# Breaking the Ice Curtain?

## Russia, Canada, and Arctic Security in a Changing Circumpolar World

Edited by P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Suzanne Lalonde

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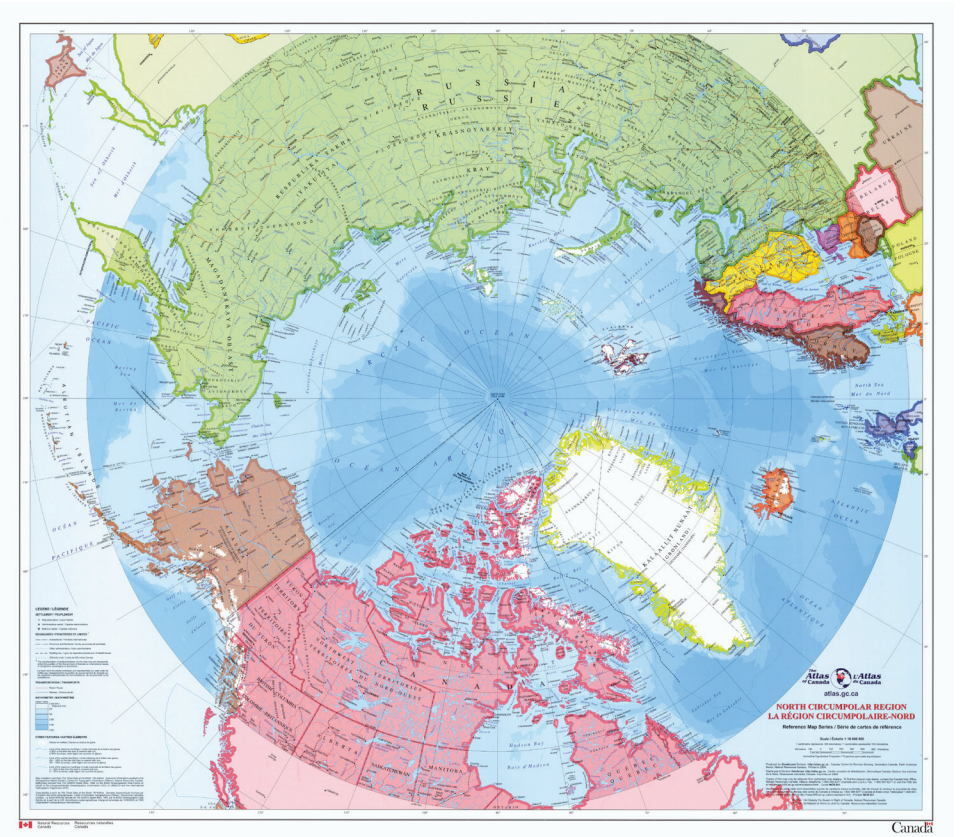


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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| AGF | Arctic Group Forces (Russia) |
| AOPS | Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships (Canada) |
| ASW | Anti-Submarine Warfare |
| AZRF | Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation |
| BEAC | Barents Euro-Arctic Council |
| BGS | Border Guard Service (Russia) |
| CAF | Canadian Armed Forces |
| CADIZ | Canadian Air Defence Identification Zone |
| CCG | Canadian Coast Guard |
| CJOC | Canadian Joint Operations Command |
| CLCS | Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf |
| CSIS | Center for Strategic and International Studies |
| DND | Department of National Defence (Canada) |
| DoD | Department of Defense (United States) |
| EEZ | Exclusive Economic Zone |
| EU | European Union |
| EUCOM | United States European Command |
| EvoNAD | Evolution of North American Defense |
| FOL | Forward Operating Location |
| FSS | Federal Security Services (Russia) |
| G-7 | Group of Seven |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GIUK | Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom “Gap” |
| INF | Intermediate Range Nuclear Force |

# LIST OF ACRONYMS (continued)

| | |
|---|---|
| IMO | International Maritime Organization |
| LNG | liquefied natural gas |
| LOSC | Law of the Sea Convention (see also UNCLOS) |
| LRA | long-range aircraft |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NASTE | New Arctic Strategic Triangle Environment |
| NORAD | North American Aerospace Defense Command |
| NSR | Northern Sea Route |
| NWS | North Warning System |
| PLAN | People's Liberation Army Navy (China) |
| RCN | Royal Canadian Navy |
| SAR | Search and Rescue |
| SSE | *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (2017 Canadian Defence White Paper) |
| SSBN | nuclear-powered ballistic submarine |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UNCLOS | United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (see also LOSC) |
| UNDRIP | United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples |
| U.S. | United States of America |
| USN | United States Navy |
| USNORTHCOM | United States Northern Command |
| USSR | Union of Soviet Socialists Republics |

INTRODUCTION

# Russia, Canada, and the Ice Curtain

P. Whitney LACKENBAUER*

Canada and Russia are the geographical giants, spanning most of the circumpolar world. Accordingly, the Arctic is a natural area of focus for the two countries. The region plays strongly into their identity politics, with leaders often invoking sovereignty and security frames to drum up support for investments in this "frontier of destiny."[1] The purported need to protect sovereign territory and resources from foreign encroachment or outright theft, backed by explicit appeals to nationalism, can produce a siege mentality that encourages a narrow, inward-looking view.

Although the end of the Cold War seemed to portend a new era of deep cooperation between these two Arctic countries, lingering wariness about geopolitical motives and a mutual lack of knowledge about the other's slice of the circumpolar world are conspiring to pit Canada and the Russian Federation as Arctic adversaries. Are Russian and Canadian Arctic policies moving in confrontational direction? Can efforts at circumpolar cooperation

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survive the current crisis in Russian-Western relations, or does an era of growing global competition point inherently to heightened *Arctic* conflict?

I have argued previously that the key audience for confrontational rhetoric on Arctic issues in both countries is domestic. In official policy and statements, however, the Russian and Canadian governments follow a pragmatic line and pursue their maritime and continental shelf claims in the region in compliance with international law – while highlighting that, as sovereign states, they will not be pushed around by neighbours who might encroach on their respective jurisdiction. This serves as a convenient pretext to invest in more robust military capabilities to protect territory, natural resources, and national interests.[2]

The precise nature of the threats to each country's respective Arctic realm remains ambiguous, with alarmist narratives regularly conflating regional dynamics with grand strategic considerations.[3] Most Canadian academic commentators now concede that increasing great power competition between Russia and the West does not arise from Arctic issues, and the myth of Arctic resource or boundary wars is typically dismissed as fantasy (although political and media commentators seeking simple, sensational frames to grab public attention sometimes conjure such conflicts as probable futures). Nevertheless, a long history of mistrust between Canada and Russia means that Cold War narratives are easily resurrected whenever either side declares its right to assert sovereignty and rattles its sabres to show resolve.

"We have actually stretching across the Arctic a veritable ice curtain, which is impenetrable," newspaper editor Robert Keyserlingk told the Empire Club of Canada in 1949.[4] Polar projection maps unfurled after the Second World War, illuminating the much shorter flight paths between Russia and the United States across the North Pole region, made the circumpolar neighbourhood a cause for concern. Deep ideological divisions and strategic realities dictated that prospects for Russo-Canadian collaboration in the Arctic would remain frozen for decades.

Scientific cooperation began to draw open the ice curtain separating the two countries beginning in the mid-1960s. Reciprocal political visits showed that the high politics of the Cold War need not freeze out other forms of collaboration, such as research (including social sciences and issues concerning northern indigenous peoples) covered by the 1984 Canada-USSR

Arctic Science Exchange Program. Mikhael Gorbachev's landmark Murmansk speech in October 1987 called for the Arctic to become a "zone of peace," opening new opportunities for political, economic, and environmental agendas previously subordinated to national security interests. Inspired by this vision, Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney proposed an international Arctic Council that would draw Russia into the new world order, and bilateral relations began to thaw. In 1992, Mulroney and Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued a Declaration of Friendship and Cooperation, then a formal Arctic Cooperation Agreement.

Canada, in particular, embraced broader interpretations of security with environmental, cultural, and human dimensions, promoting a vision of circumpolar stewardship, stable governance, and human capacity-building. At the turn of the new millennium, *The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy* set four objectives for circumpolar engagement. Traditional security threats were notably absent, and working with Russia to address northern challenges such as cleaning up Cold War environmental legacies and funding Russian indigenous peoples' participation in the Arctic Council formed a core priority. "Perhaps more than any other country," the document declared, "Canada is uniquely positioned to build a strategic partnership with Russia for development of the Arctic."[5]

Developments over the last decade have both reinforced and challenged desires for an enhanced polar partnership. The visible impacts of global warming in the Arctic, dreams of increasingly navigable sea routes, boosterism surrounding oil and gas deposits in the offshore region, uncertain boundaries, and heightened interest from non-Arctic states have thrust the region into the international spotlight. A popular "race for resources" narrative fed anxieties about the potential for inter-state conflict fueled by imaginary resource disputes and sovereignty challenges.[6] These ideas weigh heavily upon Russian and Canadian minds. With a Russian economy heavily dependent upon Arctic oil and gas reserves, it comes as no surprise when senior officials in Moscow emphasize that the Arctic must become the core strategic resource base of Russia.[7] Canadian politicians harbour similar visions when they trumpet the immense promise of Northern resources and, most importantly, of Canadians living in a region who face dismal socio-economic and health indicators compared to the rest of the country.

With so much at stake, symbolism can easily be mistaken for substance. In the West, Artur Chilingarov's flag planting exploit at the North Pole in August 2007 and Russian announcements of reinvestments in military capabilities to defend its Arctic interests aligned with a burgeoning awareness of "New Russia" nationalism. The resumption of long-range bomber patrols, coupled with the announcement of new fleet units, airfields and special Arctic brigades, pointed to a renewed "militarization" of the region.[8] On the other side of the pole, the Canadian government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper also proclaimed a "use it or lose it" strategy framed by aggressive rhetoric predicated on potential sovereignty threats and the need to protect Arctic resources.[9]

Despite the tendency of mainstream media commentary and some official representatives to exaggerate and inflate threat assessments related to offshore natural resources, shipping, and external military actors, the dominant international messaging of both the Canadian and Russian governments from 2008 to 2014 emphasized their commitment to circumpolar cooperation.[10] Since the Ukrainian crisis of 2014, however, Western concerns about Russian intentions and behaviour on the international stage has reinforced a popular image of that country as the wild card in the Arctic strategic equation and reignited questions about regional security.[11] Speculation about an impending conflict in the region has been strengthened by disagreements and tensions between Russia and NATO. Through security-related fora and media channels, Russia has been conveying a message that it will not be pushed around by neighbours who need to take seriously Russia's regional interests—and its willingness to defend them. In its official policy, however, and in most international statements on the Arctic, Russia continues to follow a pragmatic line and is pursuing its territorial claims in compliance with international law. Its leaders dismiss foreign criticisms that they are flexing their muscles to extend their claims beyond their legal entitlement.

Mixed messaging is disconcerting and often confusing for Canadian and Russian observers alike. Unfortunately, most Canadians and Russians lack knowledge of one another as Arctic actors, thus inhibiting better understandings of past, present and future sources and drivers of competition and cooperation between our countries. Addressing this

unfamiliarity is foundational to any constructive engagement. If an ice curtain continues to distort our views of one another, it is time to pull the blinds and get to know one another as Arctic neighbours.

We hope that this short volume on Russian and Canadian Arctic policies, with a particular focus on strategic and security issues, makes a modest contribution to this process. Our goal is to help facilitate dialogue and debate rooted in observable policy trends and verifiable evidence rather than speculative (and often excessively pessimistic) forecasts leading to inflated threat assessments.[12] In December 2018, a group of eminent international lawyers, political scientists, historians, and geographers from Canada and Russia (as well as several American colleagues) gathered in Montreal to discuss foreign policy, defence/international security, legal, environmental, and human security dimensions of circumpolar relations, with a particular focus on Russian and Canadian strategic interests, capabilities, and intentions in and for the region. Five participants agreed to contribute short chapters addressing basic questions relating to how we interpret national Arctic strategies and military plans for the region. Are political commitments to international cooperation mere camouflage for military buildups anticipating an inevitable confrontation between Russia and the West?[13] What do the Russian and Canadian governments perceive as the most pressing defence, security, and safety threats in or facing Arctic states and peoples? Is the maintenance of cooperative ties in the Arctic antithetical to growing global strategic competition between Russia and the West, or do Russian and Canadian Arctic policies provide space for multilateral (and perhaps even bilateral) cooperation on issues of shared interest in their respective Arctic regions and the circumpolar world more broadly?

In the first chapter, Russian legal professor Viatcheslav Gavrilov examines the longstanding importance of the Arctic for Russia as a source of resources, as a maritime transportation conduit, and in its overall national security paradigm. Gavrilov emphasizes that Russia has been able to delineate and then enhance its sovereignty over its Arctic Zone through the application of international law and conducting itself within international norms. He posits that while Russia prefers to continue this approach, factors exogenous to the Arctic – namely increasing strategic competition with the West – have motivated many officials to associate reliance on international law with weakness. Accordingly, Russia is adjusting its policies to protect and project

its national interests through a two-track strategy of developing hard power capability whilst maintaining Arctic norms by enhancing institutions oriented around functionalism. Because of broader global and circumpolar dynamics, Gavrilov concludes that other Arctic actors will influence the future course of Russian actions in the Arctic.

In the second chapter, I provide an overview of Canada's emerging Arctic and Northern policy framework under the Liberal government of Justin Trudeau, emphasizing that there has been more continuity than change in the main substantive elements of Canada's Arctic policy. Through bilateral statements with President Barack Obama, Prime Minister Trudeau reinforced a model for Arctic leadership that placed a clear priority on "soft security" and safety issues and abandoned the sovereignty-focused messaging of his predecessor Stephen Harper. Similarly, the Liberal government's commitment to produce a new Arctic and Northern Policy Framework to replace the Northern Strategy introduced by the preceding Conservative government indicates a renewed emphasis on environmental protection and socio-cultural health and security of Northern Indigenous peoples. All told, Canada's priorities continue to affirm the relevance and importance of a comprehensive approach to Arctic defence and security, with Canada's 2017 defence policy *Strong, Secure, Engaged* balancing investments in defensive capabilities to deter would-be adversaries with the development of capabilities to support unconventional security and safety missions in the Arctic.

These ideas align with Russian international affairs professor Alexander Sergunin's reflections on Russian defence and security modernization plans and priorities for the Arctic region in chapter three. Sergunin suggests that there has been a significant shift in Russia's threat perceptions and security policies in the High North. In contrast with the Cold War era when the Arctic was a zone for global confrontation between the USSR and the U.S./NATO, Moscow now sees this region as a platform for international cooperation. Analyzing Russian threat perceptions and security doctrines since 2008, Sergunin suggests that Russia perceives no serious hard security threats to the Arctic and has elevated economic, environmental, and social dimensions of the soft security agenda to a much higher importance. Accordingly, he contends that military power now serves new functions, such as protecting Moscow's economic interests in the region and

performing symbolic functions. In Sergunin's assessment, the Russian government has indicated that the regional cooperative agenda could include such areas as climate change mitigation, environmental protection, maritime safety, Arctic research, Indigenous peoples, cross- and trans-border cooperative projects, and culture.

In the fourth chapter, political scientists Troy Bouffard, Andrea Charron, and Jim Fergusson examine "two Russias": one an adherent to international law constructively engaging in liberal internationalism through the Arctic Council and other fora, and the another an increasingly belligerent power threatening Western interests. In the face of renewed great power rivalry, the challenge is to balance encouragement of positive behavior in the Arctic while defending against aggressive actions elsewhere in the world and protecting one's homeland. The authors argue that increased strategic competition and dual-track signaling from both "Russias" does not mean that war is inevitable. Instead, it is incumbent on NORAD and NATO to take these new Russian capabilities and bellicose signals seriously and to plan accordingly. This includes pushing NORAD defences further out to counter the threat that emerging weapon systems pose to North America, and a rejuvenation of NATO maritime control capabilities (particularly anti-submarine warfare) in the North Atlantic to respond to Russia's modernization of its Northern Fleet.

In the fifth chapter, Canadian political science professor Rob Huebert assesses how the Arctic fits into the evolving strategic postures of Russia, the United States, and China. In contrast to his earlier "sovereignty on thinning ice" and "perfect storm" hypotheses,"[14] he emphasizes that potential Arctic conflict will not emanate from disputes over Arctic resources or territory but from the "spill-over" effects of broader strategic rivalry. Driven by its opposition to NATO expansion and a desire to recapture the international status of the former Soviet Union, Russia has been modernizing and expanding its armed forces, particularly its strategic weapon systems based in the Arctic. Huebert asserts that Russia's goal is to leverage these regional weapons to achieve its interests globally, which has provoked a nascent security dilemma. Strategic weapons are drawing the American military into the Arctic, given that American strategic doctrine calls for a strong counter-force effort against opposing nuclear forces. Conversely, the American development of a limited ballistic missile defense shield partially based in

Alaska invites China and Russia to develop capabilities to neutralize it. Furthermore, Huebert contends that China's strategic competition with both Russia and the United States will inevitably draw it into the region, given its importance as a theatre for submarine forces. Ultimately, in a growing great power competition in the Arctic region, Huebert implies that Canada could find itself pushed to the margins in the New Arctic Strategic Triangle Environment (NASTE) that he suggests is taking form.

The conclusions, co-authored with international law professor Suzanne Lalonde, invite further reflection and discussion on the future of Canada-Russia Arctic relations and circumpolar affairs more broadly. Cooperation is neither naïve nor idealistic, we argue, and actually serves the national interests of both Canada and Russia. We suggest that Huebert's dark portrait of a region on the precipice of intense competition and conflict is overly pessimistic, selective, and reductionist, and we see space for constructive bilateral and multilateral engagement in several core areas of common interest. In the end, we call upon Russian and Canadian analysts to seek deeper understandings of one another, avoid simple narratives that perpetuate simple conflict-cooperation binaries and eschew nuance, and discern discrete opportunities for Arctic cooperation that reflect both countries' national interests and stewardship responsibilities for the circumpolar world.

**Notes**

[1] For introductions to the image of the Arctic in both countries, see for example Sherrill E. Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002); Ken Coates, P. Whitney Lackenbauer, William R. Morrion, and Greg Poelzer, *Arctic Front: Defending Canada in the Far North* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2008); Geir Hønneland, *Russia and the Arctic: Environment, Identity and Foreign Policy* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2006).

[2] P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Mirror Images? Canada, Russia, and the Circumpolar World." *International Journal* 65:4 (2010 Autumn): 879-97.

[3] Another dynamic relates to the differences between the North American and European Arctic. On this theme, see Andreas Østhagen, Gregory Levi Sharp, and Paal Sigurd Hilde, "At Opposite Poles: Canada's and Norway's approaches to security in the Arctic," *Polar Journal* 8:1 (2018): 163-181.

[4] Robert Keserlingk, "Between the Iron and the Ice Curtain," *The Empire Club of Canada Addresses* (Toronto: Empire Club of Canada), 10 November 1949, 84-94, http://speeches.empireclub.org/62566/data?n=2.

[5] Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy* (Ottawa, 2000).

[6] See, for example, Rob Huebert, "Climate Change and Canadian Sovereignty in the Northwest Passage," *Isuma* 2, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 86-94; Huebert, "The Shipping News Part II: How Canada's Arctic Sovereignty is on Thinning Ice," *International Journal* 58:3 (2003): 295-308.; Scott G. Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown: The Economic and Security Implications of Global Warming," *Foreign Affairs* (March–April 2008); Charles K. Ebinger and Evie Zambetakis, "The Geopolitics of Arctic Melt," *International Affairs* 85:6 (2009): 1215-1232; and Richard Sale and Eugene Potapov, *The Scramble for the Arctic: Ownership, Exploration and Conflict in the Far North* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2010).

[7] See D. Medvedev, "Russian Federation Policy for the Arctic to 2020" (2008), http://www.arctis-search.com/Russian+Federation+Policy+for+the +Arctic+to+2020.

[8] See, for example, Margaret Blunden, "The New Problem of Arctic Stability," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 51:5 (2009): 121-42; Rob Huebert, Heather Exner-Pirot, Adam Lajeunesse, and Jay Gutledge, *Climate Change & International Security: The Arctic as a Bellweather* (Washington: Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, 2012). For other viewpoints, see James Kraska, ed., *Arctic Security in an Age of Climate Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Frédéric Lasserre, Jérôme Le Roy, and Richard Garon, "Is there an arms race in the Arctic?" *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 14:3-4 (2012): 1-56; and Valery Konyshev and Alexander Sergunin, "Russian Military Strategies in the High North," in *Security and Sovereignty in the North Atlantic*, ed. Lassi Heininen (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 80-99.

[9] On the Harper government's early Arctic strategy, see Lackenbauer, *From Polar Race to Polar Saga: An Integrated Strategy for Canada and the Circumpolar World* (Toronto: Canadian International Council, 2009); and Petra Dolata, "A New Canada in the Arctic? Arctic Policies under Harper," *Études canadiennes/Canadian Studies* 78 (2015): 131-154.

[10] See P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Ryan Dean, *Canada's Northern Strategy under the Harper Conservatives: Key Speeches and Documents on Sovereignty, Security, and Governance, 2006-15*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security No. 6 (Calgary and Waterloo: Centre for Military, Strategic and Security Studies/Centre on Foreign Policy and Federalism/Arctic Institute of North America, 2016); Alexander Sergunin, *Russia in the Arctic: Hard or Soft Power?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Jørgen Straun, "Russia's Strategy in the Arctic: Cooperation, not Confrontation," *Polar Record* 53, no.3 (2017): 314-32; and Stephanie Pezard, Abbie Tingstad, Kristin Van Abel, and Scott Stephenson, *Maintaining Arctic Cooperation with Russia: Planning for Regional Change in the Far North* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2017), https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1700/RR1731/RAND_RR1731.pdf.

[11] On the impacts of the Ukrainian crisis on Arctic relations, see for example Andreas Østhagen, "Ukraine Crisis and the Arctic: Penalties or Reconciliation?" The Arctic Institute, 30 April 2014, http://www.thearcticinstitute.org/2014/04/impact-of-ukraine-crisis-on-Arctic.html; Kari Roberts, "Why Russia will play by the rules in the Arctic," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 21:2 (2015): 112-128; Daria Gritsenko, "Vodka on ice? Unveiling Russian media perceptions of the Arctic," *Energy Research & Social Science* 16 (2016): 8-12; Valery Konyshev, Alexander Sergunin, and Sergei Subbotin, "Russia's Arctic strategies in the context of the Ukrainian crisis," *Polar Journal* 7:1 (2017): 104-124; Danita Burke and Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, "Debating the Arctic during the Ukraine Crisis: Comparing Arctic state identities and media discourses in Canada and Norway," *Polar Journal* 7:2 (2017): 391-409; and Michael Byers, "Crises and international cooperation: an Arctic case study," *International Relations* 31:4 (2017): 375-402.

