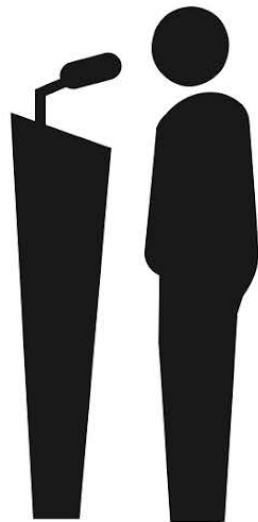


ARCTIC FUTURES SYMPOSIUM

BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS
AND MODERATORS



2024



Lena Abrahamsson

Professor and Head of Subject, Chaired Professor, Human work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology

Lena Abrahamsson is Professor and Head of Subject in Human Work Science at Luleå University of Technology (LTU), Sweden. She has been Dean of the Faculty of Technology & Science and currently she is vice scientific leader for LTU's strategic area "Creaternity" which brings together research on sustainable material use in a connected and circular economy. She is also board member of Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH). She has led research in projects across many fields, including studies of gender, work, and organisation, and the work of the future in the green and digital industrial transition. Gender equality and sustainability are at the core of all this work. Among her concerns at the moment are major studies of "the mine of the future", examining inclusive, safe and attractive mining work and mining societies in the north of Sweden.



Jonas Andersson

Chair for Region Jämtland Härjedalen, Sweden

Jonas Andersson is the President of Region Jämtland Härjedalen in the inland of northern Sweden. He is also chair for the network of European Northern Sweden (EFNS) that gathers the four northernmost counties of Sweden with elected politicians to take positions and represent northern Sweden in EU matters. He is also chair of Fellesrådet which is a cross-border cooperation organization between Norwegian and Swedish regional and local authorities.

From 2025 will he be the chair for the network of Northern Sparsely Areas (NSPA) between 14 regions in Northern Sweden, Eastern and northern Finland and north Norway in the European Arctic. He has among other things also been the Mayor of the municipality of Ragunda in his home region 2015–2022.



Glenn Berggård

Vice Chair of the Regional Executive Board of Region Norrbotten, Sweden

Glenn Berggård is Vice-Chair of the Regional Executive Board of Region Norrbotten, and responsible for sustainability and gender equality in the region. Additionally, he is Chair of the Regional Public Transport Company, LTNAB, a Member of the North Calotte Council, a Member of Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, CPMR, Vice Chair of CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Arctic Task Force, and part-time employee at Luleå University of Technology. Glenn has a PhD in Traffic Engineering.



Kristine Berzina

Managing Director, Geostrategy North, German Marshall Fund of the United States

Kristine Berzina is the Washington, DC-based managing director of GMF Geostrategy North. She is responsible for leading programming on US, Nordic, Baltic, and Arctic security and defense issues, and provides analysis on NATO and US and European foreign policy.

Berzina also leads GMF's Across America initiative, which takes European officials into the US heartland to build regional connections on security issues. She is a frequent commentator in international media, including The New York Times, the BBC, CNN, NPR, France 24, Deutsche Welle, and The New Yorker. She is a co-host of Drošinātājs (The Fuse), a Ukraine-focused podcast and Latvian radio program.

Berzina previously worked on countering autocratic influence as head of GMF's Alliance for Securing Democracy's geopolitics team and, while based in Brussels and Berlin for the organization, on transatlantic security and energy issues. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science and history from Yale University and a master's degree in international relations from the University of Cambridge.



Patti Bruns

Secretary-General, Arctic Mayors Forum

Patti has been Secretary General of the Arctic Mayors' Forum since August 2022. Patti came to the AMF from the Canadian International Arctic Centre where she served as Senior Policy Advisor. She previously held the position of Executive Secretary of two Arctic Council Working Groups – ACAP (Arctic Contaminant Action Program) and EPPR (Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response). Patti has a deep knowledge of the Arctic through her work with the government, multilateral fora and the consultancy sector.



Killian Charles

President and CEO, Brunswick Exploration

Killian Charles is President and CEO of Brunswick Exploration, Inc since 2020. Prior to this, he was Vice President-Corporate Development for Osisko Metals, Inc where he now remains as a Special Advisor.

In the past, Mr. Charles occupied the position of Mining Analyst at Laurentian Bank Securities, Inc. and Mining Analyst at Industrial Alliance Securities, Inc. (Broker) for six years. He also worked as a Manager of Corporate Development at Integra Gold Corp. until its acquisition by Eldorado Gold in 2017. Mr. Charles received an undergraduate degree in Earth and Planetary Sciences from McGill University.



Marie-Anne Coninx

Former EU Ambassador at Large for the Arctic; Fellow, Egmont Institute; IPF Board Member

Marie-Anne Coninx was the first EU Ambassador at Large for the Arctic (2017 - 2019) before her retirement after 35 years as an EU official. During her career as a European diplomat, she was the EU Ambassador to Canada and EU Ambassador to Mexico, and served at EU Delegations with the United Nations in New York (US) and Geneva (Switzerland), providing her with extensive experience in multilateral issues.

