

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Speech by the Prime Minister of Greenland, Jens-Frederik  
Nielsen at the European Parliament**

**Strasbourg, October 8th, 2025**

Ataqqinartooq præsident Metsola, Ataqqinartut Europa-  
Parlamentimi ilaasortat.

Ullumikkut oqalugiartussatut qaaqquneqarnera ataqqinaatitut  
tiguara.

Your excellency, President Metsola and honorable members of the  
European Parliament.

I am truly honored for the invitation to address you, the  
parliamentarians of the European Union here today.

As you are the democratic voices of all the people in the European  
Union, I am eager to share with you my vision of Greenland's  
place in the evolving EU-Greenland partnership. A partnership  
that is of great importance to us.

2025 has been an eventful, if not dramatic, year for Greenland.  
The world is changing, and it is changing fast.

Greenland is no stranger to change. Our people, the Greenlandic  
people, Kalaallit is a proud people, who has survived and thrived  
in the harsh conditions of the Arctic for thousands of years.

We have lived off the land and ocean, while respecting it and not taking more than was necessary. We have adapted our livelihoods to the climate and learned to recognize and react to the changes in our environment.

As we have dealt with these changes, one thing has remained constant – the recognition that we need each other. We need each other to deal with changes, both the challenges and opportunities.

We would not have been able to survive if every member of our people did not contribute and fulfill a specific role. The country of Greenland is built on cooperation, and the desire to cooperate based on fundamental values such as equality and respect for one another.

This continues to be at the core of Greenland today. Also, in our relations with the world outside Greenland. We need cooperation and partnerships with like-minded countries and institutions, who share our values.

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The EU has been a stable, reliable and important partner for Greenland for more than 40 years. It has evolved from a cooperation primarily focused on fisheries, to now including education, raw materials, energy, biodiversity, research and climate change.

Our relationship has gradually grown and expanded throughout the years, and most recently with the EU Office opening in Greenland, which has been a great tool for cooperation and connection.

The EU has been a steadfast friend and have stood by us when we needed it the most.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you, to you, the EU, for your strong support for Greenland, during the challenging times we are going through right now.

You have stood by us, as a friend and a partner. We will never forget this. Thank you.

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As we look ahead, we wish to continue to strengthen and develop our cooperation and partnership with the EU.

As the world is changing fast, new challenges are presented. I believe that Greenland can offer solutions for the EU, and the EU can offer solutions for Greenland. Creating new opportunities for us both on mutually beneficial terms.

The recent presentation of the European Commission's draft for the Multiannual Financial Framework was followed closely by Greenland. We noted with great enthusiasm the presentation of the draft Decision on Overseas Association including Greenland.

We were very happy to see the suggested focus areas for the cooperation with Greenland, namely education, critical minerals, renewable energy, digitalization and sustainable tourism.

These are all important areas where there is great potential to strengthen and develop our cooperation even further. Areas that can be beneficial for both Greenland and the EU.

We were also very encouraged to see that 530 million euros is suggested to be allocated for cooperation with Greenland.

We know that there will be long negotiations ahead, where also you as the parliamentarians will be playing key roles. But the suggested amount from the Commission, is promising in terms of further developing our cooperation.

This could for example include investments in the renewable energy sector and to the mineral resources sector, including infrastructure investments in different mining projects.

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Our emerging mineral sector is poised to become a key player in securing supply lines of strategic and critical raw materials to the EU and to the world. Greenland holds 24 of the 34 critical minerals identified by the EU.

Developing mining projects is, however, capital-intensive. If we are to succeed in the exploitation of the critical minerals, there is a need to reduce the risk that investors take on. This task of reducing risks must partly be solved politically and not only by the markets.

In 2023, the EU and Greenland agreed on a strategic partnership on sustainable raw materials value chains. The objective of this partnership is to support the development of the mineral resources in Greenland, while also establishing raw materials value chains for the green transition in the EU.

This partnership is a good and important step in our cooperation, and there are examples of projects where the EU has provided support. This is very positive.

Taking the current security situation in the world into account and the green transition, there is however a need to move faster. The critical minerals of Greenland have the potential to shift global and security balances. But action needs to be taken fast. Greenland is ready to move with the EU, to hasten the pace.

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It is not just our raw materials that are important for the security balances and the green transition. Greenland has the potential to become a key partner to the EU on renewable energy. Greenland's hydropower potential is both vast and untapped.

With our abundant water resources, including glaciers and rivers, we are an ideal location for large-scale hydroelectric power projects.

We have the potential to become a global leader in the export of green energy. This will create new income streams for Greenland and make a difference on a global scale.

We are actively seeking investors for these projects which are being offered into tenders next year.

The EU Commission has already supported us in our first tender process, and we are ready to collaborate further.

Greenland and our own national utility company are currently in dialogue with the European Investment Bank (EIB) to expand the hydro powerplant near our capital Nuuk.

The engagement of the EIB in Greenland requires a framework agreement. Such an agreement is currently being negotiated between the relevant parties. Once the agreement is in place, we expect the EIB will be able to engage in other projects related to both infrastructure and raw materials.

We look forward to exploring projects for such a collaboration further.

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As we seek to strengthen our cooperation with the EU and other like-minded countries and institutions, connectivity becomes a key word.

In today's world no country and no economy can function and develop without strong connectivity.

In a country characterized by vast distances, dispersed settlements, and harsh natural conditions, telecommunications are not merely a technical necessity — they are a lifeline.

The digital network connects our communities, supports education, healthcare, and business, and is essential for both the well-being of our citizens and the emergency response capabilities of our authorities.

