



Northern Research Forum

5th NRF Open Assembly "Seeking Balance in a Changing North"

24- 27 September 2008 in Anchorage, Alaska, USA

Final Report on

Northern Research Forum Plenary Session

The Future of Northern Co-Operation

and

Special Roundtable Discussion

The Arctic Council and Multilateral Cooperation

Reports and Articles

Introduction

This is a final report of the first Plenary “The Future of Northern Co-operation” and the special Roundtable Discussion “The Arctic Council and Multilateral Cooperation” at the 5th Open Assembly of the Northern Research Forum (NRF). The 5th Open Assembly of the NRF was one assembly in a series of biennial NRF gatherings since the year 2000. It was particularly important due to the fact that it was the first one in the USA and in the Pacific North.

The 5th Open Assembly of the Northern Research Forum took place in Anchorage, Alaska. It was organized by the Northern Research Forum together with the 5th NRF Host Organizing Committee, representing the Office of the Governor of Alaska, Office of the Mayor of Anchorage, US Arctic Research Commission, Inuit Circumpolar Council, Institute of the North, University of Alaska Anchorage, Alaska Native Science Commission, The Northern Forum, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Cinza Research, and Anchorage Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The program of the 5th NRF included the following plenary sessions: “*The Future of Northern Co-operation*”, “*The New Geography of a Warming North*”, “*The Accessible Arctic in the Global Economy*” and “*Leadership in the Age of Uncertainty*”. In addition with the plenary sessions, special roundtable discussions about the “*Arctic Council and Multilateral Cooperation*” were presented. Five Theme Project Group roundtable discussions with one project session were also implemented. The themes of the Theme Project Groups were “*Future of Northern Cooperation: Legal and Political Issues*”, “*Economies in the North –Migration*”, “*Energy Issues*”, “*Northern Sea Routes*” and “*Climate Change - Northern Security/ies*”. The title of the Project Session was “*How do we sustain and build healthy northern communities*”. The program also consisted of open discussion in breakout sessions, Young Researchers rapporteur presentations and an excursion around Anchorage surroundings and the Athabascan village of Chickaloon

Among the main achievements of the 5th NRF Open Assembly are the following:

First, the 5th NRF Assembly showed that the NRF design is much needed today, even more than about ten years ago when it was started, and consequently, the idea and design has been copied and applied by several other organizations and institutions in many forums;

Second, the 5th Assembly showed that the NRF design is functioning, even when there was not necessarily a critical mass of participants present. Consequently, the NRF design was improved upon, and further developed at the Anchorage meeting. The latter was mostly performed through and by the breakout sessions, which followed the plenaries and more generally, the open discussions, which were often too short. This interaction gave a chance for a more focused discussion on one hand, and on the other hand, it left more room for many participants to take the floor;

Third, for the first time there was a substantial volume of applications submitted by young researchers and post-graduate students, and from this large selection there was an excellent group of NRF Young Researchers (YRs) present at the 5th NRF. All of them did an excellent job. In plenary sessions where YR took part in panel discussion, such as in Panel IV, there was good discussion among the participants in the panel themselves and from the audience. All this convinces that there is both a need for, and willingness to promote the NRF Network based on Young Researchers;

Fourth, all together 20 Position Papers were received, which both covered very well the four plenary themes of the 5th NRF, and were put on the NRF Website 2-3 weeks before the start of the Anchorage meeting;

Fifth, in the NRF meeting in Anchorage a new NRF activity was launched, when the five NRF Theme Project Groups had their first meeting (one of the project groups, "*Economies in the North*" had started its work already as the NRF Theme workshop in 2005). These groups will continue their work until the 6th NRF Open Assembly in 2010 in Oslo, Norway, where they will present a substantial report on their field(s) with possible ideas and proposals for the future;

Sixth, four of the invited eight Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) (the SAOs of Canada, Finland, Iceland and Russia) and two of the six invited Permanent Participants (Aleut Int. Ass. and ICC) of the Arctic Council were present at 5th NRF and took part in the special Roundtable discussion "*The Arctic Council and Multilateral Cooperation*". Further, and even more important, the discussion of the Roundtable was both open and substantial including some new ideas and proposals by the SAOs (see the report from the session).

About the current geopolitical situation

At the early-21st century the circumpolar North is not isolated, but closely integrated into the current world of globalization and part of the international system. Recently there has been a growing world wide, even global, economic and political interest towards the northernmost regions of the globe. That has been particularly due to the estimated fossils in the shelves of the northern seas and visions of new trans-arctic sea routes. Further, a significant and rapid multi-functional environmental and geopolitical change with the complex impacts and the uncertainty of climate change is occurring in the circumpolar North. Consequently, a strategic importance of the North is growing and becoming high on the agenda in geopolitics and economics in many northern states and major powers outside the region. All this might have several consequences., For example, northern areas (mostly) as peripheries of the eight Arctic states have become target areas for the growing economic, political and military interests of the central governments, as well as those of major powers outside the region and big trans-national companies.

This raises a number of questions, such as whether the Arctic states are ready for a thorough discussion on relevant issues, such as the exploitation of northern (energy) resources and a new kind of international regime for the North, in the context of the existing institutionalized (mostly multilateral) international cooperation? And further, what kind of role there might be for the Arctic Council (see Exner-Pirot; Numminen in this volume)? Or, will the Arctic states have more traditional and national responses for these northern regions, such as an emphasis on national defence and redeveloping the abilities of the armies of these countries (see Huebert in this volume)? Or, will further cooperation happen in a bilateral context, or in the context of different *ad-hoc* coalitions, such as the meeting of the five littoral states of the Arctic Ocean (e.g. The Ilulissat Declaration 2008)?

Consequently, one of the timely and critical issues is how to strengthen relations between regional organizations, particularly the Arctic Council, and global / world-wide organizations, particularly the United Nations, not least due to the UNs Convention of the Law of the Sea, which is the main legally-binding international document dealing with the circumpolar North. Further, it would be good and important to encourage the Arctic states and the European Union,

which launched its first communication on the Arctic Region in November 2008 (Commission of the European Communities 2008), “to work together on an agenda for issues of Arctic and northern interest, and to promote it on a global level in cooperation with international organizations and forums, which are taking a growing interest in Arctic issues of global importance” as Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region recommended in their 8th conference in August 2008 in Fairbanks (Conference Statement 2008). The 5th NRF Open Assembly continued this discussion in the 1st Plenary Session on the future of northern cooperation and the Roundtable discussion on the Arctic Council and multilateral cooperation.

This is a brief description of the geopolitical situation, where the 1st Plenary “*The Future of Northern Co-operation*”, with the panelists of Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland, Professor Nikita Lomagin, Dept. of World Economy St.Petersburg State University, Russia, Deputy Minister Inuuteq Holm Olsen, Greenland, Rasmus Bertelsen, PhD Research Fellow, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge and Jussi Laine, Doctoral student of the Department of Geography, University of Joensuu. In the special Roundtable Discussion “*The Arctic Council and Multilateral Cooperation*”, the panelists were Ragnar Baldursson, Senior Arctic Official of Iceland, Patricia Cochran, Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council and Chair of the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat, Ms.c. Adèle Dion, Ambassador, Senior Arctic Official of Canada, Victoria Gofman, Aleut International Association, Jyrki Kallio, Senior Arctic Official of Finland, Anton Vasiliev, Ambassador at Large, Senior Arctic Official of the Russian Federation, Heather Exner-Pirot, PhD Candidate, University of Calgary and Lotta Numminen, researcher in the Finnish Institute of International Affairs and PhD student at University of Helsinki. These two sessions took place at the 5th Open Assembly of the Northern Research Forum (NRF) in Anchorage, Alaska in September 2008. Proceedings articles from the 5th Open Assembly are available at the NRF website, www.nrf.is.

Reports from Young Researchers

Report on Plenary Session "The Future of Northern Cooperation"

by Dessimslav Sabev, NRF Young Researcher

Chairs: Steven Bigras and Zaneta Ozolina, members of the NRF Steering committee

Panelists: Dr. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland; Professor Nikita Lomagin, Dept. of World Economy, St.Petersburg State University, Russia; Deputy Minister Inuuteq Holm Olsen, Greenland; Rasmus Bertelsen, PhD Research Fellow, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge; and Jussi Laine, Doctoral student of the Department of Geography, University of Joensuu, Finland

This session started the 5th Northern Research Forum (NRF) with an intriguing discussion on what is probably the main reason and overarching topic of the NRF, namely the future of circumpolar cooperation. Big issues were delivered directly by a heterogeneous participants' panel, including the President of a northern country, Arctic Council representatives, policy analysts, and young researchers. While the panelists came from four different member states in the Arctic Council (Iceland, Russia, Greenland/Denmark, Finland), not all of them were official representatives of those states. Nevertheless, this panel's geopolitical configuration, combined with the absence of voices from countries like USA, Canada and Norway, strongly oriented the discussion towards the Eurasian North and was dominated by the (new) Russian Arctic agenda.

The most fascinating feature of this panel was the friendly confrontation of five different and sometimes contradictory perspectives on northern cooperation. President Grímsson, one of the most prominent makers and promoters of northern cooperation, put a special emphasis on the democratic structure of the Arctic Council (AC), which includes northern communities' organizations (such as ICC) in the decision-making process. This is what makes the Arctic Council unique among the multilateral political structures today. As a result of this democratic structure, the driving force in the AC would be, according to President Grímsson, the political will, not the political strength/power. For that reason, he sees a danger for the future of northern cooperation if it is to split into "boxes", i. e. into different negotiating tables. The way to

overcome this danger would be, as President Grímsson has been repeated it since the 1st NRF 8 years ago, to engage Russia in a positive way in the process of northern cooperation. He did not precise though how this was to be achieved and why, one decade later, our main objective in northern cooperation is still to woo Russia.

Part of the answers came from Professor Lomagin's much structured and less romantic presentation on Russia's northern agenda. His talk reminded us that the priorities in a government's northern agenda are tied up to the special "national interests" within the "Arctic race". Indeed, the Arctic appears primarily as a race field in the Russian agenda, and northern cooperation is supposed to follow. Professor Lomagin's lecture made it clear that Russia is ready for action and that if northern partners are not prepared to join it, Russia will act independently. And if President Grímsson eventually took this last statement to reaffirm his sustainable idea of positive cooperation with the largest member of the AC, it nevertheless demonstrated that it is rather Russia who sets up the northern agenda, and that Iceland rather agrees. This was a compelling demonstration of a beautiful, although asymmetrical, friendship.

Once again Russia appeared as a main driver of change in Jussi Laine's presentation on the "B/ordering North" where Russia was a critical actor in the delicate "balance of northern cooperation". Probably a Finnish touch on that research was its EU vantage point. This provoked much interest in the audience and resulted in a question of whether EU is expected to become a full member of the AC or not. President Grímsson's answer was not a standard one and thus took some by surprise. It was not his clear-cut "no" to EU's aspirations that surprised us but rather the reasoning that supported it. Hence it appeared, according to President Grímsson, that EU was, in fact, not friendly enough with Russia, and therefore not a welcomed guest on President Grímsson's Arctic table where Russia turns out to be a very special guest.

A couple of presentations from the standpoint of another Arctic player, namely the Denmark/Greenland team, gave us a well-deserved break from Russian politics. Drawing a picture of the international perspective of Greenland, Deputy Minister Olsen added some opportune emphasis on the indigenous aspect on northern cooperation although in some parts of his speech Arctic indigenous communities appeared as subjects of government protection rather than actors

of northern cooperation. He notably pointed out the need to "protect indigenous communities" within the circumpolar negotiations. Then Rasmus Bertelsen expounded his much ambitious "vision for a North Atlantic Security and Surveillance Organization" for the former Danish zone of influence, namely the places he defined as "micro-states" such as Iceland, Greenland, and the Faeroe Islands. Hence, this session was a compelling demonstration that what we called "the Borderless North" two years ago is (still) divided into states, zones of influence, in a word: "boxes". The Arctic has become a focal point of stronger-than-ever national interests. But isn't that what makes the future of northern cooperation a most exciting process to watch?

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Report on the Roundtable Session “The Arctic Council and Multilateral Cooperation”

by Dr. Oliver Krone, NRF Young Researcher, University of Lapland, Finland

This session echoed the overall opening speeches, and was held among the Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) of the “Arctic Eight” and representatives of two permanent observers.

Given president Grímsson’s emphasis on the need for unity of the “Arctic Eight” to act multilateral, all of the SAO confirmed that the exclusion of some members in the discussions about the development of seaways earlier in 2008 in the Arctic was an event that should not happen again. The overall reports that the audience listened were about the operational procedures within the Arctic Council (AC).

Under the heading of multilateral cooperation the Icelandic SAO Mr. Ragnar Baldursson opened the presentations by arguing that the AC was a result of the overall changing political arena after the end of the “Cold World”. For that reason the Arctic cooperation about issues of common concern would be still quit young. Furthermore the legacy of the “Cold War” still would overshadow the agenda of the AC by excluding some fields, of which the most prominent is the security policy.

Talking about the most prominent issues that Iceland currently pursues is in particular the non-concern with security issues and indigenous issues on a broad discussion basis. Here it was

indicated that often nation-states silenced-off indigenous affairs, but that is being discussed more openly by representatives of the nation-states that have indigenous people in their overall territory.

Echoing the concern for indigenous people the two representatives of the permanent observers group indicated the difficulties of integrating “Traditional (Ecological) Knowledge” (T(E)K) into the proceedings of the research that is conducted in different working groups, embodied in the AC (Patricia Cochran, Inuit Circumpolar Council). According to the two representatives, the awareness for importance of its recognition had grown, but in an operational view in western scientific knowledge would still be prominent. On this matter the representative of the Aleut International Association, Victoria Gofman, reported about a research project financed partially by the National Science Foundation, where for the first time ever TEC and western knowledge would have been used on an equal standing.

Ms. Cochran indicated that the status of permanent observers for indigenous people would pose significant economic constraints, as they have to lobby for financing to make themselves heard. In terms of policies, ICC had taken up a position whereby indigenous interests are pursued more actively and thereby also breaking the silence about problems of these population segments in the respective nation-states.

A novel approach to the operationalising of internal procedures in the AC was suggested by the Finnish SAO Jyrki Kallio as an idea. According to his model, for now, there is too much differentiation between committees concerned with Sustainability, and its impact for the different policy fields. For this reason he suggested that the AC might consider a distinction between natural and human systems and how sustainability might be achieved by having a dedicated, coordinating working group that should ensure that Sustainability were not only a “talk” item, but also one that structures the proceedings of the different working groups. Furthermore, this could increase transparency in the handling of affairs within the AC. He too reiterated the problem of the exclusion of some AC states presented to its own understanding. He reported that often SAO’s would be drawn into the running of operational affairs from the working groups, thereby increasing the SAOs already heavy workload.

Answering implicitly, the invitation from president Grímsson to increase Russia's involvement in the AC Mr. Anton Vasiliev as SAO declared that the Russian Federation perceives itself as an active member of the AC. He reiterated in this account of the Russian involvement in the new Foreign Policy that was described in the early morning session by Professor Nikita Lomagin. Accordingly Russia perceives itself as a major player in the Arctic and the Arctic is a major part of Russia. In line with the FPC, he declared that this policy would seek to enhance the economic situation of the overall North and thus also the indigenous people. In his view there is a perspective growing in Russia that seeks a strategic relationship between Russia and the United States of America on Arctic Affairs. From this perspective Russia would be in a process to balance itself between unilateral action on Arctic issues, and one of multilateralism as security would be an overall Arctic affair.

Taking recourse to last years demarcation of the Russian shelf possession Mr. Vasiliev declared that there would not be a problem with the Russian Northern Border that was evident, but that the Northern Border of the Russian Shelf freedom that was assured. From this perspective he argued that the Northern Russian Shelf itself were for access. On a strategic planning perspective for AC affairs he declared that Russia would deliver its contributions to ongoing research projects. Furthermore, he reported that Russia would attempt to integrate and enhance the link-up between AC work and that of the NRF.

