

EN

E-003272/2022

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell i Fontelles  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(17.11.2022)

The Joint Communication<sup>1</sup> published by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy together with the Commission in October 2021 is an updated policy document setting out a coherent analysis and replies to major challenges in and around the Arctic regions in areas where the EU is engaged and/or has an impact.

It does not purport to address all matters of importance to the Arctic regions and their inhabitants, nor does it suggest that the EU has the primary responsibility for major developments in and around Arctic regions. It fundamentally advocates cooperation and dialogue in regional and multilateral contexts. The EU can contribute in key areas, within the competences of the EU, but has no competence in other areas.

The unprovoked and unjustified Russian aggression against Ukraine has affected the EU's engagement with Russia across the board and also in the Arctic context, but it hasn't fundamentally changed the principles the EU bases its Arctic policy on. Therefore, at this stage, there are no intention to alter the Arctic policy document as a specific reaction to Russian war of aggression on Ukraine.

The major challenges affecting the Arctic regions - set out in the Joint Communication - remain. Like-minded partners and countries will have to take their cooperation and dialogue forward, not least in the context of the fight against global climate change and loss of biodiversity as well as in the context of sustainable, robust and inclusive development across the Arctic regions.

---

<sup>1</sup> JOIN(2021) 27 final, A stronger EU engagement for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Arctic, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=JOIN:2021:27:FIN>