

St Petersburg Institute of History, Russian Academy of Sciences
Federal Research Center for Integrated Arctic Studies named after academician N. P. Laverov,
Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences
Arkhangelsk Regional Museum
Political Encyclopedia Publishers (“ROSSPEN”)
Norilsk Nickel (“Nornickel”)

INFORMATION LETTER I

DEAR COLLEAGUES! We invite you to take part in the International Scientific Conference

“The Svalbard archipelago: From *terra nullius* to the site of interaction. On the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Svalbard Treaty”, which will be held on October 29–30, 2020 in Arkhangelsk (Russian Federation).

After the discovery of the Svalbard archipelago in 1596 by the Barents expedition, whaling in the waters surrounding it attracted the interests of various private companies and European States. In the late XIX – early XX centuries, with the beginning of industrial coal mining on the Svalbard archipelago, the possibility of revising the legal status of the archipelago, previously considered as *terra nullius*, became an important topic of international political discussion. The Svalbard Treaty of 1920, the 100th anniversary of its signing on February 9 this year, laid the foundation for modern international rights and obligations in relation to the Svalbard archipelago. In 1925 Svalbard officially became part of the Kingdom of Norway. The Soviet Union, which initially did not recognize the Treaty, changed its position on Svalbard after the Soviet Union was recognized by Norway and joined the Treaty in 1935.

The Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation are currently much more involved in various socio-economic and scientific activities in the Archipelago than other States that have joined the Svalbard Treaty at various times. Today, the issue of Svalbard's status is still an element of geopolitical rivalry in the Arctic.

The following thematic panels are proposed at the conference:

- Features of the legal and political status of Svalbard – frozen reality?
- whaling activities on the Islands of the Svalbard archipelago and in the surrounding waters in the XVI-XVII centuries.
- History of coal mining in Svalbard in the XIX–early XXI centuries.
- The question of Svalbard at the Peace Conference in Paris (1919–1920) in the context of world political contraction.
- Circumpolar geopolitical tendencies in global international relations, shifting the balance between cooperation and competition in the region as a result of the actors' ambitions. Conflicts in Russian-Norwegian relations.
- Svalbard's prospects in the “Arctic of the future”.
- Russian-Norwegian and Soviet-Norwegian relations in the Svalbard archipelago: Experience of cooperation and conflict resolutions.

- History of scientific research in Svalbard.
- Arctic tourism.

As part of the conference, the Arkhangelsk Regional Museum will open an exhibition dedicated to the history of the Svalbard archipelago.

Please direct the applications to the email address: spitzbergen1920@gmail.com. The application must contain the subject of the report, its brief description (up to 200 words) and personal data of the participant: full name, academic degree, country, city, position and main place of work, email address, contact phone number. Application deadline: July 1, 2020.

The expected duration of the report is 20 minutes.

The working language of the conference is Russian and English.

Travel costs defrayed by the sending organization.

Texts of reports of the conference “Svalbard Archipelago: From *terra nullius* to the territory of interaction. By the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Svalbard Treaty” will be published in one of the leading publishers in Russia – “ROSSPEN”. Collection of articles will be indexed in RSCI.