[12] On this theme, see Pavel Baev, "Threat Assessments and Strategic Objectives in Russia's Arctic Policy," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 32:1 (2019): 25.

[13] Baev, "Threat Assessments and Strategic Objectives," 26.

[14] See, for example, Huebert, "Climate Change and Canadian Sovereignty"; "The Shipping News Part II"; "Return of the 'Vikings,'" in *Breaking Ice: Renewable Resource and Ocean Management in the Canadian North*, eds. Fikret Berkes et al. (Calgary: Arctic Institute of North America, 2005), 319-36; and "Canada and the Changing International Arctic: At the Crossroads of Cooperation and Conflict," in *Northern Exposure: Peoples, Powers and Prospects for Canada's North*, eds. Frances Abele et al. (Ottawa: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2008), 1-28.

CHAPTER 1

# Russian Arctic Policy

Viatcheslav V. GAVRILOV*

Since Russia first opened and developed its Arctic territories, they have always been essential to our country for three main reasons:

1) As a source of food and mineral resources for internal consumption and external trade;
2) As an assembly point of transport routes of national and transcontinental importance;
3) As a region playing a key role in ensuring the national safety of Russia in its military and strategic meaning.

As technology developed and the political and economic global picture changed, the role of each of those factors in the life of Russia steadily grew and, consequently, played an increasingly prominent role in shaping the domestic and foreign policy of our country.

For a long time, Russia has declared its special rights over coastal Arctic marine spaces. The first document to explicitly define them geographically is the Decree of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR of April 15, 1926, which proclaimed the lands and islands located in the Northern Arctic Ocean to be the territory of the USSR.[1]

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The Decree is considered to be one of the most important legal documents that demonstrates historical adherence of Russia to the sector theory of Arctic delimitation.[2] We should not forget that Russia did not initiate this sectoral approach – it only repeated what Canada had done earlier.[3] Furthermore, Russia has never made any attempts to extend its sovereignty across the waters of this entire "Arctic sector" and thus to appropriate a significant part of the Arctic Ocean.

However, the 'sector principle' still, to a large extent, determines Russia's vision for the geographical limits of the possible extension of its jurisdiction in the Arctic. That circumstance often plays against our country, for at the end of the day it is Russia itself that limits its possibilities in the Arctic and narrows the room for manoeuvring in political relations with other participants of the so-called 'Arctic Race.'[4]

It is sufficient to take a look at the maritime delimitation treaties concluded between Russia and the U.S. in 1990[5] and Russia and Norway in 2010[6] to see that such delimitations have to a large extent been made on the basis of the eastern and western limits of the Russian 'Arctic sector' respectively. For Russia, however, it would be more beneficial to draw boundaries based on the principle of 'equidistant lines' with respect to certain territories within the framework of such treaties.

The 'sectoral' factor has also to a considerable extent determined the geographical limits of Russia's claim to an extended continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean, even though from a legal point of view, Russia had every right to claim submarine spaces extending significantly beyond the North Pole. This right was confirmed by Denmark, whose submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) in 2014 significantly overlaps with areas included in Russia's submissions of 2001[7] and 2015[8], namely in the central Arctic Ocean basin and along the Lomonosov Ridge, up to the outer limits of the Russian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).[9] In light of this expansive Danish claim, it becomes evident that numerous Western claims against Russia after 2007, when a group of Russian scientists planted Russia's flag on the seabed at the North Pole, have been unjustified.

Russia has always striven for and continues to act in the Arctic in accordance with norms of international law and on the basis of the author-

ity that those norms (for example, Article 234 of the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention[10]) confer. This fact, as well as the necessity to promote the national interests of Russia, form the keystone of the Arctic policy of our country. It is obvious that the content and methods of implementing this policy may be adjusted depending on the global political climate, as well as on the level of cooperation and trust between Russia, Arctic states and other interested subjects.

Russia is destined to play a leading role in forming the Arctic agenda and the functioning of international mechanisms of Arctic cooperation by the mere fact that the area of its 'Arctic sector' is just a little less than the sum of the sectors of all other coastal Arctic states. That is why it is almost impossible to imagine the success of any Arctic initiative or multilateral agreement without the participation of Russia.

It is important to understand that Russia has never refused to cooperate with its Arctic neighbours. In fact, it was Russia (the Soviet Union) who at the end of the twentieth century initiated a renewal of Arctic cooperation. Fundamental points of that initiative were mentioned in Mikhail Gorbachev's speech in Murmansk on 1 October 1987,[11] in which he advocated creating a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe, reducing military activity and building a trust regime in northern seas, collaborating in developing natural resources, coordinating scientific research, cooperating in the sphere of environmental protection and opening the Northern Sea Route (NSR) to foreign vessels.

The turn of the millennium was a special period in the life of our country. It was a time when everyone expected that the actions of Russia – which withdrew from communist ideology after the collapse of the Soviet Union and declared its dedication to 'universal human values' – would be adequately interpreted and appreciated by the West. The Russian government sincerely believed that it would enjoy meaningful and equal status with the West and would be able to solve any difficult tasks – both of a social-economic and military-political nature – with its new partners, even if this meant compromising, at times, on our sovereignty.

At that time, a point of view became widespread in Russia that while sovereignty is still a very important mode of power within the global political system, it is not the only one. There is also another mode of

power, namely global or international governance, which orders world politics in a different way. According to this approach, the Arctic – especially in respect of its natural resources and sea routes – is a common heritage of humanity[12] that should be exploited together with other countries and in a very careful way. International law and institutions should be the focus of Arctic politics and the basis for an emerging regional governance regime. Some scholars even considered that a special international legal regime, similar to the Antarctic Treaty,[13] should be established for the region and a comprehensive agreement concluded to make it a 'region of peace and cooperation.'

Reflecting this vision, Russia took a series of significant political steps to implement its new Arctic policy. Among the most important were:

- Active participation in the creation and work of the Barents-Euro-Arctic Council (1993) and the Arctic Council (1996), as well as significant involvement in the most important reports produced by the two bodies;
- Reaching agreement with Norway and the U.S. on delimiting Arctic maritime spaces and simplifying the procedure for cross-border trips by local residents;
- Participation in developing, within the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Guidelines for Ships Operating in Arctic Ice-covered Waters, subsequently adopted as the Polar Code[14];
- Amending national legislation for the purpose of,

  1) opening navigation of the NSR to foreign vessels in 1990, with the subsequent liberalization of the rules for transit in 2013[15];

  2) increasing the attractiveness of the Russian economy for foreign investors, including through resource projects in the Arctic;

  3) adopting special laws for the protection of the rights of indigenous minority peoples (including those of the North)[16];

4) improving state measures for environmental protection, etc.;

- Filing in 2001 the first submission to the CLCS for determining the outer limits of the Russian continental shelf within its 'Arctic sector' in accordance with the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea;
- Concluding international treaties and agreements with the U.S. and other countries to reduce arms and improve confidence-building and cooperation measures in the military and anti-terrorism fields.

The subsequent course of events, however, has clearly demonstrated the gullibility of advocates for the theory of the shared, equitable and safe use of the Arctic as a common heritage of mankind by all interested states. Some political forces in Western countries treated the readiness of Russia for large-scale cooperation as a sign of weakness, as readiness to compromise on its interests on the global stage. As a result, the West stopped perceiving Russia as a state that should be dealt with on an equal footing.

This has led to a series of steps that could hardly be treated as friendly by Russia: from expanding NATO and EU to the borders of our country, to Western attempts to substantially influence Russian domestic and foreign policy to serve the interests of the West. Putin's Munich speech in 2007[17] clearly demonstrated that Russia is not going to put up with such a state of affairs and that it will pursue its own independent foreign policy, while reaffirming our readiness to cooperate to resolve mutual problems but only if treated on an equal footing.

That call has not been heard. Moreover, the Munich speech was treated as a sign of Russia's aggressive imperial ambitions, as a trigger for a new policy of imposing political and economic sanctions on Russia each time its actions, for any reason whatsoever, do not work for the West. Such an approach has initiated a step-by-step degradation of Russian relations with European and Anglo-Saxon states and a decrease in the level of mutual trust, resulting in Ukrainian and Syrian opposition and straining relations to the present day.

This crisis has affected interstate cooperation in the Arctic to a lesser degree than expected. Indeed over the last several years, Russia has taken an active part in drafting three international treaties on *Search and Rescue*[18], *Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response*,[19] and *Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation*[20] under the auspices of the Arctic Council (all of which have now entered into legal force) and in crafting an *Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean* which, after lengthy and tough negotiations, was finally adopted and opened for signature in 2018.[21]

This diplomatic activity has been unfolding at a time when Russia has been bearing a heavy economic cost. Sanctions imposed by the U.S. and European countries restricting the transfer of technologies, equipment, and investments have significantly hampered Russia's ability to implement existing and to develop future Arctic oil and gas projects, as well as to develop port and other infrastructure along the Northern Sea Route.

These circumstances have had a serious impact on Russia's Arctic policy. Moscow could no longer view the Arctic as the 'common treasury' of humankind. Our country's renewed approach to the Arctic supports the thesis that Russia should be firm in defending its legitimate rights and national interests in the region in regards to: the determination of the outer limits of the Russian continental shelf; the full-scale exercise of its jurisdiction and sovereign rights in its Arctic EEZ; the determination of navigation rules in the waters of the NSR; the fight against poaching and smuggling in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation; and the modernization of the armed forces deployed in the High North for defensive purposes. In terms of Russian domestic policy, the focus is on ensuring comprehensive social-economic and technological development and environmental protection of the Arctic Zone of Russia.

The foregoing conclusions stem from two key documents determining the current Russian Arctic policy:

1) *Basics of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period until 2020 and for a Further Perspective*;[22] and

2) *The Strategy of the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and Ensuring of National Security for the period until 2020.*[23]

The President of the Russian Federation approved these documents on 18 September 2008 and 20 February 2013, respectively. The *Basics of the State Policy* expressly emphasizes that today:

> National interests determine basic objectives, primary goals and strategic priorities of the state policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic. The realization of national interests of the Russian Federation in the Arctic is provided by institutions of the state power together with institutions of the civil society in strict conformity with the legislation of the Russian Federation and its international treaties (para. 5).

It is especially important to note the second part of the abovementioned thesis, for it clearly shows that Russia, while focusing on the realization of its national interests, continues to be a responsible international actor that behaves in the international arena in line with principles and norms of international law and its international commitments. That is why, even today, the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention (LOSC); the Ilulissat Declaration (2008);[24] Arctic Council agreements, directions and recommendations; the Polar Code; and relevant multilateral and bilateral agreements should be considered as a legal basis for Russia's Arctic strategy. As stated in paragraph 6 of the *Basics of State Policy*:

> One of the basic objectives of the Russian state policy in the Arctic is ensuring the regime of mutually beneficial bilateral and multilateral cooperation of the Russian Federation with the Arctic States under international treaties and agreements to which Russia is a part.

It is important to understand, however, that if in the 1990s and at the beginning of the twenty-first century Russia was ready to talk about comprehensive international governance of the Arctic, today it is concerned mainly with intergovernmental cooperation in the Arctic provided that, as a mandatory condition, its national interests are taken into account. It should also be understood that some of these interests may

differ from the interests and expectations of other Arctic or involved states. That is why it is time to negotiate with Russia instead of continuing the policy of threats and sanctions.

The latter approach pushes Russia to find new partners willing to invest money and technologies in its Arctic projects. In recent years, this has meant more Asian partners rather than European or American companies and officials. As a result, the 'Asian dimension' of the Arctic is becoming more and more meaningful, and the prospect of the Trans-Polar Arctic Route passing outside the jurisdiction of Canada and Russia is now a very distinct possibility.[25]

The new political and economic reality in the Arctic led Russia to initiate a process of legislative reform to confer upon the 'Arctic Zone of Russia' a special legal status. As established in the Special Decree adopted by the Russian Federation President on 2 May 2014 (as amended on 27 June 2017), the Arctic Zone of Russia is divided into 9 distinct entities (regions, districts and areas). Currently, the Russian Federation is actively working on the adoption of a special federal law defining a special procedure for carrying out economic and other activities on their territory.

In addition, on 29 December 2017, Federal Law No. 460-FZ *On Amending the Merchant Shipping Code and Declaring Invalid Certain Provisions of Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation*[26] was adopted. Its main objective is to create conditions to increase the participation of vessels sailing under the Russian state flag in shipping activities between Russian seaports, as well as between Russian seaports and any other places which are under Russian jurisdiction (for example, artificial islands, installations and structures within the Russian EEZ or on the Russian continental shelf).

That objective has been achieved by expanding the term 'coastal shipping' and by establishing the rule that ice-breaking services and pilotage assistance in the waters of the NSR can only be performed by vessels sailing under the state flag of the Russian Federation. Moreover, Article 4 of the Merchant Shipping Code has also been amended to provide that maritime transportation of oil, natural gas (including in liquefied form), and gas condensate, extracted from the territory of the Russian

Federation or its continental shelf and loaded onto vessels in the waters of the NSR, until the first point of unloading or in cases of transshipment, can also be carried out solely by vessels flying the state flag of the Russian Federation.[27]

According to the developers of the Law, the above measures seek to improve the financial situation of Russian transport companies, to create additional possibilities for upgrading the Russian fleet, and to attract additional funds to modernize NSR infrastructure. In reality, however, the outcome may be the complete opposite in the event of a decrease in foreign interest in the resources of the Russian Arctic if interested parties have to pay not only for the commodities themselves but also for their shipment by Russian vessels through the waters of the NSR.

One other legislative initiative with the potential to drastically change the existing NSR regime is the federal law *On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation* adopted on 27 December 2018.[28] According to this act, the Russian State atomic power corporation 'Rosatom' will be almost exclusively responsible for state policy, state property, and state services as regards the development and functioning of the NSR, including the development of seaport infrastructure. According to the authors of the law, its adoption will significantly enhance the development of the NSR as the national transport artery of Russia in the Arctic and the infrastructure of the ports of the Northern Sea Route. Unfortunately, as the recent incident in the Kerch Strait has shown, confrontation continues, mutual trust remains elusive, and Russia's legal rights are still of a little interest to any country except Russia itself. In such circumstances, Russia will likely be forced to continue its policy of promoting and defending its own national interests, including in the Arctic. Confirmation of this determined approach can be seen in Russia's new legislative initiative to establish an advanced notification obligation for the passage of foreign warships along the NSR beginning in 2019.

Only time will tell what practical implications these new Russian legislative norms will have. Until then, only one thing can be said for certain: external circumstances have forced certain corrections in Russia's Arctic policy, and the existing balance in the region can no longer re-

main unchanged. We are on the cusp of change, and the direction that this change will take depends not only on Russia but on other participants in that process as well.

**Notes**

[1] Decree of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, 16 April 1926, *SZ SSR* (1926), no. 32, item 203.
[2] See L. Timtchenko, "The Russian Arctic Sectoral Concept: Past and Present" *Arctic* 50:1 (1997): 29.
[3] See R.S. Reid, "The Canadian Claim to Sovereignty over the Waters of the Arctic" *Canadian Yearbook of International Law* 12 (1974): 115 and M. Byers & S. Lalonde, "Who Controls the Northwest Passage," *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* (2009): 1146-48. It should be noted that Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper surrendered the sector theory in a speech in Iqaluit, Nunvaut in August 2006. "Securing Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic," Speech by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, 12 August 2006, Iqaluit, Nunavut, https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2006/08/securing-canadian-sovereignty-arctic.html.
[4] See for example the opinion editorial by Michael Byers, "Canada's Arctic Race with Russia," *The Star* [Toronto], 29 July 2007, https://www.thestar.com/opinion/ 2007/07/29/canadas_arctic_race_with_russia.html, or by M. Kaste, "In the Arctic Race, the U.S. Lags Behind, *National Public Radio (NPR)*, 19 August 2011, https://www.npr.org/2011/08/19/139681324/in-the-arctic-race-the-u-s-lags-behind.
[5] *Agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Maritime Boundary*, 1 June 1990, http://www.marineregions.org/documents/USA-RUS1990MB.PDF.
[6] *Treaty between the Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation concerning Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean*, 15 September 2010, http://www.marineregions.org/documents/ NOR-RUS2010.PDF.
[7] See Receipt of the submission made by the Russian Federation to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, https://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/rus01/RUS_CLCS_01_2001_LOS_English.pdf.
[8] See *Partial Revised Submission of the Russian Federation to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in Respect of the Continental Shelf of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Ocean: Executive Summary 2015*,

http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/rus01_rev15/2015_08_03_Exec_Summary_English.pdf.

[9] See *Partial Submission of the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark together with the Government of Greenland to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf 'The Northern Continental Shelf of Greenland: Executive Summary,'* http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/dnk76_14/dnk2014_es.pdf.

[10] *United Nations Law of the Sea Convention*, 10 December 1982, 1833 *United Nations Treaty Series* 396.

[11] M. Gorbachev, The Speech in Murmansk at the ceremonial meeting on the occasion of the presentation of the Order of Lenin and the Gold Star Medal to the city of Murmansk, 1 October 1987 (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency, 1987) 23-31, https://www.barentsinfo.fi/docs/Gorbachev_speech.pdf.

[12] See for example E.V. Kienko, "China's stance towards the applicability of the common heritage of mankind governance regime to the Arctic," *Journal of Law and Administration* 2:13 (2018).

[13] See, for example, M. Watson, "An Arctic Treaty: A Solution to the International Dispute over the Polar Region" *Ocean & Coastal Law Journal* 14:2 (2009): 306, and E. Struzik, "As the Far North Melts, Calls Grow for Arctic Treaty," 14 June 2010, *Yale Environment 360* website at https://e360.yale. edu/ features/as_the_far_north_melts_calls_grow_for_arctic_treaty.

[14] *International Code for Ships operating in Polar Waters*, Amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, Resolution MSC.386(94), 21 November 2014, in Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its Ninety-Fourth Session, Annex 7, IMO Doc MSC 94/21/Add.1, and Amendments to the Annex of the Protocol of 1978 relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, Resolution MEPC.265(68), 15 May 2015, in Report of the Marine Environment Protection Committee on its Sixty-eighth Session, Annex 11, IMO Doc MEPC 68/21/Add.1.

[15] *Rules of navigation in the water area of the Northern Sea Route,* http://www.nsra.ru/files/fileslist/120-en-rules_perevod_cniimf-13_05_2015.pdf. A few minor amendments were introduced on 9 January 2017, http://www.nsra.ru/files/fileslist/122-en-transl_asmp.pdf.

[16] Federal Law "On Guarantees of Rights of Indigenous Minority Peoples of the Russian Federation" No. 82-FZ, April 30, 1999; Federal Law "On the Territories of Traditional Nature Use of the Indigenous Numerically Small Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation" No. 49-FZ dated May 7, 2001.

[17] V. Putin Speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, 10 February 2007, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034.
[18] *Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic*, adopted 12 May 2011, Arctic Council website, https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/531.
[19] *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic*, adopted 15 May 2013, https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/529.
[20] *Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation*, adopted 11 May 2017, https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/1916.
[21] *Agreement to prevent unregulated high seas fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean*, adopted 3 October 2018 (not yet in force), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2019.073.01.0003.01.ENG.
[22] Russian Federation, "Basics of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period till 2020 and for a Further Perspective," 18 September 2008, http://www.arctis-search.com/Russian+Federation+Policy+for+the+Arctic+to+2020.
[23] Russian Federation, "Russian Strategy of the Development of the Arctic Zone and the Provision of National Security until 2020," 8 February 2013, http://www.iecca.ru/en/legislation/strategies/item/99-the-development-strategy-of-the-arctic-zone-of-the-russian-federation.
[24] Available at https://www.arctic-report.net/product/859/?lang=.
[25] See, for example, T.C. Stevenson, J. Davies, H.P. Huntington, W. Shearda, "An Examination of Trans-Arctic Vessel Routing in the Central Arctic Ocean," 100 *Marine Policy* 83 (2019).
[26] Federal Law "On amending the Merchant Shipping Code and declaring invalid certain provisions of legislative acts of the Russian Federation" No. 460-FZ dated 29 December 2017.
[27] At the same time, according to paragraph 4 of Article 4 of the Merchant Shipping Code, the Russian Government has the right to issue special permits for the transportation of such goods by ships flying the flags of foreign countries. The first such permission was issued by the Decree of the Russian Government on 14 March 2019 under No. 435-r. In accordance with it, some foreign ships were given the opportunity to carry out international sea transportation of natural gas and gas condensate, loaded on these ships in the sea port of Sabetta, up to the first unloading or transshipment point.
[28] Federal Law "On amending certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation" No 525-FZ dated 27 December 2018.

CHAPTER 2

# Canada's Emerging Arctic and Northern Policy Framework: Confirming a Longstanding Northern Strategy

P. Whitney LACKENBAUER*

Spanning three Territories and stretching as far as the North Pole, Canada's North is a sprawling region, encompassing 75 percent of the country's national coastlines and 40 percent of its total land mass. The sheer expanse of Canada's North, coupled with its ice-filled seas, harsh climate, and more than 36,000 islands make for a challenging region to monitor – particularly as the North encompasses a significant portion of the air and maritime approaches to North America.

Although Canada's North is sparsely populated, the region is spotted with vibrant communities, many inhabited by Canada's Indigenous populations. These communities form an integral part of Canada's identity, and our history is intimately connected with the imagery and the character of the North. Economically, Northern Canada is also home to considerable natural resources, industries, and growing tourism – with the potential for further exploration, including transit through Canada's Arctic Archipelago.