She began her career in the Legal Service of the European Commission and worked for 12 consecutive years as a Staff Member in the Cabinets of three Commissioners. She also worked in the External Relations Department at EU HQ, overseeing relations between the European Union and Latin America. Ms Coninx studied law at Ghent University (Belgium) and carried out her post-graduate studies at Cambridge University (UK) and at the European University Centre in Nancy (France). As a Belgian citizen, she is fluent in Dutch, French, English, German, and Spanish.



Bergdís Ellertsdóttir

Senior Arctic Official; Ambassador, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland

Ambassador Bergdís Ellertsdóttir has an extensive experience and has worked on international trade as well as security issues, multilateral, and bilateral issues in her long career withing the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She recently took up the position of the Arctic Ambassador as well as serving as the Deputy Permanent Secretary of State.

Bergdís served as the Ambassador of Iceland to the United States 2019 to 2024.

Before taking up the position in Washington DC, Bergdís was the Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations. Previously she headed the Mission of Iceland to the European Union and was the Ambassador to Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Switzerland. In 2012 she was the Chief negotiator and finalized one of the first European Free Trade Agreements with China. Between 2007 and 2012 Bergdís was Deputy Secretary General of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Other positions include Director General for International Security and Development Co-operation Affairs and Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister of Iceland.



Aina Elise Fagereng

Project Manager, Bodø International School; BRUS - Developing the Bodø region

As a project manager, her specialty is in communication, networking, relationships, and collaboration. I have a robust portfolio of managing various projects among those Bodø International School, and a high success rate in leading numerous conferences and networking events. My background is in strategic and political communication, coupled with my passion for trust-based communication and effective processes, fostering meaningful connections and driving impactful results.



Rolf Folland

Lt Gen, Norwegian Military Representative to NATO

Lieutenant General Folland, born on January 28, 1968, began his distinguished military career in 1988, serving in a variety of leadership roles within the Royal Norwegian Air Force and NATO. He currently represents Norway as Military Representative to NATO. Previously, he served as Chief of the Royal Norwegian Air Force and held command positions at Rygge and Bardufoss Air Bases, among others. With extensive operational experience, including leadership in Afghanistan and expertise in NH90 operational testing, LtGen Folland has logged 2,883 flight hours across multiple aircraft types such as the Sea King Mk 43B and NH90.

A graduate of prestigious institutions, including the Royal College of Defence Studies (London) and the Air Command and Staff College (USA), he holds a master's degree in Military Science and Leadership. Married to Inger Marit with two daughters, Hedda and Ane, LtGen Folland enjoys cross-country skiing, running, biking, and deer hunting, reflecting his lifelong passion for sports and the outdoors.



Tânia Frazão Nunes

Legal and Policy Adviser, Small and Medium Enterprises, DG GROW

Ms Tânia Frazão Nunes currently works at the European Commission, in the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), as a legal and policy officer in the unit responsible for SMEs. She is a Portuguese qualified lawyer and holds a masters degree in European Law, from the College of Europe.

Before joining DG GROW, Ms Frazão Nunes worked in Directorate General for Competition and was a member of the Cabinet responsible for Directorate General for Research and Innovation.

Prior to joining the European Commission, Ms Frazão Nunes worked as a competition lawyer in the private sector, both in Portugal and in Belgium, as well as in the European Court of Justice, in Luxembourg.



Helga Kristín Friðjónsdóttir

Founder and CEO, Iceland Unwrapped

Helga Kristin Fridjonsdottir (Helga Stina) is the owner of Iceland Unwrapped. Iceland Unwrapped was founded in the Netherlands in 2015. The focus of the company is on providing unique travel plans and connections to travelers, businesses and organizations that want to visit Iceland. The main focus is to work with local vendors, smaller businesses and entrepreneurs. A native of Iceland, Helga Stina created Iceland Unwrapped to bring the magic of her country to the rest of the world, and provide unique opportunities for travellers, businesses and professional groups. As a lover of all things travel, her vision for Iceland Unwrapped has always been about connecting people with Iceland and to provide a personal, unforgettable and unique experience to her business and personal customers.

Even though she was born in Iceland, Helga Stina has lived all over the world – Brazil, Austria, Denmark, Portugal and Holland. She began her career as a project manager in the youth sector in Iceland, and worked in education and the financial sector in Denmark. She holds an M.A in Global Studies and Project Management at Roskilde University in Denmark. She is fluent in Icelandic, English, Danish and Portuguese.



Gunhild Hoogensen Gjørv

Professor in Security and Geopolitics; Arctic 6 Chair in Security Studies, UiT, The Arctic University of Norway

Gunhild Hoogensen Gjørv is a professor of security and geopolitics (within critical peace and conflict studies) at UiT The Arctic University of Norway. She also continues in her role as the Arctic 6 chair in security studies (arcticfive.org). Hoogensen Gjørv's research explores tensions between perceptions of state security and human/individual security in various contexts, with a focus on hybrid threats and warfare, civil-military cooperation (particularly Norway's Total Defence concept), and Arctic security. She is concerned with the representations and execution of the civilian role in war and seeks to better understand "everyday" security. She leads several projects that examine the role of civilians in complex threats/warfare. Gunhild Hoogensen Gjørv leads the Grey Zone research group at UiT: <https://uit.no/research/thegreyzone>.



