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United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

The Militarization of The Arctic Circle:
Curse or Blessing?

STUDY GUIDE

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LETTER OF WELCOME

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure as the president of this committee to welcome you to the United Nations Security Council of the 2023 3rd International Leirion Model United Nations Conference: Special Edition & Leirion MUN Academy. Before we say anything else, let me briefly introduce myself. My name is Eve Vazaiou and I study Statistics & Insurance Science at the University of Piraeus. I am looking forward to meeting and getting to know all of you as well.

To make the conference as successful as possible, research on the committee's topic is required. The following study guide is to guide you upon the issue "The Militarization of The Arctic Circle: Curse or Blessing?" We expect a good level of understanding of the topic and your country's position. If you are an MUN beginner, or you are not so experienced yet – please do not worry, do research to the best of your abilities, and we will be happy to explain the rules of MUN'ing to you during the conference. In any case, you can always contact me at vazaiouevaki@gmail.com

I am looking forward to making the conference a success together with you!

Kind regards,

Eve Vazaiou, President of the UNSC

Dear delegates,

My name is Sofia Kapetanaki, and it is my utmost honour to serve as the Deputy President of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in the 3rd International Leirion Model United Nations Conference: Special Edition & Leirion MUN Academy. I am 17 years old and a 12th-grade student of Platon School. My MUN experience started in 9th grade and since then it has truly grown. I have attended 13 conferences and I have got various knowledge about many things. I guarantee you that you will not regret your decision to participate in MUNs as it is an activity full of joy.

The following study guide is to guide you upon the issue "The Militarization of The Arctic Circle: Curse or Blessing?", which is a critical issue that is very interesting to learn about. It will provide you with the appropriate understanding of the topic. Nevertheless, you are expected to conduct your own extensive research, to have a clear image of your country's position and policy. Should you have any questions on the topic or need any clarifications do not hesitate to contact me through my email kapetanakisophia7@gmail.com. I look forward to seeing you all at the conference and making unforgettable memories!

Best Regards,

Sofia Kapetanaki, Deputy-President of the UNSC



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INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six main principal organs of the United Nations (UN), responsible for maintaining international peace and security. It was established in 1945 under the UN Charter, held its first session in 1947¹ and is composed of 15 member states. The UNSC has the responsibility and right to take immediate and drastic actions. It is also responsible to determine when and where a UN peace operation should be deployed. It responds to crises around the world and it has a range of options at its disposal.

Under Article 25 of the UN Charter, the decisions of the Security Council are legally binding for all UN Member States. Chapter V of the UN Charter presents in detail the basic structure of the council, the rules of it and the rights that Member States have. Hence, it becomes evident that the Security Council plays a crucial role in preserving international peace and actively promoting it, not only through intervening in instances of high international friction, but also by establishing a lasting rapport between various nations of the world.

The UNSC has played a critical role in resolving some of the most significant international conflicts of the past century. For example, during the Cold War, the UNSC played a key role in preventing the escalation of conflicts between the US and the Soviet Union. In more recent times, the UNSC has been involved in efforts to resolve conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and Mali, among others. The presidency of the UNSC rotates among its members on a monthly basis. The UNSC is made up of 15 members, including 5 permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms.

The voting procedure in the UNSC is complex. Decisions of the UNSC require the affirmative votes of at least 9 of its 15 members, including the concurring votes of all 5 permanent members. This means that, under Article 27 of the UN Charter, any permanent member can veto a decision. The veto power has been a source of controversy as it has been used by permanent members to protect their own interests, sometimes at the expense of the wider international community.

The Security Council also suggests Secretary-General candidates to the General Assembly and recommends new states for admission as member states of the United Nations. Showing similarities with the General Assembly, the Security Council performs most of its duties in passive forms. In the resolutions of the Security Council, it can be seen that the Council uses its rights to “suggest, recommend, or encourage” member states to take necessary actions. However, it is certain to say that the passive

¹ “What Is the Security Council? Security Council.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 17 Jan 1946
www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/what-security-council . Accessed 29 Aug. 2023.



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implications of the Security Council are far more binding and implicative. Most important decisions taken in the Security Council are the active implications. It includes military interventions, applying and keeping track of sanctions and peacekeeping missions.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ISSUE

The US Secretary of the Air Force Barbara Barrett was reported saying, "The Arctic is among the most strategically significant regions of the world today" when introducing the US's new Arctic Strategy. This is a revealing statement about this frequently ignored region, which is poised to take a much larger role than ever before on the geopolitical and geostrategic arena. More sea ice is melting in the Arctic Ocean, opening opportunities for shipping and resource extraction, making the region more vulnerable to environmental damage, military conflict, and territorial disputes.

However, when it comes to sovereignty in the Arctic, the UNCLOS's definitions of maritime borders and resource management are the most significant laws, treaties, and regulations. The many types of maritime areas and which states or entities have authority over them and a right to the resources in them are determined by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. There are disagreements here since every state has the legal right to request an expansion of the maritime region in which they have the sole right to resources if they can demonstrate that part of their actual landmass extends underwater. These disputes are becoming more and more significant for the participating member states in the Arctic region as more sea ice melts and more mineral and hydrocarbon resources may be extracted from the seabed.