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> … The Arctic is also becoming more relevant to the international community. Climate change is increasingly leading to a more accessible Arctic region. While operating in the region will remain a difficult challenge for the foreseeable future, Arctic and non-Arctic states alike are looking to benefit from the potential economic opportunities associated with new resource development and transportation routes.
>
> Canada, Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (2017)[1]

On 19 October 2015, Justin Trudeau's Liberal party won the Canadian federal election with a sweeping majority. The change in government certainly represented a political departure, though the main substantive elements of Canada's Arctic policy – which have remained remarkably consistent since the 1970s – are likely to remain intact. In Canadian policy, a domestic focus on Indigenous rights, conservation, and the health and resiliency of Northern communities is complemented by a renewed commitment to global climate change mitigation. Through bilateral statements with President Barack Obama, Prime Minister Trudeau reinforced a model for Arctic leadership that placed a clear priority on "soft security" and safety issues and abandoned the classic sovereignty-focused messaging of his predecessor Stephen Harper. Similarly, the Liberal government's commitment to produce a new Arctic and Northern Policy Framework to replace the Northern Strategy introduced by the preceding Conservative government indicates a renewed emphasis on environmental protection and socio-cultural health of Northern Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, while the Liberal government has introduced a new political discourse on Arctic affairs that avoids the hard sovereignty and defence rhetoric that marked the early Harper era,[2] Canada's priorities continue to affirm the relevance and importance of a comprehensive approach to Arctic defence and security. The Trudeau government's defence policy (*Strong, Secure, Engaged*) balances investments in defensive capabilities to deter would-be adversaries with the development of capabilities to support unconventional security and safety missions in the Arctic. (These ideas align with Professor Sergunin's reflections on Russian defence and security modernization plans and priorities for the Arctic region, as discussed in the next chapter.)

## The Trudeau Government's "New" Arctic Priorities

Immediately upon taking office, Prime Minister Trudeau took bold steps to demonstrate that Canada "is back" when it comes to joining global efforts to mitigate climate change.[3] While the Harper government tended to emphasize local climate change adaptation measures in its Arctic agenda rather than global mitigation efforts, the Liberals chastised their predecessors' alleged "refusal to take meaningful action on climate change," their lack of funding for science and their "muzzling" of government scientists, and their prioritization of economic growth over environmental protection.[4] By signing the Paris Agreement on climate change in November 2015, Canada signalled its commitment to shift course, reduce greenhouse-gas emissions in concert with the international community, and promote a clean-energy future. Although Canada's formal statements in these climate change negotiations did not reference the Arctic explicitly,[5] this new global posture influenced both domestic and international policy agendas.

Along these lines, the U.S.-Canada Joint Statement on Environment, Climate Change, and Arctic Leadership of March 2016 articulated "a common vision of a prosperous and sustainable North American economy, and the opportunities afforded by advancing clean growth." Both Trudeau and Obama cited the Paris Agreement as a pivotal moment and committed to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector, as well as advancing climate change action globally. They also "reaffirm their commitment to working together to strengthen North American energy security, phase out fossil fuel subsidies, and accelerate clean energy development to address climate change and to foster sustainable energy development and economic growth." Both countries also promise to "continue to respect and promote the rights of Indigenous peoples in all climate change decision making."[6]

Respect for and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples lies at the heart of the Liberal agenda. "No relationship is more important to me and to Canada than the one with Indigenous Peoples," Trudeau highlighted in his publicly-released mandate letter to each of his Cabinet ministers in November 2015. "It is time for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights,

respect, co-operation, and partnership."[7] In May 2016, Canada officially lifted the qualifications to its endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which the Conservatives had registered over the requirement for "free, prior and informed consent" from Indigenous peoples on issues that affected them. While disavowing the notion that this new position gives Indigenous groups a "veto" over development projects,[8] Canada's unqualified support of UNDRIP affirms a strong commitment to welcome "Indigenous peoples into the co-production of policy and joint priority-setting" within the Canadian political community.[9]

The appointment of Inuit leader Mary Simon as special representative to Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett in July 2016 reflects the Trudeau's government's commitment to co-develop its Northern policy with Indigenous leaders. A longstanding champion of Inuit rights, Simon's formal role was to seek out the views of Northerners and provide advice to the federal government on future conservation and sustainable development goals that would support efforts to devise a new Shared Arctic Leadership Model. Given her mandate, as well as her previous critiques of "militaristic" Arctic strategies,[10] it is no surprise that her efforts emphasized environmental and human security considerations. Her interim report on conservation goals, released in October 2016, identified marine conservation opportunities – and revealed how broadly she interpreted her mandate to tackle Northern (and particularly Inuit) cultural, socio-economic, and political challenges. "While conservation concerns inform many aspects of northern land claims agreements, Arctic peoples and their representative organizations and governments are far more preoccupied with issues related to supporting strong families, communities and building robust economies," Simon explained in her report. "Closing [the basic gaps between what exists in the Arctic and what other Canadians take for granted] is what northerners, across the Arctic, wanted to speak to me about as an urgent priority. Reconciliation is inextricably tied to this reality."[11]

Relationship-building also extended to the international sphere, with the Trudeau government emphasizing multilateral and bilateral cooperation in line with a more "nuanced" foreign policy. Building on the new prime minister's promise that Canada would have a more "compas-

sionate and constructive voice in the world" under the Liberals after a decade of Conservative rule, newly-appointed Minister of Global Affairs Stéphane Dion called for renewed "engagement" with Russia in November 2015, despite Canada's ongoing displeasure with Russian expansionism and aggression in the Ukraine. While the Harper Conservatives had suspended almost all bilateral contact with Russia after the latter invaded Crimea in March 2014, Dion stressed that this extreme stand deviated from the actions of the U.S. and other G-7 partners. "We also need to think about our national interests because Russia is our neighbour in the Arctic," the minister explained.[12] This revised stance provoked debate amongst Canadian commentators, some of whom worried that this would send the wrong signals to an increasingly assertive Putin already "pivoting" towards the Arctic as a "strategic frontier."[13] Others suggested that the intention to resume cooperation on areas of common ground in Arctic affairs was sensible and responsible.[14] After Chrystia Freeland replaced Dion as Minister of Foreign Affairs in January 2017 and adopted a stronger line against Russia,[15] however, the high-level political climate for bilateral engagement between the two countries has noticeably cooled.

Canada's most important international relationship is with the United States, with bilateral announcements affirming that the neighbours would remain "premier partners"[16] and would play a joint leadership role in Arctic (particularly North American Arctic) affairs. The Trudeau-Obama Joint Statement on Environment, Climate Change, and Arctic Leadership of March 2016 articulated several priority areas that flowed logically from the work that Canada had promoted as chair of the Arctic Council from 2013-15.[17] Emphasizing Indigenous rights and knowledge, as well as "natural marine, land and air migrations that know no borders," the joint statement conceptualized the Arctic as "the frontline of climate change" and articulated four main objectives:

1. *Conserving Arctic biodiversity through science-based decision making* by achieving national goals for land and marine protected areas, and working "directly with Indigenous partners, state, territorial and provincial governments" to set "a new, ambitious conservation goal for the Arctic based on the best avail-

able climate science and knowledge, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.

2. Collaborating with "Indigenous and Arctic governments, leaders, and communities to more broadly and respectfully" *incorporate Indigenous science and traditional knowledge into decision-making.*

3. *Building a sustainable Arctic economy* based on scientific evidence, with commercial activities occurring "only when the highest safety and environmental standards are met, including national and global climate and environmental goals, and Indigenous rights and agreements." Sub-priorities include: establish *low impact shipping corridors* and consistent policies for ship operations, taking into account important ecological and cultural areas, vessel traffic patterns, Indigenous and Northern Arctic input, and increased coast guard cooperation of our Coast Guards; seek a binding international agreement to *prevent the opening of unregulated fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean,* building "on a precautionary, science-based principle to commercial fishing that both countries have put in place in their Arctic waters"; and ensure that *oil and gas development and exploration* activities "align with science-based standards between the two nations that ensure appropriate preparation for operating in Arctic conditions, including robust and effective well control and emergency response measures."

4. *Supporting strong Arctic communities* by "defining new approaches and exchanging best practices to strengthen the resilience of Arctic communities and continuing to support the well-being of Arctic residents, in particular respecting the rights and territory of Indigenous peoples." This objective stresses that "all Indigenous Peoples in the Arctic are vital to strengthening and supporting U.S. and Canadian sovereignty claims," and both countries "commit to working in partnership to implement land claims agreements to realize the social, cultural and economic potential of all Indigenous and Northern communities." Priority areas include "innovative renewable energy and efficiency alter-

> natives to diesel"; community climate change adaptation; "innovative options for housing and infrastructure"; and "greater action to address the serious challenges of mental wellness, education, Indigenous language, and skill development, particularly among Indigenous youth."[18]

Indigenous and environmental organizations in Canada applauded the statement, with national Inuit leader Natan Obed stating that "the final language in this document really spoke to Inuit" and heralding it "a tremendous breakthrough for Indigenous people who live in the Arctic."[19] Mary Simon also described the statement as offering "real promise in its scope and in its focus on a collaborative process. Taken seriously, alongside the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls To Action, it will open a new chapter in Indigenous to non-indigenous relationships and partnership."[20]

Canada's Oceans Protection Plan, unveiled in November 2016, contained several provisions to enhance Canada's marine safety system that flowed naturally from the safe shipping objectives promoted in the joint statement. "For residents of Canada's North, marine transportation is an essential lifeline," the plan observed. "Ships bring food and other goods necessary for survival, while representing critical jobs and employment opportunities. Through the Oceans Protection Plan, the Government of Canada will make investments to make Arctic resupply operations faster, safer and more efficient for remote communities." The government committed to expand the number of Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Auxiliary units in Arctic communities, thus "bolstering capacity to respond to emergencies and pollution incidents," as well as setting up a seasonal inshore rescue boat station to enhance Northern search and rescue capacity. Furthermore, Canadian Coast Guard icebreakers would extend their operating season in the Arctic, and Canada would improve the northern operations of its National Aerial Surveillance Program. "Doing so will improve local marine pollution reporting, search and rescue capacity and satellite monitoring of vessels offshore, which also supports Canadian sovereignty," the plan noted. It also emphasized the importance of better coordinating federal emergency responses to marine

emergencies and pollution incidents on all three coasts, in close cooperation with Indigenous and local communities.[21]

This explicit emphasis on building stronger partnerships with Indigenous peoples and with coastal communities dovetails with broader government approaches to safer shipping, environmental security, and economic development. "Indigenous coastal communities share ties to Canada's oceans that span generations," the official Oceans Protection Plan announcement explained:

> They rely on them as a source of livelihood, food security, and valuable transportation routes. The Oceans Protection Plan provides Indigenous coastal communities with new opportunities to protect, preserve, and restore Canada's oceans and sea routes.
>
> The Government of Canada needs the traditional knowledge and expertise of Canada's Indigenous peoples and coastal communities to protect its coasts and waterways more efficiently. They have been safeguarding Canada's waters for years. They are often the first to respond to marine emergencies and can be the most affected when a marine pollution incident occurs. They have valuable insights and expertise to contribute to more effective response and protection of our coasts. Their partnership in the Oceans Protection Plan is a critical element of Canada's marine transportation system.22

In acknowledging the value of regional partnerships with Indigenous and local communities to prepare for emergency response and manage waterways, the plan also serves as a model for federal and territorial partners to consider when framing proposals for investments in enhancement Arctic security and safety capabilities more generally.

Trudeau and Obama followed up with a Joint Arctic Leaders' Statement on 20 December 2016 that sought to advance the objectives that they had outlined the previous March. This follow-up announcement launched concrete actions "ensuring a strong, sustainable and viable Arctic economy and ecosystem, with low-impact shipping, science based management of marine resources, and free from the risks of offshore oil and gas activity," that would "set the stage for deeper partnerships with

other Arctic nations, including through the Arctic Council."[23] While framed in a bilateral and international context, the statement again provides strong insight into Canada's domestic Arctic policy goals. "The overall objective is to support Canada's commitments to reconciliation and renewed partnerships, strong Arctic communities, sustainable Arctic economies, acting within the realities of climate change, and ensuring a healthy Arctic environment," supplemental information from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada explained. In the Canadian context, the statement laid out a long list of measures designed to promote "a strong, sustainable and viable Arctic economy and ecosystem":

- a new process to build an Arctic Policy Framework co-developed with Indigenous, territorial and provincial partners, that will replace Canada's Northern Strategy;
- a second phase of northern engagement by Minister Bennett's Special Representative, Ms. Mary Simon, to further inform the government's approach to Shared Arctic Leadership.
- a one-year project working with northerners to build a vision and a plan to build up abundant Arctic fisheries and jobs for Northerners;
- investments that will enable Northern communities to acquire basic marine infrastructure and safety equipment to help sealifts and community re-supply operations;
- a dedicated five-year project to engage Northern communities in developing a shared governance and management model for the Northern Marine Transportation Corridors and Arctic marine shipping, in a way that is environmentally and socially responsible, including respecting modern northern treaties;[24]
- additional Marine Safety and Security inspector jobs to ensure all vessels operating in the Canadian Arctic meet all marine shipping and navigation safety requirements;
- direct support to establishing training and certification programs for ships operating in polar waters at Canada's Northern Marine School, including a new transfer payment program to support Northern and Indigenous people entering marine jobs

(crew members for the Canadian Coast Guard, Marine Safety and Security inspectors for Transport Canada, and workers for the marine sector at large);

- reaffirming the creation of a new Coast Guard Auxiliary unit in the Arctic, including new funding for Northern communities to purchase boats and emergency response equipment;
- reaffirming increased icebreaking services by the Canadian Coast Guard, to ensure safe passage of vessels through Arctic waters;
- reaffirming extended coverage of hydrographic charting and navigational information to Canada's 23 highest priority ports and waterways with significant coverage in the Arctic;
- launching a new process with Northern and Indigenous partners to explore options to protect the "last ice area"[25] within Canadian waters, in a way that benefits communities and ecosystems;
- reaffirming commitment to complete a plan and timeline to deploy innovative renewable energy and efficiency alternatives to diesel in the Arctic;
- announcing all of the Canadian Arctic waters as indefinitely off limits to new offshore oil and gas licences, to be tested every 5 years by a science-based review taking into account marine and climate change science;[26] and
- announcing a one-year consultation with existing offshore oil and gas permit holders on their interests.[27]

The most controversial element of the December 2016 joint statement related to the federal-level decision to suspend the issuance of new Arctic offshore oil and gas licences. "This is due to the irreplaceable value of Arctic waters for Indigenous and Northern communities' subsistence and cultures," an official statement explained. "The vulnerability of communities and the supporting ecosystems to an oil spill, as well as the unique logistical, operational, safety and scientific challenges to oil extraction and spill response in Arctic waters also represent unprece-

dented challenges."[28] Given that there was little to no offshore activity at the time of the announcement, it did not immediately affect local and regional economic interests. Nevertheless, the federal government's failure to consult with territorial officials prior to the announcement upset the Northern premiers – particularly in light of all the Trudeau government's messaging about the centrality of partnerships with territorial governments and Indigenous organizations in its new approach to intergovernmental relationships.[29] Arctic commentator Heather Exner-Pirot suggested that the December 2016 statement "departs from Canada's prioritization of Northerners in its Arctic policy, … align[ing] Canadian Arctic foreign policy more squarely with American inclinations" as well as demonstrating the influence of "environmentalist groups such as WWF and Oceans North Canada, whose agendas are clearly evident in the documents and who boast alumni currently in senior Canadian government roles."[30]

Exner-Pirot also highlighted that the commitment to co-develop a new Arctic Policy Framework with Northerners, territorial and provincial governments, and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people, included the promise of "an Inuit-specific component" in this policy. In her assessment, this revealed how the government "privileges the Inuit" over other Northern Indigenous peoples.[31] The signing of an Inuit-Crown Partnership agreement between Trudeau and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president Natan Obed in February 2017, coupled with the release of Mary Simon's vision for an Arctic Policy Framework the following month, could be considered evidence of this privileged status. Simon explained that she interpreted her advisory mandate as seeking answers to two overarching questions: "Why, in spite of substantive progress over the past 40 years, including remarkable achievements such as land claims agreements, constitutional inclusion and precedent-setting court rulings, does the Arctic continue to exhibit among the worst national social indicators for basic wellness? Why, with all these hard-earned tools of empowerment, do many individuals and families not feel empowered and healthy?" In response, she categorized the main challenges inhibiting Arctic development into four categories: education and language, research and Indigenous knowledge, infrastructure gaps (particularly broadband, housing, and energy), conservation and the need for

Indigenous protected areas. "There is no other region of Canada that has experienced the breadth and pace of geo-political development in the last 50 years than the Arctic," Simon noted. Despite obvious linkages to global and national drivers, she emphasized her belief "that answers will be found in programs, processes, and policies that enable Arctic leaders to craft and support their own community-based and community-driven solutions." Her bottom-up approach, to be devised by Arctic leaders and funded by federal money, was based on her vision of an "inclusive, mutually respectful and trustful process" that adhered to various "principles of partnership" (see table 10.1) that privileged Indigenous rights and Indigenous knowledge. The only reference to sovereignty related to "a concerted effort to promote and protect Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic" in the previous forty years, and the only references to security related to food security.[32]

These elements of Trudeau government's Arctic agenda indicate a return to the primacy of socio-cultural and environmental priorities over the more hard security, resource development emphasis attributed to the Harper government.[33] Although conventional sovereignty-security rhetoric is conspicuously absent, the few political speeches that the Liberal government's representatives have given on international Arctic issues have resurrected romantic, nationalistic images that extol Canada's pride and unique responsibilities as a Northern nation — similar to those that featured so prominently in the Harper government's speeches (and those of his political predecessors).[34] For example, Parliamentary Secretary for Global Affairs Pamela Goldsmith-Jones, delivering a speech on behalf of Minister Dion to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Arctic Council in September 2016, proclaimed:

> Yes, we have a northern soul: 'The true north strong and free.' Few places on earth evoke more glorious images than the North. It is the land of the aurora, where the northern lights dance across the darkened sky at nightfall, and the land of the midnight sun and of polar days that go on forever under light that never fades.

**Figure 1: Principles of Partnership**

1. Understanding and honouring the intent of Section 35 of the *Constitution Act of 1982:* All partners should understand and honour Canada's commitment to upholding Section 35 of the *Constitution* and strive to achieve forward momentum in defining how Section 35 can be applied to evolving policy and program initiatives.
2. Reconciliation: Reconciliation in partnerships and policy-making involves, at a minimum, a commitment to restoring relationships, seeing things differently than before, and making changes in power relationships.
3. Equality, trust, and mutual respect: A true partnership has to be built on equality, trust, transparency and respectful disagreement.
4. Flexible and adaptive policy: Nation-building in the Arctic will not be found in one-size-fits-all policy solutions. Policies need to adjust and adapt to circumstances.
5. Arctic leaders know their needs: Recognize that Arctic leaders know their priorities and what is required to achieve success.
6. Community-based solutions: Local leadership must be recognized and enabled to ensure community-based and community-driven solutions.
7. Confidence in capacity: An effective partnership has confidence in, and builds on, the capacities that are brought into the partnership, but also recognizes when capacity gaps need addressing.
8. Understanding and honouring agreements: The signing of an agreement is only the beginning of a partnership. Signatories need to routinely inform themselves of agreements, act on the spirit and intent, recognize capacity needs, respect their obligations, ensure substantive progress is made on implementation, expedite the resolution of disputes, and involve partners in any discussions that would lead to changes in agreements.
9. Respecting Indigenous knowledge: Indigenous and local knowledge must be valued and promoted equally to western science, in research, planning and decision-making.

*Source:* Mary Simon, Minister's Special Representative on Arctic Leadership, *A New Shared Arctic Leadership Model*, March 2017, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1492708558500/1492709024236.

> Our northern belonging fills us with pride—a pride that we owe first and foremost to the Canadians who actually live in the North. ... It is all the more important to remember that the well-being of northern people is being challenged by great shifts in the North's physical and economic environments. The Arctic is attracting more and more economic activity. It will be the site of major, new economic projects. Its resources are increasingly coveted. Its navigation routes are opening. All the while, its ecosystem remains as fragile as ever.
>
> The North is an essential part of our future and a place of extraordinary potential. More than ever, the world will count on Canada as a responsible steward of this great barometer of our planet. Northern resources, explored responsibly, offer huge potential for increased economic development. But if these resources are exploited irresponsibly, it will be a disaster not only for us but for all of humanity.[35]

A few weeks later, Goldsmith-Jones told the Arctic Circle in Reykjavik that, "for Canadians, the North captures our imagination like no other part of our country."[36] This Arctic exceptionalism, which firmly embeds the North in national identity politics, inspires a sense of responsibility, serving as a call to action to protect Northerners and the environment from emerging threats—an obligation that all Canadians are asked to bear.

While the priorities articulated in the U.S.-Canada joint statements on the Arctic in March and December 2016 reflect Canadian political interests, they have found less enthusiastic support from the Trump administration than they did with Obama. "The joint statement marked Obama's final push to use his executive powers to lock his legacy of Arctic climate change, environmental and sustainable development into law, but unfortunately without the backing of Congress or the new president-elect," commentator John Higginbotham noted. Trump's election, however, promised to slow "the momentum of these historic bilateral Arctic understandings." During his campaign, Trump had committed to "sharply reverse Obama's policies on climate change, environment and international investment and trade flows," placing Canada in a precarious position to suffer "collateral damage from American

measures." Higginbotham suggested that Canada faced the challenge of "educat[ing] the Trump administration that it needs continued strong partnership with Canada on North American Arctic issues of common interest because of the region's size, location, resource potential, history of partnership and shared values." Priority areas included transportation and resource infrastructure, modernizing the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), and improved marine systems.[37] Given strains in the bilateral relationship over trade and other issues, the Arctic has not been high on the Canada-U.S. agenda. The joint statement released by President Trump and Prime Minister Trudeau when they met in February 2017 made no mention of the Arctic whatsoever, although it did emphasize their partnership as "indispensable allies in the defense of North America and other parts of the world, through NATO and other multilateral efforts," with NORAD illustrating "the strength of our mutual commitment."[38]

## *Strong, Secure, Engaged*: Situating the Arctic in Canada's Defence Policy

> Everything the Defence team does to better anticipate threats, understand the complex security environment and adapt to a rapidly changing world is done with a single objective in mind: ensuring the Canadian Armed Forces achieves success on operations. The Canadian Armed Forces is fundamentally focused on delivering results, whether it is battling through harsh conditions to save someone in distress in the Canadian Arctic, working with other Canadian government partners to help deliver life-saving assistance after a natural disaster at home or abroad, or engaging in combat to defeat potential adversaries or protect vulnerable populations from those seeking to harm them, in the context of United Nations or other peace operations.
>
> DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, p.81

What roles should we anticipate for the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as other government departments and agencies, in Arctic defence, security, and safety as the region's political, strategic, socio-economic, and physical landscapes continue to evolve?