This valuation and positive feedback on the work of the NRF was reiterated by MSs. Adèle Dion who spoke as Canadian SAO. In her view the NRF would act as an important source for arctic researchers, and simultaneously allowed forging cooperation and links between the different sciences involved in Arctic research.

On this notion of cooperation she stressed that the AC should continue working on the principle of consent among the Arctic Eight. On the policy fields dealt with, by the AC, she reiterated that this body is the sole body that had final decision making power on nation- state, embracing research of the Arctic among the Arctic Eight. Ms. Dion reminded in her speech that Canada is the founder of the AC, and considers the Arctic and the circumpolar cooperation vital. In a longer research perspective, and not only for that, she emphasized the need to orientate actions to

Human needs. On the prevalent issue of additional members to the AC, or status changes for some permanent observers to full members, she maintained the position that the AC's charter was clear that status of full membership should left to the adjacent states to the Arctic itself.

During the Q&A session the question was raised whether the exclusive character of the AC membership would not be something "elitist". This was denied by Ms. Dion. She pointed out that the AC member's would not refuse the status of permanent observer given to other international organisations or nation-states. However, it should be clear that the AC would not grant this status for free, and it would expect valuable inputs to the AC and the territory represented by it. This remark was echoed and reiterated by Mr. Vasiliev, who told the audience that the AC is seemingly perceived as governance body for the Arctic. Furthermore, and indicative of the utilisation view that some observers have of the AC, their involvement would shrink if asked for dedicated input to the work on the working group level.

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Summary of Discussion at the Breakout Group in the 1st Day, Wednesday September 24th

by Shirley Roburn, NRF Young Researcher

Although most of the discussion focused on outreach and education strategies for the Arctic Council's work, the group began by clarifying more general questions concerning the Arctic Council and its role.

General Discussion of the Arctic Council and its mandate

The group began by reviewing what issues would fit within the mandate of the Arctic Council, and raised questions regarding the Council's scope. For example, there was discussion as to whether the research scope of the Council's activities should be narrowed to focus on assessments or "state of the arctic" reports, given that there are other disciplinary groups for most social and physical sciences. Other people highlighted the benefits of multidisciplinary approaches, which are more holistic and can bring specific new insights.

The group also questioned some of the limitations facing the Arctic Council as a multilateral body, questioning whether the Council was evolving sufficiently to meet evolving needs. Some people voiced concerns about issues of fragmentation and exclusion in northern multilateral governance in general. An example of this problem is the gap that sometimes arises between the national policies of individual member countries, and the joint policies that members of the Council have all signed on to. Other examples of "disconnects" included policy differences between indigenous peoples and the national governments of the states they live within, and lack of understanding or connection between governments and the various projects of the International Polar Year.

The low profile of the Arctic Council

The general impression of the group was that the Arctic Council's profile is low, even among groups for whom the Arctic Council's work has immediate applications. It was discussed whether national level representatives at the Arctic Council could do more to bring their work back to their individual countries. Canada has put forward an outreach and communication strategy for the Arctic Council and this is starting discussion on how outreach is best done. The more general question was raised as to whether the Arctic Council was itself best positioned to engage in outreach, or whether this approach was too 'top down'. When the Arctic Council released particularly crucial reports on human development and climate change, the NRF held 'town hall' style meetings: perhaps partnerships and other types of community links are necessary to complete the 'loop' between the Council and constituents in member states.

Community Level Outreach

The group briefly considered whether different types of outreach materials, such as DVDs, could be helpful. One example that was discussed was the DVD distributed in support of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment findings. Another approach that was mentioned was the type of long-term, community-initiated education epitomized by the Yukon community stewards program. This program funded extended placements of fish and wildlife resource people in small communities, where they supported community environmental education and monitoring projects. Later on, in the discussion, the idea of involving communities in monitoring came up as a very practical way to bridge gaps between scientific research and its applied social relevance.

Certain arctic observation networks are already in place which draw on local community participation- such networks are critical for effective, long-term monitoring, whether in the social or 'hard' sciences. In either case, longer time spans make it more possible to meaningfully study 'change'. Community involvement 'closes the loop', and makes a better two way flow of information: where communities are involved in gathering data, they are also more likely to have results flow back to them.

Scientific Information: the balance between specificity and synthesis

The group discussed the difficulty in balancing the production of cutting-edge research with the need to actually synthesis and incorporate scientific information so it becomes part of our broader understanding. Andrew Weaver's theories were cited to elaborate; Weaver has written about how too much emphasis on peer-reviewed scientific data can cause practitioners to focus on producing scientific papers to the point where they do not spend enough time contextualizing their data, and linking it up to related real-world contexts. While any effort to synthesize information inevitably involves bias, the group discussed the need for dialog among different groups of academic researchers, and between researchers and society more broadly. The International Polar Year was mentioned as one effort to create a more complete research picture, which is more interdisciplinary and involves more "team" science. Additionally, some IPY projects focus on practical issues, which is one good way to create strong collaborations and ensure a good flow of communication between researchers and others who have an interest in the research outcomes.

Both synthesis and specificity are needed for research to advance: very specific expertise is required to bring something new to a research question, but a 'big picture' mindset is also needed to contextualize the results and to put them in dialog with other knowledge.

The group discussed the difficulty of creating such dialogs: it is not always a simple matter to determine when more data is needed, or when what is actually required to understand better the existing pieces of information and how they are linked. To create dialog, one must disseminate information, but until one has a handle on the 'global' picture and can evaluate what information is important to share, it's hard to know what to disseminate and therefore how to start productive dialog. Synthesis is always a subjective process; however, rather than avoiding this process,

more people should be engaging in it more often, creating a diversity of "big pictures" that help to conceptualize the whole from different perspectives.

In addition to the question of how knowledge can bridge different sectors, the group discussed the need for both "pure" research, or 'research for the sake of research' where immediate applications may be unclear, and for research that asks socially relevant questions. In general, it was felt that academics should give more emphasis/higher priority to pursuing socially relevant research areas; at the same time it was recognized that knowledge often develops in unpredictable ways, and that open-minded exploration--including of the seemingly esoteric--is an essential part of knowledge creation.

A Few Practical Proposals

Some practical projects are already underway to improve access to the Arctic Council. For example, a new Arctic Portal web tool will provide a gateway to much "public" Arctic Council information.

The group felt that the most important thing at this juncture is not that more people know about the Arctic Council itself, but that the knowledge and policy proposals that are generated within the individual Arctic Council working groups find their way to people for whom the information is relevant. With that in mind, the group discussed how at the working group level a lot of exchange is already taking place, with practitioners who sit on the various working groups bringing knowledge back to their home countries and home governments. The group discussed avenues for increasing funding for working group members, and particularly for representatives of Permanent Participants. Such representatives have close links with Arctic peoples who may be most affected by the issues confronted by the working groups; at the same time, the Permanent Participants have substantively fewer financial resources than nation-state actors, and this poses a limit to participation. Travel costs to and from meetings are an important impediment. It was brought up that a similar lack of resources posed a hurdle for the University of the Arctic, which found it hard to create continuity in its representation from Canadian First Nations because bodies like the CYFN (Council of Yukon First Nations) lacked the funding to consistently send the same staff person to planning meetings.

It was suggested that working group funding for new research could be linked to funding support for permanent participants.

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Summary of Breakout Group 2 on Future of Northern Cooperation/Arctic Council

by Audrey Giles, NRF Young Researcher as rapporteur

Moderator: NRF Steering Committee Member: Susie Crate

The opening up of arctic waters has a tension to it: it is beneficial for some (such as those who ship resources), but it is harmful if not catastrophic for others (such as Indigenous peoples living in vulnerable areas). It is important for organizations and governments to negotiate these tensions. In order for negotiation to be facilitated in a way that is not inherently confrontational, it was suggested that there is a necessity to develop a culture of cooperation between and within arctic nations.

The discussion focused mostly on the Arctic Council. One participant noted that there were parallels between the opening up of the Baltic Sea and the ensuing relationship between Moscow and the regions. It was questioned if this same sort of relationship would emerge through the opening up of arctic waterways. Indeed, some questioned the extent to which the regions in the North are actually participating in decisions at the Arctic Council. It was pointed out that Russia and the USA have problems of communication between horizontal actors. Further, it was noted that data is not always being shared between arctic states, which has resulted in holes in how the Arctic Council operates. Greater cooperation could help to facilitate, for example, a “condominium mode” (joint investment/mutual investment) in shipping between Russia and other countries.

In order to foster a culture of cooperation, it is necessary to avoid an environment of suspicion, which can provoke reactions up to and including military interventions. It was suggested that all security systems need to include Russia in order to create the most promising situation for the fostering of a culture of cooperation.

Presentations by panellists

Indigenous Organizations in the Arctic Council

Victoria Gofman¹, Aleut International Association, Executive Director; U.S.A.

1996, Ottawa, Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council:

“...Affirming our commitment to the well-being of the inhabitants of the Arctic, including special recognition of the special relationship and unique contributions to the Arctic of indigenous peoples...;

Recognizing the traditional knowledge of the indigenous people of the Arctic ... and taking note of its importance ... to the collective understanding of the circumpolar Arctic;

Desiring further to provide a means for promoting cooperative activities ... and to ensure full consultation with and the involvement of indigenous people...;

Recognizing the valuable contribution and support of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Saami Council, and the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the Far North, Siberia and the far East of the Russian Federation in the development of the Arctic Council;

Hereby declare:

1. The Arctic Council is established as a high level forum to:

- Provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities...*

2. The Category of Permanent Participation is created to provide for active participation and full consultation with the Arctic indigenous representatives within the Arctic Council”

Fast forward to 2008, more than a decade later, how do these statements hold today? Have the good intentions of the founders and perseverance of the initial Permanent Participants fulfilled a

¹ The opinion expressed in the article is solely by Victoria Gofman

promise of an equal and mutually respectful forum for chartering a better life for the Arctic and its peoples?

There is no simple answer to this question since this is not a black and white territory. Many complex issues, ranging from the foreign relations between the Arctic States to the domestic policies toward indigenous peoples, cast various shades of many colors on the Arctic Council's work.

It is feasible that the recent surge in the interest to the Arctic, mainly due to its increased accessibility, will lead to a revision of the Arctic Council structure and, perhaps, its legal status. Will Permanent Participants continue to be integrated in the Arctic Council if it becomes a multilateral instrument or will they lose their footing because they are not sovereign governments per se, not to be confused with the sovereign status that Tribal Councils in Alaska and First Nations in Canada have? What will happen to Permanent Participants if the Arctic Council evolves into a convention or a treaty?

Foreign policy is a prerogative of capitals. For example, the State of Alaska has been affected by the U.S. foreign policies more than any continental state of the Union but has a minuscule-to-none role in federal foreign policies. Alaska's past two centuries are a reflection of major international history-making events: the purchase of Alaska from Russia, a World War II battle field, Cold War and Amchitka nuclear tests just to name a few. Aleuts (Unangax), indigenous people of the Aleutian chain in the Bering Sea, found themselves in the midst of these events that dramatically and irreversibly altered their lives and the entire culture.

The fact that the government did not consult with the Aleut people on the decisions with life changing consequences is a part of the history of the bygone era, accepted and forgiven by many but certainly not forgotten. In the United States, changes in the domestic policies in the last several decades made it possible to insure that local residents and indigenous peoples are informed and consulted whenever major developments are planned in their homeland but involvement of indigenous organizations in relevant foreign policy matters has continued to be considered unnecessary.

Should the Arctic Council become an international instrument with vested powers, it would be a tremendous step forward to continue its partnership between the States and indigenous organizations in addressing all issues without exceptions. The Arctic Council provides one of the

few forums where indigenous organizations have a unique role in discussing foreign policies related primarily to the protection of the environment. Ironically, AIA and other Alaska Permanent Participants have better access to some of the foreign policy issues than the State of Alaska.

The fact that a small indigenous non-profit organization can share a negotiation table with ambassadors and officials of all Arctic States is a remarkable act of recognition of a nation albeit without national borders, an anthem, and taxes. There are no other organizations or forums that would provide a mechanism for a direct participation of an organization such as AIA in international scientific assessments of the magnitude of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment released in 2004 and the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment expected to be published in 2009. These two benefits alone give AIA a competitive edge in the development of its research programs such as the Bering Sea Sub Network (BSSN) and in informing the Aleut region about the newest socio-economic and environmental trends in the North.

Having access to the opportunities does not automatically lead to the ability to make use of them. Considering that the Arctic Council, as it stands today, is a circum-Artic body for implementation of scientific research programs aimed at advancement of the sustainable development of the Arctic, Permanent Participants can receive benefits and can contribute primarily through participation in the Council's programs. Only participation in the projects provides a venue for "active participation and full consultation".

Yet permanent participants have not been able to fully realize these opportunities due to a myriad of problems. Some of them are financial; others are rooted in lack of experience and expertise that in turn could, at least partially, be attributed to financial difficulties as well. These problems are not insurmountable but the collective efforts of Permanent Participants so far have not been very successful. Since most of the obstacles are financial, they act as a de facto filtering preventing Permanent Participants from participation and severely limiting their input.

Over the years, some Permanent Participants developed their own strategies for funding and have been successful in obtaining funds but even money does not always guarantee a meaningful participation, such as leading a chapter of an assessment.

For example, the Aleut International Association's strategy has been a development of a large program funded by a competitive grant that would serve as a contribution to the Arctic

Council processes among others. The successful program became known as the Bering Sea Sub-Network: International Community-Based Environmental Observation Alliance for the Arctic Observing Network (BSSN) that is a 2008-09 International Polar Year project implemented by the Aleut International Association in collaboration with the University of Alaska, United Nations Environment Programme – Global Resource Databank Arendal and the Alaska Native Science Commission under the auspices of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna working group of the Arctic Council. BSSN is funded by the United States National Science Foundation. The project's pilot stage, which began in June 2007, runs through May 2009. The project is expected to continue, pending further funding.

The BSSN timeline begins in 2003 during the work on ACIA, findings of which clearly indicated the need for broad-based efforts for monitoring of environmental changes. The concept was presented at the Arctic Council in 2004 and the Senior Arctic Officials recommended developing the project under the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme. The concept of circum-arctic network at that time proved to be unfeasible and the idea was scaled down to a regional network. In 2005, it was decided to develop a proposal to the National Science Foundation's International Polar Year (IPY) program, the Arctic Observing Network. In 2006, the concept received the IPY endorsement.

BSSN is a network of coastal communities. It consists of six villages representing six indigenous cultures: three in the Russian Federation (Kanchalan — Chukchi, Tymlat — Koryak, and Nikolskoye — Western Aleut/Unangas) and three in the United States (Gambell — Siberian Yup'ik, Togiak — Central Yu'pik, and Sand Point — Eastern Aleut/Unangan).

This project creates a structured network that provides the means for the systematic collection of information about the environment and lays a foundation for future community-based research. The network also provides for the efficient management of data gathered from community-based environmental observations.

The overall goal of BSSN is to increase understanding and knowledge of pan-Arctic processes, thereby enhancing the ability of scientists, Arctic communities, and governments to predict, plan, and respond to environmental changes and their subsequent socio-economic effects.

All BSSN communities heavily depend on marine resources of the Bering Sea. Even the most remote communities realize today that the resources are impacted by multiple stressors and

concerted efforts by all peoples across the Bering Sea are needed to assure that the scientific information that is used in resource management decisions encompasses the best knowledge available, including indigenous and traditional knowledge. BSSN is one of the ways to address these concerns.

There have been many discussions in the last few years about what projects would fit to be Arctic Council projects. The strength of the Arctic Council is in its ability to generate projects demonstrating innovation and with a strong participation of the indigenous peoples.

It was quite telling that the Arctic Council neither embraced nor fully understood BSSN. It was praised by some Member States but a collective reception of the States, as expressed by their representatives, was very tepid. It takes time to change attitudes and BSSN is gradually earning its status and gaining supporters across the table.