The right of passage is another significant discussion topic in relation to UNCLOS and the right to the Arctic waters, in addition to resources. Several shipping routes over the Arctic Ocean are becoming increasingly appealing to more states as sea ice melts more and global trade expands. A good example is the Northwest Passage, a shipping route that travels through what Canada views as its internal waters but offers a shorter path than the one used currently from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. There must be agreement on this and other shipping routes in the region if future conflict is to be avoided.

"The Arctic regional regime and its membership must create room for the inclusion, not exclusion, of military matters. Military forces are a valid and needed resource, particularly as they are possibly the only government organization with the capability to operate in the harsh regional environment and to provide services such as search and rescue and human and natural disaster assistance. The stationing and establishing of military units and centers may



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also be useful as logistics and transportation hubs and could create much needed regional infrastructure which can be used for other purposes, such as for shipping.”²

Useful Information

Located geographically around the North Pole at 66°30’ North, the area is surrounded by the Arctic Ocean. Consisting of the northernmost regions of Canada, the Russian Federation, Greenland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland and the United States, the Arctic region experiences extremely high levels of solar radiation year round. These distinctive features set the site apart from others, making it historically inaccessible; With widespread climate change and global warming, the region is now attracting the world's attention. The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment estimates that temperatures in the Arctic region have increased nearly twice as fast as in any other region of the world over the past century, resulting in the loss of the polar ice cap. narrow. According to Riechmann, the world is facing climate change, the polar ice caps are melting, making sea and land routes around the Arctic more accessible.

The Arctic region is controversial due to its economic, environmental and military value, but the land is not owned by any country. Most of the neighbouring countries claim sovereignty over this area through the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in accordance with international law (“Law of the Sea”); UNCLOS imposes coastal state jurisdiction and control over the Arctic region, allowing coastal states to enforce the law, the exclusive economic zone is about 200 miles from their respective Arctic coasts. nautical miles and provisions for their respective maritime territories in the area. However, in the past there have been joint territorial claims among several countries. This led to the creation of the Arctic Council with Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the US as permanent member states and several other countries as observer states. without voting rights. This forum discusses wildlife conservation, sustainable development, climate impacts, monitoring and evaluation, as well as emergency prevention, preparedness and response, with a common agenda. is to establish peace and security.

² *The Militarization of the Arctic: Emerging Reality, Exaggeration, And ...*,
www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol15/no3/eng/PDF/CMJ153Ep18.pdf. Accessed 29 Aug. 2023.



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Figure 1 Geopolitical map of the Arctic

Historical Background

With the end of the Cold War and the geopolitical vision of the region in decline, a new political paradigm has emerged in the Arctic, based on institutional frameworks that support and facilitate cooperation for common interests and challenges. Over the past decade, however, the Arctic is once again likely to fall into an inflection point, as the pendulum swings back into a more strategic and military direction. This is especially evident in the increased presence, capacity development and use of military force by all the countries of the Arctic Five Group (A-5); a phenomenon described by some commentators as the "militarization" of the Arctic. However, these analyses include more detailed descriptions and catalogues of military operations, and they do not go so far as to investigate their underlying explanatory components. Instead, there is a simple narrative that militarization stems from an emerging perception in the region that relations are becoming more adversarial and hostile, particularly over claims of exclusive maritime zones are controversial. It has often been argued that opening access to resources and potential in the region is what led to the last and last great race for sovereign control of the world.

Now, however, a warmer climate, new hydrocarbon extraction technologies and growing interest in northern shipping lanes are causing a new big game in the Arctic. It was in that context that in 2007, the countries bordering the Arctic learned of the shocking news that Russia had planted a titanium flag on the bottom of the Arctic Sea. The fact that two mini submarines Mir-1 and Mir-2 planted the Russian flag as they plunged to a depth of 4,200 meters below the North Pole is a symbolic gesture



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intended to demonstrate Russia's claim to territory by demonstrating that Russia's continental shelf extends to the north. Pole.

In 2014, Russia announced its intention to make the Arctic a priority area for its navy. Washington also demonstrates similar interests by engaging in a scientific and military race for sovereignty over areas of the Arctic. For its part, Canada has also developed two military bases in the Canadian Arctic. It is only a matter of time before other regions also establish their bases in the Arctic.

Permanent members of the Arctic have signed a formal declaration of neutralization through Ilulissat 2.0. Critics argue that it does not bring about change, it just explicitly states what was previously the norm, because neutralization does not entail the withdrawal of defense and control as a thing. precondition, it is simply a commitment to maintain the existing peace and stability. In the area. The trend of multiploidization in the High Arctic region is becoming increasingly apparent, with discussions of demilitarization now off the political agenda of the Arctic states. Although the development of countries on the security front to militarize it is clearly indicated, it is still necessary to analyze and restore a radical solution to stabilize the region by demilitarization.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The legal system that applies to the Arctic region becomes increasingly crucial as the stakes for coastal States increase. The UNCLOS, which governs the usage of the world's oceans, applies to the Arctic because it can be thought of as an ocean covered in ice.³ Following is an analysis of the UNCLOS parts pertinent to territorial disputes in the Arctic area.