The Liberals promised in their 2015 election platform to maintain current National Defence spending levels, pledging "a renewed focus on surveillance and control of Canadian territory and approaches, particularly our Arctic regions," and an "increase [in] the size of the Canadian Rangers."[39] Rather than repudiating Harper's promised investments in enhanced Arctic defence capabilities, the Trudeau Government has extended them. Canada's June 2017 defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged (SSE)*, reinforces that the Arctic remains an area of particular interest and focus. "To succeed in an unpredictable and complex security environment," it commits to "increase [the military's] presence in the Arctic over the long-term and work cooperatively with Arctic partners."[40]

The defence policy statement reiterates longstanding images of the Arctic as a region undergoing massive change. "The Arctic region represents an important international crossroads where issues of climate change, international trade, and global security meet," *SSE* describes. Rather than promoting a narrative of inherent competition or impending conflict, however, the narrative points out that "Arctic states have long cooperated on economic, environmental, and safety issues, particularly through the Arctic Council, the premier body for cooperation in the region. All Arctic states have an enduring interest in continuing this productive collaboration."[41] This last sentence suggests that Russia (described elsewhere in the policy document as a state "willing to test the international security environment" that had reintroduced "a degree of major power competition") does not inherently threaten Arctic stability given its vested interests in the region. Accordingly, the drivers of Arctic change cited in *SSE* emphasize the rise of security and safety challenges rather than conventional defence threats, thus confirming the line of reasoning that has become well entrenched in defence planning over the last decade:[42]

> Climate change, combined with advancements in technology, is leading to an increasingly accessible Arctic. A decade ago, few states or firms had the ability to operate in the Arctic. Today, state and commercial actors from around the world seek to share in the longer term benefits of an accessible Arctic. Over time, this interest is expected to generate a correspond-

> ing rise in commercial interest, research and tourism in and around Canada's northern territory. This rise in activity will also bring increased safety and security demands related to search and rescue and natural or man-made disasters to which Canada must be ready to respond.[43]

In the context of being "strong at home," *SSE* explains that the Canadian Forces will "maintain a robust capacity to respond to a range of domestic emergencies, including by providing military support to civilian organizations on national security and law enforcement matters when called upon, engaging in rapid disaster response, and contributing to effective search and rescue operations." As a desired end state, the policy anticipates that, once implemented, Canada's military "will have improved mobility and reach in Canada's northernmost territories," and established a "greater presence in the Arctic over the longer-term." This is not described as presence for the sake of presence. Instead, "Canadians can be confident that the Canadian Armed Forces will remain ready to act in the service of Canadians – from coast to coast to coast – and sustain a continuous watch over Canada's land mass and air and sea approaches, an area of more than 10 million square kilometres, ensuring timely and effective response to crises."[44]

Towards these ends, Canada's defence policy places an explicit emphasis on a "Whole of Government" approach to achieve its national security and public safety objectives. "While operating in Canada's North, we often work in close partnership with other federal, territorial, and local partners," the statement observes. "As such, we will leverage our new capabilities to help build the capacity of whole-of-government partners to help them deliver their mandates in Canada's North, and support broader Government of Canada priorities in the Arctic region."[45] This echoes the messaging from previous DND/CAF Arctic strategic and operational documents over the last decade, which plan and prepare to support activities such as search and rescue (SAR), major transportation disasters, environmental disasters, pandemics, loss of essential services (i.e., potable water, power, fuel supplies), organized crime, foreign state or non-state actor intelligence gathering activities, attacks on critical infrastructure, food security and disruptions to local hunting, and transportation practices caused by shipping or resource

development.[46] In resonance with the broader thrust of Canada's Arctic policies, *SSE* also highlights that "Indigenous communities are at the heart of Canada's North" and commits "to expand and deepen our extensive relationships with these communities, particularly through the Canadian Rangers and Junior Canadian Rangers." This also entails "engaging local populations as part of routine operations and exercises"[47] — a practice that has been adopted over the last decade and connects to the emphasis on local empowerment espoused by Mary Simon and other Northern leaders.[48]

Canada's defence policy also specified ongoing or new investments in Arctic capabilities across the three armed services that will be integrated "into a 'system-of-systems' approach to Arctic surveillance, comprising air, land, sea, and space assets connected through modern technology."[49] Identifying the Royal Canadian Navy's principal domestic challenge as "the need to operate in the Arctic, alongside the Canadian Coast Guard, and alongside allied partners," the government confirmed that it would acquire five or six Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) to "provide armed, sea-borne surveillance of Canadian waters, including in the Arctic. They will enforce sovereignty, cooperating with partners, at home and abroad, and will provide the Government of Canada with awareness of activities in Canada's waters."[50] The Canadian Army will receive "a new family of Arctic-capable land vehicles" (all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles and larger tracked semi-amphibious utility vehicles) to improve its operational capabilities in the North.[51] To meet joint intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance requirements, the Royal Canadian Air Force will implement "sensor and communication solutions that are specifically tailored to the Arctic environment," as well as a new Canadian multi-mission aircraft to replace the CP-140 Aurora Long-Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft and new space-based communications and surveillance systems.[52] Building on previous investments to bolster Arctic capabilities (discussed in this book), these new platforms, vehicles, and systems should serve as critical enablers to deliver positive effects across a broad spectrum of defence, security, and safety missions.

Rather than adopting unilateralist messaging suggesting a need for Canada to defend its Arctic interests independently (owing to potential sovereignty threats), *SSE* affirms the compatibility between exercising

sovereignty and collaboration with international partners. "Canada remains committed to exercising the full extent of its sovereignty in Canada's North, and will continue to carefully monitor military activities in the region and conduct defence operations and exercises as required," the policy explains. Concurrently, "Canada's renewed focus on the surveillance and control of the Canadian Arctic will be complemented by close collaboration with select Arctic partners, including the United States, Norway and Denmark, to increase surveillance and monitoring of the broader Arctic region."[53] Commitments to "renew the North Warning System (NWS) and modernize elements of NORAD" flow from Canada's longstanding bilateral defence arrangements with the U.S. to jointly monitor and control the air and maritime approaches to the continent.[54] The policy also notes that while the eight Arctic states (Canada, the U.S., Denmark/Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia) "rightfully remain the primary actors in the Arctic, Canada recognizes the increasing interest of non-Arctic states and organizations and will work cooperatively with all willing partners to advance shared interests on safety and security."[55]

While careful to acknowledge Russia's rights and interests as an Arctic state, the defence policy also notes its role in the resurgence of major power competition globally and concomitant implications for peace and security.[56] "NATO Allies and other like-minded states have been re-examining how to deter a wide spectrum of challenges to the international order by maintaining advanced conventional military capabilities that could be used in the event of a conflict with a 'near-peer,'" the policy notes in the "state competition" section that immediately precedes the discussion about a changing Arctic. Highlighting that "NATO has also increased its attention to Russia's ability to project force from its Arctic territory into the North Atlantic, and its potential to challenge NATO's collective defence posture," the policy makes clear that "Canada and its NATO Allies have been clear that the Alliance will be ready to deter and defend against any potential threats, including against sea lines of communication and maritime approaches to Allied territory in the North Atlantic."[57] Despite Canada's reticence to have NATO adopt an explicit Arctic role over the past dec-

**Table 10.2: Enhancing Arctic Capability**

To enhance the Canadian Armed Forces' ability to operate in the Arctic and adapt to a changed security environment, the Defence team will:

106. Enhance the mobility, reach and footprint of the Canadian Armed Forces in Canada's North to support operations, exercises, and the Canadian Armed Forces' ability to project force into the region.

107. Align the Canadian Air Defence Identification Zone (CADIZ) with our sovereign airspace.

108. Enhance and expand the training and effectiveness of the Canadian Rangers to improve their functional capabilities within the Canadian Armed Forces.

109. Collaborate with the United States on the development of new technologies to improve Arctic surveillance and control, including the renewal of the North Warning System.

110. Conduct joint exercises with Arctic allies and partners and support the strengthening of situational awareness and information sharing in the Arctic, including with NATO.

Source: *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, p.20, 113.

ade,[58] the inclusion of this reference – as well as the commitment to "support the strengthening of situational awareness and information sharing in the Arctic, including with NATO"[59] – indicates a significant shift in official position.

## Final Reflections

Important questions and debates related to Russia's intentions and investments in reinvigorating its Arctic defence forces, NATO's role in the circumpolar world, and Canada's long-standing continental defence relationship with the United States need not push "soft" security and safety considerations to the margins. Indeed, given the multi-dimensional nature of emerging Arctic challenges, the Government of Canada has already adopted definitions of Arctic security that move beyond traditional frameworks fixated on military conflict to emphasize

broader human and environmental issues—the most pressing Arctic security and safety concerns according to government and Northern representatives.[60]

As noted above, in 2016 the Trudeau Government announced its intention to refresh *Canada's Northern Strategy* (2009) and *Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy* (2010) in a new Arctic and Northern Policy Framework for Canada that would incorporate both domestic and international aspects. Rooted in the principle of co-development with Northerners, Territorial and Provincial governments, and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis People, this "whole of government" initiative has involved unprecedented collaboration across 33 federal departments, as well as partnerships with Northerners and other stakeholders, on how to move forward with policy-making. Although the Framework remains a work in progress and has not been released, the consultation process affirmed six key thematic areas:

- Education, skills development and capacity building will unlock economic opportunities;
- Investment in social, transportation, energy and connectivity infrastructure supports all priorities;
- Climate change is a lived reality in Canada's Arctic and impacts all sectors;
- Science and Indigenous Knowledge can and must be brought together;
- Domestic and international spheres cannot be considered in isolation; and
- Security, safety and defence are linked to the economic, social and environmental well-being of Northerners

These thematic areas are all linked in a people-centric approach, with the well-being of people and communities core to both domestic policy and to Canada's global Arctic leadership. Accordingly, collaboration and partnership are predicated on ideas that Canadians living in the Arctic are best placed to make decisions in areas that impact them, Indigenous-Crown partnerships are key to addressing socio-economic gaps and

moving forward together, and the economic potential of the Arctic should be developed to the benefit of Northern residents.

In summary, Canada remains committed to working with its circumpolar neighbours to ensure Arctic remains a zone of peace and stability. Although increasing traffic and foreign presence heightens safety and security concerns in the region, blurring the lines between security, trade, investment, development, economic, and foreign policy, regional governance remains sophisticated and resilient. The Arctic Council, the Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS), Polar Code, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Biodiversity Convention, and International Maritime Organization (IMO) provide important mechanisms to engage with other Arctic states and the rest of the world. Furthermore, despite current tensions with Russia, we still cooperate on areas of mutual interest in an Arctic Council context, such as food security, science, permafrost, and emergency preparedness (including for search and rescue operations, maritime disaster, and oil spill response). As Canada seeks to position itself as a "Global Arctic leader," it cannot help but look across the North Pole and consider how its circumpolar plans align with those of the Russian Federation, even if the coming years bring an intensification of resurgent strategic competition and divergent interests elsewhere in the world.

**Notes**

[1] Department of National Defence (DND), *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (2017), 79, http://dgpaapp.forces.gc.ca/en/ canada-defence-policy/docs/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf.

[2] See, for example, P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Ryan Dean, *Canada's Northern Strategy under the Harper Conservatives: Key Speeches and Documents on Sovereignty, Security, and Governance, 2005-15* (Calgary: Centre for Military, Strategic and Security Studies/ Arctic Institute of North America, 2016). On Harper's early vision, see Klaus Dodds, "We are a Northern Country: Stephen Harper and the Canadian Arctic," *Polar Record* 47:4 (2011): 371-374.

[3] Jason Fekete, "Justin Trudeau says Canada 'is back at climate-change meeting," *National Post*, 30 November 2015.

[4] Liberal Party of Canada, "A New Plan for Canada's Environment and Economy" (August 2015), https://www.liberal.ca/files/2015/08/A-new-plan-for-Canadas-environment-and-economy.pdf.
[5] Tahnee Prior and Whitney Lackenbauer, "COP21: Why Are We Leaving the Arctic Out in the Cold?" *Nunatsiaq News*, 2 December 2015.
[6] "U.S.-Canada Joint Statement on Climate, Energy, and Arctic Leadership," 10 March 2016.
[7] Prime Minister of Canada, "Ministerial Mandate Letters," http://pm.gc.ca/eng/ministerial-mandate-letters.
[8] Gloria Galloway, "Canada drops opposition to UN indigenous rights declaration," *Globe and Mail*, 9 May 2016;
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[10] See, for example, Mary Simon, "Militarization and the Aboriginal Peoples," in Arctic Alternatives: Civility or Militarism in the Circumpolar North, ed. F. Griffiths (Toronto: Science for Peace/Samuel Stevens, 1992), 55-67; and Mary Simon, "Does Ottawa's Focus Look Backwards," *Nunatsiaq News*, 11 April 2008.
[11] Mary Simon, Interim Report on the Shared Arctic Leadership Model, 31 October 2016, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1481656672979/1485800424490.
[12] Lee Berthiaume, "Canada ready to re-engage with Russia, Iran, despite differences, Dion says," *Ottawa Citizen*, 11 November 2015.
[13] In January 2016, Dion reiterated that Canada hoped to resume dialogue with Russia, despite that country's military aggression in the Ukraine, and cited the Arctic as a region where Canada would benefit from re-engagement with its circumpolar neighbour. Scott Borgerson and Michael Byers, "The Arctic Front in the Battle to Contain Russia," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 March 2016. See also Matthew Fisher, "Allies wait for great defence commitment from Canada while Russia militarizes the Arctic," *National Post*, 4 February 2016; and Eva Salinas & Hannah Hoag [in conversation with Rob Huebert and Heather Exner-Pirot], "Canada Wants to Reopen Dialogue with Russia," *Arctic Deeply*, 17 February 2016, https://www.newsdeeply.com/arctic/articles/2016/02/17/canada-wants-to-reopen-dialogue-with-russia.
[14] See, for example, Kari Roberts, "Why Russia will Play by the Rules in the Arctic," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 21:2 (2015): 112-128; Adam Lajeunesse and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Canadian Arctic Security: Russia's Not Com-

ing," *OpenCanada/Arctic Deeply*, 19 April 2016, https://www.opencanada.org/features/canadian-arctic-security-russias-not-coming/; and Lackenbauer, "Canada & Russia: Toward an Arctic Agenda," *Global Brief* (Summer 2016): 21-25.

[15] See, for example, Kathleen Harris, "Canada to expel 4 Russian diplomats, reject credentials of 3 more," CBC news, 26 March 2018, https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-russia-diplomats-sanctions-1.4593062.

[16] See P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Rob Huebert, "Premier Partners: Canada, the United States and Arctic Security," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 20:3 (Fall 2014): 320-33.

[17] See Canada, *Iqaluit 2015: Development for the People of the North—Results Achieved during Canada's Arctic Council Chairmanship, 2013-2015* (Ottawa: Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2015); Heather Exner-Pirot, "Canada's Arctic Council Chairmanship (2013-2015): A Post-Mortem," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 22:1 (2016): 84-96; and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Conceptualizing 'One Arctic' as the 'Canadian Arctic'? Situating Canada's Arctic Council Chairmanship (2013-15)," in *One Arctic: The Arctic Council and Circumpolar Governance*, ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Heather Nicol, and Wilfrid Greaves (Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee / Centre on Foreign Policy and Federalism, 2017), 46-78. This "Safe Arctic Shipping" theme built upon previous Council recommendations, such as the landmark *Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment* (2009), as well as the ongoing work of multilateral mechanisms like the International Maritime Organization (IMO) through which Canada and other countries negotiated the Polar Code that entered into force on 1 January 2017. These initiatives reflect Canada's consistent advocacy for the protection of the Arctic environment, and reflect its interests as both a maritime nation and an Arctic coastal state that welcomes navigation in its waters, so long as maritime activities comply with domestic and international rules and regulations.

[18] "U.S.-Canada Joint Statement on Climate, Energy, and Arctic Leadership," 10 March 2016, http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2016/03/10/us-canada-joint-statement-climate-energy-and-arctic-leadership#sthash.XjRoT2R7.dpuf

[19] Sima Sahar Zerehi, "Trudeau-Obama shared Arctic leadership model a hit with Inuit and environmental groups," CBC News, 11 March 2016, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/trudeau-obama-washington-visit-arctic-promises-1.3486076.

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[21] "Canada's Oceans Protection Plan: What it means for Canada's regions," 7 November 2016, http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2016/11/07/canadas-oceans-protection-plan-what-it-means-canadas-regions.

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[24] See also Louie Porta, Erin Abou-Abssi, Jackie Dawson, and Olivia Mussells. "Shipping Corridors as a Framework for Advancing Marine Law and Policy in the Canadian Arctic." *Ocean & Coastal Law Journal* 22 (2017): 63-84.
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[26] The U.S.-Canada Joint Arctic Leaders' Statement explained that "taking into account the respective obligations of the United States and Canada under international law to protect and preserve the marine environment, these steps also support the goals of various international frameworks and commitments concerning pollution, including those reflected in the 1990 International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Cooperation, the 2013 Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic, and the U.S.-Canada Joint Marine Pollution Contingency Plan. Furthermore, with respect to areas of the Beaufort Sea where the U.S.-Canada maritime boundary has not yet been agreed, these practical arrangements are without prejudice to either side's position and demonstrate self-restraint, taking into account the principle of making every effort not to jeopardize or hamper reaching a final maritime boundary agreement."
[27] INAC, "FAQs on Actions being taken under the Canada-US Joint Arctic Statement," 20 December 2016, http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1482262705012/1482262722874.
[28] INAC, "FAQs on Actions."
[29] See, for example, Peter Taptuna's comments in John Van Dusen, "Nunavut, N.W.T. premiers slam Arctic drilling moratorium," CBC News North, 22 December 2016, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-premier-slams-arctic-drilling-moratorium-1.3908037. See also Rob Huebert, "Trudeau's Arctic Oil Decision a Fresh Example of Canada Ignoring the North," *Globe and Mail*, 6 January 2017; and "Northern Premiers want a say in Trudeau's New Arctic Policy," *Nunatsiaq News*, 30 January 2017.

[30] Heather Exner-Pirot, "Six Takeaways from this Week's U.S.-Canada Joint Arctic Statement," *Arctic Deeply*, 22 December 2016, https://www.opencanada.org/features/six-takeaways-weeks-us-canada-joint-arctic-statement/.
[31] Exner-Pirot, "Six Takeaways."
[32] Mary Simon, Minister's Special Representative on Arctic Leadership, *A New Shared Arctic Leadership Model*, March 2017, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1492708558500/1492709024236.
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[34] See P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Ryan Dean, eds., *Canada's Northern Strategy under the Harper Conservatives: Key Speeches and Documents on Sovereignty, Security, and Governance, 2006-15*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security (DCASS) No. 6 (Calgary and Waterloo: Centre for Military, Strategic and Security Studies/Centre on Foreign Policy and Federalism/Arctic Institute of North America, 2016).
[35] Address by Parliamentary Secretary Goldsmith-Jones, on behalf of Minister Dion, marking the 20th anniversary of the Arctic Council, Ottawa, 29 September 2016, http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1131189.
[36] "The Arctic Council at 20 Years: More Necessary than Ever," address by Parliamentary Secretary Pamela Goldsmith-Jones at Arctic Circle Assembly, Reykjavik, Iceland, 8 October 2016, http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1139819.
[37] John Higginbotham, "Perspective on the US-Canada Statement on the Arctic," *Centre for International Governance Innovation*, 9 January 2017, https://www.cigionline.org/articles/perspective-us-canada-statement-arctic.
[38] White House, "Joint Statement from President Donald J. Trump and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau," 13 February 2017, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/02/13/joint-statement-president-donald-j-trump-and-prime-minister-justin. On NORAD in this context, see Andrea Charron, "North

American Aerospace Defense Command and the Arctic: Beyond the Santa Tracker," in *North of 60: Toward a Renewed Canadian Arctic Agenda*, ed. John Higginbotham and Jennifer Spence (Waterloo: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2016), 83-88.

[39] Liberal Party of Canada, "Defence Platform [2015]," https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/royal-canadian-navy/, last accessed 21 October 2015.

[40] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 14.

[41] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 50. Most Canadian academic experts seem to have reached a consensus about the prospects of "resource" or "sovereignty wars" emanating from Arctic disputes. Previous proponents of the "sovereignty on thinning ice" school have largely abandoned their earlier arguments that Canadian sovereignty will be a casualty of climate change and foreign challenges. Instead, academic narratives anticipating potential conflict now emphasize how other international events (such as Russian aggression in the Ukraine) could "spill over" into the Arctic or how new non-Arctic state and non-state actors might challenge or undermine Canadian sovereignty and security. See, for example, Rob Huebert, "Why Canada, US Must Resolve their Arctic Border Disputes," *Globe and Mail,* 21 October 2014; Huebert, "How Russia's Move into Crimea Upended Canada's Arctic Strategy," *Globe and Mail,* 2 April 2014; Huebert, "Is Canada Ready for Russia's Hardball Approach to the North Pole," *Globe and Mail*, 30 January 2014; Derek Burney and Fen Osler Hampson, "Arctic Alert: Russia is Taking Aim at the North," *Globe and Mail*, 9 March 2015; Michael Byers, "The Northwest Passage Dispute Invites Russian Mischief," *National Post*, 28 April 2015; Chris Sorensen, "The World's First Ice-Busting Yachts Open the High Arctic," *Maclean's*, 30 December 2015; Scott Borgerson and Michael Byers, "The Arctic Front in the Battle to Contain Russia," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 March 2016. For a less alarmist view of Russia, see Adam Lajeunesse and Whitney Lackenbauer, "Canadian Arctic Security: Russia's Not Coming," *Arctic Deeply*, 14 April 2016, https://www.opencanada. org/features/canadian-arctic-security-russias-not-coming.

[42] See, for example, P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Adam Lajeunesse, "The Canadian Armed Forces in the Arctic: Building Appropriate Capabilities." *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies,* 16/4 (March 2016): 7-66; and Lackenbauer and Lajeunesse, "The Emerging Arctic Security Environment: Putting the Military in its (Whole of Government) Place," in *Whole of Government through an Arctic Lens,* P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Heather Nicol eds. (Antigonish: Mulroney Institute on Government, 2017), 1-36.

[43] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 51.

[44] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 60.