After ten plus year of existence, the Arctic Council has yet to develop a set of rules that would welcome leadership of an Arctic Council project by a Permanent Participant's organization. It appears that some Member States may be more comfortable to see Permanent Participants stay in the wings and let the governments run the show. The Arctic is a stage where indigenous organizations are actors and it is reasonable to expect that they should be able to play some leading roles in the Arctic Council's programs.

While all is not perfect, as the Arctic Council matures in its current form or in a reformed one, there is no doubt that there will be more doors open for its indigenous organizations. It is to the benefit of the larger Arctic community that the political gains achieved in the Council by the Permanent Participants are sustained and enhanced.

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Russian Policy in the Arctic and the Arctic Council

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Only a week ago, on September 17th, the Security Council of the Russian Federation adopted a set of documents on the priorities of the Russian policy in the Arctic.

Speaking at the session of the Council, President D. Medvedev underlined the strategic importance of the Arctic to Russia, both to the country's economic development and to sustaining its competitiveness on the world market.

The Arctic is a major part of Russia and Arctic territories are now approximately 20 percent of Russian Federation territory. This figure could be further adjusted when the new Russian law on the exact composition of the Russian Arctic zone is prepared and adopted. The length of the Russian borderline facing the Arctic Ocean exceeds 20 thousand kilometers. Russian Arctic regions produce about 11 percent of the GNP of the country and 22 percent of its exports. As much as 90 percent of Russian natural gas, 90 percent of nickel and 60 percent of copper come from the Arctic, and major reserves of hydrocarbons and other mineral resources are concentrated there.

Russia is a major part of the Arctic. More than a third of Arctic territories are Russian and the Arctic regions of Russia represent the largest economy of the Arctic. Nearly half of the Arctic population lives in the Russian Federation. The North Sea Route is a major transport line between western and eastern parts of Eurasia. Russia holds 80 percent of "biodiversity" of the Arctic. Hence the importance attached to the Arctic and the legitimate attention of the world to the Russian politics in the Far North. Hence the strong interdependence between Russia and the Arctic and Russia's strong interest in stability, predictability and cooperation in the Arctic region.

The Security Council has put forward clear priorities in Russia's Arctic Strategy and President D. Medvedev has named them. The key task is to turn the Arctic into Russia's resource base for the twenty-first century. The main issue is the reliable protection of our national interests in the region and to ensure that, three concrete tasks have been put forward.

First, the establishment of a solid legal and regulatory framework for our activities in the Arctic by finalizing and adopting federal law on the Russian Arctic zone's southern border. This

new law should clarify what particular territories of the Russian Federation are parts of the Russian “Arctic zone”. Such a clear legal definition is needed to specify the territorial scope of possible economic, investment, tax and other policies and privileges with a view of a speedy economic and social revival of these Russian Arctic regions.

Another separate and important task, not related to the law mentioned above, is fixing the outer limits of the Russian continental shelf. Russia was the first to present in 2001 its submission to the UN Commission on the outer limits of the continental shelf. Some additional scientific data is required to prove the relevance of our submission, and we shall work on those ourselves and with our partners. We remain committed to the existing international legal regime and mechanisms, above all Article 76 of UNCLOS and the UN Commission, and consider it sufficient for regulation in this regard. At the first ministerial meeting of the five Arctic coastal states in Greenland’s Ilulissat this May we agreed to remain committed to an extensive international legal framework which applies to the Arctic Ocean, notably the law of the sea, and to the orderly settlement of any possible overlapping claims. There has been no change in the Russian position since that time.

Second, reducing the gap in development between the Russian Nordic regions and other regions. Considerable federal funds, including through a number of federal programmes, have already been invested in the northern regions. But there are still problems with ensuring this money is spent rationally for genuinely effective production and the creation of new jobs. It is also clear that budget funds alone cannot resolve the Arctic’s problems. We need to combine the possibilities of the state, business community, and local self-government.

Modernizing transportation infrastructure is one of the most urgent priorities. The lack of roads, local air transport links (which for the most part have broken down in the post-Soviet period), modern river and sea ports and an ageing fleet, including the icebreaker fleet that is so important in this region, is a real obstacle for developing the Arctic’s rich investment potential. Technical modernization of airports is a key issue in this context as air transport is practically the only type of transport link for remote districts.

At the same time, some groups of the population and non-profitable transport segments in the Far North cannot get by without support measures, and these measures should be provided.

The North Sea Route is one of the main links in the Arctic transport system. It plays a crucial part in ensuring timely delivery of supplies needed to the Far North. With climate change,

it can become more accessible. There are still problems in this area and we need to work not just on restoring freight volumes to former levels but also on increasing them. The North Sea Route will be modernized with an up-to-date navigation, search and rescue system. We are going to develop it as one of the country's strategic national main transport routes. The transport component of developing hydrocarbon reserves and their exports by sea also needs to be made more efficient.

Three, resolving the region's environmental problems is another priority we need to keep working on, including the implementation of the agreements reached at international forums. Protecting the environment and developing eco-tourism are among the conditions for preserving the northern indigenous peoples' way of life, and we shall take care of sustaining and developing indigenous peoples' culture and traditional industries and crafts.

In the spirit of the above, The Security Council has adopted the Policy Framework of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the period of up to 2020. This document proceeds from the comprehensive approach to the task and entails substantial state financing that will be channeled through various state targeted programmes.

The new Russian Arctic Policy provides for further development of constructive cooperation in the Arctic, both bilateral with all our regional partners and multilateral, within the framework of the existing organizations. The two key such organizations, from our viewpoint, are the Arctic Council and the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council.

The Arctic Council has a unique mission: to address Arctic issues at a political level through multilateral cooperation, on the basis of consensus. In a way, the Council is the embodiment of the spirit of cooperation among the member states who face the same challenges of harsh living conditions of the Far North, of climate change, the protection of environment and traditional living cycles of indigenous peoples, as well as exploring and using its mineral reserves. Russia highly regards the achievements and potential of this forum and intends to further enhance its national contribution to the Council's endeavors.

The work of the Arctic Council already made and currently under way on such major sensitive issues as Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, Oil & Gas Assessment, Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment proves that it is capable of addressing serious problems and to work out consensus recommendations, however difficult this might be. In my mind, this reflects the correct balances of the regional composition of this forum; between the scope of its activities and the

character of its “products” (assessments, recommendations and practical cooperation projects); between its internal arrangements and decisions and transparency and cooperation with non-member states and entities. Not least, the associations of indigenous peoples of the North hold a special role in the Council’s proceedings. All these balances should be sustained in a very careful and responsible manner.

This does not mean that the Council is static. Each of the chairmanships, which rotate once in two years, tries to bring a new dynamic function to the Arctic Council and to the way it organizes its work. Russia did that while chairing the Council in 2004-2006. Norway is doing that remarkably well during its current chairmanship of the organization. But most of the dynamic of the Arctic Council comes not from the novelties of its organization, but from choosing its subject-matters appropriately. This depends not only on the chairs, but on all member states who propose their leadership on the issue.

In the Russian view, there are two areas where such new dynamics can be attained and where Russia can contribute.

One is the establishment of the Arctic Council Projects Support Instrument. This idea, which has already been explored for a couple of years, seems to be taking shape now. Several countries, including Russia, have already made significant pledges and the preparation of the basic documents on the PSI is in full swing. If all the interested parties manage to agree on these documents and they are adopted at the next Arctic Council CSO session in November, it would mean that the PSI could begin to deliver starting next year. That would be a major boost to the Arctic Council practical activities, primarily in ensuring stability of activities in Russia within the list of priorities of ACAP (Arctic Contaminants Action Plan).

Another is to initiate practical work in the establishment of the regional prevention/safety/security system (or network) in regards to economic and infrastructural projects. This is a Russian initiative put forward in the Arctic Council last year. The idea is to collectively work out a set of standards, other measures of prevention, monitoring and elimination of man-made accidents in oil and gas exploration and transportation, in nuclear power plants and others. This process could be in phases, although we believe that we should proceed fast. As a first step, the Arctic Council member states could jointly evaluate the potential threats and find general agreement on the way forward. Some applicable assessments in this context are already being made within the Arctic Council undertakings, such as Oil & Gas Report

and Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment. Russia expects that its initiative will be adopted by the Arctic Council to become the Arctic Council project. Meanwhile, we have already started contributing to the future project. A very productive and substantial international conference on these issues was organized jointly with our Swedish colleagues in Dudinka 1-3 September. On 1-2 October a large scale rescue exercise is organized in the new Varandey LUKOIL oil terminal in the Barents Sea. The observers from all Arctic Council member states have been invited and a conference on the outcome of the exercise will be organized right after in Naryan-Mar.

These two areas demonstrate the huge potential of further development of cooperation in the Arctic under the guidance of the Arctic Council and in the interests of all member states. Contrary to alarmist reports that one sometimes sees in the media, expanded and transparent cooperation in the Arctic region can and should be the predominant trend in the North.

The same holds true when we consider the activities of the governmental Barents/Euro-Arctic Council, which the Russian Federation currently chairs. Coordinating the work of BEAC with the Arctic Council endeavors and the new European Union “Northern Dimension” policy, we see it as yet another positive example of Nordic cooperation in business, culture, ecology, tourism, health care, education, support of indigenous peoples, etc.

I believe that the adoption of the new Russian policy in the Arctic will be conducive to more cooperation in the Arctic and in the relevant regional organizations.

22 September 2008

Articles by Position Papers Authors and NRF Young Researchers

Revolution in Governance: A Matter of Global Necessity

Kirk Cameron and William J. Klassen

In 2006, Britain's Chief Science Advisor, Sir David King, warned the world of the dire consequences of not addressing the rapid increase of climate change. He noted that, with a three degree rise in world temperature, computer modelling has indicated that 400 million people could be at risk of starvation, between one and three billion could be facing water stress, crop yields could suffer declines of between 20 and 400 million tons, and finally one half of the nature reserves of the world could be destroyed. With the melting of the Greenland's ice cap, the world's oceans could see a six metre rise forcing mass world-wide population relocation (*The Independent*, "3 degrees:...", April 15, 2006)

In its rather understated way, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change notes "observational evidence from all continents and most oceans shows that many natural systems are being affected by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases" (Working Group II Contribution to the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report – Climate Change 2007: Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability).

Ultimately, if temperatures rise in excess of 3 degrees globally, all bets are off regarding the nature and frequency of global catastrophic events. The numbers reflected above become a starting point in describing the extent to which this century's global civilization will be disrupted. Indeed some predict civilization may not last at all, that there are thresholds or "tipping" points beyond which the framework of social and political structure disintegrates. Cambridge Professor, Astrophysicist Sir Martin Rees declared in his 2003 work *Our Final Century*, "the odds are no better than fifty-fifty that our present civilization will survive to the end of the present century unless all nations adopt low-risk and sustainable policies". (See also Ronald Wright, *A Short History of Progress*, 2004, House of Anansi Press Ltd.)

What can be done to offset this apocalyptic scenario? Reengineering of governance structures and systems to design and effectively implement global adaptation strategies is needed. Kyoto is a telling example of how nation-states cannot hope to reach agreement on effective approaches to address global issues of this nature. Today, with the purported anthropogenic impact on climate witnessed over the past two hundred years since the commencement of the Industrial Revolution, it is too late for a Kyoto strategy, no matter how revolutionary and deep the cuts to humanity's reliance on CO₂-generating products. Adaptation becomes the only viable alternative to be investigated and implemented on a global scale.

In a 2006 article in the Canadian journal *Policy Options*, entitled "Adapt and Thrive: Options for Reducing the Climate-Change Adaptation Deficit", Ian Burton presses:

Adaptation is now becoming an item on the policy agenda that cuts across the departmental and sectoral boundaries of government, and it must be factored into decisions in a generic way similar to issues such as gender equity, environmental impacts, and poverty eradication. There are two immediate implications of this: first, governments at every level and the private sector have to find ways of addressing adaptation in a more coherent way, and this requires some institutional reform or restructuring; second, such innovations need to be supported by a more integrated science and policy for adaptation. On the leading edges of this debate, experts have already begun to talk about adaptation science and adaptation policy.

Perhaps the greatest irony here is that governments are attempting to deal with the near-term challenge of too much heat, when it is generally acknowledged by climate experts that within a few thousand years the planet will face another ice age at which time CO₂ release may be the engineering option to mitigate the worst effects of the cooling cycle (see Tim Flannery, *The Weather Makers*, 2005, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd.) But, we digress; that would be outside the timeframe contemplated in this conference – perhaps another time...

In addition, the challenge is not only within national borders but across all countries and regions of the planet. As Sir Nicholas Stern argues in his book, *The Economics of Climate*

Change (2006, Cambridge University Press), “climate change demands an international response, based on a shared understanding of long-term goals and agreement on frameworks for action.”

It goes without saying that the North (defined here as that part of the globe above the 60th parallel) is not hermetically sealed from the rest of the planet. If anything, there is a clear indication in the work of the IPCC that there will be a correspondingly greater impact on the north than other regions of the planet. Borrowing heavily from the work of IPCC, in a 2007 Government of Canada publication *From Impacts to Adaptation: Canada in a Changing Climate*, the following list of impacts is noted:

- Current levels of exposure and sensitivity to climate-related changes, as well as limitations in adaptive capacity, make some northern systems and populations particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- Climate-induced changes in permafrost, sea ice, lake ice and snow cover have large implications for infrastructure maintenance and design.
- Climate changes will result in shifts in species availability, accessibility and quality, with consequences for biodiversity and human populations that rely on these resources.
- Increased navigability of Arctic marine waters and expansion of land-based transportation networks will bring both opportunities and challenges associated with culture, security and the environment.
- Maintaining and protecting aspects of traditional and subsistence ways of life in many Arctic Aboriginal communities will become more difficult in a changing climate.

The global implications of climate change for the north are staggering. The following is a quick list of some of the pressures that can be expected in the next half-century all of which will stress governments with polar geography.

- Increased use of the Arctic for transportation, reducing the distance between Europe and Asia by more than 7000 kms., and changing traffic patterns to access northern continents using access points in the Arctic.
- An expanded geo-political “battleground” for militaries with northern interests and access.

- Increased pressure on northern governments to accommodate the “environmental refugees” displaced by rising waters along coastlines, shifts in arable lands and changes in water availability.
- Increased land values for population settlement, agriculture and other renewable resources as northern regions become warmer, and in some areas wetter.
- Increased demands from sovereign nations experiencing reduced water availability to gain access to fresh water in northern regions of America, Asia and Europe.
- Improved economics of resource extraction as the north warms; there are vast untapped mineral resources throughout the north, and many areas remain unexplored yet have great potential. And this is in a day when, as populations around the world grow, there is an increasing global hunger for these resources.
- Increased access to the off-shore areas of the resource-rich Arctic; the U.S. Geological Survey estimates there could be as much as 90 billion barrels of recoverable oil, 30 percent of the world’s undiscovered gas and as much as 20 percent of natural gas liquids.
- Ever-developing new technologies that can “unlock” other non-traditional forms of energy such as gas hydrates from deep sea and permafrost; in the Canada’s Mackenzie Delta, extensive research is being conducted at the Mallik gas hydrate field by an international consortium (the technology is proven, although the economics may not yet there to make its production viable).

Clearly, world demand for the resources increasingly available throughout the north will continue to grow in coming decades, and governments will be pressed to respond to these demands.

Nations around the circumpolar north will have to face the dilemmas inherent in the looming clash between that “invincible force meeting that immovable mass” – world demand colliding with sensitive ecosystem management and traditional lifestyles and interests of aboriginal peoples who have populated the north for thousands of years.

As requested by conference designers, we wish to provoke response by saying that there will have to be change. The world demands are too great for sovereign governments not to respond. Energy and non-renewable resources are just too attractive for world markets, land for settlement and agricultural production will be under increasing pressure, and water is rapidly becoming the geo-political “flash point” of this century.