The Convention establishes maritime baselines, from which several areas are defined. With increasing distance from the baseline, the degree of the coastal States' sovereignty decreases. Territorial waters are defined as the area up to 12 nautical miles (nm) seaward from the baseline, the "contiguous zone" is the area up to 24 nm, and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is the area up to 200 nm. The coastal States have the exclusive right to utilize natural resources in each of these zones. Foreign ships must be allowed "innocent passage" across territorial seas and navigation rights in EEZs. 'Innocent passage' is defined as navigation through territorial waters "so long as it is not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the coastal State."³ The territorial claims in the Arctic that fall inside one of these categories are noteworthy since they are generally uncontested.⁴

³ UNCLOS Art. 18,19

⁴ <http://theglobaljournal.net/article/view/439/>



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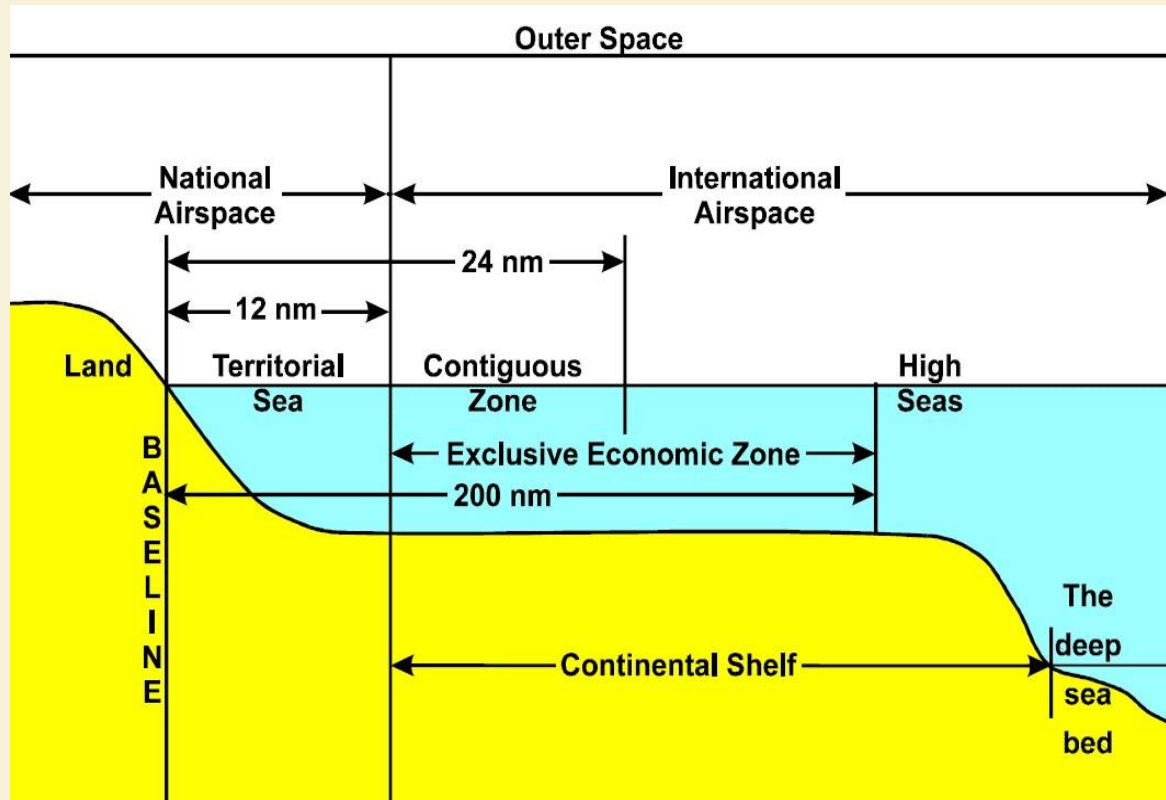


Figure 2: Admin. "UNCLOS Maritime Zones: Byju's: UPSC." BYJUS, BYJU'S, 19 Dec. 2022, byjus.com/free-ias-prep/unclos-maritime-zones/.

In fact, territorial claims essentially rest on UNCLOS clauses pertaining to the continental shelf. These articles state that States have the right to utilize certain natural resources, such as oil and gas, beyond the 200 nautical mile limit if their continental margin exceeds their EEZ. However, UNCLOS also defines an outer shelf

A coastal State must provide the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), which is made up of 21 chosen experts, with scientific evidence about the size of its continental margin in order to formally assert its claim based on the requirements of the continental shelf. This submission must be made no later than ten years following the individual State's ratification of the UNCLOS. The CLCS makes a recommendation about the definition of the state's continental shelf after analyzing the data that was presented. The final determination of maritime boundaries, however, remains up to the candidate State because the CLCS decision is politically

³ <http://theglobaljournal.net/article/view/439/>

limit, as the territory claimed cannot be more than 100 nautical miles (nm) from the 2,500-meter isobaths or 350 nautical miles (nm) from the baseline.¹



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neutral and States may share continental shelf land mass.⁵ So far, Russia, Norway, Denmark and Canada have submitted claims in the Arctic region to the CLCS.⁶

Nonetheless, UNCLOS also includes dispute-settlement mechanisms in regard to the demarcation of maritime boundaries. UNCLOS requires parties to the treaty to resolve differences amicably and lays out various procedures in the event that disputing parties are unable to come to an understanding.⁷ Therefore, contending States have the option of referring the dispute to arbitral tribunals, the International Court of Justice, or the International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea.⁸ States may, however, choose to claim in UNCLOS that they are not subject to these methods.⁹ Only Norway and Denmark have made a claim to the CLCS and are subject to the legally-binding dispute resolution mechanisms because only Russia and Canada have used such a declaration and the United States has not ratified UNCLOS.¹⁰

With UNCLOS, an international legal framework covering the territorial disputes in the Arctic region is in place. However, the dispute settlement mechanisms of UNCLOS regarding the demarcation of maritime boundaries lack teeth. The CLCS solely possesses the mandate to delineate the continental shelf and Norway and Denmark are the only states to be bound by legally binding procedures in the Arctic region.