[45] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 80.
[46] See, for example, Lackenbauer and Lajeunesse, "Canadian Armed Forces in the Arctic," and Lackenbauer, "From 'Defending Sovereignty' to Comprehensive Security in a Whole of Government Framework: Government Narratives of Arctic Sovereignty and Security in the Harper Era" in *Understanding Sovereignty and Security in the Circumpolar Arctic*, eds. Wilfrid Greaves and P. Whitney Lackenbauer (forthcoming 2019).
[47] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 80.
[48] See, for example, Paul Kaludjak, "The Inuit Are Here, Use Us," *Ottawa Citizen*, 18 July 2007; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, *Nilliajut: Inuit Perspectives on Security, Patriotism and Sovereignty* (Ottawa: Inuit Qaujisarvingat, 2013); and Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation, *National Roundtable on Arctic Emergency Preparedness: Report of Proceedings* (Toronto: Munk-Gordon Arctic Security Program, 2014).
[49] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 80; see also 15, 39, 64.
[50] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 35.
[51] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 37, 102, 109.
[52] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 39, 64, 65, 71, 71, 109, 110, 111.
[53] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 90.
[54] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 80. See also Lackenbauer and Huebert, "Premier Partners."
[55] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 90. Given Canada's longstanding position that its sovereignty in the Arctic is well-established, there is unlikely to be any reversing of its basic stance on the rights and roles of Arctic states in regional governance. With Prime Minister Trudeau having criticized his predecessor for allegedly politicizing the scientifically-informed legal process to delineate the outer limits of Canada's continental shelf in the Arctic, Canada is likely to emphasize openness, transparency, the rule of law, and science-based decision-making as it navigates the process established by article 76 of UNCLOS for claims to extended continental shelves. See Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon, *Breaking the Ice: Canada, Sovereignty, and the Arctic Extended Continental Shelf* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2017). Similarly, the Liberal government is unlikely to succumb to alarmist narratives suggesting that military threats warrant a deviation from our established approach to managing outstanding sovereignty and status of water disputes. See, for example, Borgerson and Byers, "Arctic Front in the Battle to Contain Russia"; and Levon Sevunts, "Canada's defence review and the Arctic," *Radio Canada International*, 8 April 2016, http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2016/04/08/canadas-defence-review-and-the-arctic/.

[56] As Ernie Regehr notes, "the Russia-related alarms raised by officials, analysts, and Parliamentarians through the Senate and House of Commons reports [released in recent years] were not carried over into the Government's new defence policy statement. It has only three references to Russia, and only one of those is linked to the Arctic, though even it doesn't suggest a threatening posture within or toward the Arctic itself. Instead, it notes a NATO concern that Russia is once again expanding its capacity to project force from the Arctic into the North Atlantic." Ernie Regehr, "Arctic Security and the Canadian Defence Policy Statement of 2017," 31 August 2017, http://thesimonsfoundation.ca/highlights/arctic-security-and-canadian-defence-policy-statement-2017.
[57] DND, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 79-80.
[58] A U.S. diplomatic cable released through Wikileaks revealed that PM Harper opposed the inclusion of the Arctic on NATO's agenda, warned NATO's secretary-general that the alliance has "no role" in the Arctic, and suggested that pressure for involvement is coming from nations who want to exert their influence in a region "where they don't belong." Canada also apparently asked NATO to remove Arctic from all future agendas. Quoted in John Ivison, "Canada Under Increasing Pressure to Come Up with Co-ordinated NATO Response to Russia in Arctic," *National Post*, 23 April 2014, http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canada-under-increasing-pressure-to-come-up-with-co-ordinated-nato-response-to-russia-in-arctic. Canadian media and academic opinion is divided. Some commentators suggesting that Canada should maintain its stance against NATO involvement on the grounds of alienating/antagonizing Russia (or at least playing into Putin's hands by appearing to validate his suggestion of Western aggressive intentions against Russia's Arctic). See, for example, P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Canada & Russia: Toward an Arctic Agenda," *Global Brief* (Summer/Fall 2016): 21-25. Others see it as promoting greater European Union involvement in Arctic affairs writ large, such as Robert W. Murray and Tom Keating, "Containing Russia Should Not Mean Bringing NATO to the Arctic," *Globe and Mail*, 25 April 2014. Others worry that NATO involvement would amplify the misconception that Arctic regional dynamics (eg. boundary disputes, continental shelves, Arctic resources, shipping lanes) are likely to precipitate conflict between Arctic states. Others push for stronger NATO involvement to meet heightened Russian military threat, stand up to Russian intimidation, and show strong deterrent. See, for example, Aurel Braun, "Canada Needs to Counter Russian Aggression with Arctic Security," Macdonald-Laurier Institute, 25 September 2014, http://www.macdonaldlaurier.ca/canada-needs-counter-russian-aggression-arctic-security/; Murray Brewster, "Join Ballistic Missile Defence, Involve

NATO in Arctic, Experts Tell Trudeau," *Global News*, 3 November 2015, http://globalnews.ca/news/2315862/join-ballistic-missile-defence-involve-nato-in-arctic-experts-tell-trudeau/; Huebert in Levon Sevunts, "Canada's Defence Review and the Arctic," *Radio Canada International*, 8 April 2016, http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2016/04/08/canadas-defence-review-and-the-arctic/; Rob Huebert, "How the Warsaw NATO Summit Altered Arctic Security," 18 July 2016, https://www.newsdeeply.com/arctic/community/2016/07/18/how-the-warsaw-nato-summit-altered-arctic-security; and Huebert, "NATO, NORAD and the Arctic: A Renewed Concern," in *North of 60: Toward a Renewed Canadian Arctic Agenda*, ed. John Higginbotham and Jennifer Spence (Waterloo: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2016), 91-99.

[59] *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, 113.

[60] See P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Towards a Comprehensive Approach: Defence, Security, and Safety," in *North of 60: Toward a Renewed Canadian Arctic Agenda*, ed. John Higginbotham and Jennifer Spence (Waterloo: Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2016), 43-47.

CHAPTER 3

# Arctic security perspectives from Russia

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Russia's security strategies in the Arctic are a matter of ongoing controversy both in the mass media and amongst members of the academic community.

The outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis and Moscow's military intervention in the Syrian conflict have spurred new accusations of Russia being an aggressive and militarist power, not only in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, but also in the Arctic.[1]

According to some Western analysts, because of Russia's economic weakness and technological backwardness, the country tends to resort to military-coercive instruments to protect its national interests in the Arctic. By extension, this could inevitably lead to a regional arms race, re-militarization of the High North, and military conflict. According to this logic, these analysts expected that Moscow would dramatically increase its military activities and presence in the region, as well as accelerate its military modernization programs, in the wake of the Ukrainian and Syrian crises.[2]

These concerns did not materialize. Instead of significantly expanding its military build-up and military activities in the region, the Kremlin made the socio-economic development of the Arctic Zone of the

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Russian Federation (AZRF) a priority. In parallel, Moscow managed to bracket out Arctic cooperation from its current tensions with the West so that it could maintain relations with other regional players on a cooperative track.

This chapter explores whether Russia is really a revisionist power in the Arctic or whether Russia's actions can be evaluated in more positive terms, particularly as a country that is interested in the region's security and stability, and open to international cooperation in the High North. Before addressing this main research question, however, the Russian threat perceptions and doctrinal underpinnings of Moscow's military strategy in the region should be analyzed.

## Threat perceptions and security doctrines

In the decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Kremlin paid little attention to the Arctic. With the end of the Cold War, the region lost its former military-strategic significance for Moscow as a zone of potential confrontation with the U.S./NATO. In the Yeltsin era, the economic potential of the region was underestimated. Moreover, in the 1990s, Russia's Arctic regions were perceived by the federal government as a burden or source of various socioeconomic problems rather than an economically promising region. Moscow almost abandoned the far northern regions which had to rely on themselves (or foreign humanitarian assistance) for sustenance.

The situation started to change slowly in the early 2000s, when the general socioeconomic situation in Russia improved and the Putin government – with its ambitious agenda of Russia's revival – came to power. President Dmitry Medvedev approved the first Russian post-Soviet Arctic strategy titled *Foundations of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Up to and Beyond 2020*.[3] The six-page document listed the Russian national interests in the region as follows: to develop the resources of the Arctic; to turn the Northern Sea Route (NSR) into a unified national transport corridor and line of communication; and to maintain the region as a zone of peace and international cooperation. According to plans, the multifaceted development of the northern territories is expected to culminate in the Arctic becoming Russia's "leading strategic resource base" between 2016–2020.

The strategic security goal was defined as "maintenance of the necessary combat potential of general-purpose troops (forces)," strengthening the Coast Guard of the Federal Security Service (FSS) and border controls in the AZRF, and establishing technical control over straits and river estuaries along the whole NSR. Thus, the Russian armed forces deployed in the AZRF, which were to be organized under a single command (the Arctic Group of Forces (AGF)), were charged not simply with defending territory but also with protecting Russia's economic interests in the region. In turn, this required increasing the capacity of the Northern Fleet, which was (and is) seen as an important instrument for demonstrating Russia's sovereign rights in the High North as well as protecting its economic interests in the region.

Although the document was designed primarily for domestic needs (particularly, it aimed at setting priorities for development in the AZRF) many foreign analysts tended to interpret the Strategy-2008 as "solid evidence" of Russia's revisionist aspirations in the region.[4] For them, Russian plans to "define the outer border of the AZRF," create the AGF, and build a network of border guard stations along the coastline of the Arctic Ocean were evidence of Moscow's expansionism in the region. The Kremlin's mantra that these initiatives were of a purely defensive nature were treated with great scepticism.

Since Strategy-2008 was of a rather general nature, its content needed to be made more concrete and specific. The provisions of the document also needed to be outlined in details and updated regularly by other documents. On 20 February 2013, President Vladimir Putin approved *The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation* (Strategy-2013),[5] which was both the follow-up and an update of the Strategy-2008. It should be noted that this document could not be considered as Russia's full-fledged Arctic doctrine because it covered only the AZRF rather than the whole Arctic region. In this sense, the document was comparable with the Canadian (2009) and Norwegian (2006) strategies for the development of their northern territories.

Strategy-2013 had some international dimensions, including Moscow's intention to legally define Russia's continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean and file its new application to the UN Commission on the Limits

of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), as well as the need for international cooperation in areas such as exploration and exploitation of natural resources, environmental protection, preservation of Indigenous peoples' traditional economy, and culture. The main objective of the document, however, was first and foremost to provide a doctrinal/conceptual basis for the sustainable development of the AZRF. In short, it was designed for domestic rather than international consumption.

The new Russian strategy was much more open to international cooperation to solve numerous Arctic problems and ensure the sustainable development of the region at large. Similar to the 2008 document, Strategy-2013 emphasised Russia's national sovereignty over the AZRF and NSR and called for the protection of the country's national interests in the area. Along with this rather traditional stance, the new strategy articulated an impressive list of priority areas for cooperation with potential international partners. This provided Strategy-2013 with a more positive international image than the previous document.

As far as the purely military aspects of Strategy-2013 were concerned, the document set up the following tasks:

- Ensuring a favourable operative regime for Russian troops deployed in the AZRF to adequately meet military dangers and threats to Russia's national security.
- Providing the AGF with military training and combat readiness to protect Russian interests in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and deter potential threats to and aggression against the country.
- Improving the AGF's structure and composition, providing these forces with modern armaments and infrastructure.
- Improving air and maritime space monitoring systems.
- Applying dual-use technologies to ensure both AZRF's military security and sustainable socioeconomic development.
- Completing hydrographic works to define more precisely the external boundaries of Russia's territorial waters, EEZ and continental shelf.[6]

In sum, Strategy-2013 invited further discussions on Russia's Arctic policies, rather than offering a comprehensive and sound doctrine. To become an efficient national strategy, it should be further clarified, specified, and instrumentalised in a series of federal laws, regulations and task programs. The Russian Arctic strategy should also be better designed for international consumption. Although the Russian Arctic doctrine of 2013 clearly addressed soft security, foreign audiences – by virtue of inertia – continue to perceive that kind of Russian document as a manifestation of Moscow's expansionist plans in the High North.

The Ukrainian crisis entailed an essential revision of the Russian national security policies' conceptual/doctrinal basis, beginning with Russia's military strategy. On 26 December 2014, President Vladimir Putin approved a new version of Russian military doctrine. Although the Arctic was mentioned only once in the document, it is remarkable that, for the first time, the protection of Russia's national interests in the Arctic in peacetime was assigned to the Russian armed forces.[7] In general, the new military doctrine retained its defensive character, but Russia's neighbours (including those in the High North) remained concerned with Moscow's intentions in the region.

In July 2015, President Putin approved a new version of Russia's maritime doctrine[8] which identified the Arctic as one of two regions (along with the North Atlantic) where NATO activities and international competition for natural resources and sea routes continued to grow and required an "adequate response" from Russia. According to the document, naval forces and the nuclear icebreaker fleet should be modernized by the 2020s.

President Putin also approved a new national security strategy in late December 2015.[9] The Arctic was mentioned three times in this document. First, the region was identified as an area where the international competition for natural resources of the world ocean could increase. Second, the Arctic was described as an important transport/communication corridor which is crucial for Russia's economic security. Third, the High North was depicted as a region of international cooperation, peace and stability.

In November 2016, President Putin signed a new version of the *Russian Foreign Policy Concept*[10] which mentioned the Arctic twice. First, it was described as a region for potential cooperation with Canada. Second, it was mentioned in the special section on the High North. The document underlined the importance of cooperation between the regional players in areas such as sustainable development of natural resources, transport systems (including the NSR), environment protection, and preservation of peace and stability. The concept also emphasized the need to strengthen regional multilateral institutions, such as the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC). The document insisted particularly on the need to insulate the Arctic from current tensions between Russia and the West and to prevent any military confrontation in the region.

To summarize, while the Ukrainian crisis has affected Moscow's threat perceptions in the Arctic to some extent, it has not significantly changed the Kremlin's general attitude to the region which, according to the Russian leadership, should remain a zone of peace and security. Cooperation should be a dominant paradigm in this region.

## Hard security strategy

As mentioned above, a radical shift in Russia's threat perceptions in the Arctic region has taken place over the last quarter of a century. This shift engenders a clear tendency towards the increasing role of soft rather than hard security-related concerns. These soft security concerns include ensuring Russia's access to and control of the natural resources and transport routes in the region, climate change mitigation, and cleaning up environmental "hot spots." At the same time, some Russian strategists believe that various security threats and challenges in the region require the preservation and further development of certain military capabilities and an expanded presence in the North. They note that the ongoing Ukrainian crisis has negatively affected Russia's relations with NATO and its member states, with NATO suspending several cooperative projects with Russia including military-to-military contacts and the development of confidence- and security-building measures.

In contrast to some pessimistic expectations, however, there has been no substantial change in Russia's perceptions of the role of military

power in the Arctic. Moscow's military strategies remain geared towards the attainment of three major goals: first, to demonstrate and ascertain Russia's sovereignty over the AZRF, including the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf; second, to protect its economic interests in the High North; and third, to demonstrate that Russia retains its great power status and has world-class military capabilities.[11] In a sense, Russian military strategies are comparable with those of other coastal states (especially the U.S. and Canadian ones).

The significant degeneration of the Soviet-era military machine in the Arctic in the 1990s and early 2000s left the Russian nuclear and conventional forces badly in need of modernisation in order to effectively meet new challenges and threats. The main idea behind the modernisation plans is to make the Russian armed forces in the Arctic more compact, better equipped, and better trained. The Russian armed forces' modernisation efforts started well before the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis, namely with the launch of the third State Rearmament Program (2007–2015) which covered both nuclear and conventional components.

The modernisation programme of Russia's strategic forces in the North includes the renewal of its fleet of eight strategic nuclear submarines, and was not influenced by the Ukrainian crisis. Currently, only six Delta IV-class submarines will undergo the process of modernisation. In the future, the new Borey-class fourth-generation nuclear-powered strategic submarines are planned to replace the Typhoon- and Delta IV-class submarines. The first Borey-class submarine, the *Yuri Dolgoruky*, has been in operation with the Northern Fleet since January 2013. Three other Borey-class submarines (the *Prince Vladimir,* the *Prince Oleg*, and the *Prince Pozharsky*) designed for the Northern Fleet will be operational between 2018–2020.[12]

In contrast with the strategic component, Russia's conventional forces' composition and posture were affected by the Ukrainian crisis. In order to reorganise Russian land forces in the AZRF in a more efficient way, plans were announced to transform the motorised infantry and marine brigades located near Pechenga (Murmansk Region) into the Arctic special force unit. Soldiers in this unit were to be trained in a special programme and equipped with modern personal equipment for

military operations in the Arctic by 2016. As mentioned above, all conventional forces in the AZRF were to be organized into the AGF, to be led by a joint Arctic command.[13]

The Ukrainian crisis and NATO's reaction to Russian actions, however, precipitated some adjustments to Russia's military planning. While two Pechenga-based brigades were left in place, the Arctic brigade was created ahead of schedule (in January 2015) and deployed in Alakurtti, close to the Finnish–Russian border. Given the "increased NATO military threat" in the North, President Putin decided to accelerate the creation of a new strategic command, "North," which was established in December 2014 (three years ahead of the schedule). It was also announced that the second Arctic brigade will be formed and stationed in the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district east of the Ural Mountains within the Arctic Circle.[14]

The Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu also announced the establishment of two new Arctic coast defence divisions by 2018 as part of an effort to strengthen security along the NSR. One of them is likely to be stationed on the Kola Peninsula (in addition the existing military units), the other in the eastern Arctic (Chukotka Peninsula). The new forces will be tasked with anti-assault, anti-sabotage, and anti-aircraft defence duties along the NSR.[15] They will both interact closely with law-enforcement authorities like the Ministry of Interior, the National Guard, and the Border Guard Service (BGS).

The growing tension with NATO has forced Russia to pay more attention to its air-defence force units, which are stationed in the AZRF – on the Kola Peninsula, near Severodvinsk (Arkhangelsk region), Chukotka, and on several Russian islands in the Arctic: Novaya Zemlya, Franz Josef Land, the New Siberian Islands, and Wrangel Island. Some of these units have re-established old Soviet airfields and military bases in the region. These units, which are equipped with (among other things) RS-26 Rubezh coastal missile systems, S-300 air-defence missiles, and the Pantsyr-S1 anti-aircraft artillery weapon system,[16] were merged into a joint task force in October 2014. Measures to increase Moscow's military potential in the region include the creation of a new air-force and air-defence army, including regiments armed with MiG-31 inter-

ceptor aircraft, S-400 air-defence missile systems (to replace the S-300 systems), and radar units.[17] One goal is to restore continuous radar coverage along Russia's entire northern coast, which was lost in the 1990s. To that end, a total of thirteen airfields, an air force test range, and ten radar sites and direction centres would be established in the Arctic in the coming years.

The strengthening of the BGS represents one of the most important priorities of Russia's national security policies in the High North. The first Arctic border guard unit, whose aim was to monitor the circulation of ships and poaching at sea, was created as early as 1994. The unit was reorganized in 2004–2005, and new Arctic units were established in border guard stations in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk in 2009. Furthermore, two new border guard commands – one in Murmansk for the western AZRF regions, and one in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky for the eastern Arctic regions – have been established. Border guards are now assigned with the task of dealing with new soft security threats and challenges, such as the establishment of reliable border control systems, the introduction of special visa regulations to certain regions, and the implementation of technological controls over fluvial zones and sites along the NSR which are currently monitored from the air by border guard aircrafts and on the land and sea by the North-Eastern Border Guard Agency. The Russian border guards plan to establish a global monitoring network from Murmansk to Wrangel Island. All in all, Moscow plans to build twenty border guard stations along its Arctic coastline.[18]

Another structural change is an ongoing reorganisation of the Russian Coast Guard (part of the BGS), which now has a wider focus in the Arctic: in addition to the traditional protection of biological resources in the Arctic Ocean, its top priorities now include oil and gas installations and shipping along the NSR. There are plans to equip the Coast Guard in the AZRF with the brand new vessels of project 22,100. The Okean-class ice-going patrol ship, the *Polyarnaya Zvezda* (Polar Star), is currently undergoing sea trials in the Baltic Sea. Vessels of this class can break up to 31.4-inch-thick ice. They have an endurance of 60 days and a range of 12,000 nautical miles at 20 knots. They are equipped with a Ka-27 helicopter and can be supplied with Gorizont drones.[19]

The attention which Russia now pays to the Coast Guard is in line with what other coastal states do (especially Norway and Denmark). Moreover, Russia actively partook in the creation of an Arctic Coast Guard Forum which was established by the coastal states in November 2015.

Moscow argues that the Russian build-up is defensive in nature, and that the numbers of additional armed forces are small. The Kremlin posits that these activities are prudent, given the importance of the North to Russia's future economic development plans, the increasing permeability of Russia's vast northern borders, and the anticipated increase in commercial shipping along Russia's north as Arctic sea ice melts.

## Soft security agenda

The Kremlin has a busy domestic security agenda which has been prioritized over the international problems in the region. Russia's leadership realises that most of the threats and challenges to the AZRF originate from inside rather than outside the country. These problems are rooted in a confluence of factors, including: the degradation of Soviet-era economic, transport and social infrastructure in the region; the current resource-oriented model of the Russian economy; numerous ecological problems generated by the Soviet model of industrialism and military activities; and the lack of funds and managerial skills in Russia to properly develop the AZRF.

The ***economic dimension*** of the Russian soft security strategy has the following priorities for the AZRF: sustainable economic activity and increasing prosperity of Arctic communities; sustainable use of natural, including living, resources; and development of transport infrastructure (including aviation, marine and surface transport), information technologies and modern telecommunications.[20]

Russian economic strategic priorities were slightly revised in the aftermath of the Ukrainian crisis. First and foremost, Moscow had to adjust its energy policy priorities. In view of the lack of Western technologies and investment, the offshore projects were slowed down or postponed. The emphasis was made on LNG production, which is seen as a more promising export-oriented project than the oil-related ones (Ya-

mal LNG plant in Sabetta). To counter the Western sanctions, Russia has invited China, South Korea, India and Vietnam, the countries which did not introduce sanctions against Russia, to support its Arctic projects through funding, technology and joint development projects.