Sovereign governments ringing the Arctic must adapt, and the only way to effectively do so is through cooperation, in ways that are far most substantial than Kyoto! Inevitably, Arctic nations will need to “give up” some of those inherent values that come with being sovereign. It has been easy in the past for nations to have long standing disputes over the Arctic territorial map (Canada and the United States over the Northwest Passage; Canada and the United States over the dividing line north from the border between Alaska and Yukon; Canada and Denmark over Hans Island; Russia and just about everyone else on where the nations divide the Arctic sub-sea riches...) in that cold harsh climate and massive year round ice formations too great to overcome economically with current technologies meant that no one really had to worry about fighting for something that was effectively out of reach to the planet.

Science predicts that within a few years we will see the complete demise of year round ice covering the Arctic seas and waterways, Northwest and Northeast. In a recent international study headed by ice expert Christian Hass of the University of Alberta in Canada, records that ice thickness in the central Arctic Ocean has reduced by 50 percent between 2001 and 2007, a mere 6 years! They reflect that “the Arctic sea ice cover has transitioned into a different climatic state where completely ice-free summers would soon become normal” (Ottawa Citizen, August 6, 2008, “‘Drastic thinning’ of ice in Arctic hits 50 per cent”). The article goes on to present the global dilemma: “That’s a startling prospect for all polar nations, including Canada, which are concerned about how climate change is transforming the Arctic Ocean environment, but are equally intrigued by the opportunities opening up for trans-Arctic shipping and off-shore oil and gas development”.

Seasons to explore sub-sea resources will lengthen and this will be coupled with new technologies to do so more effectively for longer periods. Indeed the rapidity of the ice retreat is surprising. In an article, Dr. Mark Serreze, a senior researcher at the University of Colorado’s National Snow and Ice Data Centre concludes that “It’s a new era of research because we weren’t thinking we would lose sea ice this quickly. Compared to what our climate models said, we’re 20, 30 years ahead of schedule in terms of ice loss. This kind of caught us by surprise...” (Globe and Mail, August 6, 2008, “Frozen Northwest Passage expected to open up”). In effect, treasures heretofore inaccessible will be available to the planet and sooner than anticipated.

The environmental risks are high, and there is awareness and concern about the consequences within the public, private and NGO communities. Shell’s proposed drilling in the

Beaufort Sea off the Alaska coast has been stymied by court action brought by groups, such as aboriginal whalers, opposed to such drilling in 2008 (*Anchorage Daily News*, “Shell says no Beaufort oil drilling in 2008”, February 19, 2008, <http://www.adn.com/money/story/319206.html>). Shell is confident that it can deal with concerns such as oil spills from a well blow-out in the Beaufort Sea and has a spill-clean up plan in place. (Shell's Beaufort Sea Exploratory Drilling Program Oil Spill Response in Ice; Prepared for: Shell Exploration and Production Co. August 2007; Prepared By: David F. Dickins, DF Dickins Associates Ltd. info@dfdickin.com; Alan A. Allen Spiltec allan@spiltec.com; <http://www.dfdickins.com/ShellOSR2007.pdf>).

An uncontained spill could pose serious problems for the ecosystems of these Arctic waters, negatively affecting bowhead whales and other marine mammals, and fish on which Alaskan aboriginal people depend. Others share the whalers concerns. In a paper entitled "Oil Spill Response Challenges in Arctic Waters" the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) cites numerous oil spills in northern waters where delay in appropriate response has resulted in oil pollution continuing for decades, e.g. the Exxon Valdez in Prince William Sound. To quote from the report:

WWF believes that there are certain places on our planet that are too sensitive to be put at risk from an oil spill. No operator can guarantee 100% that there will not be a spill, and even in ideal conditions oil spills leave their mark. The Arctic offers the highest level of sensitivity and the lowest level of capacity to clean up an accident. This combination makes it unacceptable to expose the Arctic to an unfettered scramble for oil.

WWF is seriously concerned that areas which have previously been protected and off-limits for exploration are now being opened up and considered for hydrocarbon activities. Typical arctic conditions such as extreme temperature, unstable ice, safety and poor visibility create a significant 'response gap' that limits the ability to clean up any spills, thus leaving these special and highly vulnerable places unprotected. The

political and economic drivers may have changed but the environmental and social risks are even greater." p.1

And further on:

This report reveals substantial gaps in oil spill response capacity that WWF believes must be filled as a pre-condition before any further petroleum development in the Arctic. The risk of environmental and economic damage resulting from major spills in Arctic waters can be greatly reduced if individuals from the private and public sector take action now to address the response gap issue before proceeding with new development.

The oil spill response constraints posed by arctic conditions contribute considerably to the risk of negative impacts from an arctic oil spill. The same dynamic conditions that challenge spill responders have also added to the stresses on arctic species and habitats. A catastrophic event like a major oil spill could permanently tip the balance." p. 27

(http://assets.panda.org/downloads/nuka_oil_spill_response_report_final_jan_08.pdf)

However, given pressures world-wide, we can't lock it up, so we must manage well to protect it!

Geo-strategists suggest that energy-hungry nations and global private sector interests have figured out the value of collaboration. Illustrative of this is the positioning that has occurred in Asia:

By the late 1990s, China, too, was engaged in a vigorous form of diplomacy.... It simultaneously strove to establish a constellation of friendly states in the region through lavish offerings of aid and diplomatic favours. The Chinese even spearheaded the formation of a regional political body – the Shanghai Cooperation Organization – to advance its geopolitical interests in the area....

These are characteristics of the types of relationships now being forged around the world between major energy consumers and potential suppliers. In every case, these relationships, in turn, entail fresh calibrations of the power relationships among major energy-consuming nations. Already edgy and competitive, they hint at future scenarios of conflict among the so-called Great Powers of a far more dangerous sort. While still at an early stage, such often pugnacious maneuvering for energy resources is bound to have profound consequences for international peace and security; if nothing else, it will redraw the atlas of international politics in a way that has not been seen since the onset of the Cold War some sixty years ago.

(Michael T. Klare, *Rising Powers: Shrinking Planet*, 2008, Henry Holt and Company, LLC, p. 21)

This is a disturbing shift in international geopolitical alignment that will have consequences on a global scale. The good news is that the same energy can be applied to collaboration for the careful adaptation of the Arctic region so that development can occur in ways that respect the sensitivity of the northern ecosystem.

Nation states with a direct interest in the Arctic (United States, Canada, Russia, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Greenland) can reach agreement on the creation of a new order of cooperation for the Arctic region, and this can occur on two levels.

The first and easiest, given that this may very well be a further step in what has already started with the international bodies, the Arctic Council (see <http://www.arctic-council.org/>) and the Northern Forum (see <http://www.northernforum.org/>), is the establishment of an international council of Arctic nations with a mandate to achieve the following:

- Collaboration on research necessary to understand the extent to which change is occurring throughout the north. In effect this would be continuation of the massive effort in place through the International Polar Year (March 2007 - March 2009).
- Dissemination of that research among contributing states.

- Establishment of an Arctic Policy Institute affiliated with the University of the Arctic that would look at research findings, and, through adaptive management planning and integrated resource management “lenses” bring advanced advice to governments to ensure that the trends (and the unforeseen dramatic changes which will most likely be encountered over the next century) and their implications for governments’ actions are given careful and well-deliberated consideration.
- As with the Canadian Polar Commission, the international council of Arctic nations and the Arctic Policy Institute could be given mandate through sovereign states’ legislation to ensure a degree of independence that wards against the immediate political priorities of 5 year mandated governments to influence these bodies by pressing for short term goals.

The second, and far more controversial, is the establishment of an Arctic Union with plenipotentiary authority to “manage” change throughout the Arctic region. Created by international agreement among circumpolar nation-states, this body would have delegated powers to address the challenges associated with anthropogenic impacts on Arctic regions in the context of climate change. Great debate would inevitably occur over powers granted and on the geographic application of this body.

There is one example “out there” of where international cooperation of a similar kind has been effective. The Antarctic is “controlled” by collaboration among nations with varying interests in that polar region. The Antarctic Treaty System, first established in 1959 now signed by 46 countries, and contains the following objectives and purposes:

- Use of Antarctica to be for peaceful purposes only.
- Cooperation among treaty countries on scientific investigation.
- Free exchange of information and personnel (linked to the United Nations).
- Rises above disputes over sovereignty claims.
- Prohibits nuclear testing and radioactive materials disposal.
- Covers all of the region south of 60 degrees.

- Allows for free access for all treaty-state observers, and requires advance notice of all activities and the introduction of military personnel for peaceful purposes (eg search and rescue or scientific support).
- Jurisdiction over observers and scientists rests with their own states.
- Provides for frequent consultative meetings.
- Discouragement of all states (treaty or non-treaty) where they are pursuing objectives other than those established in the treaty.
- Dispute resolution through the International Court of Justice.

An Arctic Treaty System would be dissimilar to that of the Antarctic in that its primary purpose would be the management of change, the bringing of good data and intelligence to decision-making over the direction and pace of change throughout the Arctic. The body established would need to have considerable “teeth” to accomplish its objectives, and the support of nation-states to police and uphold the decisions made by the treaty body. For instance where transportation is concerned, it would need to have surveillance capacity to monitor traffic and the policing capacity to deter parties not in compliance with common rules set by that treaty body for transportation through the Arctic.

There would also be the need for an international consultation body that would bring aboriginal bodies (governments) with traditional interests in the Arctic in to discussion on the implications of decisions. This would be of particular importance to Canada where there are formal treaties in place with aboriginal peoples such as the Inuit (1993) and the Inuvialuit (1985) who have rights captured in Constitutionally-protected land claims regarding the management and control of development offshore in the Canadian Arctic.

In conclusion, climate change necessitates new thinking on a global basis to control the pace and direction of development throughout the Arctic. Nation states cannot afford to wait for a catastrophe to occur before engaging on the establishment of institutions that can ward against potential irreparable damage that could occur in this vast and highly sensitive eco-region of the planet.

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Human Security in the Circumpolar North: What Role for the Arctic Council?

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Introduction

The past few years have seen a resurgence of interest on all things Northern, spurred by global warming, the possibility of greater resource exploitation and a media-generated ‘race’ for the Arctic as the Arctic Ocean basin’s continental shelf is divvied up. There is a lot at stake in the North, but media coverage and subsequent government actions have tended to distract rather than direct attention to the most important policy issues facing the circumpolar region.

Much has been written about American threats to Canada’s sovereignty in the Northwest Passage, competing Russian claims to large tracts of the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean, and even conflict between Canada and the Danes over tiny Hans Island. A picture of threatened national interests has emerged, and governments have responded with announcements for new bases, ports, vessels and monitoring in the Arctic. Closer inspection reveals that the actual risks to national security in the Arctic remain very low. However, serious human security threats – environmental, cultural and economic – do exist that require the attention not only of individual governments but of the entire circumpolar region to adequately address them.

This paper will argue that the focus in the Arctic on traditional security issues has detracted from more significant and pressing threats revolving around human security issues. It will then evaluate the role that regional cooperation, particularly via the Arctic Council, should play in resolving some of these issues.

Threats, Real and Imagined

There are several areas of contention in the Arctic, including the status of the Northwest Passage; the delimitation of the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean basin; disputed territory in the Beaufort Sea between Yukon and Alaska; illegal fishing throughout the sub-Arctic; and the

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dispute between Canada and Denmark over Hans Island, on the Nares Strait between Ellesmere Island and Greenland. While these present significant political problems, they pose minimal national security risks.² Due to its circumpolar, and relatively more significant political nature, this paper will focus on disputes over the continental shelf.

Continental Shelf

The planting of a Russian flag on the Arctic sea floor in the summer of 2007 set off a firestorm of headlines describing a new ‘race’ or ‘gold rush’ for the Arctic. The surge of interest has mainly to do with the possibility of huge oil and gas deposits in the Arctic becoming accessible as a result of global warming and the subsequent melting of sea ice. The US Geological Survey estimated in July 2008 that the Arctic accounts for about 13 percent of the undiscovered oil, 30 percent of the undiscovered natural gas, and 20 percent of the undiscovered natural gas liquids in the world. About 84 percent of the estimated resources are expected to occur offshore (USGS, 2008). Under the terms of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), coastal states have sovereign rights to the resources within 200 miles of their coastlines, known as their EEZs (Exclusive Economic Zones). However the Article 76 of the Convention provides for an extension of the EEZ to up to 350 nautical miles from their coastline if states can prove that the area in question is an extension of their own continental shelf.³

Although exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbon resources in most parts of the Arctic Ocean basin are still prohibitively difficult and expensive, the various Arctic coastal states have an obvious interest in maximizing their own claims in anticipation of future development.⁴ Under the terms of UNCLOS, states must submit claims for continental shelf extending beyond the 200-mile EEZ to the United Nations’ Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (made up of 21 experts from state parties to UNCLOS) within 10 years of ratifying UNCLOS. In cases where it disagrees with the scientific merits of a state submission, the Commission can formulate recommendations. In response, the coastal state may make a revised or new submission. Russia made its first claim in 2001 but was requested by the Commission to

² Due to space restrictions, a more thorough evaluation of these disputes is not possible for this forum.

³ *United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea as of 10 December 1982*, available at http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/UNCLOS-TOC.htm. The Convention defines the continental shelf as comprising “the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin”.

⁴ The United States (Chukchi Sea, January 2008), Greenland (West Coast in Baffin Bay, January 2008) and Canada (Beaufort Sea, May 2008) have all held auctions and/or sold licenses for oil and gas exploration this year.

resubmit using more concrete scientific evidence. This new claim must be submitted by 2009. Norway submitted its claim to an extended continental shelf in the Arctic to the Commission in November 2006 (Dufresne, 2008). Canada, having ratified in 2003, has until 2013 to submit its claim. Government scientists are currently mapping the continental shelf around Canada in preparation for its submission.⁵ Denmark has until 2014 to make its claim. The United States is still not party to the UNCLOS, however both the Bush Administration and the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee iterated their support for ratification of the Treaty in 2007.

There is a likelihood that at least some of the claims in the circumpolar region will conflict, particularly those over the Lomonosov Ridge, an underwater ridge that runs some 1,800 kilometres across the Arctic Ocean, stretching from islands off Siberia to Canada's Ellesmere Island (CBC News, 2007). Russia claims that it is an extension of the Eurasian continent while Canada and Denmark are likely to claim it as an extension of North America. The latter are currently partnering in efforts to obtain the scientific evidence necessary to substantiate such a claim, designated as LORITA-1 (Lomonosov Ridge Test of Appurtenance).⁶

The spectre of some kind of military incident over significant reserves of oil and gas in the Arctic is not unrealistic, particularly if oil prices continue to skyrocket and supply fails to meet demand in an energy hungry world. However, it remains very unlikely, and suggestions to the contrary have been exaggerated by the media.

Representatives of the five Arctic coastal states (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the United States) have met independently of the Arctic Council to discuss the use, management and delimitation of the Arctic Ocean, most recently and notably on May 28, 2008 in Greenland, where the Russian, Danish and Norwegian Foreign Ministers, the Canadian Minister of Natural Resources and the US Undersecretary of State issued the Ilulissat Declaration. The Declaration reiterated the respective countries' commitment to UNCLOS for the orderly settlement of any overlapping claims in the Arctic Ocean and rejected the need to develop a new comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean.⁷ The head of the international law department in the Danish foreign ministry, Thomas Winkler, further stated that "the main point is that the five coastal states have sent a very clear political signal to everybody that we will manage

⁵ See http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/geo/continental_shelf-en.aspx for more information on Canada's efforts.

⁶ See "The Continental Shelf Project" from the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation website, http://a76.dk/expeditions_uk/lorita-1_uk/index.html, retrieved June 4, 2008, for more information.