Alain Hubert

Founder and President, the International Polar Foundation

Alain Hubert is a Belgian explorer, certified mountain and polar guide, a civil engineer, and the President and Founder of the International Polar Foundation (IPF). With the IPF and support from sponsors from the private sector and the Belgian State, he built the the first zero-emission polar research station, the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica.

Alain Hubert obtained his Civil Engineering diploma from the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL) in 1974. As an adolescent, he became an avid practitioner of outdoor sports including marathons, canyoning, skiing and paragliding.

Alain has always been an entrepreneur who lives for adventure and strives to achieve. Early in his career, he founded a co-op specialising in carpentry and joinery (CHERBAI) in the Ardennes region of Belgium.

He has gone on a number of major polar and mountaineering expeditions. His achievements include being the first Belgian to ever reach the North Pole in 1994 with Didier Goetghebuer, a world record autonomous crossing of Antarctica (3924 km in 99 days) with Dixie Dansercoer in 1998, and five attempts at Mount Everest. The Arctic Arc expedition with Dixie Dansercoer in 2007 was the first ever Siberia-Greenland crossing via the North Pole.

During his expeditions, Alain Hubert witnessed the pace and magnitude of climate change firsthand and decided to dedicate himself to that cause. He collaborates with scientists and collects ground truth data for them during his expeditions (for example snow depth data for the CryoSat mission during the Arctic Arc Expedition in 2007).

In 2002 he founded the International Polar Foundation along with climatologist André Berger and glaciologist Hugo Decler. The International Polar Foundation supports polar scientific research, promotes informed action on climate change, and the development of a sustainable society.



Naja-Theresia Høegh

Law Student, Board Member, AVALAK; Former Special Advisor on Youth to the EU Commissioner on International Partnerships

Naja-Theresia Høegh comes from Qaqortoq, Greenland. She is a board member of the Greenlandic Student Organisation Avalak, for Greenlandic students studying in Copenhagen, and a former delegate of the OCT-Youth Network (2022-2023). In her free time, she likes to be creative with art, and takes inspiration from her home country and culture. Naja-Theresia is currently studying law at the University of Copenhagen, and has an interest in international relations as well as Indigenous Peoples' rights.



Morten Høglund

Arctic Ambassador for Norway, Senior Arctic Official of the Arctic Council

Morten Høglund was appointed Senior Arctic Official (SAO) for Norway in October 2021 and, before that, as the first dedicated Norwegian ambassador to ASEAN in Jakarta in 2017. Before these postings, Mr Høglund was a Senior Official ASEAN at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Special Adviser for Arctic Affairs.

Mr Høglund served 12 years in the Norwegian Parliament and 2 years as Deputy Foreign Minister. He has served as Deputy Mayor in two Norwegian counties. As a Member of Parliament, Mr Høglund chaired the Parliament's Arctic delegation and has also been Chair of the Circumpolar Arctic Parliamentary cooperation.

Mr Høglund is married and has four children. He has a long history in Chinese Dragon Boat Racing, including founding the Oslo Dragon Boat Club and co-founding both the European and International Dragon Boat Federation.



Johanna Ikävalko

Director of the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Finland

Dr. Johanna Ikävalko (b. 1965) dissertated at the University of Helsinki, Finland, in 1997 with hydrobiology/sea ice biology as her main field of research. She has lived and done research abroad, e.g. in Germany (Institute for Polar Ecology), Australia (Australian Antarctic Division) and US (University of Santa Cruz, California). Polar field campaigns took her sailing twice to the Antarctic, the North Pole and several voyages in the frozen Baltic Sea.

After her active career in science, she has moved more to implementation science based knowledge. In 2009-2013 she was affiliated as the Head of Environment at the Finnish Farmers' and Forest Owners' Association, after which she was the Head of Marine Research Unit, Finnish Meteorological Institute. Johanna has also served as a ministerial adviser at the Ministry of Transport and Communications. During Finland's presidency at the Arctic Council in 2017-2019 she led successfully the priority "Meteorological Cooperation", after which she worked as an expert for the Arctic Council working group Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme Secretariat.

Dr. Johanna Ikävalko has been directing the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland since the beginning of 2021.



Mikael Janson

Director, North Sweden European Office

Mikael Janson has been Managing Director of the North Sweden European Office, the EU office for the two northernmost Counties of Sweden; Norrbotten and Västerbotten, since 2011. Before this he served as City Commissioner in the City of Gothenburg. He has worked as an official in the municipal government and served as acting substitute in the Swedish Parliament. For several years he was responsible for the administration and marketing of a small entrepreneurial firm in electric power systems which became the leading firm in its niche in Sweden. Mikael studied technical engineering in electronics and holds a Master's of Science in Business Administration and Communication from the Universities of Gothenburg and Lund. His personal connection to the Arctic is being half Norwegian with roots from above the "Lootveggen".



