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**STATEMENT FROM CLEAN AIR TASK FORCE ON ARCTIC COUNCIL
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SLOWING ARCTIC MELTING: THE ARCTIC COUNCIL NEEDS TO ACT NOW

On May 12, as the eight-nation Arctic Council convenes in Nuuk, Greenland, it will have the benefit of two recent reports it commissioned. The first report, from the Council's scientific arm, concludes that, as a result of accelerating Arctic warming, global sea levels could rise between 3 and 5 feet by 2100, well above the 7 to 23 inches previously estimated; threatening major cities on the U.S. East Coast and around the world. The second report, by a special Council task force, has concluded that Arctic melt could be slowed dramatically in the next few decades by curbing air pollution like black carbon (dark particulate matter from trucks, ships, flares, and fires) and methane from oil and gas, coal mines, and waste systems. This report follows on a recent study by the UN demonstrating that proven, feasible measures to reduce emissions of black carbon and methane could avoid almost two-thirds of the warming currently expected in the Arctic (1.1°C above 2010 temperatures) by 2040.

The evidence is in. The time to act is now. Yet these two reports are not even on the agenda for discussion. There is no more urgent issue facing the Council, however, and no more meaningful place than Greenland to demonstrate its leadership. Here's what the Arctic Council and its eight governments need to do:

1. Agree to collectively curb black carbon and methane emissions

The Arctic Council must declare that it will take all feasible measures to curb methane and black carbon emissions, which heat the atmosphere and, in the case of black carbon, darken ice and snow, causing them to melt.

The Council should agree to act collectively where it can, such as:

- Supporting action by the International Maritime Organization to curb black carbon emissions from ships in the Northern hemisphere.
- Developing rules for a "zero emissions policy" to eliminate methane dumping and black carbon emissions in the Arctic from rapidly expanded Arctic shipping and oil and gas exploration and extraction.

- Jointly funding methane reductions globally via mechanisms like the Global Methane Initiative and the proposed Prototype Methane Funding Facility.

2. Agree to take appropriate domestic actions to curb black carbon and methane.

Black Carbon. The eight Arctic nations, because of their proximity to the pole, account for roughly 40% of Arctic warming from black carbon emissions. They must act immediately to reduce these emissions:

The United States

- *Diesel.* Most black carbon emissions from the United States come from older diesel trucks, construction equipment, and other off-road engines. The U.S. should pass pending legislation or enact rules to require that only low emissions equipment be used in federally funded construction projects; and fully fund the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, which has already saved thousands of lives by helping fund retrofits of school buses, trucks and other equipment.

The Nordic Countries and the EU

- A substantial portion of black carbon from the Nordic countries comes from domestic stoves. Those countries should adopt standards for new stoves and require and fund retrofits to lower emission equipment.
- The Nordic countries and the EU, like the US, should allow only clean diesel equipment to service government construction projects, and should adopt regulatory and funding measures to phase out dirty engines or retrofit them.

Russia

- Russia should expand on existing successful pilot programs to curb open agricultural burning in the spring season, when black carbon from fires darkens and melts snow and ice most effectively. These fires, and the forest fires often started by agricultural burning, are a major public health and safety problem and also a very important source of Arctic black carbon.

Methane

All Arctic nations should:

- Require capture and use of methane from oil and gas wells, pumps, and other facilities; coal mines; and landfills and other waste systems. Currently widespread dumping of methane is common practice from these industries, despite the billions of dollars of fuel being wasted.