⁵ Alex G. Oude Elferink & Constance Johnson, Outer Limits of the Continental Shelf and “Disputed Areas”: State Practice Concerning Article 76(10) of the LOS Convention, 21 INT’L J. MARINE & COASTAL L. 461, 464 (2006). http://archive.law.fsu.edu/journals/transnational/vol18_2/isted.pdf, 352ff.

⁶ <http://www.stimson.org/content/evolutionarcticterritorialclaimsandagreementstimeline1903present>

⁷ UNCLOS Art. 279, 281

⁸ UNCLOS 287

⁹ UNCLOS Art. 298

¹⁰ http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_declarations.htm



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KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Arctic Region

The Arctic region, or the Arctic, is a geographic region spreading around the North Pole. There is no single correct definition of the region as the southern boundary varies.¹¹ For the sake of this research report, we will define the Arctic Region as the region within the Arctic Circle.

Franz Josef Land

Franz Josef Land sits high in the Russian Arctic, about 900 kilometers from the North Pole, the world's northernmost archipelago. Made up of 192 islands comprising more than 16,000 square kilometers, the uninhabited island chain has until recently been locked beneath ice for much of the year.¹²

GIUK Gap

The GIUK gap (sometimes written G-I-UK) is an area in the northern Atlantic Ocean that forms a naval choke point. Its name is an acronym for Greenland, Iceland, and the United Kingdom, the gap being the two stretches of open ocean between these three landmasses¹³, making it a strategically important area.

Spitsbergen

Spitsbergen, formerly West Spitsbergen (Vest Spitsbergen), is the largest and only permanently inhabited island of the Svalbard archipelago, part of Norway, in the Arctic Ocean.¹⁴

¹¹ "Arctic Region." *Uni of Lapland*, www.arcticcentre.org/EN/arcticregion. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.

¹² National Geographic Society. "Franz Josef Land." *National Geographic Society*, www.nationalgeographic.org/projects/pristine-seas/expeditions/franz-josef-land/. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.

¹³ Iiss. "The Giuk Gap's Strategic Significance." *IISS*, www.iiss.org/publications/strategiccomments/2019/the-giuk-gaps-strategic-significance. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.

¹⁴ "Spitsbergen." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., www.britannica.com/place/Spitsbergen. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.



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Svalbard

An officially Norwegian archipelago, north of the European mainland in the Arctic Sea. It was first discovered by the Dutch and has since mainly housed Norwegians and Russians who have set up coal mines there, which are mostly regarded as a reason for their presence.¹⁵

Arctic Council

It is the primary intergovernmental forum in the Arctic Region, and it was founded in 1996. It consists of the 8 Arctic States, 6 Permanent Participants, 6 Working Groups and 38 Observers.¹⁶

Arctic States

The Arctic countries are the countries bordering Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, the United States (Alaska), Canada, Denmark (Greenland) and Iceland, which are also members of the Arctic Circle.

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

“An Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is a concept adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (1982), whereby a coastal State assumes jurisdiction over the exploration and exploitation of marine resources in its adjacent section of the continental shelf, taken to be a band extending 200 miles from the shore”.¹⁷ Inside the borders of the EEZ a country has full rights to all the resources below the ocean’s surface, like resource extraction and fishing. Ships are allowed to pass through the EEZ but they cannot extract any resources.

¹⁵ “Home.” *Crop Trust - Securing Our Food, Forever*, www.croptrust.org/work/svalbard-global-seedvault/. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.

¹⁶ “The Arctic Council.” Arctic Council, arctic-council.org/en/.

¹⁷ Directorate, OECD Statistics. “EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ).” OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms - Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Definition, 4 Mar. 2003, stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=884.



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Militarization

“The act of assembling and putting into readiness for war or other emergency” or simply “The process of becoming ready for conflict or war.”¹⁸

Maritime Area

Maritime area means the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf outwards the territorial sea of each Contracting Party over which they have sovereign rights or jurisdiction in accordance with International Law.¹⁹

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1903	Canada sets up the North-West Mounted Police in the Yukon territory in an attempt to claim rights to the western Arctic.
1907	Canadian senator Poirier makes the first suggestion of claiming sovereignty over Arctic territory, suggesting an area extending to the North Pole. The Canadian Senate dismisses the idea.
1909	American explorer Robert Peary is the first to reach the North Pole and claims the entire Arctic region for the US.
1916	Norway starts mining coal on the Svalbard archipelago, a practice it has carried out ever since.
1925	All travelers approaching the triangle-shaped regions between Canada and the Soviet Union's extremes and the North Pole are allegedly required to obtain permission from them in order to do so, essentially asserting sovereignty.