Ellen Marie Jensen

*Independent Scholar, Affiliate of the Austrian Polar Research Institute
Research Group on Social and Cultural Systems*

Based in Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino in Norwegian Sápmi, Dr. Ellen Marie Jensen is an independent scholar, educator, author, and affiliate of the Austrian Polar Research Institute on social and cultural systems, member of the Co-Create initiative, and core member of the Beyond Hot Air Project – a conversation platform on critical raw materials for the European energy transition. She earned her PhD in Humanities and Social Sciences from UiT, Arctic University of Norway in 2019 with a trans-disciplinary project in Indigenous and gender studies. For a decade, Jensen has been an educator in various fields, disciplines, and institutions. Her most recent position was as Associate Professor at the Sámi University of Applied Sciences where she taught and mentored in the Sámi Pathfinder program and in Journalism and Media studies.

Jensen's scholarship has focused on the following broad themes: Sámi migration; gendered and decolonial perspectives in Sámi research; Indigenous research methodologies; storytelling and narrative methods; cultural resurgence; and impacts of extractive industries in Sámi communities.



Tuukka Karjalainen
Senior Advisor, City of Rovaniemi

Tuukka Karjalainen has been a Senior Advisor in the City of Rovaniemi since March 2024.

Before this role he has served over 33 years in the Finnish Defence Forces with significant positions for example as Commander of Lapland Air Wing, Chief of Air Force Personnel and Commander of Air Force Academy Education and Training Center.

Karjalainen holds a Pre-Doctoral Degree from the National Defence University (2013).

He was born in 1970 in Lappeenranta.



Pertti Lamberg
CEO & Project Manager, Sakatti, Anglo American

Pertti Lamberg is Manager of the Sakatti Project and CEO of AA Sakatti Mining Oy, Anglo American's Finnish subsidiary operating in Sodankylä. The Sakatti project is a true polymetallic orebody aligned to Finland's and the EU's critical minerals priorities. Sakatti is designed as the next generation of FutureSmart Mining™, focused on a minimal surface footprint and using technology and innovation to deliver ever better environmental and social outcomes, whilst producing essential raw materials needed to transition to a greener, low carbon energy future.

A geologist by training, Pertti has over 30 years' experience in the mining industry and academia, including the positions of Research Metallurgist in Outokumpu, Outotec and at the University of Queensland, professor of geometallurgy at Luleå University of Technology and as the CEO of Keliber Oy.



Ian Lesser

Distinguished Fellow and Adviser to the President, Head of Brussels Office, German Marshall Fund of the United States

Ian Lesser is a distinguished fellow and adviser to GMF's president. He heads the organization's Brussels office and leads GMF South, a program encompassing research and analysis of developments in Southern Europe, Türkiye, the Mediterranean, and North-South relations around the Atlantic. He served as GMF's acting president from 2020 to 2021. His expertise includes US foreign and security policy, transatlantic relations, and European and Middle Eastern affairs. He holds the chair in transatlantic trade and economy at the College of Europe in Bruges.

Prior to joining GMF, Lesser was a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and vice president and director of studies at the Pacific Council on International Policy. He spent over a decade at the RAND Corporation as a senior analyst and research manager specializing in strategic studies. From 1994 to 1995, he was a member of the secretary's policy planning staff at the US Department of State, responsible for Türkiye, Southern Europe, North Africa, and the multilateral track of the Middle East peace process.

A frequent commentator for international media, Lesser has written extensively on foreign and security policy issues. He holds a DPhil from the University of Oxford and studied at the University of Pennsylvania, the London School of Economics, and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and the Pacific Council on International Policy. He serves on the advisory boards of the NATO Defense College Foundation, the Antwerp-American Foundation, Atlantic Dialogues, and the Delphi Economic Forum, and has been a senior fellow of the Onassis Foundation and the Luso-American Development Foundation.



Pamela Lesser

Doctoral Researcher, Faculty of Social Sciences, Arctic Centre University of Lapland

Pamela Lesser is a senior expert with the Research, Development and Innovation Services unit at the Lapland University Consortium. For the past 11 years, she has been a researcher within the Arctic Governance Research Group at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, where she focused on sustainable mining practices in the north, and in particular, the social licence to operate (SLO) concept. Concurrent with her work as a researcher, Pamela was the Regional Lead at the Initiative For Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA), a global mining standard, in charge of raising awareness of IRMA within Brussels policy circles. Pamela's background is in land use and urban planning as well as in environmental impact assessment. Prior to her work at the Arctic Centre, Ms. Lesser was a Fellow of Ecologic Institute – U.S., a Berlin-based think-tank, with projects related to smart cities and spatial planning. Ms. Lesser has extensive experience in the public sector, working for consultancies as well as with NGOs. As the National Policy Analyst at ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability USA, she served as a policy advisor to the Executive Director. Pamela Lesser was educated at Georgetown University, the University of California, Los Angeles (B.A., Political Science, M.A., Urban Planning), and conducted post-graduate studies in environmental policy at the RAND Corporation and in environmental science and policy at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, DC.