The ***environmental dimension*** of Russia's AZRF strategy includes: monitoring and assessment of the state of the environment in the Arctic; prevention and elimination of environmental pollution in the Arctic; Arctic marine environment protection; biodiversity conservation in the Arctic; climate change impact assessment in the Arctic; and prevention and elimination of ecological emergencies in the Arctic, including those relating to climate change.[21]

Moscow is seriously concerned about the environmental situation in its Arctic region. As a result of intensive industrial and military activity, many AZRF areas are heavily polluted and pose serious health hazards. Russian scientists have identified 27 so-called "impact zones," where pollution has led to environmental degradation and increased morbidity in the local population. The main impact zones are the Murmansk region (10% of total pollutants for the 27 impact zones), the Norilsk urban agglomeration (over 30%), the West Siberian oil and gas fields (over 30%), and the Arkhangelsk region (approximately 5%).[22] In total, some 15% of the AZRF territory is polluted or contaminated.[23]

In 2011, the Russian Government launched a programme worth 2.3 billion roubles to clean the AZRF, including the Franz Joseph Land and Novaya Zemlya Archipelagos. By the end of 2016, some 42,000 tons of waste had been removed from these archipelagos and 349 hectares of insular land had been cleaned.[24] In 2015, another AZRF cleaning programme was launched – this time with a 21-billion rouble funding envelope. By the end of the following year, the cleaning of Wrangel Island – including the removal by the Russian military of 36,477 barrels and 264 tons of scrap metal – was nearly complete.[25] A comprehensive analysis of the environmental situation in another seven major AZRF areas had

been planned, but the federal government has been unable to find reliable contractors to conduct the requisite studies.[†]

Nuclear safety in the High North is also a matter that encourages Russia and other Arctic states to cooperate. Notably, more than 200 decommissioned nuclear reactors from submarines and icebreakers from the Soviet period are stored on the Kola Peninsula – a Soviet "legacy" that is especially problematic for neighbouring countries such as Norway, Finland, and Sweden. It should be noted that the U.S.-Russian Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (Nunn-Lugar) of 1991–2012[26] and the Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Program in the Russian Federation (*Framework Agreement on a Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Program in the Russian Federation 2003*)[27] played a significant role in nuclear waste treatment.

The Russian Government programme on nuclear and radiological safety for 2008–2015 succeeded in dismantling 195 retired nuclear submarines (97% of the total quantum), removing 98.8% of radioisotope thermoelectric generators from service, and dismantling 86% of these generators. Centralized long-term storage facilities for spent nuclear fuel were constructed. Moreover, 53 hazardous nuclear facilities were decommissioned, 270 hectares of contaminated land was remediated, and open water storage of radioactive waste was ended.[28]

Russia has supported and vigorously participated in developing all the UN-related environmental initiatives ranging from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report (2014) to the International Maritime Organization's Polar Code (2014–2015) and the Paris agreement on climate change (2015). Moscow has also actively participated in the AC working and expert groups involved in environmental research and assessment.

The ***social dimension*** of Moscow's soft security strategy focuses on health of the people living and working in the Arctic; education and cultural heritage; prosperity and capacity building for children and the

[†] Similarly, the cleaning of the Russian mining villages on Spitsbergen, planned for 2011–2013, was never implemented.

youth; gender equality; and enhancing well being and eradicating poverty among Arctic people.[29]

Although good ideas have been articulated, implementation remains problematic – something true of many areas of Russian public policy. The path to modernisation and innovation in the AZRF charted by the Russian Government must begin to move from policy declarations to actual implementation of specific, realistic projects in the region. The Kremlin appears to understand the need for constructive dialogue and deeper political engagement with all of Russia's AZRF regions, municipalities, Indigenous people, and non-governmental organisations (e.g. the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, as well as environmental groups and human rights activists). Moscow generally encourages these actors to work with international partners – unless, of course, such engagement assumes a separatist character or involves attempts to challenge Moscow's foreign policy prerogatives. In practice, however, the federal bureaucracy's policies and approaches will often confront the projects of subnational actors and civil society groups. Instead of using the resources of these actors in a creative way, Moscow tries to control them. In so doing, the state undermines their initiative, making them passive, both domestically and internationally.

## Conclusions

The post-Cold War era brought a significant shift in Russia's threat perceptions and security policies in the High North. In contrast with the Cold War era, when the Arctic was a zone for global confrontation between the USSR and the U.S./NATO, Moscow now sees this region as a platform for international cooperation. The Kremlin now believes that there are no serious hard security threats to the AZRF and that the soft security agenda is more important.

While some media, politicians, and strategic analysts portray the changes in Russia's military capabilities as a significant military build-up and even a renewed arms race in the region, the real picture is far from this apocalyptical scenario. It is more accurate to characterize the military developments as limited modernization and increases or changes in equipment, force levels, and force structure. Some of these changes – for example, the creation of new Russian Arctic units, commissioning more

sophisticated and better armed warships, and the establishment of new command structures in the north – have little or nothing to do with power projection into the potentially disputed areas where the Arctic coastal states' claims overlap or into the region at large. Instead, they are for the patrolling and protecting of recognized national territories that are becoming more accessible, including for illegal activities, such as overfishing, poaching, smuggling, and uncontrolled migration. Others changes – such as modernization of Russian strategic nuclear forces – may have more to do with maintaining a deterrent rather than developing offensive capabilities. In other words, it is safe to assume that these programmes do not provoke an arms race or undermine regional cooperation.

Moscow is mostly concerned with the soft security challenges to the AZRF, such as dependence on extractive industries and export of energy products, socioeconomic disparities between Russia's northern regions, degradation of urban infrastructure, debilitating ecological problems, and threats to Indigenous peoples' traditional economies and way of life.

In its foreign policy, Russia has clearly demonstrated that it has a preference for soft power instruments (diplomatic, economic, and cultural) in the Arctic theatre, as well as activity and discourse *via* multilateral institutions. Moscow has developed a pragmatic international strategy which aims at using the Arctic cooperative programmes and regional institutions for solving first and foremost Russia's specific problems rather than addressing abstract challenges. Russia's pragmatism should be taken into account by other regional players and should not be misinterpreted. Currently, there is no Russian "hidden agenda" in the Arctic. Moscow insists that its strategy in the region is predictable and constructive rather than aggressive or improvised. The Kremlin is quite clear about its intentions in the region, insisting that Russia does not want to be a revisionist power or troublemaker in the Arctic. To achieve its national goals in the region, Russia will use peaceful diplomatic, economic and cultural means, and act through international organisations and forums, rather than unilaterally.

The Russian leadership believes that the Arctic cooperative agenda could include the following areas: climate change mitigation, environ-

mental protection, emergency response, air and maritime safety (including the Polar Code implementation, charting safe maritime routes, and cartography), search and rescue operations, Arctic research, indigenous peoples, cross- and trans-border cooperative projects, and culture. In order to prevent potential conflicts, avoid misunderstandings, and facilitate regional cooperation, Russia suggests that the Arctic states should be clear about their military policies and doctrines and should include arms control initiatives and confidence- and security-building measures in their bilateral or multilateral relations in the Arctic. To concretize this ambitious agenda, solid institutional support is needed. For this reason, the regional (the Arctic Council and BEAC) and global (International Maritime Organization, UN Environment Program, UN Development Program, etc.) governance institutions, which have slowed down their activities in the Arctic because of the recent tensions between Russia and the West, should be reinvigorated.

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CHAPTER 4

# A Tale of "Two" Russias?*

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*Foreign Affairs* and *The Economist*, indeed most international affairs journals, have proclaimed the return of great power politics. What is more, the key agitator in this soon to be new-world-system is Russia. Since the 2014 annexation of territory (Crimea) from Ukraine, Russia has proven an aggressor in its near abroad engaged in cyber and information operations, meddled in elections conducted in Western states, poisoned several in Britain, probed the air boundaries of many states and their maritime vessels with its interceptors, and invested in new defence capabilities including a serious program to circumvent existing ballistic missile defences with hypersonic vehicles. The logical conclusion could be none other than that Russia poses a threat to its neighbours and beyond and must be contained as, according to the Washington think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), "Russia's shift toward a more belligerent security posture is an enduring reality, not an aberration."[1]

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In other words, expect to pull out your neorealism primer, double down on sanctions against Russia, and brush up on deterrence theory even at the risk of hardening Moscow moderates. Surely, aggressive behaviour and policies in certain parts of the world or with respect to particular issues portends the same behaviour in all areas? And yet, Russian doctrines and actions vis-à-vis the Arctic are not entirely in keeping with the evidence that makes the West's perceived geopolitical enemy #1. Despite being the largest Arctic power measured by northern population, gross domestic product (GDP – real and potential), size of territory, and military assets/capabilities, it remains committed to cooperative action in the Arctic. Are there then two Russias? If so, should the West treat them differently?

## Two Russias?

We suggest that there are consistent examples of Russia seeking what theorists call a liberal intergovernmental approach[2] to manage/mitigate conflicts in the Arctic. In other words, Russia will work with other states and actors to achieve international cooperation and solutions to issues of shared concern in the Arctic. For example, Russia:

1) continues to support use of the *UN Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS) to manage disagreements including the delimitation of its continental shelves;[3]
2) was instrumental in the creation of the Arctic Coast Guard Forum in 2015;
3) supports the Arctic Council's mandates enthusiastically and lobbied for the International Maritime Organization's now mandatory *Polar Code*; and
4) is still guided by two Arctic doctrines (albeit written pre-2014)[4] that enumerate Russia's national Arctic interest to be that of cooperation, the primary impetus being the importance of the development (read predictably and sustainably) of Russia's Arctic Zone to Moscow's overall economic stability and success.

According to Moscow, NATO activity (be it its expanded membership or increased military activity by member states that are also Arctic littoral states) and the growing competition for resources provide justification for Russia to revise its military strategy in 2014[5] assigning protection of Russian Arctic assets[6] to the Russian military and the need for more maritime capabilities in its 2015 revised maritime doctrine.[7]

Akin to squeezing a balloon, increased pressure exerted or perceived in one area begets a reaction in another. Russia's aggression against Ukraine in the Donbas region and illegal seizure of Crimea in 2014 prompted Western reactions. Predictably, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) re-evaluated their threat postures regarding Russia and policy language/positions changed. NORAD, for example, is increasingly concerned with the reach of Russia's cruise missiles.[8] Norway hosted *TRIDENT JUNCTURE* in November 2018 which had an Article 5 (collective defence) scenario and included the 29 members of NATO, as well as Sweden and Finland.[9] The U.S. Navy (USN) revised its 2009 Arctic Road Map in 2014[10] to enhance its ability to operate in the Arctic: a continued U.S. Coast Guard surface concern and responsibility. Meanwhile, in 2014 Russia was kicked out of the G8, Arctic Chiefs of Defence Staff talks were suspended, and NATO-Russian Council activity all but ceased.

A reminder of the egregious and numerous examples of Russian complicity and aid to a murderous Syrian government are a reflexive, even required retort, in Western circles to what may be only discreet examples of better behaviour in the Arctic. Certainly, the annexation of territory from a sovereign state in modern times demands more than strongly worded letters of condemnation. Logic suggests that only the naïve would separate such behaviour from more cooperative behaviour seemingly contained to the Arctic. What remains then is an insuperable obstacle, constructed by both sides, to better relations. Neorealists would counsel NATO and NORAD to spend more and increase military presence in the Arctic even at the risk of creating a security dilemma for Russia requiring it to continue to do the same.

If, however, the West can continue to encourage positive Russian actions in the Arctic while defending against its behaviour elsewhere and protecting the homeland, then Arctic issues may represent a conduit to improved relations. The Arctic Council, the premier regional intergovernmental forum, has fostered cooperation in the Arctic and created avenues for dialogue to address other Russian policies/actions of concern. This does not mean that the West excuses, ignores, accepts, or capitulates to Russian behaviour elsewhere. On the contrary. NATO is more important than ever, especially in strategically critical zones like the GIUK gap [Greenland-Iceland-UK] – the maritime corridor that links Russia's Northern Fleet to the North Atlantic. The NORAD-led Evolution of North American Defense (EvoNAD) study is vital to consider all of the future threats facing North America, including those posed by Russia. In short, it is time for North American and European allies to both encourage positive Russian behaviour as well as protect against Russian threats. In other words, adopt a flexible but strategic approach to Russia that heeds the caution of realists but embraces the opportunities to cooperate, especially in the Arctic.

## Dealing with the Arctic Russia

Currently, most global experts, officials and stakeholders alike agree that no foreseeable conflict exists in the Arctic *over Arctic issues*. Observers expect/consider that any potential conflict involving the Arctic would originate externally and "spill over" into and/or through the North.[11] What remains with regard to the most prevalent, other-than-defence-related, Arctic issues largely rests within the scope of the Arctic Council. As a result, Russia's participation in the Arctic Council is not only vital but the best avenue of engagement. Understanding the role of the Arctic Council and Russia as one of the most important member states, therefore, is essential to global defence and diplomatic expectations.

The Arctic Council represents the foremost international organization to discuss non-military circumpolar issues (as outlined in the 1996 *Ottawa Declaration*),[12] led by the eight member states with input from the Indigenous Permanent Participants and accredited Observers. As such, the ministerial- and ambassador-level body offers a consensus-

based, highly inclusive forum from which to identify and address various issues before they rise to intensified levels. From a military perspective, the ability of a regional forum to manage a full spectrum of conventional issues helps to reduce the number of disputes that require monitoring. Defence agencies tend to sustain awareness and analysis of prioritized issues normally managed within the political sphere – issues which involve tensions assigned to elevated or escalated levels before circumstances reach a precarious zone of miscalculation. Throughout each level, defence organizations may have an increasingly critical support function and responsibility to help reduce tensions during heightened diplomatic struggles. Consider, for example, the military options for all scenarios that were required while recent negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea took place.

Given that the Arctic Council avoids military security issues – a condition originally required by the United States when it agreed to the creation of the forum – discussions tend to focus on mutual areas of concern for which all parties seek assistance. This leads to greater clarity and opportunity for issue identification and definition, not to mention buy-in by all Arctic states.

Cooperative efforts should neither be dismissed nor treated as trivial. Take for example the contentions issue of unregulated fishing in the Arctic, which resulted in the five Arctic littoral states signing on to a moratorium in 2015[13] — an agreement reached, in part, to the good offices of the Arctic Council. States often establish mutually-beneficial opportunities based on a single point for cooperation. Russia's continued helpfulness vis-à-vis the Arctic Council is perhaps out of shear non-binding conveniences and opportunities that facilitate the pursuit of its objectives. Nevertheless, the gains to be made by encouraging such cooperative ventures need to be supported. In a highly globalized, economically interdependent world, soft power continues to provide the more flexible and nuanced multinational negotiating options. As expected, formal agreements, once established normally through treaties and conventions (hard law – the most common form of recognized international law), require maintenance and oversight. When aspects of agreements come under conflict, deliberate or otherwise, hard power options involving political coercion – potentially backed by military in-

tervention or economic sanctions – may become necessary to resolve tensions. So far, such circumstances do not exist for the Arctic region, nor do they seem probable given that all decisions reached under the Arctic Council framework are by consensus and were decided on by all members.

The Arctic Council remains the lead institution working to identify and define issues through advocacy as well as sponsored projects. Its outputs include delivery of rigorous and authoritative information to policy/decision makers as well as to the public *before* an avoidable disaster strikes and forces policy reform into a typical hindsight cycle. Russia continues to be a committed and active member in this regard, signalling the importance of *acting* rather than *reacting*. As an additional benefit, all other non-Arctic Council-related issues thus become clearer and more manageable. The Arctic Council's contribution to regional stability helps provide confidence in the international community and should be used as a metric by defence organizations for analysis and planning efforts.

## Dealing with the "other" Russia via NORAD and NATO

For Canada, dealing with the "other" Russia, which continues to conduct malign activities,[14] means an increased role for NORAD to defend the North American airspace and warn of threats to its maritime approaches and for NATO to guard the maritime approaches in the North Atlantic and beyond. Today, the air threat to North America has returned because of the deterioration in relations of the West with Russia and the need to protect the homeland given the resumption of Russian bomber flights around the North American Arctic, as well as the emergence of a new generation of long-range, advanced Russian air- and sea-launched cruise missiles. For NATO, attention is turning to the sea lanes of communication in the North Atlantic.

Since its operational establishment in 1957, the foundation of NORAD has rested on the shared premise that the defence of North America is indivisible. In the 1950s, American and Canadian strategists concluded that the demands generated by "air breathing" threats (such as aircraft and missiles) posed by the Soviet Union to the continent were

most effectively and efficiently met through a binational command structure. Over time, NORAD has adapted to the evolving threat environment, and to the evolving command structures and political priorities of both nations.

The emergence of intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles in the 1960s expanded NORAD's original air warning mission into the aerospace domain, with its linkage to the U.S. ballistic missile early warning systems.[15] With the development of air-launched cruise missiles in the late 1970s, the air warning system of ground-based radars built in the 1950s was modernized with the creation of the North Warning System. In 1988, NORAD began aiding with aerial drug interdiction at the same time as the threat of the Soviet Union was diminishing.

After the shock of 9/11, NORAD's attention turned inward with the integration of Transport Canada and U.S. Federal Aviation Administration radar feeds into the NORAD command centre based in the Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center in Colorado Springs. Shortly thereafter, NORAD adapted to the establishment of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in 2002 which led to the creation of the NORAD-USNORTHCOM Command Center at Peterson Airforce Base also in Colorado Springs. This, in turn, was followed by the establishment of the tri-command relationship, consisting of NORAD, USNORTHCOM and initially Canada Command which was replaced by Canadian Joint Operations Command or CJOC in 2012.

In 2004, NORAD's aerospace warning mission was connected to USNORTHCOM's ballistic missile defence mission. This has remained the case even though Canada chose, in 2005, not to participate in the U.S. missile defence effort (i.e. the "kill" side of Ballistic Missile Defence). In 2006 NORAD was signed "in perpetuity," thereby eliminating the political irritants associated with the five-year renewal process.[16] It also acquired a third mission: maritime warning.[17]

The Post-Cold War era has been dominated by intrastate conflict and violence, Western (primarily U.S.-led or -supported) military interventions, and the War on Terror after 9/11. This era has largely come to an end. In its place, a new era dominated by Great Power struggles, now

termed near-peer competition and rivalry, is evident with concomitant regional inter-state territorial conflicts. This requires a refocus (or rediscovery) of nuclear deterrence and strategy under new conditions especially given that the U.S. has recently pulled out of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty bolstering Russia's strategic doctrine which "integrates the strategic operational effect of conventional precision strike with the deterrent and coercive effect of nuclear capabilities."[18] In this new geopolitical/strategic environment, intrastate conflict and violence as well as terrorism will remain, but they largely reside on the margins as they did during the Cold War. Western military intervention in intrastate conflicts will also continue but will be significantly constrained by near-peer rivalry, as witnessed since 2015 by the simultaneous Western/U.S.-led and Russian interventions in the Syrian Civil War.

For the time being, the U.S. will remain the dominant political-military power with global power projection capabilities. However, the determination of Russia to spend on its military, notwithstanding the sanctions placed against it and its economic dependence on fossil fuels, and the dramatic growth of China's economy have provided both countries with the means to modernize and develop advanced military capabilities that challenge the U.S. and the West. Both countries are improving their capacity to project power beyond their respective regions especially via their respective strategic forces.

This new threat environment also has direct implications for the current location of forward operating locations (FOLs) in the Canadian Arctic, and NORAD's deterrence and defence strategy. In the past, NORAD fighters deployed to these forward operating locations were in range of intercepting Soviet long-range bombers before they reached their air-launched cruise missiles launch points. Today, this is not possible given the range of Russian air-launched cruise missiles. In response, a binational committee, which includes the participation of United States European Command (EUCOM) officials given possible Russian launch points within its area of operations east of Greenland, is examining alternative forward operating locations.[19]

Even with interceptors deployed farther north, it is questionable whether they would have the range to strike the launching platforms, notwithstanding the possibility of a new generation of long-range air-to-air missiles or the deployment of air-to-air refuelling aircraft, with the latter having significant infrastructure and cost implications for forward operating locations. Alternatively, consideration could be given to deploying U.S. long-range aircraft (LRA), as Canada has no such capability nor any plans to acquire it. Besides the infrastructure costs, there are also political-strategic implications of such deployments being perceived by Russian authorities as a pre-emptive strike posture, and likely Canadian concerns about NORAD assuming an offensive posture.[20] Canada has always stressed the "defence" in NORAD and has tapped into national offensive capabilities to counter Russian LRA activity.

North American maritime defence cooperation has clearly moved from the defence and security margins and addressing the relatively narrow potential maritime terrorist threats of the post 9/11 era to a central concern, largely driven by Russian naval developments. The North Atlantic and the sea lines of communication to NATO Europe are returning to prominence.

The end of the Cold War removed the North Atlantic from the Western allies' defence and security agenda. Supreme Allied Command Atlantic, the primary structure for allied North Atlantic defence, stood down and was replaced by the generic Allied Transformation Command. Atlantic allied naval cooperation moved to the periphery, concentrating on missions in the Persian Gulf and off the Horn of Africa (Somalia and the Gulf of Aden) related to conflicts that captured allied attention. More recently, allied naval attention has concentrated on the Mediterranean, the Black, and Baltic Seas in response to Russian activities, attended by the two Standing NATO Maritime Groups, under Allied Maritime Command located in Northwood, United Kingdom.[21]

With the North Atlantic returning to the defence agenda, several priorities emerge that naturally raise issues for the Canada-U.S. relationship. The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and USN have a long history of cooperation, dating back to the Second World War and Cold War. Since then, the RCN has remained actively engaged with USN, particularly

evident in the ability of Canadian vessels to integrate (and thus replace American vessels) in U.S. Carrier Task Forces. This also extends to select NATO nations, especially the United Kingdom and its Royal Navy. This capability, however, has been largely limited to the tactical level of cooperation. Command and control arrangements, like those under Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic during the Cold War, and with them related exercises among the allied navies and the formal division of areas of responsibility in protecting the SLOC, are largely absent.

At the same time, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), especially related to the North Atlantic and the former Soviet threat, is no longer a training priority. The RCN, once an allied exemplar of this capability, has largely lost its expertise. Post-Cold War tasks became priorities over ASW, reflecting the threat environment of the 1990s and early 2000s, even though submarines proliferated within the developing world. Nor was there any pressing need to exercise the reinforcement of NATO's northern flank.[22] Limited and shrinking naval resources on both sides of the Atlantic relative to political and operational demand required choices to be made, and the obvious choice was to neglect the North Atlantic. Moreover, Russian naval activity in the North Atlantic largely disappeared as a function of the end of the Cold War's adversarial relationship and a lack of resources amidst tremendous political, social, and economic upheavals following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Even with the emergence of the post-9/11 terrorist threat, and its maritime dimension,[23] there was no need to resurrect these arrangements. The maritime terrorist threat on the east coast of North America was primarily an area for intelligence cooperation.