⁷ The full text of the Ilulissat Declaration is available at <http://www.cop15.dk/NR/rdonlyres/BE00B850-D278-4489-A6BE-6AE230415546/0/ArcticOceanConference.pdf>, retrieved June 4, 2008.

the Arctic responsibly, that we have the international rules necessary and we will all abide by those rules." (Borger, 2008) Given the enormous political, economic and military costs that would be borne out of any conflict between, for example, Russia and Canada over oil rights in the Lomonosov Ridge, one should have little reason to doubt that they will play by the rules.

What Potential for Conflict?

The above analysis has demonstrated that far from being the unstable, unpredictable and potentially hostile situation as depicted in the media, the dispute over the continental shelf of the Arctic basin, as in the other Arctic disputes, have been marked by open and cooperative relations among the disputants, based primarily on the application of existing international law. The fact that the stakes are either so low, as in the case of Hans Island, or distant enough, as in the case of large-scale commercial shipping and mineral and hydrocarbon exploitation, have contributed to the orderliness of the situation. Admittedly, as the sea ice recedes and the stakes get higher, the disputes may take on a less amiable hue. As such, it would seem in everyone's best interests to resolve the disputes sooner than later, while tensions are relatively low. This could be accomplished much more easily if nationalism was taken out of the equation.

Part of the reason the 'rush' for the Arctic has merited so much media attention is because it would seem so incongruous for a country like Canada to go to war with either the United States or Denmark. It is hard to imagine a situation whereby the political and economic fallout would justify a military incursion by any of these countries against each other. The real fear seems to be that an unpredictable and belligerent Russia might threaten its military might to back up resource exploitation past its legal territorial boundaries, or that the Arctic will once again be used as a theatre for war. As such, it is worth examining what exactly a worst-case scenario might look like should tensions dissolve into conflict in the Arctic.

General Sverre Diesen, the Norwegian Chief of Defence, articulated such a perspective at a September 2007 conference on Arctic Security.⁸ War, to extract from Clausewitz's famous dictum, is politics by other means. Because the political objectives in the Arctic are primarily economic in nature – controlling shipping lanes and oil and gas exploitation in particular – a military conflict would impede, rather than further, any given circumpolar states' political

⁸ *Emerging from the Frost – Security in the 21st Century Arctic*, Tromsø, Norway, September 25-26, 2007, hosted by the Norwegian Institute of Defence Studies. For more information and conference presentation, visit http://www.mil.no/felles/ifs/english/start/seminars_conferences/seminar_07_eng/article.jhtml?article ID=149522

objectives. Given the investment, technology and time it would take to establish a profitable drilling venture in the high Arctic, it is in the interests of the Arctic Eight to ensure the region is as stable and that the governance framework is as predictable as possible.

It is given that states do not always act in a way that is theoretically rational. But even if a conflict were to occur in the Arctic, it would necessarily be of a limited nature so as not to separate itself from its political origin (Diesen, 2007). Ruling out the use of force for purposes of territorial expansion (a highly unlikely venture in this day and age), the most likely scenario under which a conflict would occur in the Arctic would somehow be about the right to exploit natural resources – primarily energy (oil) and food (fish). Because those resources as it stands are not critical to national survival, and indeed are available, and in the case of oil and gas, cheaper, elsewhere, a confrontation escalating to conflict would be limited and essentially about economic interests. General Diesen as such speculates that any such conflict would be limited to air and sea engagements because of their speed and flexibility, and would be “short, sharp and in essence punitive military actions, orchestrated in extremely close interaction with political initiatives and diplomacy.” (Diesen, 2007) Diesen further iterates that such a scenario, given the costs, is highly unlikely.

Skeptics may point to the fact that many of the circumpolar countries have been beefing up their military power in the region. Norway announced in Spring 2008 that it is refocusing its defense policy to the north. Russia has been amping up its naval and air force exercises in the region, and both former President Putin and current President Medvedev have placed the rebuilding of the Russian forces ability to operate in the north as a core priority. The Americans have maintained a significant, permanent force of about 26,000 troops in Alaska and are looking closely at ways it can improve its icebreaking and naval capacity in the region (Huebert, 2008, 7). Finally, Canada has been particularly busy, adding a training base in Resolute Bay, a refueling port in Nanisivik, and committing funding (contract pending) for the construction of 6-8 new ice strengthened naval vessels and an icebreaker already named the Diefenbaker (CBC, 2008).

However it should not be understood that these developments are evidence of aggression. As General Diesen explains, in a strategic environment such as the Arctic, a military presence acts as a visible expression of national interests and ambitions in the area - a *symbol* of the importance of the area to a particular nation. Indeed, some military presence may be seen as a condition of stability - not instability - in the region, signifying that interests are established and

looked after. The Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Store, made a similar point in October 2007 when he argued that “[t]he need for a strengthened military presence in the High North is about the normal presence any coastal state needs to have in our modern age when traffic is increasing and increasing numbers of actors are flocking to our waters.” (Store, 2007)

Similarly, Brigadier General Christine Whitecross, Commander of the Canadian Forces Northern Area, has stated that there is no traditional military threat to Canada in the North.⁹ When asked what threats do exist in the North, she spoke of search and rescue challenges, as well as diamond smuggling in NWT and the possibility of illegal migrants, criminals and terrorists entering North America from the Arctic, issues which at any rate would fall under the purview of Immigration Canada and the RCMP respectively, with the potential for cooperation from DND.

There are security issues in the Arctic, not military threats, at least in the short and medium term. New ice-strengthened vessels and icebreakers are critical not for launching attacks against hostile forces but for exerting the control over Arctic spaces needed to fulfill our environmental and custodial responsibilities. While these security issues need to be, and have been taken seriously, it should seem obvious that based on their marginal rate of threat, they have been exaggerated in the media and by respective circumpolar governments.

Human Security Issues

What have *not* been exaggerated are the myriad human security challenges to Northerners in the circumpolar region. The concept of human security is a relatively new one, making its official debut in the 1994 United Nations Development Programme (UNEP) report. Although the concept itself is contested, in the most general sense it implies a focus on the security of individuals or people, as opposed to national or military security.

The term human security has often been applied to work being done in the Arctic. It figures prominently in such documents as the Canadian Northern Dimension of Foreign Policy, and its principles - sustainable development, participation of indigenous peoples, environmental protection, cultural diversity - are enunciated in the European Union Northern Dimension, declarations of the Arctic Council and elsewhere.

Canada in particular has made stringent efforts to include human security issues on the

⁹ Statements made in presentations at the University of Calgary Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, October 2007, and the University of Manitoba Political Science Students Association annual conference, January 2008.

circumpolar agenda, a fact related to the foreign policy priorities of the Canadian government when it led the establishment of the Arctic Council in 1996, and to the Canadian domestic situation, with its human security problems in the North as well as the significant influence of northern indigenous groups.

In the context of the Arctic, this paper argues that human security encompasses three primary areas: environmental, economic and cultural security. While they are obviously interrelated, this paper will outline the major issues involving each one separately.

Environmental Security

As has been widely recognized by northerners themselves, and corroborated by scientists through such reports as the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) (2004) and the Fourth IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change) Assessment Report (2007), the circumpolar region is particularly susceptible to the effects of climate change and is demonstrating its effects sooner and more severely than other regions in lower latitudes. The ACIA notes that climate change will result, among other things, in declining sea ice; sea level rise; impacts on wildlife; impacts on indigenous people; coastal erosion and thawing permafrost; shifting vegetation zones; increasing fires and insect outbreaks; and opening sea routes.

One of the crueler ironies of climate change is that those who have done the least to produce the greenhouse gases (GHGs) that have spurred it are the ones who are most vulnerable to its effects. This is true in the Arctic, which remains a sparsely populated area of some four million inhabitants.

Thus while there remains discussion on ways to mitigate climate change in the North, the real focus has been on adaptation. Indeed, the indigenous people of the north have survived in the harsh Arctic for centuries because they have superb adaptive capabilities. To persevere in the challenging times ahead, local communities, with support from provincial/territorial/state, national and international governmental bodies, must define the risks related to rapid change and prepare themselves and their societies for such change.

Besides climate change, circumpolar communities have faced challenges from Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) - pollutants which are toxic, persistent in the environment, resistant to normal procedures which break down contaminants, and accumulate in the body fat of people and marine mammals. They also pass from mother to child during pregnancy and through breast

milk. High contamination rates in traditional Inuit and aboriginal food sources threaten not only their health but their culture, as diet alternatives are sought to replace contaminated foods. Again, there is little Northerners can do themselves to minimize their development, as they typically travel to the North from large industrial centres. There is some promise that the Stockholm Convention on POPs, which entered into force in 2004, will help reduce their effect in the North.

Economic Security

Fundamental to the well-being and sustainability of any people is their ability to provide for themselves through productive and, in contemporary society, remunerative work. Because of the North's great distances, isolation, and resultant poor infrastructure, many of its inhabitants, primarily those of aboriginal or Inuit descent, are finding it difficult to find such work as they adjust from their traditional lifestyles to those of a post-industrial Western society. In this sense, then, many northern governments are endeavouring to enhance the economic security of Northerners – both by providing employment opportunities and by increasing revenues in self-governed communities - through the development of mines, exploration drilling, and potentially shipping. Clearly, northern economic development is not being pursued for purely altruistic motivations, but the fact remains that it is expected to benefit the people of the region if it is done in a responsible, collaborative and sustainable manner, and Northerners themselves are encouraging it.

Current prices for oil, gas and minerals make exploitation in the North much more economically attractive than it would have been even five years ago. Opening of sea lanes as sea ice melts earlier and for longer periods of time, make the transportation of such resources more feasible, even as melting permafrost and warming temperatures challenge land-based infrastructure, including roads, ice roads and pipelines. One cannot ignore the fact that exploitation of and use of such resources, especially oil and gas, are the primary cause of the climate change problem. This does not seem to have dissuaded local and national governments from pursuing such development.

Cultural Security

The concept of cultural security is perhaps the most indefinite of the three described here. At its most basic, it refers to the survival and flourishing not of individuals but of a particular group and its traditional way of life. In the case of the Arctic, it means the ability of indigenous groups, in particular the Inuit, the Sami, the Gwich'in, the Athabaskan peoples, the Aleuts and the Russian 'small-numbered' peoples of the North, to practice and preserve their culture, their language, their traditional hunting, gathering and herding skills, and to practice some form of self-determination.

It is impossible and impractical to separate environmental and economic security from cultural security, as it is economic and environmental issues that are most threatening the culture and well-being of Arctic indigenous peoples. But this paper argues that if we are to rank the relative importance of the above security domains, cultural security must be predominant. The relative risks and opportunities arising out of new economic development and environmental regulations and regimes must be judged against their benefit for Northerners, and indigenous groups in particular. This is not meant to be a vague and romantic standard to be subsequently ignored by governments and self-interested committees and organizations, but as a serious rejoinder to those that may legitimately consider economic or environmental concerns as preeminent. From the perspective of any responsible government, and from the perspective of much of the human security literature, the concerns of *people* must come first. To be sure, this involves a careful balancing of economic and environmental needs. But when in doubt, the consideration of the group - Northerners in general, and indigenous groups in particular - must have the ultimate consideration. All policy decisions in the North must be evaluated through this lens.

Regionalization and the Arctic Council

So far this paper has argued that national security issues in the Arctic have been overblown, and that advancements in military funding and equipping can be explained as symbolic efforts to telegraph the importance of Arctic resources to neighbouring countries, not to mention the short term domestic political gain. It has further argued that the focus on national security has distracted from issues of human security, which in the context of the Arctic are best elaborated as environmental, economic and cultural challenges. Human security issues in the Arctic are much

more real, more pressing and pose a greater risk to Northerners themselves, and require in many instances cooperation amongst the eight Arctic states in order to be dealt with and hopefully mitigated if not resolved. This section thus asks, in what areas might circumpolar regionalism contribute to the resolution of the many human security issues facing the North?

Regionalism in Theory

While regionalism is not a new phenomenon, it is one whose significance has been growing as a result of the strengthening of globalization, especially since the end of the Cold War. As Andrew Hurrell describes, regionalism is attractive inasmuch as allows states to deal with problems that go beyond what they can manage individually, but at a more manageable level than an international forum would allow given the likelihood for common values, societal consensus and priorities at the regional setting (Hurrell, 2007, 131). It further allows weaker states the opportunity to interact and agenda-set to a degree that would not be possible on a larger stage, within an institutional context where they can balance the power and influence of larger neighbours. (Fawcett, 2004, 439) This would certainly help describe the attractiveness of the Arctic Council to members such as Canada, Norway and Finland, and explain their respective endeavors to promote the Council and its work.

Some issues lend themselves better to the regional arena than others. Environmental issues undoubtedly fall into this category. They include threats, such as climate change, transmission of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and oil spills, that are not contained by national borders, and so cannot be dealt with solely at the national level. At the same time, they typically affect a limited number of states, so that the threat, costs and burden of regulation and clean-up falls on the shoulders of a few, and as such will be more effectively and efficiently dealt with amongst those few than in a larger, more diluted international arena.

The work of the Arctic Council reflects this fact, as its main preoccupation has been with issues of the environment, science and to a lesser extent sustainable development. However most of its work has thus far been scientific and testimonial, with relatively little done to deal with practical matters, something that should and must change.

Another issue area that, in the Arctic in particular, might fruitfully be dealt with at the regional level is security. *Military* security is explicitly barred from discussion at the Arctic Council. However other traditional security issues, notably search and rescue (SAR) and Coast

Guard activities, present similar problems across the Arctic and thus could benefit all if common and shared solutions are adopted.

Arctic Regionalization in Practice

One lesson we can draw on from the success and failures of other regionalization projects is that much more can be achieved by concentrating on “concrete common interests, rather than on grandiose and all-embracing projects that invariably end in frustration.” (Fawcett et al, 2003, 35) What follows, then, is a list of concrete issue areas already in discussion in the Arctic around which common interests would dictate that a more formal governance structure is at the very least desirable, and in some cases necessary. The achievement of some or all of these endeavours, aside from their intrinsic benefit, would serve to increase confidence in the activities of the Arctic Council, building momentum for future successes.

Search and Rescue (SAR)

The Arctic is geographically huge, sparsely populated and is prone to extreme weather conditions. This makes search and rescue activities expensive and dangerous, as well as vitally important for anyone lost or left in the Arctic for even a few hours at certain times of the year. Sharing of resources, for example of vessels, helicopters, medevacs, and other aircraft, particularly as shipping traffic and resource exploration activities increase, makes economic and strategic sense. This kind of SAR coordination already exists, but would be better served with a more formal agreement or memorandum of understanding amongst all Arctic nations. As a start, SAR activities were mentioned in the most recent Arctic Parliamentarians report of August 2008, with a call to strengthen cooperation, consultation and coordination of search and rescue activities in the region.

Coast Guard

Similarly, national Coast Guards in the Arctic have relatively limited resources given the size and type of area they are expected to monitor and control. It merits explicit mention that the security threats most pressing in the Arctic come not from neighbouring states, but from criminals. Drug and diamond smuggling, entrance of illegal migrants, terrorist activities and illegal shipping pose serious if limited threats in the North. An enhanced coordination of surveillance and monitoring of such activities between the various circumpolar Coast Guards would prove mutually beneficial.

It should be noted that one of the Arctic Council's working groups, the Emergency Preparedness, Prevention and Response (EPPR) group deals with similar types of problems as they occur in an environmental context, e.g. oil spills. However it is not a response agency and thus far has focused mainly on exchanging information about best practices. As marine traffic increases, the time is ripe for the Arctic Council to consider more comprehensive and operational coordination of SAR, Coast Guard and environmental emergency response activities.

Fisheries

The sub-Arctic contains some of the most important commercial fisheries in the world, particularly in the Bering and Barents Seas, and forms a vital source of economic activity and income in the North. However it is likely to undergo fundamental changes in the coming years. Climate change and the warming of Arctic waters are likely to cause some species of fish to migrate further north, allowing for greater fishing opportunities in the high Arctic, but also exposing fish stocks to illegal and thus far unregulated fishing, with the potential of depleting stocks. An increase in shipping traffic and oil and gas exploration may further increase levels of toxic chemicals, and pose serious threats to the marine ecosystem and biodiversity.

