. Recommend the United States take steps necessary to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;
13. Recommend the governments of the United States and the Russian Federation support and finance mutually beneficial cooperative scientific research engagements between our countries across a wide range of disciplines.



Tatiana Konko

Mark Dudley

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