Over the last decade, however, political relations between NATO and Russia deteriorated, particularly following the Russian actions in Crimea, eastern Ukraine, and Syria. Russian naval activity in the North Atlantic has increased substantially. New generations of Russian naval capabilities, including longer range surface and sub-surface cruise missiles, pose a growing maritime threat. As a result, NATO's northern flank has re-emerged as a security concern. Maritime defence cannot be ignored, and this issue (especially for the Atlantic) brings the coastal European allies and thus NATO into play. Reflecting this new environ-

ment, NATO re-established a North Atlantic Command, once again in Norfolk, and the USN has re-created the U.S. Atlantic 2nd Fleet.

The specific command structures and processes of these two new developments remain to be seen relative to those of Supreme Allied Command Atlantic during the Cold War. More importantly, as a function of new military technologies and a new U.S. command (USNORTHCOM) since the Cold War, there are now two distinct – albeit inter-related – perspectives on North Atlantic maritime control: NATO Europe (with an emphasis on the members bordering the North Atlantic) and USNORTHCOM/NORAD. For European NATO members, the central objective is to secure the sea lanes of communication in the case of war in Europe, even if it broke out far to the east of the Cold War inter-German border. The requirement to ensure the movement of personnel and resources from North America to reinforce standing forces is vital, especially for Norway which borders Russia.[24] Furthermore, NORAD and NATO must achieve all of this while continuing to recruit, retain, and train combat capable militaries against the backdrop of changing demographics, restricted budgets, and ongoing operations.

The list of requirements for both NORAD and NATO in terms of equipment, surveillance, personnel, and training needs is very expensive. Now, when attention needs to refocus on the defence of the state, limiting military competition in the Arctic and continuing to encourage a rules-based approach is paramount. Seizing opportunities for continued cooperation with Russia in the Arctic is the right thing to do even if some Western commentators perceive it as distasteful and essentially a *de facto* rewarding Russia for its egregious behaviour elsewhere in the world. Relations between and among near-peer competitors are always a mix of cooperation, competition, and rivalry depending upon the specific issues at play. The first step is for Western analysts to recognize that the behaviour of Russia is generally helpful as a regional actor in the Arctic. The second is to plan seriously for the defence of the state from all military threats, including Russian ones.

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[3] Klaus Dodds, "From Ilulissat to Kiruna: Managing the Arctic Council and the Contemporary Geopolitics of the Arctic," in *Handbook of the Politics of the Arctic*, ed. Christian Leif Jensen and Geir Hønneland (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015), 733-758.
[4] Russian Federation, "Foundations of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic to 2020 and Beyond" (18 September 2008) and "Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation" (20 February 2013).
[5] Russian Federation, "Russian Military Strategy" (26 December 2014).
[6] Russian Federation, "Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period up to 2030" (Moscow: Ministry of Energy, 13 November 2009).
[7] Russian Federation, "Maritime Doctrine" (July 2015).
[8] For example, in addition to Russia's shorter-ranged R-73 *Vympel* (NATO A-11) air-to-air missiles there is concern with its longer-ranged 37 *Vympel* (NATO A-13 *Arrow*) ones.
[9] NATO, "Exercise Trident Juncture 18 to demonstrate NATO's ability to defend itself" (June 2018), https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_155866.htm?selectedLocale=en.
[10] Chief of Naval Operations, "US Navy Arctic Road Map 2014 -2030" (February 2014), https://www.navy.mil/docs/USN_arctic_roadmap.pdf.
[11] General Terrence O'Shaughnessy (USNORTHCOM and NORAD Commander). "Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee (26 February 2019), https://www.armedservices.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ OShaughnessy_02-26-19.pdf (especially p.11 onward).
[12] The *Ottawa Declaration* (1996) is found at https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/85.
[13] *Declaration Concerning the Prevention of Unregulated High Seas Fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean*, Oslo, NO (2015), https://www.regjeringen.no/ globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/folkerett/declaration-on-arctic-fisheries-16-july-2015.pdf.
[14] General John E. Hyten (Commander USSTRATCOM)," Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee" (26 February 2019): 3, https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Hyten_02-26-19.pdf.

[15] The U.S. Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) - consisting of the space-based Defense Support Program and ground-based radars located at Fylingdales (UK), Thule (Greenland), Clear (Alaska), Beale (California), Cape Cod (Massachusetts), and Cavalier (North Dakota) - feeds data into the NORAD threat assessment process which, in turn, provides warning to both National Command Authorities (NCA) of North America that the continent is under ballistic missile attack.

[16] In the initial agreement, renewal was set at ten years. On Canada's request, it was reduced to five years, although renewals have also occurred in shorter periods of time (with renewals in 1991, 1996, and 2000).

[17] *Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada on the North American Aerospace Defence Command,* Article I, para l, & Article III (28 April 2006), http://www.state.gov/ documents/organization/69727.pdf.

[18] Johnson, Dave. *Russia's Conventional Precision Strike Capabilities, Regional Crises, and Nuclear Thresholds*. No. LLNL-TR-745418. Lawrence Livermore National Lab. (LLNL), 2018: 93, https://e-reports-ext.llnl.gov/pdf/920140.pdf.

[19] These could include the U.S. base at Thule, in Greenland, and Canadian Forces Station Alert on the north-eastern tip of Ellesmere Island.

[20] Of course, U.S. LRA under USSTRATCOM would not necessarily need to be assigned to NORAD. Throughout the Cold War, the U.S. received permission from Canada for LRA overflights, and this could be extended to provide permission for U.S. LRA to use Canadian northern bases in the event of a crisis, thereby leaving NORAD in a strictly defensive posture.

[21] Standing NATO Maritime Group (SNMG)1 and 2 were established in 2005, replacing the NATO Standing Naval Force Atlantic and Mediterranean. They rotate as the NATO Reaction Force, and undertake a range of missions, training, and exercises among the NATO allies. SMNG2 has largely been dedicated to maritime security in the Aegean and Black Sea. There are no USN vessels formally attached to either Group.

[22] During the Cold War, Canada committed to providing reinforcements to NATO's northern flank through its Canadian Air-Sea Transportable Brigade Group (CAST) in Norway.

[23] The post-9/11 concern is that a dirty bomb will be hidden on a cargo vessel or that the terrorists will launch some form of missile from a maritime platform.

[24] The most recent study is John Andreas Olsen, ed. *NATO and the North Atlantic* (London: Royal United Services Institute, Whitehall Paper #87, 2017).

CHAPTER 5

# The New Arctic Strategic Triangle Environment (NASTE)

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Throughout much of the Post-Cold War era a narrative developed around the notion of Arctic exceptionalism: that the Arctic is an exceptionally peaceful and cooperative region in which the Arctic states found a way to avoid importing their differences into the area and interacted in a manner that promoted good relations.[1] There are clear indications, however, that important changes threaten to destroy this exceptionalism and marking the Arctic a location of increasing tension. These tensions are not being caused by disputes over arctic resources or other causes found in the Arctic but by the developing rivalries of the great powers. In several respects, the Arctic region is succumbing to the tyranny of geography. As relations between the United States and Russia deteriorate, and as China continues to grow and challenge the United States (and possibly Russia) in global influence, geopolitical tensions produce new strategic and military activities in the Arctic that now recast the region in more competitive terms than has been the case for the last two decades. This chapter examines these new geopolitical forces, offers an

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explanation of how they are evolving, and argues why they are becoming a more important consideration in understanding regional affairs.

A New Arctic Strategic Triangle Environment (or NASTE) is forming, in which the core strategic interests of Russia, China and United States are now converging at the top of the world. The Arctic is witnessing a new "great game"[2] that is not about conflict *over* the Arctic but rather occurring *through* the Arctic. This does not make the threat any less dangerous, but it does make it more complicated. At the heart of the new geopolitics are growing tensions between Russia and the West, specifically the United States,[3] coupled with the growing power of China and its relationships with both the West and Russia.[4] In a changing international system, the primary security requirements of the three most powerful states are now overlapping in the Arctic region, producing new challenges and threats.

Advances in new weapon systems with greater speed, range and reach are also heightening the importance of the Arctic as a geostrategic space.[5] Longer range, hypersonic delivery systems force major powers to patrol and protect their northern coastal regions to provide advance warnings of attacks and to defend against them. For the Russians, placing the delivery systems in the Arctic remains one of the most effective geographic locations for launching against the United States in the event of conflict. Likewise the Arctic is also one of the best location for the Americans to launch against Russia. Thus the Arctic geography keeps it strategically important. This forces each of the main powers to look to the Arctic to ensure that their geopolitical competitors do not gain a military advantage.

The requirement for the coastal states to develop their constabulary forces to protect against new "soft" security threats emerging in a rapidly melting and increasingly accessible Arctic further confound our understandings of the NASTE. It is difficult to separate the expansion and enhancement of military capabilities that can be used for offensive strategic purposes from those intended to defend local resources, shipping routes, and the Arctic environment.[6] For example, the Russian Government claims that its efforts to modernize and reopen northern air bases

that were closed at the end of the Cold War are needed to secure and support increased shipping within their Northern Sea Route (NSR).[7] Bases that serve as hubs for search and rescue platforms can also be used to stage Russian fighter and bomber aircraft used to patrol the Arctic basin.[8] Dual-use military assets complicate the arguments of those commentators who suggest that the Arctic remains an exceptional location, isolated from increasingly tense geopolitical realties, because the threat environment could quickly change if Arctic states, possessing strong military capabilities, change their intentions from a defensive to an offensive posture.

The development of this NASTE is not about fighting over Arctic resources, as many commentators speculated in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Close cooperation continues within multilateral bodies such as the Arctic Council, and is evidenced through peaceful employment of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) process to determine the outer limits of the continental shelf.[9] This cooperative spirit, however, no longer represents the overall trajectory of the Arctic security environment. At the heart of NASTE are the core security requirements of Russia, the United States, and increasingly China. What do their security needs mean for the future of the Arctic security environment?

## Russian Core Security Needs and the Arctic

Several core Russian security requirements concern the Arctic. First (and perhaps foremost) the Russian Federation adamantly opposes NATO expansion. While the Yeltsin Government voiced displeasure about the issue, Vladimir Putin's administrations have been much more explicit in their condemnation of what is seen as NATO encroachment on Russia's historic sphere of influence. In a landmark speech made to the Munich Security Forum in 2007, Putin explained why he saw the continued expansion of NATO as a major threat to Russia:

> I think it is obvious that NATO expansion does not have anything to do with the modernization of the alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it

> represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended? And what happened to the assurances our western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No one even remembers them.[10]

Some commentators were initially sceptical of Putin's challenge as he approached the end of his second term as President. The Russian decision to use force in the Georgian War of 2008, however, represented the first time that Russia used force to stop NATO expansion.[11] It did so again in 2014 when it employed both explicit military force in the invasion of Crimea and implicitly supported pro-Russian elements in the eastern Ukraine to prevent that country from joining the EU and NATO.[12] These actions provoked an overt reaction from Western states, such as the invocation of economic sanctions and the despatch of military forces to Eastern Europe.[13] Russian actions also had a significant impact on Arctic cooperation, including the stance taken by Canada as chair of the Arctic Council at the time. For example, Canadian officials boycotted an Arctic Council task force meeting held in Russia, imposed travel bans on some Russian officials, and suspended bilateral exchanges as part of its "principled stand."[14] Although Moscow attempted to isolate its action in the Ukraine from its cooperative efforts in regional Arctic affairs, its actions in 2014 had a spill-over effect into circumpolar relations.[15]

Russia's effort to rebuild its military (particularly its strategic deterrent) and to regain its influential role in the international system represent a second core concern. Most analysis point to the 2008 Military Reform and the 2015-2017 State Armament Program as the first indications of Russia's intent to increase its hard power.[16] This was made explicit in both the National Security Strategy announced by the Medvedev Administration in May 2009 and again in Military Doctrine of February 2010.[17] The net result of this effort to regain "great power" status has been the professionalization of its military forces, with a focus on equipping them with technologically advanced weapons, and an expansion of forces deployed across the Russian north.[18] This reflects geogra-

phy, the need to expand and protect Russia's nuclear deterrent forces, and the importance of strategically positioning forces to protect a region of high economic and security importance. This development gives Russian forces a local military advantage which has been used to project power abroad. For example, Russia used elements of its Northern Fleet (including its only aircraft carrier) in Syria,[19] and employed elements of its air force and navy to project power against Canada, the U.S., Norway, United Kingdom, Sweden, and Finland following the Ukrainian Crisis.[20] This suggests that Russia has become a regional hegemon in the Arctic, with improved northern-based military forces, and is using its renewed strength as a form of military posturing against the West.

As a third core security consideration, the Russian nuclear deterrent is increasingly vested with submarines of their Northern Fleet based in and deployed through the Arctic. Geography leaves Russia with only two regions from which to deploy their submarines: the North or the Pacific. The Northern Fleet has the advantage of ice cover, and the bases in the Kola Peninsula are more extensively supported that their far eastern counterparts.[21] At the same time as the Russians are modernizing and rebuilding their submarine forces, they are improving their means of protecting these assets. More air units (including fighters and anti-air missiles) and land forces are being placed around the Kola Peninsula,[22] with this expanded presence facilitated by Russian efforts to better protect the NSR. Consequently, the Russians have been engaged in a serious effort to reopen, modernize, and build new air bases along the entire length of the NSR, with more than ten search and rescue stations, thirteen airfields, and ten air-defence radar stations supporting Russian fighter and bomber aircraft strewn along this route.[23]

When Russia resumed Arctic bombers patrols in 2007,[24] many Western analysts initially believed that this was a publicity stunt directed at a domestic audience. The patrols have not only been sustained but expanded, now approaching levels of frequency and complexity last seen during the worst periods of the Cold War.[25] While the TU-95 and TU-160 bombers are old, their ordnance has been modernized continuously. Russia is in the process of developing new cruise missiles beyond the capabilities of the current KH-55 cruise missiles that are their main de-

livery systems today,[26] which will allow bombers to remain further away from their targets and strike them faster. This will require Western powers to develop improved capabilities to detect and potentially intercept these aircraft much further away – leading some NORAD thinkers to contemplate how to destroy the "archer" rather than defending against the "arrow."[27] This, in turn, requires that Russia enhance its ability to protect its bombers. Even if broader relationships had remained positive between Russia and the West, this logic suggests that Russia's commitment to modernize its nuclear deterrent would have led to an investment in Arctic military capabilities, thus prompting the other Arctic states to respond accordingly.

The net effect of these three factors means that the Russia has made the Arctic an increasingly important region for military operations. This is not about projecting military force to achieve political objectives in the Arctic, but seeking new ways to leverage its relative power in the region to promote its national interests globally.

## American Core Security Needs and the Arctic

The United States' nuclear deterrent posture and aerospace defence against a limited nuclear-armed ballistic missile attack directly related to the Arctic.[28] The maintenance and modernization of their nuclear deterrent is core to their national security policy,[29] and the Americans have announced a massive modernization of their forces to that end. Investments to build a new class of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), designated the *Columbia* class, and are a case in point.[30] The U.S. also updated its force posture in 2018, re-introducing authority to use low-yield nuclear weapons in certain scenarios.[31]

A core element of the American nuclear deterrent is to actively engage Russia and Chinese forces[32] which, given the Russian presence in and focus on the Arctic, draws the U.S. into the region through an action/reaction dynamic in relation to Russia's Northern Fleet. American doctrine now places an emphasis the U.S. Navy's (USN) ability to contain (and in the event of war, to destroy) the Russian nuclear forces. This is predicated on the assumption that as long as the Russian and Chinese governments know that the Americans will be actively targeting their

delivery forces, they will not engage in activities that may require them to use then in the first place. In effect, the Americans seek to place enough doubt in the minds of Russian and Chinese decision-makers that these competitors never seriously consider using nuclear force. By definition, this deterrence strategy requires the Americans to demonstrate that they have both the will and the means to directly engage Russian nuclear forces.

Russian strategic forces within the Arctic region – both submarines and bomber assets – are core American targets. The Russian know this and are building defensive counter-forces centered on new anti-air missiles and fighters based in the Arctic region. This has unleashed the dynamics of an arms race, fuelled by the events in Ukraine. This is not about strategic forces preparing to fight over Arctic territory or resources, but building capabilities to address core security requirements from and in the Arctic.

The Americans' second core security need is to shield their homeland from a limited nuclear ballistic missile attack.[33] The specific concern (an attack from a rogue state, particularly North Korea) has resulted in the development of one of the largest American anti-ballistic missile (ABM) bases in Fort Greely, Alaska.[34] Originally slated to be closed at the end of the Cold War, Alaskan political leaders successfully lobbied the federal government to keep the base open, transforming it into a test site for American ABM development. As the threat from North Korea grew, the base expanded to become an operational base that now houses the bulk of U.S. Air Force (USAF) mid-range interceptors.[35] Since the mid-2000s, both Democratic and Republican presidents have followed the practice of increasing the number of interceptors based at Fort Greely whenever the North Korean threat elevates. Despite the political efforts of the Trump Administration to improve relations with the North Korea, it has continued this trend. In November 2017, it decided to add 20 more interceptors to the existing 40 ground-based mid-course missiles to which the Clinton and Bush Administrations had already agreed, committing to bring the total number to 64 by 2023.[36]

The American position is that missiles deployed in Fort Greely are intended to defend against the North Koreans or possibly any other rogue state with a small number of missiles. The location of the base is ideally suited to deal with the North Koreans – which makes it is equally well positioned to deal with a Chinese missile launch. Currently, the Americans argue that their ABM systems cannot respond to a mass missile attack and therefore are incapable of defending against the Chinese or Russians, thus leaving the deterrence system with those powers intact.[37] Chinese and Russians officials worry, however, that American technology may allow them eventually to develop an ABM system that could defeat their nuclear attack, thus forcing them to pay close attention to American intentions in Alaska.[38]

The ABM base in Alaska is not about a war over the Arctic, but is emerging as a central part of American systems to defend the entire United States against potential adversaries. Nevertheless, its Arctic location underscores the strategic importance of the entire region and its inextricable links to the global security balance. By extension, geopolitical relationships between the United States and Russia, combined with the growing military strength of China, will lead the U.S.'s near-peer competitors to view the capabilities in Fort Greely and other Alaskan bases as a threat to their security. In the classic form of an Arctic security dilemma, this will require that the Americans further enhance their capabilities to protection their core assets in Alaska. Already the Americans have placed advanced elements of their Air Forces at Fort Elmendorf, including a significant portion of their F-22s and F-35s.[39] This trend is likely to continue as Arctic security dynamics evolve.

## Chinese Core Security Needs and the Arctic

China has recently emerged as a major actor in the Arctic. Initially, China expressed its interest in the region through participation in Arctic science and determined efforts to engage in regional governance bodies, particularly the Arctic Council.[40] The country's 2018 Arctic Policy Paper commits to participate in the peaceful development in the region,[41] claiming that China's interests are limited to scientific study, the examination of resource development within a cooperative framework, and

the development of the governance system overseeing international co-operation. The policy makes no official mention of any Arctic security interests. Nevertheless, various Western analysts point to an emerging internal discussion among Chinese military officials and security experts on the Arctic's importance to China's security.[42] Although it is not yet clear how the Chinese government assesses the importance of the region, geostrategic considerations suggest that they will need to engage the Americans and (probably) the Russians because, in order to challenge these powers on a global scale, the Chinese cannot allow the American and Russian navies (and especially their submarines forces) safe sanctuary in the Arctic.

As rapidly escalating defence expenditures indicate, China is investing in military capabilities that will allow it challenge the Americans as a peer competitor.[43] Assuming that extensive expenditures and force modernization efforts continue, it is logical that the Chinese will eventually develop means to challenge the American nuclear deterrent (akin to the U.S.-Russia balance). Although the Chinese offer few official statements on their nuclear deterrence posture (given their sensitivity to this subject), the logic of nuclear deterrence suggests that the Chinese will develop an under-ice capability for their nuclear-powered submarines that will allow them to pursue American or Russian submarines in the event of conflict. A public acknowledgement –either intentional or not – that some or all of the People Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) current nuclear-powered attack submarines have been given an under-ice capability would lend support to this hypothesis.[44] In order for a nuclear-powered submarine to travel under the ice it needs to have specific capabilities that are expensive and complex, including an especially hardened sail to break through the ice as required, retractable diving planes, and upward-looking sonar.[45] The existence of Chinese submarines in Arctic waters would dramatically complicate both the American and Russian defensive positions in this region.

The Chinese have also taken steps to learn how to operate their surface fleet in the region. In 2015 the Chinese deployed elements of the PLAN to the coast of Alaska and conducted port visits of northern European States. Coinciding with the only official visit of President

Obama to Alaska during his term in office, five Chinese vessels, including three frigates and two resupply vessels, sailed off the Aleutian Islands and into the Bering Sea.[46] These vessels remained entirely within international waters and did not in any way violate American sovereignty, but the Chinese sent a clear message by deploying surface vessels into northern waters (although they did not sail close to ice-covered waters). The PLAN commissioned two new Type 272 icebreakers in 2016,[47] both of which are the same size as the Canadian *Harry DeWolf*-class of Arctic and Offshore Patrol vessels. It is unclear how many more of these icebreakers the Chinese will build. China's existing icebreakers, *Xue Long* and *Xue Long II*, are used for scientific programs but their future missions are unknown.

One month later after the deployment to Alaska, three Chinese naval vessels made their country's first port visits to Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. These vessels, which had been participating in anti-piracy activities with Fleet 152 off the coast of Somalia, demonstrated impressive capabilities to sail from China to Africa to northern Europe.[48] Two years later, three Chinese naval vessels visited Finland, Latvia, and Russia.[49] In 2018 Chinese ships made a port of call to Russia and engaged in Fleet operations in the Baltic Sea with Russian units.

The Chinese make no mention of the Arctic in their latest statements about naval modernization. The May 2015 military strategy makes it clear that the navy will be moving from a predominantly coastal anti-submarine warfare (ASW) focus to an all-purpose "blue water navy" capable of operating anywhere on the globe.[50] The deployments to the Alaskan and northern European waters demonstrate their intent to include northern seas in their voyages.

Although it is difficult to talk with any certainty of China's official geopolitical intent for the Arctic region, it will be important to monitor Chinese activities in the future. It is difficult to discount Chinese military involvement in the region if they continue their general build-up of strategic capabilities. There is no indication that China intends to use military force to seize Arctic territory, but the larger geopolitical chal-

lenge that developing between that country, the U.S., and Russia is likely to draw them into the Arctic theatre.