¹⁸ “Militarization - Dictionary Definition.”
Vocabulary.com, www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/militarization.

¹⁹ “Maritime Area Definition.” Law Insider,
www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/maritimearea. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.



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1926	The USSR announces the Arctic Decree, which declares that all lands between it and the Arctic are under its jurisdiction as retaliation for Canada's act of claiming territory over islands.
1945	President Truman first claims the natural resources on and beneath the seabed of what he considers to be the American Continental Shelf to belong to the US.
1958	The Convention on the Continental Shelf, precursor to the UNCLOS, is approved, and is ratified by every country except Iceland.
1969	The first commercial ship to pass the Northwest Passage, a shipping route across Canada's Arctic north that connects the Pacific and Atlantic oceans more quickly, was an American oil tanker. While other nations view these seas as international waterways, Canada views them as internal waters.
1973	An agreement on the delineation of the continental shelf between Canada and Denmark is ratified; however, it is not effective until March 13th, 1974.
1982	States are free to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which has been signed but does not yet have the required 60 signatures to be put into effect.
1992	The plan to construct an oil field offshore of Nova Zembla by the oil and gas company Gazprom has been approved by Russian President Yeltsin.
1994	A foundation for places outside of a state's jurisdiction is established by the UNCLOS, a treaty created from four earlier treaties.
1996	The Arctic Council is formed from the Ottawa Declaration (1996).
2001	Russia applies to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) claiming jurisdiction of the Lomonosov Ridge.
2006	Norway submits a request to the CLCS to extend its continental shelf to the Western Nansen Basin in the Arctic Ocean, the Loop Hole in the Barents Sea, and the Banana Hole in the Norwegian Sea.



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2007	Russia places a deep-sea flag on the Arctic Lomonosov Ridge.
2009	Canadian forces hold their first of annual military exercises in the Arctic.
2010	The United Nations Environmental Program publishes Protecting Arctic Biodiversity: Limitations and Strengths of Environmental Agreements.
2012	Environmentalists interpret Shell's oil Conical Drilling Unit (CDU) becoming aground during tow as proof that oil firms shouldn't be permitted to explore the Arctic.
2013	US president Obama presents the National Strategy for the Arctic Region. Gazprom as the first company starts pumping crude oil from beneath the Arctic Ocean. Canada submits an application to the CLCS claiming an area of around 1.2 million square kilometers to be added to its east coast offshore boundaries.
2014	Denmark submits an application to the CLCS claiming an area of approximately 900,000 square kilometers beyond the coast of Greenland.
2022	White House Arctic strategy calls for enhanced military presence

OFFICIAL POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

Local communities in the Arctic face a unique set of challenges, including remoteness, population decline, and harsh climate and terrain. EU regional policy can support developments in the European Arctic through investments under the European Structural and Investment Funds, implemented within the framework of regional development programs and cooperation European territory, along with additional support provided as special aid allocations to sparsely populated northern regions.

United States Arctic policy is based on six principal objectives: Protecting the Arctic environment and conserving its living resources. Promoting environmentally



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sustainable natural resource management and economic development in the region. Meeting post-Cold War national security and defense needs.²⁰

In a presidential directive on 9 January 2009, the US government outlines its foreign policy toward the Arctic area. The successor government of President Barack Obama has mostly accepted this document, the final presidential directive that US President George W. Bush issued, and it is thought to be largely bipartisan. The shifting and more accessible Arctic region are a focus of US national security concerns. The environment, economic development, government, indigenous communities, and science are further problems that are mentioned in the paper.

The Northern Strategy, Canada's domestic policy for the Arctic, was announced in 2009. It focuses on four priority areas (a) sovereignty; (b) social and economic development; (c) the environment; and (d) improved governance for the people of the north. It was published with the approval of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, who also serves as the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians. The four pillars of Canada's Arctic foreign policy are international, with an emphasis on Arctic sovereignty, and were released in a statement in August 2010.

Security

Nowadays, environmental and economic issues are broadly considered to be threats to security and stability. Therefore, the protection of these resources is a security issue, which involves the use of force or military means.²¹

Canadian and American administrations place a strong focus on security and sovereignty in the Arctic. While Canada's policy asserts that "exercising sovereignty over Canada's North is our number one Arctic foreign policy priority," the US order claims that the US "has broad and fundamental national security interests in the Arctic region."²² Both nations agree that greater accessibility will increase human activity in the area, with both positive and negative effects.

While the USA expresses concern over maritime law enforcement and terrorist activities, Canada expresses concern over organized crime, drug trafficking, and people trafficking. The USA lists several military difficulties that could affect the Arctic, such as "missile defense and early warning; deployment of sea and air systems for strategic

²⁰ U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of State, 2001-2009.state.gov/g/oes/ocns/arc/. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.

²¹ *Arctic Security: A Global Challenge - Marco Marsili, 2022 - Sage Journals*, journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/09735984221120299. Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.

²² Canadian Government, Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future (Minister of Public Works and Government Services: Ottawa, July 2009).