Subsequently, commentators such as the WWF have recommended the establishment of a Regional Fishery Management Organization (WWF, 2008, 26), and a bipartisan resolution has been put to the US Senate calling for a halt to any commercial fishing activity in the Arctic until an international agreement is reached with the circumpolar nations to manage and protect fish stocks in the Arctic Ocean (Marine Conservation Alliance, 2007). Clearly some kind of regional governance structure is needed.

Shipping

Finally, the Arctic Council should seriously consider making mandatory the voluntary shipping guidelines endorsed by the International Maritime Organization, known colloquially as the Polar Code. One of the Arctic Council's working groups, PAME (Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment) is currently conducting an Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment, due to be released at the Council's ministerial meeting in April 2009. The Assessment is expected to recommend the adoption of a more formal governance structure to regulate Arctic shipping, which would be similar to the Polar Code. The essential purpose is to provide internationally recognized standards for the construction and operation of ships in Arctic ice-covered polar

waters, both for the safety of the ship and crew, and to mitigate the environmental consequences of shipping in such a vulnerable ecosystem.

Some critics¹⁰ have argued that the shipping code is *de facto*, if not *de jure*, mandatory, since shipping insurers essentially require vessels to conform to the voluntary guidelines of the Polar Code. However, a mandatory Polar Code, with formal recognition and endorsement by all of the circumpolar states, would provide a better base by which to regulate Arctic shipping in coming years, and in anticipation of a significant increase in traffic.

A Regional Seas Agreement

What might be obvious by now is that all of the above-mentioned issue areas, which demonstrate the greatest likelihood and potential benefit to circumpolar states should they be regulated or governed on a regional basis, revolve around Arctic waters.

While SAR, Coast Guard coordination, and shipping and fisheries management are concrete and practical *short term* goals, a regional seas agreement that would “assure that arctic wildlife and natural resources can be protected and that future development of the region can be sustainable” (WWF, 2008, 5) is an obvious and achievable *mid-term* goal – in the realm of five to ten years. Whereas the above proposals deal with single issues, a regional seas agreement would provide the necessary framework for a consistent and holistic management of the Arctic Ocean and the expansion of activities in the area. (WWF, 2008, 28) The underlying problems associated with an increase in fishing or shipping are environmental ones, and an ecosystem-based approach, rather than a series of ad hoc measures, would better protect the Arctic marine environment.

Protection is done through regulation, which would require not only laws and policies but collaboration and coordination amongst the circumpolar Coast Guards. And finally, as the WWF argues, a comprehensive treaty arrangement might also have the benefit of incorporating “the goal of sustainable development and the conservation of traditional subsistence lifestyles” of the indigenous residents of the Arctic (WWF, 2008, 28).

A careful balance must be struck in the Arctic between environmental, economic and cultural security goals. This is far more likely to be achieved through a regional seas agreement than through the tempered and cursory arrangements that have been successful to date. As Rob Huebert points out, several models for such an arrangement already exist, for example the

¹⁰ Interview with an anonymous DFAIT official, November 22, 2007.

OSPAR Commission, which protects the North-East Atlantic; the Cartagena Convention, which protects the Caribbean; or the Helsinki Commission, which protects the Baltic region. (WWF, 2008, 27 and 37-41) In addition, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) established a Regional Seas Programme in 1974 to promote sustainable use and management of marine and coastal environments, and to date thirteen programmes have been established. The Arctic Ocean is a prime candidate to establish such a framework, either under the auspices of UNEP or under separate terms that would better reflect the needs of the Arctic and the circumpolar states.

In the Ilulissat Declaration, signed in May 2008 by ministerial representatives from the five circumpolar nations with an Arctic coastline, the Arctic states iterated their commitment to the existing legal framework as established by the Law of the Sea, and asserted that there is “no need to develop a new comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean.”¹¹ While UNCLOS would be an important building block upon which to build a new regional seas agreement, it is not sufficient in itself to govern the new environmental, economic and security realities of the Arctic. In terms of the environment, UNCLOS’ Article 234 for example outlines what states *can do* to protect ice-covered areas, but nowhere does it *oblige* states to adopt and enforce environmental regulation. And it, in itself, would be of no use in enforcing Arctic fishery and shipping regulations, or facilitating northern cooperation for Coast Guards and SAR.

Social Issues and Regionalism

The above has outlined issue areas where regional cooperation would be likely to achieve significant benefits for all of the circumpolar states. However there are many issue areas that would be better addressed at the local, national or international level. Chief among them are social issues.

Aside from environmental and scientific issues, the Arctic Council has endeavoured to address issues of sustainable development and cultural empowerment in the North. In that respect it has had some success, in particular the meaningful involvement of six Arctic indigenous peoples’ organizations, as Permanent Participants, in the Arctic Council. Some other concrete achievements include the establishment of the University of the Arctic and the

¹¹ Ilulissat Declaration, May 29, 2008, retrieved from http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Ilulissat_Declaration.pdf on October 27, 2008.

publication of the Arctic Human Development Report.

The Arctic Council, and circumpolar regionalization in general, has facilitated cooperation and communication amongst indigenous peoples, enhanced their capacity to speak out on and influence northern policy, and provided a forum by which to share best practices and lessons learned in social development and cultural sustenance. While these are important accomplishments, the regional forum has certain limits when it comes to issues of human security and development.

First of all, efforts to build a circumpolar identity have led to a misperception that indigenous peoples of the north are in similar situations. They are not. While Saami face significant cultural challenges, the human development situation in Northern Scandinavia is far and away better than that in northern Canada, northern Russia, rural Alaska and Greenland. Saami number relatively few, they are highly integrated into regular Scandinavian society, and northern Scandinavia at any rate is more highly developed, has better infrastructure, employment rates and access to education than its circumpolar counterparts. Any *regional* solution to development issues would thus have to be tailored to the problems facing different areas from the outset – i.e. there *is* no pan-circumpolar solution to any of the human security issues outlined in this paper.

Furthermore, the governance models guiding issues such as education, employment, substance abuse, and health care vary widely not only across the circumpolar north but within countries themselves. In Canada, for example, the three territories have their own systems, different aboriginal and indigenous groups have different self-government structures, and the provincial norths operate under completely different rules. It would be immensely difficult to establish and fund a one-size fits all social policy at the national, let alone the regional, level that could be implemented and effective across the board. Even issues of adaptation in the Arctic are best dealt with individually, to reflect the needs, capacities and vulnerabilities of individual communities, regions and countries.

When it comes to establishing shipping regulations or fishery policies or common standards of environmental protection in a common area, it only makes sense to do so at the regional level. However years of on the ground experience and academic reflection have shown that development is most effective and most sustainable when it is initiated at a grassroots or local level, be it in Africa or in Alaska. Similarly the funding of social programs is extremely

expensive and complex, and should be managed at the levels at which funds come from and are spent.

Finally, some issues are best dealt with at the international level. Climate change, for example, affects the Arctic disproportionately to its contribution to the greenhouses gases that have caused the problem. However solutions, or mitigation, to the roots of the problem require global efforts, and cannot be dealt with effectively at the local, national or even regional level.

This is not to argue that the Arctic Council should abandon attempts to promote sustainable development and provide a forum to share information and best practices from across the north. Issues of human security are critically important to the well-being and future of the north. Pragmatically however, it seems obvious that the limited funds and efforts of the Arctic Council should be directed towards achieving concrete and practical objectives such as those listed in this paper.

Arctic Council Stalled

The number and frequency with which observers and policy makers are calling for a new governance agreement for the Arctic has been increasing of late. Rob Huebert, in his position paper for this conference, argues that the “growing international presence in the north that will increase international interaction both between the Arctic states and from an increasing number of non-Arctic states ... will require governance systems that go beyond what the system now provides” (Huebert, 2008, 8). The WWF has called for a regional agreement on management and conservation of the arctic marine environment (WWF, 2008). And the Arctic Parliamentarians, meeting in August of this year, asked their governments to:

- Work to develop harmonized, effective regulations to reduce all forms of pollution from ships sailing in the Arctic Ocean.
- Strengthen cooperation, consultation and coordination among nations regarding search and rescue matters in the region to ensure an appropriate response from states to any accident.
- Take an active role in updating the "Guidelines for Ships Operating in Ice covered Waters" within the International Maritime Organisation, and making these guidelines mandatory.
- Strengthen existing measures and develop new measures to improve the safety of maritime navigation.

They further stated that “the political role of the Arctic Council should be enhanced given the

many challenges facing the region” and that efforts should be made “to promote ideas to strengthen the legal and economic base of the Arctic Council” (8th Conference of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, 2008).

If collective wisdom is leaning towards a stronger institutional and governance framework in the Arctic, what has prevented it from occurring? A number of obstacles are at play.

First of all, the nature of the Arctic Council – one designed around achieving consensus on all substantive matters – makes for slow progress in adopting new policies. This is not least because the United States, in particular, has been reluctant to adopt new multilateral commitments; indeed, the US under the Clinton Administration agreed to join the Arctic Council on the condition that it would be a forum and not a formal institution. This type of behaviour is expected in international relations theory: superpowers such as the USA and Russia are reluctant to support new multilateral commitments because they don’t want to be constrained, whereas middle powers such as Canada, Norway and Finland typically support multilateral institutions in order to constrain superpowers. Still, the initiatives outlined in this paper are truly and objectively ones which would benefit the entire region if adopted. However, as its reluctance to join UNCLOS has shown, its true and objective best interests do not always guide US foreign policy.

Second, there is a marginalization of northern affairs within the foreign ministries of the circumpolar eight. In the United States, for example, northern foreign policy is completely decentralized and often handled out of the State Department’s Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, demonstrating its limited perception of the importance of the north in international affairs. Though Canada has a circumpolar division, it is small, has no natural home within the department, and is not as much of a ladder for advancement as, for example, working on Afghanistan or international security issues would be. Finland similarly has a small division, and its work on the Northern Dimension is primarily focused on the EU and Russia. While Norway has given more attention to its policy in the High North, it is still a small and relatively isolated division.

The current level of Arctic activities might not justify larger divisions. The problem is that such arrangements provide little opportunity for brainstorming, strategic thinking and innovation. And few diplomats working on circumpolar issues, especially at higher levels, are either Arctic experts in the academic sense or have spent any significant amount of time (> 2 years) on these

files. Coupled with the fact that the Arctic Council, for a variety of reasons, has no permanent Secretariat¹², it is no surprise that the Arctic Council finds it hard to implement any kind of mid or long-term strategy for circumpolar relations. Chairmanships are doled out in two-year periods and so typically reflect limited agendas and initiatives, with little opportunity for follow-up or strategic planning.

Finally, the recent politicization of Arctic issues that has accompanied greater access to seaways, oil and gas and mineral resources, has shifted circumpolar states' mindsets from one of multilateralism to one of unilateralism. National security is almost by definition a unilateral pursuit, and countries' recent announcements and investments have been targeted at assuring their own individual success and competitiveness in the new Arctic. Tough rhetoric has led to an escalation in tensions. This has had the unfortunate effect of leading states to pursue first and foremost their own short-term interests instead of looking at long term means to resolve regional issues.

At the same time, the sovereignty challenges and economic opportunities that abound in the Arctic have also served to focus national and international attention on a region that is usually overlooked. The media and public are just as likely to get behind initiatives in the Arctic that serve to protect the environment and properly manage its resources as those which bolster a national security presence and promote sovereignty. This might be an incredibly fortuitous moment to pursue meaningful changes to the framework of Arctic governance, not despite, but because of the concentration of national interest considerations in the North.

Conclusion

This paper has argued, first, that the recent focus on traditional security issues in the Arctic has diverted important resources and attention from the human security issues that plague the north – environmental, economic and cultural. It then proceeded to outline the ways in which the Arctic Council, as the preeminent regional forum in the area, might serve to advance human security needs in the Arctic.

The tasks outlined here – improved cooperation and regulation on shipping, fisheries, Coast Guards and SAR, with the ultimate goal of establishing a regional seas agreement to

¹² The Norwegian chairmanship of the Arctic Council has attempted to rectify this, and has established a semi-permanent secretariat in Tromso during the period 2006-2012, for its, Denmark's and Sweden's chairmanships.

holistically manage Arctic waters – are not easy, and will take significant vision, political will and diplomacy to achieve. At the core of this goal is a rethinking of national security priorities. Sovereignty and traditional security must be seen as *means* to some greater common good, and not as ends in and of themselves. The greater good in the Arctic is encompassed by the human security objectives described in this paper: protection of the northern environment; the enhancement of sustainable economic activities that will benefit northerners themselves; and the promotion and preservation of the cultural practices of the indigenous inhabitants of the Arctic.

If the management of the Arctic presents a challenge, then it also represents an opportunity. The changes that will come as a result of global warming are just beginning and it makes eminent sense to establish a governance framework to deal with these changes now, and not when we are in the midst of them. The circumpolar north contains many of the wealthiest, socially equitable and environmentally conscious nations on Earth. If any region can resolve these types of problems, and present a model for other regions on how to deal with challenges arising from climate change, it is the Arctic.

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Canada and the New Geopolitics of the North Pacific Rim

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Abstract

This paper traces the development of a new geopolitical assessment of the North Pacific "North" in relation to evolving models of Eurasian dominance and World Order. In it we explore the changing geopolitical perspectives which have been influential in this process and assess their impact upon the construction of Canadian northern and Foreign policies. The question is posed that if the end of the Cold War and the return to peace within the circumpolar region encouraged a number of decision-makers to define "the north" or "the Arctic" (terms which, despite some obvious differences in definition, are used as synonyms in this discourse) as a coherent region, do these historical geopolitical theories continue to have relevance today in terms of structuring an understanding of the relations and connections between Eurasia, and North America? Where does the North Pacific region fit in?

This article looks at the relationship between Canada and the North Pacific from the point of view of the circumpolar North. It argues that the Canadian circumpolar North is an important part of what traditional geo-politicians have called the world's Rimlands-a strategic area in context of the balance of power and access to industrial resources on a global scale, and that Canadian foreign and northern policies must orient themselves to this perspective. We begin with

discussion of the fact that in the early 20th century the North American North Pacific area located next to what Mackinder called the "Eurasian Heartland", was considered peripheral to the global power struggle. This calculation was to change as the 20th century progressed.

Today the North Pacific Rimland is keenly strategic, and includes the nation states of North Pacific, Canada, USA, Russia, Japan, North Korea, South Korea and China, meaning that the region encompasses two continents (North America and Eurasia) and part of one distinctive geographical region (the circumpolar North). Indeed, the contemporary Pacific area, and particularly the northern Rimland of the Pacific region, is considered to be one of the most dynamic regions in the world from an economic point of view. It includes on one hand, countries like the U.S. and Japan, with the largest economies in the world, or countries like China, with large and fast growing economies. On the other hand, the region contains a large number of rapidly growing cities and sub-regions with flourishing economies, such as Vancouver, Seoul and coastal areas of China. It also includes areas with rich energy resources like Alaska and the Russian Far East. In addition, and equally important, the region also contains strong political, as well as military, powers such as the U.S., Russia and China. It is on the northern edge of this region that our focus, the North Pacific and the circumpolar North is situated.

Part of the reason why a change in the geopolitical status has occurred in the region is that a significant shift in emphasis has occurred from what were very clearly 19th and early 20th century geopolitical goals. This shift signals a gradual move away from a focus upon the perceived need for controlling "Central Eurasia", or indeed controlling and containing Eurasia itself, to a perceived need for achieving the new "containment of Eurasia" by controlling the regions surrounded or adjacent to central Eurasia, to the role of the region in the global economy and its geo-economic potential. The North American North Pacific has experienced the effects of this shift. And while it was considered somewhat strategic in the late 19th and early 20th century in military terms (a result of the quest for the Northwest Passage and the changing configuration of Canada's sovereign territory in the High Arctic), it gained considerably more attention as a strategic place during the Cold War Era. Since then, however, the calculation for the geopolitical significance of the North Pacific region has changed. It has moved from an emphasis upon hard military security to a more broadly defined security in terms of economic development and resources access, to comprehensive security (including health and education), and environmental security as global warming and global pollution become major issues in the circumpolar North.

