



SCIENCE FOR A SUSTAINABLE ARCTIC

Address

by

**Guðni Th. Jóhannesson,
President of Iceland,
27 March 2020**

Dear viewers,
dear participants at this online conference,

Science for a Sustainable Arctic. Naturally, I wish I were now welcoming you in person in Akureyri, the lovely town in the north of Iceland. Naturally, I wish we were about to begin an actual meeting of minds where we could discuss, face to face, how we can use science to protect, promote and strengthen a sustainable Arctic.

This we cannot do – you all know why. Together we are all fighting a common foe, a foe that does not recognize boundaries or passports. We need to do everything we can to overcome this invisible enemy. We need to do it together.

My thoughts are with those who have lost a loved one because of the corona-virus, with those who now need treatment. Let us also send our good wishes to those who are, or have to be, in a quarantine in recent days and weeks, or are otherwise affected.

But let us also continue with our lives, our careers, our research. This conference on science and sustainability will add to our understanding of the Arctic region, its ecosystem and its peoples. This conference will be a testimony to the importance of academics, scientists and specialists in so many fields.

Dear friends: This sudden disruption of people's lives, the rhythm of society and the running of states, has already had a drastic impact around the globe. Presumably, things will get worse in many areas before they get better.

But we will get through this. We will find a way to beat the virus. And how will that be done? Through science, through the effort of scientists to develop a vaccine and other remedies.

The history of humankind contains ample cases of science beating illness and epidemics. We will continue that journey. We will conquer this virus and we will have countless conferences and meetings of minds. Yes, we will work together for a better future, in the Arctic and around the world. I wish you all a fruitful online conference.