Magni Mohr

Dean, University of the Faroe Islands

Magni Mohr is professor in Human Physiology at the University of the Faroe Islands. He also holds a professorship in Human Movement at the University of Southern Denmark. He has published more than 200 scientific articles, as well as several books, on exercise physiology, public health, and physical activity. Magni is a common speaker at international conferences around the world and is part of multiple international research committees and has worked at universities in several countries. He is the prorector for research and enterprise at the University of the Faroe Islands, where an area of focus is strengthening research and research collaboration in the Arctic region.



Willfred Nordlund

Member of the Parliament for Nordland and Chair of the Standing Committee on Business and Industry, Norwegian Parliament

Willfred Nordlund is a member of the Storting for Nordland and has held several positions since he first became a Substitute Member of the Storting in 2009. Between 2009 and 2017 he was a Substitute Member, before being elected as a Member of Parliament in 2017-2021 and then re-elected for the 2021-2025 period. Mr Nordlund represents the Center Party.

Mr Nordlund has served on several Storting committees, including as a member of the Standing Committee on Local Government and Public Administration from 2017 to 2021, and as Chair of the Committee on Business and Industry from October 2021. He has also been active in several parliamentary delegations, including the Arctic Parliamentary Delegation and the Nordic Council, where he has served as ViceChair of the Arctic Cooperation since November 2021.

Mr Nordlund has a background in marketing and economics with studies at BI Norwegian Business School. He has previously worked as a chef, machine operator and project manager in media and finance, giving him a broad experience of both practical and administrative work. His political career started early in municipal politics in Sortland. He has been elected for several periods for the Nordland County Council where he served, among other things, as Deputy Chair of the county government for transport issues.

In addition to his roles in the Norwegian Parliament, Mr Nordlund has also been involved in youth politics both locally and nationally and has been a board member of several youth organizations, including Gullregn 4H and Nordland 4H.



Ernst Sumberg Olsen

Advisor, North Atlantic Cooperation, NORA

Ernst Sumberg Olsen has a background in literature, linguistics, and marketing, with extensive experience in both the private and public sectors, including diplomatic and foreign service roles. Since 2000, he has advised the Faroese Parliament on Nordic and West Nordic affairs, served as General Secretary of the West Nordic Council, and worked in the Faroese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At NORA, he facilitates cooperation between Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, and coastal Norway in the North Atlantic and Arctic regions.



Dag-Rune Olsen

Rector, UiT the Arctic University of Norway

Professor Olsen took office as rector at UiT The Arctic University of Norway in 2021. Prior to that he served as dean and later rector at the University of Bergen. He holds a PhD in biomedical physics and was professor of medical physics at the University of Oslo and head of research at the Norwegian Radium Hospital in Oslo, before he was appointed dean in Bergen.

Olsen has been awarded with the Klaas Breur Gold Medal for his research, is elected member of the Norwegian Academy of Technological Sciences and *Academia Europae* – the European Academy - of which he was presented with the President's Merit Award in 2022.

Professor Olsen was recently elected president of Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN). He served as chair of the board of Universities Norway, is chair of the board of The Nordic Institute for Studies of Innovation, Research and Education and board member of the Arctic Philharmonic Orchestra.



Sara Olsvig

Chair, Inuit Circumpolar Council

Sara Olsvig currently serves as the International Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council. With a deep-rooted passion for human rights advocacy, she has played a vital role in the political arena, having previously served as a member of the Parliament of Denmark from 2011 to 2015 and the Parliament of Greenland from 2013 to 2018. Furthermore, Ms. Olsvig held the esteemed position of Vice Premier and Minister for Affairs, Families, Gender Equality, and Justice for the Government of Greenland from 2016 to 2018.

Her significant contributions extend to her involvement in the Constitutional Commission and the Human Rights Council of Greenland, underscoring her commitment to advancing social justice and equality. Sara Olsvig holds a Master of Science in Anthropology and is presently a PhD candidate in the Department of Arctic Social Science & Economics at Ilisimatusarfik, the University of Greenland. In recognition of her impactful work, she was awarded the 2023 Womenomics Inclusion Award.

As an Inuk born in Nuuk, Greenland, Sara Olsvig continues to inspire others through her dedication to her community, where she resides with her partner and their children.



Anita Parlow

Author, International Strategic Advisor, A.L. Parlow & Associates, LLC

Anita Parlow, a former Fulbright Scholar in Iceland; advisor and researcher, the Harvard-MIT Arctic Fisheries Project and adjunct faculty, University of Iceland School of Law. Parlow has published OpEds, articles and law reviews on Arctic geopolitical, climate and hybrid war issues for the Anchorage Daily News, Arctic Today, the Washington Post, the University of Maine Oceans Law Review, the North Dakota Law Review, the Kennan Institute's Russiafile, and the Economist. Parlow advised and wrote risk assessment reports for the Port of Nome, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and Alaska's Denali Commission. Parlow is co-editor of the recently published Springer book, *Climate and Conflict*. She has covered war-zones in the Americas, sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia, and has spoken on Arctic issues in the United States, Norway, Iceland, Finland, China and pre-Ukraine Russia. An Oxford advanced-degree-in-law, Parlow is a Member of the Bar of the United States Supreme Court.