All of these shifts opened opportunities for a new discussion about the circumpolar North, northern geopolitics, regional governance and sustainable development.

In writing about the North Pacific region in this article, and in using the terminology of traditional geopolitics, we are not arguing that there is an essential or predetermined role for the region, standing as a timeless “Rimland” to the concerns of empire, as earlier geo-politicians might have done. Rather, we are arguing that as the geopolitical assessment of the region has changed over the past century or so, geopolitical goals and perspectives for the region have responded accordingly, so that the calculation of the importance of the region, and more specifically the relationship between the Canadian North and the region, has changed substantially from the early, mid, or even late 20th century perspective. New ways of identifying threat, power, and security, new technologies and new critical assessments concerning international relations, environment and economic development have influenced our geopolitical perceptions of the region.

Thus, if the circumpolar North is now a Rimland, then it is a Rimland because it has developed a new and critical relationship to other regions, and not just because of its location vis-à-vis Eurasia. As such, the importance of the circumpolar North, and specifically the Canadian North in the North Pacific region, can be understood in terms of the changing global significance of the North itself. Whereas in previous decades this region was often perceived of as a marginal or frozen wasteland, today it plays a potentially important role in bridging the gap between Canada and the other North Pacific countries, particularly Russia.

Geopolitical Fundamentals: An Historical Assessment

Just over a hundred years ago, Sir Halford Mackinder (1904) presented "The Geographical Pivot of History" to the Royal Geographical Society. In it, he made the argument that the heartland of Euro-Asia was pivotal for global balance, and that its control and containment meant power and control over the globe. While, as Flint (2006) notes, "Mackinder's contribution is a good illustration of ... a limited and dubious Western-centric theory of history to claim a neutral and informed intellectual basis for what is in fact a very biased or situated view", it is nonetheless true that this assessment had profound influence on subsequent political definitions of world order because Mackinder drew upon what were considered profound, if not accurate truths of the late Victorian era and which continue to the present (see Venier 2004). In Mackinder's Britain,

Eurasia was the strategic center of the world, or the World Island, while on either side lay strategic inner and outer crescents which were instrumental to containment (Figure 1). In this context the Eurasian Pacific Rim was more strategic than the North Pacific Rim, and the potential for balance of power lay in the European crescent and Atlantic area. Mackinder's ideas were representative of the political culture of early 20th century Britain, where Venier argues, Imperial Russia was historically seen as a more present danger than Germany (ibid). Indeed, some still perceive that there is an inherent historical threat from Eurasia: "in the political imagery, the word [Eurasia] resonates with geopolitics and history. It is a birthplace of great civilizations that have united some of the territory. It has also been a place of contestation and clash" (Invitation to Eurasia Brainstorming Meeting 2005).

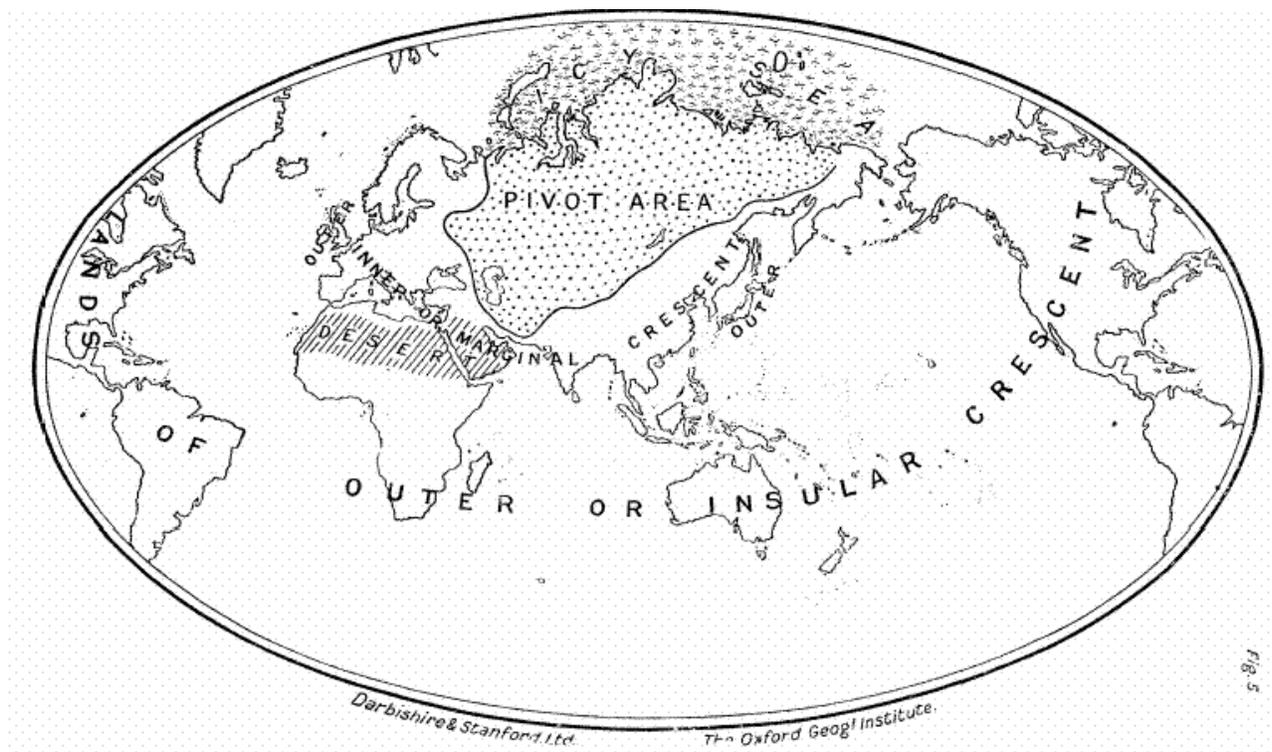


Figure 1 Mackinder's Geopolitical Assessment of Heartland

Source: H.J. Mackinder, 'The Geographical Pivot of History', *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 24, no. 4, 1904, p. 435.

While Mackinder was a British imperialist, and as such saw this region in terms of its strategic relationship to Britain itself, his theories have since that time taken on a broader perspective. The Cold War, for example, saw the Soviet Union as a modern day manifestation of "heartland", and Eastern Europe as a containment or buffer zone, in which Europe and the U.S. could not give ground for fear of losing their position of containment.

Subsequent geopoliticians such as Mahan, Spykman (Figure 2) and de Seversky (Figure 3) also positioned the margins of Eurasia and the North American continent into this strategic world map. Since then, watershed changes to scholarship and academics have since the Cold War if not earlier-exposed the weakness of geopolitical determinism, and indeed the "realpolitik" that Mackinder and his colleagues practiced during the first half of the 20th century has fallen into disrepute. Even Mackinder refined his original World Island Theory recognizing that the rising power of the U.S. would compromise his original theory in a strict sense. Significantly,

"In 1943, four years before his death, Mackinder offered the readers of Foreign Affairs an "interim estimate" of his timeless formula. He envisioned the global balance of the twenty-first century, wherein the heartland (Russia) and the mid-Atlantic nations (America, France, and Britain) would combine to balance (not necessarily against) China and India. Mackinder thought that the mid-Atlantic should be "pledged together" with Russia in case "any breach of the peace is threatened," anticipating NATO and its expansion eastward, along with the EU."
(Seiple 2004)

But yet, what is interesting in this geopolitical assessment which spans a period of nearly a decade, is that while it saw the development of an understanding about the strategic position of the Eurasia North, and the North Pacific Rim (in the Pivot Area and Inner Crescent), there was a complete lack of conceptualization of how this region fit within a broader geographical or circumpolar- zone, even as the USA and North America entered into geopolitical equations in ways not seen previously. Indeed, towards the mid-20th century, geopolitical theories made much more explicit the role of the USA and the Atlantic, or most specifically the mid-Atlantic as the forum for maintaining global balance, but had little to say about the North.

While as we have seen, Mackinder and subsequent geo-politicians revised his original formula, of interest to this paper is the fact that until he did so, the concept of geopolitics and strategic interests represented a way of thinking about a global balance in which much of northern Europe and Northern North America, namely the Canada Arctic, was absent. Such thinking was not really to occur until the late 20th and early 21st century. This is because, as Klare (2003) observes, the strategists of the turn of the twentieth century saw two ways through which global dominance could arise. The first, was in the form of the emergence of a continental power (or powers) which might potentially dominate Eurasia and gain global hegemony in this way, and it was precisely this fear-that a "German controlled continental Europe and Russia, together with a Japanese-dominated China and Southeast Asia, would merge into a vast continental power and dominate the Eurasian heartland, thereby reducing the United States to a marginal power-that galvanized American leaders at the onset of the Second World War. Franklin D. Roosevelt was deeply steeped in this mode of analysis, and it is this ideological-strategic view that triggered U.S. intervention in the Second World War." (ibid)

Klare goes on to observe the continuing relevance of these geopolitical assessments, particularly in terms of their role in positioning the North Pacific Rim. He notes that the other approach to global dominance perceived by early twentieth century geopolitical strategists was to control the "Rimlands" of Eurasia-including Western Europe, the Pacific Rim and the Middle East. To do so was to contain an emerging "heartland" power. Containment became particularly important after World War II, when the United States determined that it would in fact maintain a permanent military presence in all of the Rimlands of Eurasia. Klare suggests that this outlook led to the formation of NATO, the Marshall Plan, SEATO, CENTO, and the U.S. military alliances with Japan and Taiwan. Yet, he also notes that for most of the time since the Second World War, the focus was on the eastern and western ends of Eurasia-Europe and the Far East. To that we might add that in doing so, there was commensurate lack of attention to the northern dimensions of the northern Rimland in the North Pacific and the circumpolar North (until Spykman and De Seversky Figure 2 and Figure 3), until the establishment of the D.E.W. line under the Cold War. True, Mackinder added the Russian far north to the pivot area of the Eurasian north in 1919, bringing this whole region into a strategic zone which required containment. But the North American North remained in the outer crescent, a virtual Rim around the more strategic areas. Later theories were to reassess the importance of North America,

specifically the U.S. in this equation but not in any way which significantly included the North outside of its relationship to the USSR.

In subsequent versions of the geopolitical map, however, the North Pacific region of North America, and the North American "North" were to emerge as more strategic, and were classified as Rimlands-areas whose relevance was indicated by their position to the Eurasian "World Island" itself. These developed from the fact that in 1942, for example, Nicholas Spykman (1942) proposed that Eurasia's Rimland and its coastal areas, was the key to controlling the World Island, the heartland.



Figure 2: Spykman's Rimlands Model

Source: Mark Polelle, *Raising Cartographic Consciousness* Lexington Books, 1999 p. 118

Rimland Theory originally was meant as a prescription or justification for military control, intervention, control- a conquest of the "Old Eurasian World" as defined by Mackinder. In this sense it was a modification of Heartland Theory, rather than a recalculation of the premises of such theoretical models. While Spykman originally proposed in terms of military potential (Figure 2), however, it is still plausible to suggest that, today, the Rimland metaphor remains useful. While originally Rimlands were assessed in terms of their economic strength and their

potential to balance the Heartland of Eurasia, there is an emerging literature which suggests that a new geopolitics within an international North has emerged, in which such strategic calculations are still germane, but they share the stage with broader understandings about economic development, human security and transnational environmental cooperation (Heininen 2004).

Here the point to be made is that not until Rimlands Theory was coined by Spykman, to describe the regions peripheral to the World Island and World Ocean (Atlantic), was there a geopolitical role for the North Pacific, for Canada, or even the circumpolar region, although it was not well articulated until de Seversky. In *The Geography of the Peace*, Spykman explained that this was the area that Mackinder had formerly called the "inner or marginal crescent" (see Spykman 1942). Klare maintains that the "Rimlands" represented a different strategic concept: "The other approach to global dominance perceived by early twentieth century geopolitical strategists was to control the "Rimlands" of Eurasia—that is, Western Europe, the Pacific Rim, and the Middle East—and thereby contain any emerging "Heartland" power." (Klare 2003) De Seversky (Figure 3) saw the area of decision, in this post-World War II scenario, as lying in the North Pacific and specifically in areas of the north adjacent to the North Pole in Eurasia and North America.

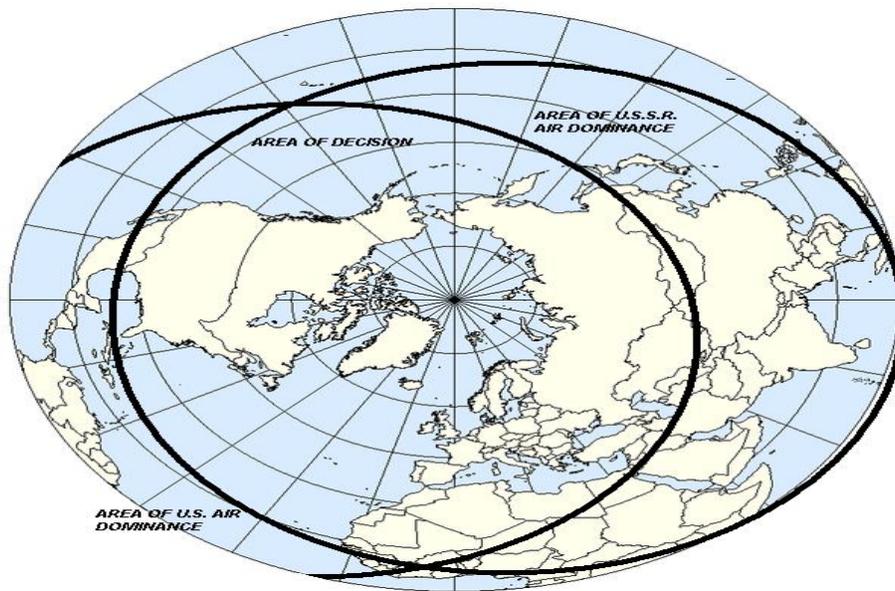


Figure 3: An interpretation of De Seversky's Map

Are these theories viable in the 21st century? Is there really still a concept of Eurasia from which the concept of Rimlands takes its cue? Clearly Eurasia, the biggest continent of the world, can be looked at from different points of view and defined in many ways. For example, "Eurasia and Asia in Russian discourses", or "The Grand Chessboard", "Middle Asia", "Europe in Eurasia, and Russia in between Europe and Asia" and "Eurasia in the Pacific"-any of which would be interesting to discuss further. But the real question concerns the relevance of these theories today and the nature of the relations and connections between Europe and Asia, or within Eurasia, and North America and Asia? There are good reasons to argue that both the Heartland theory and the resource models of geopolitics are still relevant when dealing with Eurasia and the Eurasian North (Heininen 2007).

For example, a large part of the natural resources and raw materials of the earth are in Eurasia, e.g. oil resources in the Middle East and natural gas in the Russian North. Further, this huge landmass also influences the climate of the Northern Hemisphere, and perhaps the whole world. This makes Eurasia a relevant factor in terms of the new environmental security discourse associated with global warming. Correspondingly, the biggest part of the world population lives in Eurasia, since China and India together include about 2.5 billion inhabitants, while in China alone there are 24 cities with over 5 million inhabitants. Moreover, there are other equally relevant factors. The continent represents an important economic power, and most of the nuclear weapon powers and strong military forces are in the region. At the beginning of the 21st century there is competition over natural resources, like those of the Caspian Sea region resulting in what could be considered as hegemony competition between major regional and global powers. There are also civil, ethnic and religious conflicts in areas like the Kashmir and Chechnya, while international crises and negotiations on nuclear weapon and power issues (e.g. the international negotiations on the nuclear weapons of North Korea and the dispute over nuclear power in Iran) continue to create concern. Finally, there are inter-state wars like the Iraq war, which are located on the fringes of Eurasia. Following from this, the North Pacific Rim of Eurasia is also part of the focus on the fight against international terrorism, and so too is at least one member of the rhetorical 'Axis of Evil': North Korea (ibid).