## Conclusion

A New Arctic Strategic Triangle Environment (NASTE) has major ramifications for Canada. First, it needs to be nimble to adapt to changing geopolitics. Canada and its allies were fortunate in the 1990s, framing the Arctic as a zone of peace while Russia was too weak to act in the Arctic and China was relatively disinterested. These actors are no longer on the sidelines. Furthermore, the Arctic is not insulated from global drivers in terms of environmental security, social challenges, or geopolitics. Despite normative hope for a peaceful Arctic, Arctic geopolitical realities leave Canada with the risk of sleepwalking into an increasingly dangerous Arctic security environment because most commentators still hope that the Arctic will remain an area of low tension.

Canada's problem lies in its geographic position in the middle of the resurgent power triangle between Russia, China, and the United States. Russia is actively reasserting great power status through hybrid warfare and political interference designed to undermine Western solidarity and democratic governance systems. China's rise as a global actor also appears to challenge Western interests, with its growing military capabilities and its active interference in governance through cyber warfare and economic investments to secure strategic assets. The third part of triangle is a Trump Administration that does not respect the historic "special relationship" between Canada and the U.S. and has a win-lose mentality that poses challenges to North American security cooperation.[51]

Russia's decision in 2007/08 to reinvigorate strategic deterrence and assert regional hegemonic power in the Arctic portended the arrival of NASTE. The Russian Federation has placed the bulk of its strategic deterrent with its Northern Fleet, Arctic bases and defences have been strengthened, and its military capability has expanded substantively. Russia is intent on disrupting NATO, which has Arctic implications.

The Chinese have expressed a more concerted interest in the Arctic since 1999. Although they currently play by the rules, and insist on being included in Arctic governance systems, their intention to develop a

"white water" naval capability was demonstrated in their transit of the Aleutian Islands and visits to the Nordic countries in 2015. Strategic competition and nuclear deterrence likely point towards the need to develop an Arctic capability. What would Chinese ice-capable submarines mean for Arctic stability?

How does Canada prepare for NASTE? How do we protect the continent with the United States? New technology means that surveillance and protection of our borders, through aerospace and maritime domain awareness, must be expanded outward. New Russian and Chinese hypersonic capabilities pose heightened threats for which Canada and its allies must prepare. All of this requires a shift in Canadian thinking from tactical cognition to deeper and broader strategic awareness before the Arctic security environment gets really "NASTE."

## Notes

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rines (SSNs) recently commissioned into the fleet with four more in construction or design; and two nuclear-powered cruise missile carrying submarines (SSGN) - the Type 95 - with two under construction and plans to build a fifth. Ronald O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress,* Congressional Research Service Report 7-5700 (1 November 2017). Any of these submarines sighted in Arctic waters would indicate a Chinese challenge to American and Russian capability in the region, as well as a clear marker of China's long-term aspiration to be a peer competitor to the United States.

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# Russia, Canada, and the Circumpolar World

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In a study of Canada and Russia in the Arctic produced in 1956, Canadian Northern Affairs bureaucrat R.A.J. Phillips (formerly the 2nd secretary to the Canadian embassy in Moscow) noted that "there are two major Arctic powers in the world today, and each is looking to the north as never before." Russia and Canada, he explained, "are no longer separated by the continent of Europe and the Atlantic Ocean. They are only a Pole apart."[1]

Phillips compared and contrasted the two countries' northern realities. The Russian north was much larger, with sub-arctic conditions stretching over half of the Soviet Union, while Canada's smaller north made up a larger proportion of that country. The Russian north was more heavily populated than the Canadian north, boasted more transportation infrastructure, and had received much more state investment to that time. Both countries' norths housed a wealth of natural resources, although Canada's northern regions were "in a much earlier stage of development." The countries faced similar challenges of northern development, albeit "with different sets of economic criteria and political ideologies." While pronounced differences were readily apparent,

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Phillips cautioned against allowing these to "obscure the similarities." He noted common interests in permafrost, building techniques, the physical sciences, administration, and Indigenous peoples that invited expert exchanges.[2] The fact that both countries found themselves on opposite sides of the Cold War ideological divide did not, in Phillips' view, preclude collaboration on subjects of shared concern.

While the post-Cold War period brought new opportunities for circumpolar cooperation, the relationship between Russia and the West has shown obvious strain since the Ukraine crisis erupted in 2014, with many commentators resurrecting Cold War metaphors to describe the resurgence of strategic competition globally. The idea of a new Arctic Cold War has become a conspicuous fixture of media commentary, abruptly replacing the narrative of cooperation with one of entrenched, and apparently inescapable, competition and impending conflict. Contributors to this book were asked to present their perspectives on how we should understand the Arctic security interests of Canada and Russia, within the broader context of their national strategies. How we frame issues obviously matters. What are the main motives underlying Canadian and Russian government Arctic policies and practices, and how do they perceive the other State? Does the common trope of Arctic competition and conflict, built around the idea of a "race" or "scramble for the Arctic,"[3] help to explain the logic behind Russian or Canadian strategies and allegedly aggressive rhetoric and investments in Arctic military capabilities?

Sovereignty and security are often conflated concepts, but the former is best understood as the internationally recognized right to exercise authority in a given space, while the latter relates to responsibilities to protect citizens, territories, economies, and institutions from harm. In legal matters pertaining to the sea, Russia and Canada share a common approach: State officials have expressly recognized and endorsed the existing global regime but have strongly defended their right to exercise, to the fullest extent possible, their sovereignty and sovereign rights as defined under international law. Some commentators have sought to cast this exercise of national authority as a form of exceptionalism, incompatible with the established "rules of the game." As Gavrilov convincingly argues in his chapter, however, the robust assertion of coastal State

jurisdiction is no more unilateral in the Arctic than it is in the Indian or Pacific oceans.

On the question of the legal status of the Northern Sea Route (formerly known as the Northeast Passage) and the Northwest Passage, both States invoke long-established legal concepts and doctrines to ground their right to govern, according to national rules and regulations, navigation within those waters. From the sector theory (now marginal to most legal arguments), to the customary law doctrine of historic title, to the Law of the Sea Convention (LOSC) provisions on straight baselines, Russian and Canadian legal positions practically mirror one other. While the two governments may not have a common vision for the future development of their Arctic waters – with Russia aggressively promoting navigation through the Northern Sea Route and Canada adopting a more cautious approach in terms of the Northwest Passage – both States are driven by a shared set of values and priorities.[4] While the order of priorities may be slightly different, both Russia and Canada exercise their coastal State rights and prerogatives in defence of the preservation of the marine environment, the safeguarding of Indigenous rights, the safety of navigation, national security, and the promotion of economic development for the benefit of local populations.

On this contentious issue, the two neighbours are nothing short of allies. The legal position of both Russia and Canada, and their resulting ability to make decisions that reflect national needs and priorities, is immensely strengthened by the support and shared understanding of the other. Such a meeting of strategic interests forges a bond that must be nurtured for the mutual benefit of both States.

Even in regards to the delimitation of the outer limit of their continental shelf, where Russia and Canada are in direct competition – in the sense that both countries have included some of the same portions of the Arctic ocean seafloor and subsoil in their respective submissions – the two States have shown an unwavering commitment not only to the existing legal framework (the article 76 and Commission process under the LOSC) but also to dialogue and cooperation. Whereas the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf's rules of procedure would prevent it from considering the Russian or Canadian scientific dossiers in

areas of overlap, the Commission has been given the mandate to proceed with the examination of the submissions and make its recommendations to the States because it received the explicit consent of the two neighbours to do so. This agreement to allow the Commission to proceed, despite areas in dispute, is in marked contrast to the situation in the East China Sea, for instance, where rivalries and disagreements have all but halted the delimitation process. Russia and Canada both understand that the Commission process is "without prejudice to the question of the delimitation of the continental shelf between States with opposite coasts,"[5] and the eventual determination of Russia's and Canada's extended continental shelf in the Arctic will thus necessarily involve negotiations between all the concerned parties.[6] For this reason, it is imperative that lines of communication remain open between the two States.

Furthermore, while Russia and Canada have been fully engaged in exercising their sovereignty and sovereign rights in the Arctic, consistent with the practice of coastal States everywhere else in the world, they have also remained deeply involved in the work of the Arctic Council and in other regional governance initiatives. As various authors in this volume highlight, both Russia and Canada actively participated in the recent adoption of regional instruments under the auspices of the Arctic Council dealing with search and rescue, oil pollution preparedness and response, and scientific research. Russia was an influential actor along with Canada and the other Arctic coastal States in the negotiations that led to the adoption in 2018 of the *Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean*.

Thus, the law of the sea is a vector for close collaboration and cooperation between Russia and Canada. It makes of them allies in their assertion of sovereign control over critical waterways lying off their northern coasts. And it necessitates that channels for dialogue and discussion be safeguarded and nurtured for the ultimate resolution of sensitive issues for both States such as the delimitation of their respective continental shelf.

More generally, most of the contributors to this volume suggest that the existing governance regime in the Arctic is appropriate, compatible with state sovereignty, and serves the national interests of Canada and

Russia. Both countries share a similar stance on the primary rights and roles of Arctic States in regional governance, rooted in international recognition of Arctic State sovereignty and sovereign rights. Despite tensions emanating from disputes in other parts of the world, established regional governance and international legal structures remain very much intact, from the Arctic Council to the LOSC.

While shared international legal interests might point to a peaceful and cooperative future, Huebert's frame asserting an inevitable clash of strategic interests and national security imperatives points to a breakdown in relations. Although the levels of military activity in the circumpolar region remain significantly lower than they were at the height of the Cold War, he cites geostrategic drivers (some existing and measurable, some hypothetical) to construct a narrative of impending conflict. These drivers do not relate to disputes over Arctic territory or resources, he suggests, but reflect how the region is increasingly embedded in international relations more broadly. Certainly, heightened global interest in the Arctic from major international actors such as China and the European Union suggests that globalization is drawing the region into the wider international system. Although the Arctic is no longer exceptionally isolated from the international system, both Canada and Russia have a vested interest in ensuring that established regional governance foundations remain firm and can withstand outside pressures that may undermine the interests of the Arctic States.[7]

Just how "new," however, is the Arctic security environment that Huebert sees emerging? Sergunin emphasizes that there has not been a paradigmatic shift in the Kremlin's vision of the role of military power in the Arctic in recent years. Its strategies continue to focus on demonstrating Russia's sovereignty over the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF), protecting its economic interests in the High North, and demonstrating that Russia retains great power status with world-class military capabilities. Indeed, Sergunin and his colleague Valery Konyshev have argued that "Russian military strategies are comparable with those of other coastal states (especially the U.S. and Canadian ones)."[8] Its Northern Fleet remains a cornerstone of strategic deterrence and defence of Russia's territorial integrity and economic interests in the region, while it has expanded its ability to respond to emerging non-

traditional, "soft" security threats. Is this evidence of "two Russias" – as Bouffard, Charron, and Fergusson describe liberal internationalist and aggressively revisionist, neorealist polarities in Russian behaviour – or an appropriate posture incorporating both strategic deterrence and practical capabilities to ensure safe Arctic operations, communities, and economic development (rather than preparation for a large-scale military conflict.[9]

Analysts in both countries debate the intentions behind, and implications of, State investments in defence and security. Should Western commentators read Russian investments in new Arctic capabilities and infrastructure as threats, given that most defensive capabilities can be used for offensive purposes if intentions change? In Canada and other Western countries, renewed concerns about Russia's willingness to exercise hard power to secure its geopolitical interests are imported into debates about the future of the Arctic. Is it naïve to think of the region as an exceptional "zone of peace" and cooperation that can be insulated from broader strategic competition? Is the existing international governance framework sufficiently robust to dissuade Arctic (and non-Arctic) States from revisionist behaviour in the region?

While Canada's defence posture in its Arctic is comparatively modest, its national strategies incorporate elements of a broader deterrence posture (within the context of NORAD and NATO) as well as "soft" security and safety missions that its military is likely to undertake in support of other government departments. Although Canada's 2017 defence policy (*Strong, Secure, Engaged*) appropriately links Canadian defence and security considerations to rising international interest in the Arctic, it does not depict a regional threat environment that is expected to devolve into military brinksmanship or combat. Rather, the policy focusses on preparing to address heightened security and safety risks associated with environmental change and increased accessibility to the region. The Canadian government has promised to invest in new capabilities to improve surveillance and control within its Arctic. Such investments are well within Canada's rights as a sovereign State, and should neither alarm Russia nor trigger an expansion of Russian military forces to defend Russia's Arctic.

Indeed, most of the contributors to this volume emphasize that Canada and Russia have vested interests in a stable, secure, and sustainable circumpolar world. Both countries consider themselves responsible international actors whose Arctic behaviour conforms with established legal principles and norms. Despite the suspension of economic and military cooperation since 2014, complex interdependence has yielded regional cooperation on search and rescue, transboundary fisheries, extended continental shelves, navigation, a mandatory polar code, and science.[10]

These efforts reinforce both States' national interests and recognize the tangible benefits and advantages to be derived from active collaboration. On the one hand, official policies are shaped by domestic actors and institutions that project national interests and are therefore subject to negotiation in the domestic arena. On the other hand, a State's security policies are not formulated in isolation from the policies and practices of other States. If the Western Arctic powers view the Arctic primarily as a theatre for strategic competition and bellicose messaging, that will shape Russian policies. The inverse is equally true.

Clear and transparent communication of strategic *intentions* is critical to ensure that countries like Russia and Canada do not unwittingly provoke a security dilemma or get caught up in an Arctic arms race – something that Huebert believes is already in progress but the other authors argue can be moderated by clarifying how military investments and activities are consistent with State sovereignty, deterrence, and regional safety and stability. Allowing the Arctic region to revert to a Cold War framework will preclude constructive dialogue and collaboration that can serve Arctic States' shared interests across a wide spectrum of security sectors (human, environmental, and economic). "The lack of state-to-state and people-to-people co-operation in and on the Arctic during the Cold War was largely a product of the nuclear stand-off and the apparent dominance of national security concerns in national perceptions and policies," observes Norwegian defence analyst Kristian Åtland. "The Arctic was seen as a sensitive military theater where political, cultural, and economic interests were subordinated to security interests."[11]

Appropriately situating the Arctic in the resurgent strategic rivalry between Russia and the West requires nuance and clarity. The most acute challenges facing regional actors are not generated by geostrategic competition, resource ownership questions, outstanding (and usually well-managed) boundary disputes, or different applications of international law. Instead, they relate to civil protection and safety, the practical challenges associated with adapting to climate change, assurance that Arctic shipping and resource development will be conducted safely, and what "sustainable" development looks like across a spectrum of economic sectors. Examples of priority areas where Canada and Russia might further their respective Arctic agendas by working together include strengthened partnerships in science and research, including cold weather construction, transportation technologies, and measures to address air pollutants, prevent oil pollution, and protect biodiversity. Both countries face similar challenges in terms of local adaptations to climate change and how they can best manage effects on ecosystems, food and water security, public health, and infrastructure. The countries have historically shared best practices in sustainable development, particularly in terms of Indigenous peoples, capacity-building, and governance.[12] Excessively emphasizing divergent interests, to the exclusion of points where Canadian and Russian Arctic interests converge, closes the door to these possibilities.

Overcoming mistrust will not be easy. Gavrilov's chapter makes clear that Russians believe the West failed to treat their country as an equal partner and honour its commitments to Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which has left a lingering sense of frustration and concern (about NATO expansion into the former Soviet sphere of influence, for example). Both he and Huebert highlight Putin's 2007 Munich speech as a key turning point, with Gavrilov celebrating it as a reassertion of Russia's independence in foreign policy and willingness to cooperate with other states on an equal basis, and Huebert as a warning of Russia's revisionist plans to challenge American hegemony globally. Since 2014, Western sanctions have forced Russia to turn to new sources of finance, technology, and markets – particularly China – with implications for Arctic development.[13] Given the high costs of Arctic resource extraction and transport to global markets, the relationships forged with

non-Arctic stakeholders to exploit oil, natural gas, minerals, and other resources (which are central to visions of regional and national economic prosperity in both Canada and Russia) are increasingly important. In turn, these new actors may introduce new security challenges and reshape assessments of risk and Arctic State responsibilities in the circumpolar world, particularly when filtered through the logic of "our Arctic, our rules."[14]

We hope that the papers in this volume promote better understandings of Russian and Canadian security intentions in the Arctic. Learning more about our respective strategies and correcting misconceptions about Arctic threats should help to ensure that assumptions derived from disagreements or divergent interests in other parts of the world are not misapplied to circumpolar relations. In an era of growing uncertainty in the face of Arctic environmental change and global strategic readjustments, constructive dialogue is essential to discern opportunities for cooperation, reduce the risk of miscalculating other States' intentions, and maintain the Arctic as a region characterized by peace, stability, and low tension where States can exercise their sovereign rights and responsibilities. While developments outside of the Arctic are likely to continue to complicate relations between Russia and Canada (and its Western allies) and inhibit the formation of more robust regional governance measures, most of the authors in this book suggest that this does not – and should not – preclude Arctic cooperation where this serves national and regional interests.

**Notes**

[1] R.A.J. Phillips, "Canada and Russia in the Arctic," *Behind the Headlines* 16, no.4 (1956): 1.

[2] Phillips, "Canada and Russia," *passim*, 8. 11.

[3] See Rebecca Pincus and Saleem Ali, "Have you been to 'The Arctic'? Frame theory and the role of media coverage in shaping Arctic discourse," *Polar Geography* 39:2 (2016): 83–97.

[4] See, for example, Donat Pharand, "The Arctic waters and the Northwest Passage: A final revisit," *Ocean Development & International Law* 38:1-2 (2007): 3-69; Aldo Chircop, Ivan Bunik, Moira L. McConnell, and Kristoffer Svendsen,

"Course Convergence? Comparative Perspectives on the Governance of Navigation and Shipping in Canadian and Russian Arctic Waters," *Ocean Yearbook Online* 28:1 (2014): 291-327; Viatcheslav Gavrilov, "Legal status of the Northern Sea Route and legislation of the Russian Federation: a note," *Ocean Development & International Law* 46:3 (2015): 256-263; Jonathan Edge and David VanderZwaag, "Canada-Russia Relations in the Arctic: Conflictual Rhetoric, Cooperative Realities," in *International Law and Politics of the Arctic Ocean: Essays in Honour of Donat Pharand,* eds. Suzanne Lalonde and Ted McDorman (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 240-65.

[5] United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (LOSC), article 76(10).

[6] See, for example, Ted McDorman, "The Continental Shelf beyond 200 nm: law and politics in the Arctic Ocean," *Journal of Transnational Law & Policy* 18 (2008): 155-185; Betsy Baker, "Law, Science, and the Continental Shelf: The Russian Federation and the Promise of Arctic Cooperation," *American University International Law Review* 25:2 (2010): 251-281; James Manicom, "Identity Politics and the Russia-Canada Continental Shelf Dispute: An Impediment to Cooperation?" *Geopolitics* 18:1 (2013): 60-76; Øystein Jensen, "Russia's Revised Arctic Seabed Submission," *Ocean Development & International Law* 47:1 (2016): 72-88; and Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon, *Breaking the Ice: Canada, Sovereignty, and the Arctic Extended Continental Shelf* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2017).

[7] Thanks to Ryan Dean for emphasizing this idea. See also E.C.H. Keskitalo, *Climate Change and Globalization in the Arctic: An Integrated Approach to Vulnerability Assessment* (London: Earthscan, 2008); Lassi Heininen and Chris Southcott, eds., *Globalization and the Circumpolar North* (Anchorage: University of Alaska Press, 2010); and Heininen and Matthias Finger, "The 'Global Arctic' as a New Geopolitical Context and Method," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 33:2 (2018): 199-202.

[8] Aleksandr Sergunin and Valery Konyshev, "Russian Military Activities in the Arctic: Myths & Realities," *Arctic Yearbook 2015*, https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2015/Commentaries/COMM_A_Sergunin%20and %20Kolyachev.pdf. In a written submission to the United Kingdom's parliamentary inquiry into defence in the Arctic in early 2017, Sergunin noted that "Russian ambitions in the High North may be high, but they are still far from being realized, and they are not necessarily implying the intentions and proper capabilities to confront other regional players by military means. Russia may be eager to develop powerful armed forces in the Arctic, but its plans to recreate a strong navy, to modernize its fleet of strategic submarines, to lay down new icebreakers and replace the old ones, to create better-trained and well-equipped land forces and to establish new [Federal Security Service] border control and

SAR units are difficult tasks. It is hard to imagine that Russia has the financial and technical capacities as well as managerial skills to meet these objectives in the foreseeable future." Sergunin, "Russian Military Strategies in the Arctic: Change and Continuity," written evidence submitted to the United Kingdom's Parliamentary Committee Hearings on Defence in the Arctic, 6 February 2017, http://data.parliament.uk/ written evidence/committeeevidence.svc/ evidence-document/defence-subcommittee/ defence-in-the-arctic/written/46751.html.

[9] Valery Konyshev and Aleksandr Sergunin, "The Arctic at the Crossroads of Geopolitical Interests," *Russian Politics & Law* 50:2 (2012): 34-54.

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[12] Lackenbauer, "Canada & Russia: Toward an Arctic Agenda," *Global Brief* (Summer/Fall 2016): 21-25.

[13] On perceptions of sanctions and Arctic resource development in Russia, see Daria Gritsenko, "Vodka on Ice? Unveiling Russian Media Perceptions of the Arctic," *Energy Research & Social Science* 16 (2016): 8-12.

[14] On the "our Arctic, our rules" idea, see Olga Khrushcheva and Marianna Poberezhskaya, "The Arctic in the Political Discourse of Russian Leaders: The National Pride and Economic Ambitions," *East European Politics* 32: 4 (2016): 547-566. On risks, see Katarzyna Zysk, "Asian Interests in the Arctic: Risks and Gains for Russia," *Asia Policy* 18 (July 2014): 30–38; and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Adam Lajeunesse, James Manicom, and Frédéric Lasserre, *China's Arctic Ambitions and What They Mean for Canada* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2018).

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# Index

# Breaking the Ice Curtain?

## Russia, Canada, and Arctic Security in a Changing Circumpolar World

Edited by P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Suzanne Lalonde

Canada and Russia are the geographical giants, spanning most of the circumpolar world. Accordingly, the Arctic is a natural area of focus for the two countries. Although the end of the Cold War seemed to portend a new era of deep cooperation between these two Arctic countries, lingering wariness about geopolitical motives and a mutual lack of knowledge about the other's slice of the circumpolar world are conspiring to pit Canada and the Russian Federation as Arctic adversaries. Are Russian and Canadian Arctic policies moving in confrontational direction? Can efforts at circumpolar cooperation survive the current crisis in Russian-Western relations, or does an era of growing global competition point inherently to heightened conflict in the Arctic?

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