Aaju Peter

Inuk Lawyer

Born in Arkisserniaq, a northern Greenland community, in 1960 Aaju has lived up and down the west coast of her native country as a result of her father's teaching and preaching career.

At age eleven, Aaju left Greenland to attend school in Denmark where she learned to speak Danish and read German, English, French and Latin. At age eighteen, she returned home to Greenland. In 1981, Aaju moved to Iqaluit, in Nunavut, Canada where she has taken up residence ever since. In Iqaluit Aaju learned English and Inuktitut, which has helped her succeed in her work as an interpreter, and she has done volunteer work with various women's and interpretation organizations. Her interests led her to the Arctic College where she took Inuit studies. She has travelled in Greenland, Europe and Canada performing lamp lighting ceremonies, traditional Inuit songs, displaying sealskin fashions. Currently Aaju has a home-based sealskin garment business, translates, collects traditional law from elders, raised her five children, drove a dump-truck to build the breakwater in Iqaluit, has worked as a cultural guide in the tourism industry sailing to most communities in Greenland and arctic Canada. Aaju is a graduate of the Akitsiraq Law School (2005) and was called to the bar (2007). In recent years Aaju has been involved with documentaries such as *Angry Inuk*, *Tunniit: Retracing the lines of Inuit tattoos*, and *Arctic Defenders*. These days Aaju is advocating for Inuit rights to seal and sealskin products as well as the Inuit right to be involved in issues related to Arctic waters. Aaju received the Order of Canada on December 30, 2011.



Tobias Elling Rehfeld

Ambassador, Senior Arctic Official for Kingdom of Denmark, Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Tobias Elling Rehfeld is ambassador of Denmark and Head of the Department of the Arctic and North America in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. Furthermore, he holds the position as Senior Arctic Official for the Kingdom of Denmark in Arctic Council.

From 2018-2023 Ambassador Rehfeld held the position as the Danish Ambassador to South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Lesotho, eSwatini, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Ambassador Rehfeld served as the Under-Secretary of State for Legal Affairs (Public International Law, Human Rights Law, EU Law, Administrative Law and general legal advice) from 2015-2018. He has also held the position as head of the Department of Public International Law in the MFA from 2013-2015. Before taking up this position, Ambassador Rehfeld served as Private Secretary to the Danish Prime Minister from 2009-2011, and as Principal Private Secretary to the Danish Prime Minister from 2011-2013.

Ambassador Rehfeld has from 2001-2008 held various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, including the positions of Deputy Head of the Department for Human Rights, Special Advisor on international law, and as advisor on human rights to the Danish Permanent Representation to the United Nations in New York.

Ambassador Rehfeld holds an LL.M. from University of Copenhagen (2001), Denmark, as well as an MA in International Relations from University of Exeter, UK (2000).

Ambassador Rehfeld is married and has three children. The Queen of Denmark, Margrethe II, has decorated Ambassador Rehfeld as Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog.



Riitta Rissanen

Rector, Managing Director, Lapland University of Applied Sciences

Riitta Rissanen is Rector and Managing Director of Lapland University of Applied Sciences, since 2018.

She has a business background from banking and finance from 90`s. After banking career, she has worked nearly 30 years in higher education sector in Finland, as principal lecturer, as Head of Research and Vice President. And also, as an Executive Director of The Rector`s Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences, Arene 2014 - 2018.

Riitta Rissanen did her PhD in education (Working -life based Thesis work in UAS Learning Context) for Tampere University in 2013. Riitta has been attending as a visiting lecturer in several universities, and universities of applied sciences also in international context.

Riitta has had several memberships in national boards and educational policy and evaluation groups in higher education, e.g. a member of Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEC) during 2006 - 2013 and Member of Developing Group in Financing Model for Universities of Applied Sciences, nominated by Ministry of Education in Finland, 2014 - 2017. She is also a board member in Lapland Chamber of Commerce since 2019, and also committee member of Economic Policy Committee in Finnish Education Employers (FEE) since 2021. She was appointed to the Finnish Research Infrastructure Committee in Academy of Finland starting from 1.7.2019 until 2022.

In the area of quality assurance in higher education, she chaired the audit of JAMK University of Applied Sciences in 2019, and audit of Karelia University of Applied Sciences in 2023-2024. She has done several quality assurance projects in Finnish Higher Education from the beginning of 1990. She has also participated in national level work developing the Vision for Higher Education and Research 2030 in Finland.

Riitta`s research areas are applied research in UAS, higher education systems, innovations and R&D in working life context (Mode2) as well as qualitative research, where from she has made several presentations and publications.