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sealift, strategic deterrence, maritime presence, and maritime security operations; and ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight." Regarding the subject of military threats in the region, Canada's foreign policy approach is less certain. It argues that "Canada does not anticipate any military challenges in the Arctic," even though "sovereignty is the foundation for realizing the full potential of Canada's North."

The likelihood of additional resource finds in the Arctic region, as well as the extended continental shelf and boundary disputes that may impact their access to these riches, are all strongly tied to the question of sovereignty for both Canada and the USA. The USA is aware that certain disputed Arctic regions, like the Beaufort Sea, where Canada and the USA disagree on maritime boundaries, may contain resources that are essential to its energy security. Canada regards this and other disputes as 'discrete boundary issues' that neither pose defense challenges nor have an impact on its ability to cooperate with other Arctic states.

The Northwest Passage, which the USA sees as an international waterway through which any ship has the right of free passage, is another issue of conflict between Canada and the USA. The Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route are recognized by several US Government entities as having significance for key straits anywhere in the world. The Northwest Passage is included in Canada's claim that it "controls all maritime navigation in its waters," which contrasts with the United States.

Both nations see improving their military's ability to operate in the Arctic as a crucial step in resolving their respective security and sovereignty issues. As opposed to Canada, which has a more specific goal to "better monitor, protect and patrol its Arctic land, sea and sky," the US strategy seeks for generic improvements to "protect United States air, land, and sea borders in the Arctic region." A new icebreaker and new patrol ships, military infrastructure like bases and ports, strengthening NORAD, and yearly military drills in the region in collaboration with other Arctic states, including the USA, are just a few of the initiatives the Canadian government has announced to increase its military presence in the region. These actions will likely better prepare Canada for "unforeseen events" in the region and are consistent with the Canada First Defense Strategy (described below).²³ However, the United States and Canada also stress the value of peaceful negotiations in resolving regional conflicts in conformity with international law.

²³ Canadian Government (note 6), p. 6; and Canadian Department of National Defense (DND), Canada First Defense Strategy (DND: Ottawa, 18 June 2008), p. 8



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Governance

Why are we concerned about Arctic governance? Good governance is important to protect unique Arctic ecosystems. Migrating animals' cross international borders, so collaboration among Arctic states and Indigenous Peoples in the region is essential.²⁴

The 2009 US presidential directive encourages the US Senate to ratify the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The treaty is acknowledged by the USA as the fundamental legal foundation for resolving boundary and continental shelf disputes in the region, similar to Canada's position. By allowing for the Navy's mobility and securing access to seabed resources, particularly those in the Arctic, ratifying UNCLOS might benefit US national security interests globally. By December 2013, Canada is anticipated to make a claim to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) over the enlarged continental shelf. Both countries express support for the Arctic Council and view the cooperation between the eight Arctic states within this forum as beneficial for the region as a whole. Canada has stated that the Council requires further development in the form of legally binding agreements, greater visibility and transparency, and a formalized secretariat and funding.

In contrast, the US presidential directive affirmed the limited mandate of the Council and expressed the desire that it not 'be transformed into a formal international organization', although this has since transpired. However, both nations concur that the Arctic is so different from the Antarctic that implementing a legal system similar to the 1959 Antarctic Treaty would be unsuitable. Furthermore, the Canadian policy emphasizes the region's indigenous communities and declares that they should have influence over Canada's Arctic foreign policy through both direct communication with the Canadian Government and participation in international institutions like the Arctic Council.

²⁴ "Governance." *WWF Arctic*, 24 June 2022, www.arcticwwf.org/our-priorities/governance/.



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Economic Development

The melting of the Arctic ice presents economic potential, particularly for the extraction of hydrocarbons from the Arctic bottom, according to Canada and the United States. The US presidential directive claims that "Energy development in the Arctic region will play an important role in meeting growing global energy demand" and links these potential resources to the country's energy security. While acknowledging the economic potential of the region's oil, gas, and mineral resources for northern Canadians and Canadians as a whole, Canada's domestic policy also recognizes the risks of exploitation, not least in light of the effects of the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill. The Arctic Council is one avenue for additional international cooperation on oil spill preparedness and response that is welcomed by both nations.

Realizing the sheer magnitude of the economic and commercial potential of the Arctic, it should be no surprise that the world's biggest powers are rapidly encroaching on the region, engaging in a new gold rush that is heating up against the backdrop of another Cold War. According to an assessment by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) published in 2008, the Arctic holds an estimated 13 percent (90 billion barrels) of the world's undiscovered conventional oil resources and 30 percent of its undiscovered conventional natural-gas resources. It is also home to abundant quantities of uranium, rare-earth minerals, gold and diamonds, with the potential value unlocked from these resources estimated to be many trillions of dollars. And with a 2018 National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) report estimating that 21,000 square miles of sea ice have been lost every year during the last five decades, the Arctic is becoming increasingly accessible for resource exploration and extraction as well as new trading routes.²⁵

The potential for increasing shipping in the area is another component of development in the Arctic that may call for international cooperation on risk mitigation. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is a good approach to strengthen the safety and security of Arctic commerce, including for the environment. Canada and the USA believe that new infrastructure and better search and rescue practices will be required. Although it acknowledges that the Northwest Passage is "not predicted to become a viable, large-scale transit route in the near term," Canada supports the creation of a required polar code for shipping under the aegis of the IMO.