Greenland is connected internationally through satellites and two submarine cables. Internally, we rely on a combination of land-based radio stations, submarine cables and satellites.

Some places, especially in the far north of our country, are very poorly served with unstable and very slow internet connections.

We therefore have a strong need to enhance and strengthen our digital connectivity.

We need to close the digital divide in Greenland.

Under the EU “Connecting Europe Facility”, Greenland’s national telecommunications company has been successful in getting grants to conduct seabed surveys in preparation for enhancing our submarine cable infrastructure.

We are very keen to explore more such possibilities with the EU, to enhance Greenland’s digital connection to Europe. This would also include strengthening the satellite connectivity particularly to our northernmost regions.

It is essential for us that those who operate telecommunications in Greenland are trusted and reliable actors. This is vital to ensure the stability of the infrastructure and to prevent unauthorized parties from disrupting or compromising connections.

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As we seek to enhance our connectivity, we are also focusing on our flight routes.

In 2024, we opened a new international airport in our capital Nuuk. In 2026, we plan to open another international airport in Ilulissat, 350 miles north of Nuuk, as well as a regional airport in Qaqortoq, in South Greenland.

Our new airports are expected to increase our international connectivity, allowing for further integration into international trade and tourism. This will be positive for our cooperation with important partners like the EU.

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Greenland and the EU have a longstanding cooperation on trade, especially when it comes to our fish and shellfish.

The fisheries relations between Greenland and the EU dates back to 1985, when Greenland left the European Economic Community.

Fisheries agreements have been in place since and allows EU vessels to fish in Greenlandic waters in return for a financial contribution.

It also provides duty-free access for Greenlandic fishery products to the EU market. This however hinges on a satisfactory fisheries agreement.

Today our fisheries cooperation is regulated in” the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement” which continues to be important for both the EU and Greenland.

It however also remains vital to continue to adjust the cooperation on fisheries to the development and growth of the Greenlandic

fishing industry, which is the most important industrial sector in Greenland.

We expect that the fishing industry will continue to remain the most important economic driver for Greenland in the years to come. For this reason, we must be agile and ensure that our relations continue to be beneficial for us both.

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Greenland is a country of proud fishermen and hunters. Not only does fisheries continue to be vital for our economy, but it is also crucial for the subsistence of our communities and families.

The proud tradition of seal hunting also remains crucial for our communities. Seal hunting is an important source of income and sustenance for many families. For some of our communities it is a vital part of peoples' livelihood.

Seal hunting is also an important part of the Inuit culture, with knowledge and skills being passed down through generations. In our words it's the lifeblood of our culture and our identity.

The general ban on placing seal products on the EU market has had grave negative impacts on seal hunting and has led to significant drops in the domestic supply as well as in the export of our sealskin.

This all, inspite of the exemption in the regulation for seal products derived from traditional harvests by Inuit and other Indigenous Peoples.

As the Commission takes the regulation up for evaluation, in connection with the current fitness check, it is our sincere hope that the EU will consider and implement amendments that can alleviate the grave negative impacts Greenland is experiencing from this ban.

As we continue to strengthen and build on our relationship, as friends and partners, we hope that we together can find solutions and a way forward for important issues such as this.

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Our proud tradition of fishing and hunting will continue to be a crucial part of the future of Greenland, with our youth standing ready to carry on the tradition.

As we build and develop the future of Greenland, the education of our youth will be of utmost importance. The challenges and opportunities that are to come will require specific skills and knowledge to be able to handle.

Greenland and the EU have a strong and solid partnership in the field of education. It plays a significant economic role in the development of Greenland's education system and has opened doors for exchange of knowledge, resources, and best practices.

Through this cooperation educational initiatives have been strengthened and the quality of teaching and learning in Greenland has been enhanced.

We look forward to continuing to strengthen this important cooperation on education, which will ensure that Greenland remains a strong partner for the EU in the future.

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As we look towards preparing a future for our youth and the following generations, one of the immediate challenges we are facing is the triple planetary crisis. This is a crisis that is putting Arctic ecosystems and populations under pressure.

The Arctic is being transformed by accelerating climate change, transboundary pollution and biodiversity loss.

Through the cooperation between Greenland and the EU, important agreements and programs addressing the triple planetary crises are being implemented in Greenland.

This on a local and national level, but also in an international context.

As an example, the establishment of a new national park in West Greenland can be mentioned, which is being financed through the cooperation with the EU.

The traditional use of this area and its valuable biodiversity are now accompanied by increasing interest from tourism operators and other industries. Climate change is impacting the area, as well as the pollution and waste from the increased level of activity.

A management approach for the national park, that balances the biological diversity of the area, traditional use and sustainable development, is becoming a reality thanks to the EU.

Moving forward, we hope to do more cooperation such as this, in order to address the challenges of the triple planetary crisis.

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The avenues for cooperation between us are many. Some of them we have just started to explore together, and others have been developed over several years.

Our partnership has gradually changed to fit the needs of Greenland and the EU.

I believe that we now stand in a pivotal moment of time, where our partnership once again needs to adjust to the unique challenges and opportunities we are faced with.

If there is one message that I hope you take away from what I have said today, it is this: Greenland needs the European Union and the European Union needs Greenland.

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On behalf of the Government of Greenland, I wish to express our appreciation for the continued development of the cooperation between Greenland and the European Union, which we believe contributes positively to the advancement of our society.

Thank you once again for your loyal support, and for a reliable and strong partnership. And finally - thank you for being a trusted friend of Greenland.

Qujanaq – thank you.