Pilo Samuelsen

Chief Operating Officer, SiuTsiu, Nuuk, Greenland

Pilo Samuelsen is COO of SiuTsiu, Greenland's first social economic enterprise with the goal of increasing employment and training for young people age 16-25 in two of Greenland's remote communities. He brings a dialogue-based approach to professional and sustainable decisions. He has in-depth knowledge of Greenlandic society and is committed to education, sports, and culture.

Pilo has a professional bachelor's degree as a school teacher with more than 20 years of professional experience in the field of education and educational counseling.

SiuTsiu is dedicated to help and support young marginalized men and women in Qaqortoq and Tasiilaq. This particular group of our communities are facing several barriers they need help to overcome. The effort of SiuTsiu is done in partnerships with local business with the aim of building skills and competences. SiuTsiu is working on an agenda where social and sustainable succes are parameters equal to financial succes.



Johan Sandström

Professor, Industrial Engineering and Management, Luleå Technical University

Johan Sandström is Professor of Business Administration at Luleå University of Technology (LTU), Sweden, and during 2024-2026 one of the Arctic Six Chairs. Since 2015 his research has been situated in the Arctic, predominantly focusing on the relation between mine and community, but also on issues related to migration. The main methods are ethnographic, based on engaging with community members, spending time on site. His research is communicated in various forms, through scientific publications, but also through photography, film, music and theatre. The Organizing rocks project (est. 2015), targeting Kiruna (Sweden) and northern Saskatchewan (Canada), was presented in the form of a multi-media art exhibition in Luleå, Kiruna and Vienna (at the Arctic Science Summit in 2023). Conceptually, his studies focus on analyzing power relations and enactments of responsibility and accountability. He has also conductive comparative work on the iron ore region of the Pilbara, in western Australia. Currently he is developing research on promises attached to 'green' transitions in the Swedish Arctic, with comparative outlooks in Alaska and, through Arctic Six Chair position, also in the Norwegian and Finnish Arctic. He is also engaging in comparative work on how newly arrived migrants are organized in the Swedish Arctic, but where the comparative cases are in Italy and the UK, respectively. Aside from his scientific engagements, Sandström also sits on the board of Havremagasinet, Norrbotten's largest exhibition hall for contemporary art.



Stefano Sannino

Secretary-General, European External Action Service

Stefano Sannino – Secretary General of the European Union External Action Service since 1 January 2021. Previously, he held the post of Deputy Secretary General for Economic and Global Issues at the EEAS. Prior to that, he was Italy’s Ambassador to Spain and Andorra and Italy’s Permanent Representative to the EU in Brussels.

After a period at the Cabinet of the President of the Commission Romano Prodi , Mr Sannino joined the Directorate General for External Relations (2004–2010) as Director for Crisis Management and Representative at PSC, then Director for Latin America, and finally as Deputy Director General for Asia and Latin America. In 2010 he moved to the Directorate General for Enlargement as Deputy Director General and then as Director General until June 2013.

Earlier in his career, Mr Sannino served as the diplomatic advisor to the Italian Prime Minister and his personal representative to G8 summits. He has also held the position of Ambassador and Head of the OSCE Mission in Belgrade. From 2006 to 2008 he was the Diplomatic Advisor to the Italian Prime Minister and his Personal Representative to G8 summits.

He has also held the position of Ambassador and Head of the OSCE Mission in Belgrade from 2001 to 2002 and within the Italian Diplomatic Service: Deputy Head of Mission of the Italian Embassy in Belgrade (1994-1996), Head of the Secretariat of the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1996-1998), Diplomatic Advisor and Head of the Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Trade (1998-2001).

Mr Sannino is fluent in Spanish, English and French beyond his native Italian.



Linda Solstrand Dahlberg

Senior Adviser, Arctic Policy, UiT The Arctic University of Norway

Linda Solstrand Dahlberg, PhD, is a senior adviser and the Brussels representative for the University of Tromsø - the Arctic University of Norway. Prior to joining UiT she worked for the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a senior adviser on Arctic Policy, and before that, as a Science and Innovation Policy Adviser for the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. She joined the world of policy after a career in academia as a neuroscientist.



Piet Steel

Vice-President, Belgian Polar Secretariat; Director, IPF Board; Former Belgian Ambassador to Vietnam

Piet Steel began his professional career as a Belgian diplomat. Between 1975 and 1997, he held various diplomatic assignments including Chief Negotiator during the multilateral trade negotiations of the Uruguay Round in Geneva, Ambassador to Vietnam and Consul General to Hong Kong. In 1997, he accepted responsibility for Public Affairs at the Solvay Group (Belgium), overseeing the chemical and pharmaceutical company's global government affairs activities. In 2005, he joined Toyota Motor Europe as Vice-President of External Affairs. In 2010, the Government of Japan appointed him as its Honorary Consul General for the Flanders region.

He is Chairman of the Belgium Hong Kong Society, President of the Board, Special Olympics Belgium and Member of the Board of the Polar Secretariat. He was appointed “Distinguished Visiting Fellow” of the European Business School of Regent’s University in London. Mr Steel is an advisor on international affairs to various companies.