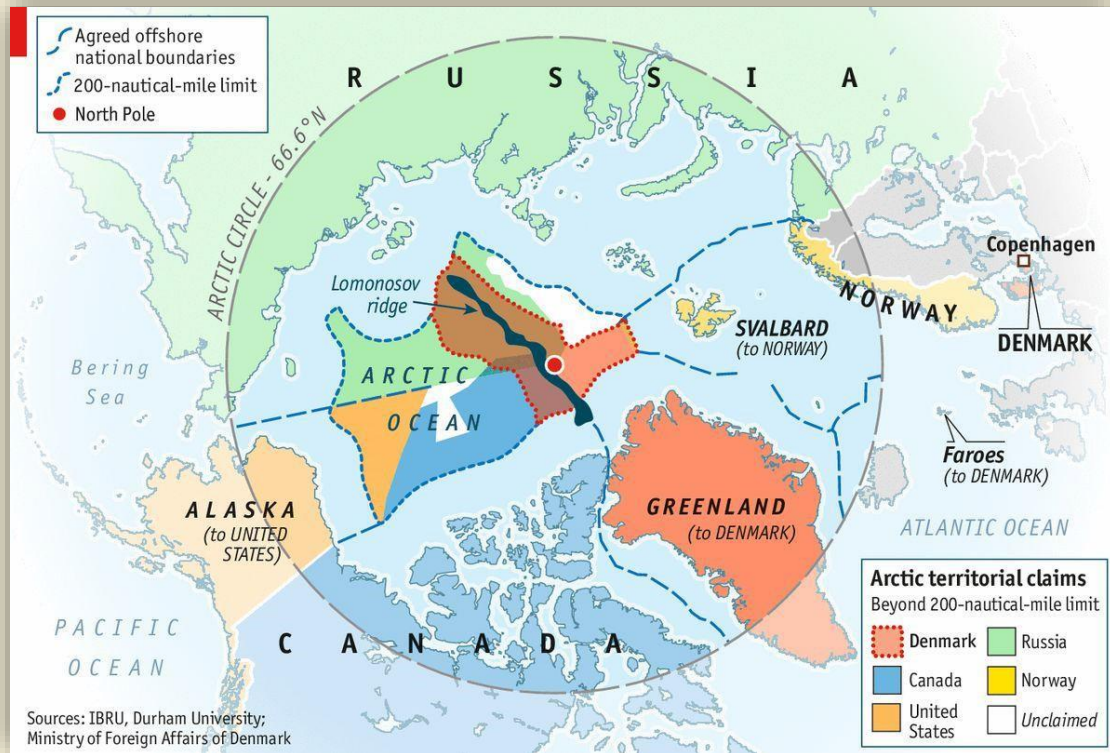
Both nations' domestic policies place emphasis on the environmental and social viability of economic development in the Arctic as well as the distinctive difficulties facing the region's fragile ecosystem and indigenous communities. When it

²⁵ Internationalbanker. "Why the Arctic Has Become a Key Theatre for the Big Powers' Economic and Geopolitical Competitions." *International Banker*, 26 Mar. 2023,



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comes to using the region's undeveloped energy resources, this is especially clear. According to US policy, energy development in the Arctic "seeks to ensure that occurs in an environmentally sound manner, taking into account the interests of indigenous and local communities, as well as open and transparent market principles." Canada has also stated that it will work to improve the social situation of northern communities on issues including human health and the preservation of indigenous languages.



internationalbanker.com/finance/why-the-arctic-has-become-a-key-theatre-for-the-bigpowers-economic-and-geopolitical-competitions/.



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BLOC POSITIONS

Canada

In the Arctic and North, and in other regions of Canada, security and defense are essential to healthy communities, strong economies, and sustainable environments.

The governments and communities of the Arctic and northern Canada are central to the region's security. Partnerships, collaboration, and shared leadership are essential to advancing security in this diverse, complex, and far-reaching field. Canada continues to work with our trusted international allies and all levels of government, including Indigenous communities, organizations and governments, to keep the Arctic and its people safe now and in the future.

Due to its ownership of more than 40% of the Arctic area, Canada is a significant participant in this discussion. As a result, it devotes a large portion of its energies to militarizing the Arctic and defending its own interests. Canada clarifies sovereignty over the Northwest Passage as well as numerous other territorial issues, including but not limited to the Hans Island dispute and the Beaufort Sea dispute, since it is extremely concerned about its border conflicts. New patrol vessels are being built and significant training exercises are being conducted. New warning systems are being developed and implemented. The majority of the other Arctic governments still have positive relations with Canada, which still has a significant voice in the Arctic Council. Compared to the other Arctic 5, it is less worried on petroleum exploration projects, although they are still involved in Arctic affairs. Given that nearly 2 million Inuit live in Canada, they are also concerned about environmental preservation and the welfare of the local native population.

Denmark

The only Nordic nation that is a member of both the EU and NATO is Denmark. They are still making significant upgrades to their military, even though they are not as focused on doing so as other countries are, particularly in terms of demilitarizing Arctic regions and bolstering it in other ways. Additionally, they are involved in a number of Arctic conflicts, such as the infamous Lomonosov Ridge conflict and the Hans Island conflict with Canada. A Strategy Policy for the Arctic was issued by Denmark in 2011 and stated that Denmark's goal is "a peaceful, secure, and safe Arctic with self-sustaining growth and development, with respect for the Arctic's fragile environment, in close cooperation with their internal partners." Denmark itself is only involved in the Arctic because of the Faroe Islands and Greenland.



