



## **SPIRIT OF ENDEAVOUR:**

### **From the Arctic, A Statement of Hope & An Appeal For Action**

#### **Summary Report of Activities:**

On July 11, 2008, more than 100 participants arrived in Svalbard in the high Norwegian arctic and boarded the ship *National Geographic Endeavour*.

We listened to the music of vast silences near the top of the world, and felt the heave and subsidence of the sea. We watched seabirds, wild reindeer, walrus, and polar bears living and moving to a different rhythm.

But we were not on vacation. Sponsored by National Geographic, the Aspen Institute and Lindblad Expeditions, our voyage was called the “Arctic Expedition for Climate Action.”

Aboard the ship were leading Republicans and Democrats; labor and business leaders; environmentalists and journalists; scientists and religious leaders; community activists and young people. We spent a week expanding our knowledge about the accelerating changes in the global climate – changes that threaten not only the Arctic and its peoples, but all of us and the rest of our planet, as well.

Among shrinking glaciers and melting sea ice, we came to a fuller understanding that global warming poses real and serious threats: to civilization; to wildlife, forests and the ocean; to fresh water; to agriculture; to human health; to justice; to the poor; to those who are yet to be born—and to peace.

In addition to the climate crisis, we discussed resource consumption and waste, human population pressures, declining ecosystems, and the disproportionate impact of climate change on the world’s poor.



### **Elements Of Shared Framework For Action:**

Our time together in the Arctic awakened a deeper sense of both urgency and hope. We know that the crisis will not be resolved easily. Understanding the magnitude of the task at hand, we believe that we must “endeavor to act” – and to prevail.

To that end, we developed elements of a shared framework for action. Those elements are:

- Energy: develop and encourage low-carbon and renewable power sources, as well as efficiency and conservation measures, to move us toward energy security and independence
- Economy: face these difficult challenges in ways that create work, wealth and prosperity; strengthen and adapt critical infrastructure; transform vital industries
- Environment: better understand, protect and restore the health of the Earth’s ecological systems
- Equity: share fairly the burdens and opportunities, especially as they affect the poor and vulnerable (who contribute the least to climate change but are likely to suffer the most)
- Education: teach everyone, especially the next generation, the necessary wisdom and skills to thrive in a low-carbon future

Within this framework, we envision the United States working in harmony with other nations and helping to lead the world in implementing climate solutions.

### **Appeal for Bipartisanship & Presidential Leadership:**

In facing this global challenge, all countries must play important roles. But the United States – as a world leader, economic power and exceptional innovator – has a unique role and responsibility.



Therefore, we support strong and principled Presidential and Congressional leadership, as well as genuine, bi-partisan cooperation.

We need action at all levels of government. The platforms of both major parties should include a commitment to climate protection. And within 30 days after the November 2008 election, the president-elect should convene a bipartisan group to assemble a set of comprehensive solutions and rapidly propose a plan to cut emissions.

**Individual Commitments:**

The participants on this unique expedition came together from diverse communities with many different responsibilities. We each commit to return to our own spheres of influence, honoring our responsibilities to communicate, educate, innovate and advocate more effectively. We face the challenge and opportunities of climate change with new urgency, energy, and priority. With new knowledge and new relationships, we will also seek additional ways to work together. This common journey leads us to a common commitment to do all we can, individually and together, to provide and encourage effective action.

**Conclusion:**

With strong leadership, the United States and the world can be stronger, healthier, more just and more prosperous – enjoying increased economic, energy and environmental security. If the United States will intelligently address climate change, we believe its actions will stimulate comparable, positive actions around the world.

Again, we urge Congress and the President to pass legislation to implement substantial cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. Those reductions will create whole new industries in the areas of clean energy and energy efficiency. With smart policies and education, this transition can create good jobs for millions of Americans: from installing solar panels and



green roofs; to creating the next generation of clean vehicles; to building a national smart grid.

On the basis of credible, scientific information, we ask everyone to come together to transform our economy to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We ask others to join us in this spirit of Endeavour.