Sabrina Suikki

International Affairs and Regional Export Cooperation, Norrbotten Chamber of Commerce

Meet Sabrina Suikki, International Business Manager at the Norrbotten Chamber of Commerce in Sweden, and Board Member at the North Sweden European Office in Brussels. With a diverse background in law, entrepreneurship, and strategic management, Sabrina brings a global perspective to the table. She excels in guiding global growth companies through complex legal and strategic challenges. A natural connector, Sabrina speaks fluent Finnish, Swedish, English, and French, with additional proficiency in Spanish, Italian, Norwegian, and German. Born in Finland and living abroad since 1999, she is passionate about sustainable innovation and the green transition in Northern Sweden, driving international trade and business development in Norrbotten and beyond.



Pavel Tkach

Junior Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland (Finland); Acting Managing Director, Arctic Youth Network (Canada)

Pavel Tkach is a researcher at the Arctic Centre University of Lapland (Finland) with experience in managing international projects funded by the EU targeting the Arctic region and carrying out project and academic research resulting in project deliverables and academic publications. The primary topics of the research interest are climate governance at regional and municipal levels, intellectual property law, cryptocurrency mining technologies and its legal regulation, tourism, youth and education. Additionally, Pavel Tkach is Managing Director of the Arctic Youth Network (Canada), where his primary responsibilities are the management of the organisation's work, leading internal and external relations and carrying out research activities related to the topic of the Arctic Youth.



Ulla-Kirsikka Vainio

Mayor of Rovaniemi, Finland

Ulla-Kirsikka Vainio has been the Mayor of the City Rovaniemi since May 2020.

Before assuming her duties as Mayor of Rovaniemi, Vainio held significant positions in municipal administration for example as the Director of Environmental and Permit Services in Pori, and as the Chief Building Inspector and Head of Department in Nokia. Prior to that she worked as CEO, architect, and head designer in the architectural office Arkkitehtikonttori Vainio & Ekman Oy, which she founded in 1996.

Vainio's education includes a Master of Administrative Sciences from the University of Tampere (2006), and a Bachelor of Engineering in Architectural Technology from Tampere University of Applied Sciences (1996). Vainio was born in 1972 in Rovaniemi.



Nicolas van Hoecke

Managing Director, International Polar Foundation

Nicolas Van Hoecke joined the International Polar Foundation in July 2021 as Managing Director. In this role, he manages the overall operations of the organization and is involved in developing strategies and projects to further its mission. Prior to his tenure at the IPF, Nicolas held various executive positions at multinational corporations such as Toyota Motor Europe, Samsung Europe, and Delhaize Group; he lived in both Europe and Asia during his time with these companies.



Maria Varteressian

State Secretary for Minister of Foreign Affairs Espen Barth Eide

Maria Varteressian, a dedicated Labour Party member, serves as the State Secretary for Minister of Foreign Affairs Espen Barth Eide. Maria's career spans pivotal roles such as Political Adviser to the Minister for Climate and the Environment, Foreign Policy Adviser within the Labour Party Parliamentary Group, and previous advisory positions at WWF Norway and Arctic Frontiers. With a Master's in Globalization and a Bachelor's in political science, Maria's commitment to public service and policy development underscores her impactful contributions within the political landscape.



Claude Véron-Réville

Head of Division for Western Europe and EEAS, Special Envoy for Arctic Matters

Claude Véron-Réville is since September 2024 the Special Envoy for Arctic matters. She heads at the same time the European External Action Service's division for Western Europe, Arctic and Regional matters, which Prior to that, she occupied different managerial positions in the EEAS Human Resources Department and was notably in charge of the selection and recruitment of EEAS staff. Previously, she worked several years on the Eastern Europe and Russia files as Deputy Head of the Russia Division in the EEAS and Deputy Head of Division for Eastern Partnership, the OSCE and Regional Organisations, including the Northern Dimension and BEAC. Between November 2011 and August 2013 she was posted as a European exchange diplomat (Transatlantic Diplomatic Fellow) in the US State Department in the Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova Office and in the Russia Office. Claude holds a Master's Degree from the College of Europe and graduated from the Paris Institute of Political Sciences. Her mother tongue is French and she speaks English and Russian.



Charlina Vitcheva

Director-General, Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), European Commission

Charlina Vitcheva was appointed Director General of DG MARE, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in June 2020. Before this, she became Deputy Director General of the JRC in September 2016. She was acting DG for the JRC from the 1st of November 2019 to the 30th of April 2020. Previous to this, she was Director of Smart and Sustainable Growth and Southern Europe at DG Regional and Urban Policy, and also held a Director's position on Inclusive Growth, Territorial and Urban Development and Northern Europe.

Before joining the Commission, Charlina spent 15 years in Bulgarian public administration including at the Permanent Representation in Brussels, dealing mainly with agricultural and fisheries issues. During this period, she was actively involved in the accession negotiations of Bulgaria and between 2000 and 2004 headed the negotiations teams in the area of agriculture and rural development, food safety, and fisheries.