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Norway

As the only Scandinavian nation with direct access to the Arctic, Norway places the region at the top of its list of foreign policy priorities. The management of resources, the environment, and marine support are the main focuses of Norwegian Arctic policy. In 2010, the disputed area between Russia and Norway was successfully resolved. As its principal ally in the region, Norway wants to keep excellent ties with the Russian Federation. According to the Norwegian Arctic Policy, key areas of attention include "international cooperation in the region, a knowledge-based business sector, broad-based knowledge development, more dependable infrastructure, better preparedness, and environmental protection".

Russian Federation

Without a doubt, Russia has adopted the position on the militarization of the Arctic that is the most aggressive and has the largest military presence. As it works to exploit the Arctic's resource-rich regions, Russia views the region's importance to its security and economic growing. Around 11% of the GDP of the Russian Federation is produced by the Arctic alone. It was the initial nation to file a claim with the CLCS. Its closest ally is Norway since the two nations regularly conduct joint military drills and have similar interests in the resource sector. The Barents Sea issue has only served to improve ties between the two nations. With access to three oceans and military installations, the Arctic offers Russia a number of benefits in terms of its geographical location. As a result, Russia is adamantly opposed to the globalization of the Arctic and has plans to station special military units there.

United States of America

Although it has strengthened the UNCLOS, the United States is still the only country that has not ratified it. A United States Arctic Policy highlighting the strategic importance of the Arctic in terms of early warning systems and missile defense was released during the Bush administration. The US claims that American ships should have the right of international travel via the straits along the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage. The US has not militarized Alaska's Arctic as much as other countries, preferring to concentrate on developing the state's coastal resources. Tensions with Canada in the Beaufort Sea as a result of this.



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UN INVOLVEMENT

The Ilulissat Declaration

The Ilulissat Declaration was adopted on 28 May 2008 in Ilulissat, Greenland. This was announced by the five Arctic coastal states (USA, Russia, Canada, Norway and the Kingdom of Denmark). The Ilulissat Declaration is a document signifying necessary joint regional efforts and responsibilities in response to the potentially adverse effects of climate change regarding the melting Arctic ice pack. ²⁶During the conference, many topics related to the Arctic were discussed, such as climate change and its effects, the lives of indigenous peoples, exploitation of natural resources, protection of Northern ecosystems. Poles and possibilities open new paths.

Since the purpose of the meeting was to discuss legal regimes and jurisdictional issues in the Arctic Ocean, only five coastal states of this ocean were invited. The Arctic Council, which is the only international forum around the Arctic, that includes all three Arctic states that do not border the Arctic Ocean (Sweden, Finland, and Iceland), has purposely not been used as a representation. herd. Therefore, these three countries did not join the Ilulissat Declaration. Similarly, the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, who hold important positions on the Arctic Council, did not participate in the Ilulissat negotiations.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The first and most important step to take is strengthening cooperation between Arctic countries. Establishing cooperation, negotiations and peaceful communication can contribute significantly to the development of the Arctic. The main problem is the conflicts and territorial disputes that arise between Arctic countries. So, by creating peaceful relations between nations, such problems can be significantly reduced. This can be done by organizing more conferences and seminars so that countries have opportunities to propose ideas, disagree peacefully and discuss possible solutions. Agreements or instructions may be made.

As the Security Council, one possible solution to this topic is a renewal to the Antarctic Treaty signed on December 1st, 1959. A potential Arctic pact might consider many of the clauses mentioned in the Antarctic pact. The Arctic can also be subject to restrictions on things like military activity, nuclear explosions, and the storage and

²⁶ "Ilulissat Declaration." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 22 Aug. 2023, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilulissat_Declaration.



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disposal of radioactive waste. Some Arctic nations, however, are opposed to such a pact since it forbids them from exploiting the region's abundant resources and instead limits them to scientific study and research. However, the extreme fragility of the Arctic situation and the intensification of military operations raise the possibility of a war. The Arctic Council would benefit most if there was continued peace in the area. However, even though DISEC does not have the jurisdiction to pass or draft any treaties, the committee has the responsibility to decide whether a new Arctic Treaty could be plausible or necessary solution.

The most controversial part of the Antarctic region is its immense wealth in natural resources. The Arctic has huge reserves of natural resources that, if used for military purposes, could be extremely dangerous for international security. All members of a solution should agree to these conditions, but a problem awaits these countries. In the future, there will be a huge shortage of natural resources because demand exceeds supply. Therefore, in the future, when all other resources are almost exhausted, the Arctic will have huge reserves. Therefore, incentives to use Arctic resources are likely to be greater than agreements with other countries, especially if they are non-binding and do not involve free will.

What is expected from the delegates

It is imperative that delegates make every effort to avert military confrontations and operations. Delegates are expected to be able to reach agreements to carry out their foreign policy while also finding measures to slow down or stop the militarization of the Arctic, which is the entire goal of this committee. Demilitarization might also benefit from declaring the Arctic Circle a nuclear weapons free zone.



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