

**Exclusive Report to ARCUS Members:  
White House Arctic Science Ministerial and Related Events  
September 27-29, 2016  
Washington, DC**

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**Ministerial**

On September 28, the White House hosted the first-ever [White House Arctic Science Ministerial](#) in the Indian Treaty Room. This historic event brought together leaders from the eight Arctic nations and many others, 25 in all, along with circumpolar Indigenous groups and top U.S. Arctic officials. The ministers agreed to a [Joint Statement](#) and released a [Fact Sheet](#) of new initiatives, some cooperative, to which they are committed.

**Pre-Ministerial Indigenous Briefing**

The afternoon before the Ministerial, Presidential Science Advisor Dr. John Holdren hosted, at the White House, Alaska Native and circumpolar Indigenous leaders for a listening session to inform the ministerial discussions.

**Ministerial Kickoff Reception**

That evening, 340 key Arctic research stakeholders attended a kickoff reception at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, where I was able to attend and represent ARCUS. In addition to Dr. Holdren, speakers included Ann Bancroft (who is the first woman to trek to the North Pole), Admiral Robert Papp (U.S. Special Representative to the Arctic), and Alaska Lt. Governor Byron Mallott (who provided a native invocation).

**ARCUS-Sponsored Side Event on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education and Citizen Empowerment**

On September 27, ARCUS hosted an [international side event](#) focused on STEM Education and Citizen Empowerment at our D.C. office. Our speakers included Ambassador Mark Brzezinski (Executive Director of the Arctic Executive Steering Committee), who provided a briefing on the Ministerial plans. We held two panels; one focused on using Arctic science as a vehicle to encourage interest in STEM education, and the other focused on empowering Arctic communities through research and STEM education. A [recording of the event is available online](#). Other resource materials include:

- [Speaker Bios & Photos](#)
- [White House Arctic Science Ministerial Info](#)
- [Featured Video 1: POLARIS Project](#)
- [Featured Video 2: EDU-ARCTIC - Engaging students in STEM education through Arctic Research](#)
- [Info from Woods Hole Research Center](#)
- [Info from ARCUS](#)
- [Info from Arctic Portal](#)

- [PoLAR Partnership Website](#)
- [STEM resources featured at the event](#)

Following the panels, we hosted many hands-on activities and displays using the Arctic to inspire STEM education. The displays were organized by the Polar Partnership. Overall co-sponsors of the event included the Arctic Portal, the Woods Hole Research Center, Arctic 21, and the Consortium for Ocean Leadership (where our DC office is housed).

We will develop a short summary document from this event and will circulate it to members in the coming weeks.

### **Analysis of Ministerial Results**

On September 29, the [U.S. Arctic Research Commission met](#), and considered the results of the Ministerial. Generally, Commissioners were excited and optimistic about how the Ministerial had brought high-level interest and support to the key needs of Arctic research. Outside reaction from the research community was guardedly optimistic, as [described in an EOS article](#). I mentioned that getting top science advisors to say that Arctic research is a priority for their country will go a long way, but the next crucial step is to follow up with real action and real implementation and real investment.

### **Planned Ministerial Followup**

The organizers of the Ministerial will be holding an implementation conversation among the countries involved in October, according to Ambassador Brzezinski. Many of the projects proposed still need quite a bit of development. ARCUS will be monitoring these and attempting to bring in perspectives from the Arctic research community as appropriate. The European Union has agreed to hold a second Arctic Science Ministerial meeting in 2018.

### **Questions?**

Please feel free to email me at [bob@arcus.org](mailto:bob@arcus.org) if you have any questions about the Ministerial or associated events, or ideas for how we might represent your interests as we go forward. I'm delighted to be able to bring you a first-hand perspective on these meetings, and thank you for being an ARCUS member.