All in all, Eurasia has had, and continues to hold, both great importance and high strategic value in world politics in general. This is especially true because of its huge landmass, "space" and access to two oceans (potentially soon, three); its rich human and natural resources, its

economic power, its nuclear weapons and technologies, the strong regional militaries, and following from that, evidence of a keen hegemony competition both regionally and" at times, globally. It has both potential for exercising cooperative and peaceful policies on the basis of economic and political influence, but hegemony competition is never far from the surface even in the 21st century. So in the final analysis, in the post-Cold War era, there remain issues which focus attention and concern within "Eurasia" as a geographical region, and suggest an increased importance for economic and political cooperation with and within Eurasia. It is against this backdrop that we continue to explore the idea that the north as a single physical region has only recently formed the basis of institutional and intergovernmental cooperation, and this co-operation relies heavily upon an international environmental discourse (Keskitalo 2004). Such change strongly affects the North Pacific Rim meaning in this paper, where Russia, Canada and the U.S.A. meet.

The North Pacific Rimlands in the Circumpolar North: New Rounds of Cooperation and Contestation

The idea of a strategic North in the Pacific Rim area has gained viability in recent years. It first emerged as a very strategic place during the Cold War-as a place of containment for the Soviet Union under conditions of rivalry. Despite continuation of traditional security concerns within the region and the focus of international relations upon military confrontation after the Cold war period, attention slowly begun to shift from militarily strategic security issues which have previously been tantamount to security within the region, such as the creation of the Distant Early Warning system or D.E.W. line, to the broader challenges of achieving human security. Correspondingly, in the 1990s there was a new recognition of and interest in the circumpolar North.

In part, the new environmental agenda has resulted from the recognition of the growing impact of global sources of pollution, global warming, and military contamination upon the circumpolar north. This included a change in to international cooperation in many areas, to facilitate new priorities such as economic development, environmental protection, access to health care, research and higher education. The end result has been that The Arctic Council has overseen the transformation of the north into a region of tremendous international significance-for issues of political cooperation as well as environmental concerns (Figure 4). This new post-

war security agenda in the North has been the result of a growing awareness of the need to apply the concepts of sustainable development which developed in the 1980s from forums such as the Brandt Commission (see Center for Globalization Negotiations, Brant 21 Forum). Indeed, the latter is sometimes credited as the first international venue to publicly promote the idea of "comprehensive security" (ibid)¹³. In its discussion of "Common Security", for example, the Commission urged the transformation of traditional military-based notions of security to include a broader focus on "human security" (The Palme Commission 1982). Such transformation would require greater international cooperation, transparency, disarmament, and demilitarization. The impact of 9/11 notwithstanding, this new approach to the definition of security has potential to have a catalytic impact upon the structure of international relations within the circumpolar North, as attention shifts from maintaining strategic control of territory to promoting environmental cooperation and multilateralism (see National Security and International Environmental Cooperation in the Arctic 1999).

Indeed, the relationship between local agency and broader issues and decisions has been reflected in the conception and definition of security, from that of an exclusively state-centered and militarized geopolitical discourse to one that is more humanistic in definition, has become increasingly relevant in the 21st century. This is because the agencies responsible for human security have also changed: new regional actors and the new regional dynamic now focus not just upon military-policy security, but also upon other aspects of security such as the challenges and threats posed by long-range, trans-boundary pollution. For example, the recently published scientific assessment of human development within the Circumpolar North, identified three main themes, or trends, in international relations and geopolitics within the circumpolar North at the beginning of the 21st century (Heininen 2004). These were increased circumpolar cooperation by indigenous peoples' organizations and sub-national governments, new efforts towards region-building, with nations as major actors, and the development of a new relationship between the Arctic and the outside world, including consideration of traditional security-policy and threats to the environment and human populations.

This means that while geopolitical discourse on the North has, until quite recently, focused almost exclusively upon either military and defense activities, and the utilization of

¹³ Olaf Palme, Swedish Prime Minister in the 1980s, was one of the first to coin the phrase "comprehensive security" to describe the comprehensive implications for three types of post-Cold War security needs: economic security, environmental security and human security.

natural resources, recent changes to definitions of human security now influence not just how security is defined, but also how the component parts of this globalized region relate to each other and to the outside. Moreover, replacing or even parallel to, traditional geopolitical assessments of the region, are new approaches to geopolitical scholarship which have developed over the past two decades. Such approaches are more interested in human-centered themes, like identity politics, or the relationship between geopolitical discourses and hegemonic power. This has changed the nature of concerns within this "Rimland" region, and suggests that new rounds of east-west / north-south geopolitical discourses are on the horizon, in which the circumpolar North figures strategically.

Nonetheless, or even despite significant gains in the human security discourse, at the beginning of the 21st century, security is still largely structured according to the concept of traditional security-policy guaranteed by the military, in spite of the fundamental changes in the international system and the obvious influence of globalization. Indeed, the Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR) - written under the auspices of the Sustainable Development Working Group or SDWG of the Arctic Council - recently reconfirmed that the Circumpolar North still has a high strategic importance both militarily (especially for the USA and the Russian Federation) and economically. This is due to utilization of, and competition over, the region's rich resource base, especially strategic resources like oil and gas (e.g. Duhaime 2004). Moreover, the appearance of the military and the construction of new infrastructure or training areas remain common within the circumpolar north, even today (e.g. Nelleman 2003).

So, the situation is complicated, and the region is important. Indeed, in reconciling all of these themes, in 2004 the AHDR report identified the following main themes of international relations and geopolitics at the beginning of the 21st century in the circumpolar North: first, the increased circumpolar cooperation by Indigenous peoples' organizations and sub-national governments; second, region-building with nations as major actors; and third, the relationship between the Arctic and the outside world including traditional security-policy, since the North is still highly strategic to the USA and Russia (Heininen 2004).

But as this paper suggests, it is also important to Canadians, and has received new recognition over the past two decades. True, Canadians have always actively engaged with the idea of a northern dimension to Canadian nationhood. The north has always been important,

symbolically, to the definition of nationhood, and is embedded within the broader iconography of Canadian nationalism. To a large extent, however, until the end of the Cold War this engagement was focused on strategic considerations based upon the more widespread view of the Arctic as a frontier, sparsely populated by traditional peoples living ancient lifestyles, and outside of the mainstream of Canadian life-as well as a region of rich natural resources such as oil and resources to fuel an industrial economy. This attitude was to change substantially in the 1980s and 1990s, as changing geopolitical concerns and definitions of security, increased attention to environmental issues, and a new sense of the legitimacy of the Arctic as a homeland for traditional societies, replaced Cold War concerns.

In terms of Canada's relationship to the region, however, the Second World War and the Cold War were important. In World War II the U.S., Canada and the Soviet Union were allies and fought against Japan, who had occupied the Korean Peninsula and Northeastern China. After the war in the North Pacific there has been both bilateral cooperation between countries such as the USA and Canada, as well as cooperation between sub-national governments like the state of Alaska and the western Canadian provinces, or Alaska, Hokkaido and South Korea. The period since the 1980s, and especially since the end of the Cold War, has seen a new start of regional cooperation across the Bering Strait between Indigenous peoples, non-governmental and local organizations and sub-national governments. But as we have seen, in the 1990s, a significant change took place in the nature of cooperation in many instances, as cooperative initiatives became more common, particularly in the area of environmental conservation. While the impetus for these developments can be traced originally to North Europe and Russia, Canada has nonetheless played an important role in redefining the strategic value of the Canadian North, its relationship to the global or international North, and its role in a broader globalized context. The process continued during the early 1990s, contributing to the development of a new and focused direction for Arctic geopolitics. Where does the Pacific North figure in this calculation?

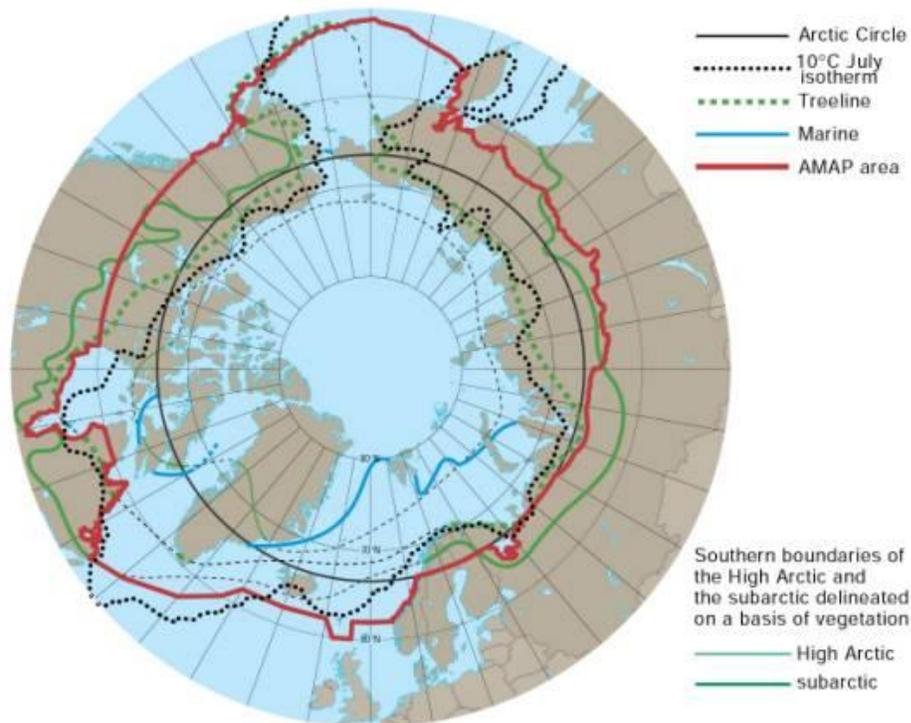


Figure 4: AMAP Definition of the Circumpolar North Region

Source: Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program, <http://www.amap.no> 29.9.2006

Figure 4 indicates that under international cooperation regimes and new mapping perspectives (AMAP) of the Arctic Council, the area of the Lower Mackenzie River and Delta, adjacent to the Northern Alaska North Slope area comprises the main region of— what is considered the North Pacific North region in North America, in the sense of its interaction in issues which are potentially oriented towards the Pacific, rather than the Atlantic Ocean. This is an area while part and parcel of the circumpolar region in a more general sense, is positioned in unique ways—most importantly in relation to its proximity to Alaska and Russia. It is the region where "Northernness" (e.g. Golovnev 2001) combines with Pacific, to produce "Rimland". As such, the North Pacific Rimland has contributed to a Canadian foreign policy discourse specifically in areas in which sovereignty, east-west (Eurasian/Russian) relations and Canada-U.S. relations are prominent. This fact means that Canada's foreign policy has not only had to consider a northern dimension, but also the close relationship of Canada to the U.S. and Russian "Norths"—both powerful and resource rich regions, and both strategic places for Canada's own national interests.

For example, although in Russia the argument is often made that "Eurasianism is a dead end", as the Russian Federation is not that global power Russia used to be; losing Ukraine consequent to the collapse of the Soviet Union (Trenin 2002, 14 and 46; also Heininen 2007), Russia has on one hand, very strong strategic and national interests and on the other hand, it faces serious threats in Central Asia and its Far East and the Pacific rim. In Russia there has recently been an academic discourse addressing the importance of redefining the role of the Russian North as more than geo-strategically important resource reserve (e.g. Alekseyev 2001)¹⁴. Further, the fact that most of the seven federal districts and 89 subjects of the Russian Federation encompass northern regions within them, makes the North important in the Russian context, as it was very important in the modernization project during the Soviet era (Helanterä-Tynkkynen 2003). This makes the Russian north a strategic region, at the same time it makes it more open for cooperation.

These realities mean that policy pertaining to the Canadian North Pacific region must address the proximity of Russia and the new Russian north. At the same time, it must accommodate U.S. approaches to Russia, and northern security. All indications are that the U.S. has a rather loosely defined internationally cooperative agenda at the regional level-emanating mainly from the bottom up. In the Bering Strait area, for example, environmental protection was one of the first fields of international cooperation since the presidents of the USA and the Soviet Union announced the establishment of an international park in the Bering Strait area in 1990.

Although the National Park Service's Shared Beringian Heritage Program was established and annual meetings have been held, a formal agreement on an international park has not yet been signed. The 1st Bering Sea Summit in April 2002 organized by environmental organizations had as its main goal that of promoting the sustainability of the Bering Sea. This fit well with initiatives such as those identified by Gorbachev's Murmansk Speech, or the Arctic scientific cooperation which was included in the Reagan-Gorbachev Summit in May-June 1988. Both gave a boost to scientific cooperation in the region. There were also several other structures and initiatives which attempted to accomplish the same goals, such as the Barrow Arctic Science Consortium (BASC) to support research infrastructure on both sides, or the many University of Alaska, Anchorage (UAA) activities designed "to marshal Alaska's experience and resources to

¹⁴ President Vladimir Putin proposed this kind of northern policy in the meeting of Russian Security Council in April 2004 in Salechard ("Putin Says Northern Regions Need 'Intelligent Long-term Policy'" ITAR- TASS News Agency, April 28, 2004).

work" in order to promote the transition of the Russian far east to democracy and free market economy by training entrepreneurs, business managers and government leaders both in Anchorage and several places in the Russian Far East.

Yet at the same time these broad initiatives have been launched, it is clear that Alaska is not positioned to make decisions concerning international cooperation in any formal sense. Indeed, the approach taken by US decision-makers more generally, at least those in Washington, with respect to cooperation across the circumpolar north is generally quite different from that of Canadians, who have invested considerable effort in devolving northern relations and encouraging indigenous participation. At the state level, American policy-makers are less inclined to make policies which promote a formal relationship within the Arctic Circle beyond those which relate to environment and "Arctic science", or which privilege U.S. research institutions and American leadership in environmental science.

The US approach to participation in the Arctic Council, for example, is driven by a number of specific issues, rather than by a sense of geographical regionalism. National security, economic development and scientific research are important U.S. interests in the region. Consequently, it would be fair to say that theoretically, the US position towards the circumpolar region remains based upon a state-centered agenda in which security and national interests are emphasized, although with recognition of the broader context of globalization. It should be noted that while the North remains a strategic location for military or security, or military structures (like the National Missile Defense system including silos in Alaska) such security is, at present, much less exclusive as in former days. What is more pronounced, however, is the strategic importance of oil and U.S. energy security in the North. As we shall see, this has implications for Canada's role in the region.

Similarly, concern with broad-based human security issues has been less significant to Washington decision-makers than more empirical studies of northern climates and environments. Indeed, Young identifies the propensity for the North to be understood as "The scientific Arctic" and as such suggests that the region has been of greater interest for its research potential to academics (Young and Einarsson 2004). U.S. personnel involved in decision-making at the level of policy for the Arctic Council have often claimed that the most proper area of concern for the federal government is the area of scientific research (presumably Western scholarship style) and data gathering, rather than upon what they consider "less rigorous" scientific themes such as

quality of life or maintaining indigenous lifestyles (e.g. ACIA 2004). While the Arctic is indeed an important parameter for the state of the planet, this focus on formal science has differentiated and at times devalued the role of traditional knowledge or traditional society in the North.

This has meant, historically, that as far as the US approach to the North American circumpolar region is concerned, at the state level, there is a tenuous link between the promotion of civil society and human security beyond the context of environmental issues. Indeed, there is no region, and no geopolitical discourse which connects people and place outside of a fairly narrowly and empirically defined environmental agenda. State Department expertise until recently consisted mainly of personnel previously assigned to border security and INS, and State Department interest, and with respect to the work of the Council was limited to concern with scientific, environmental and technical issues which affect the state of Alaska or the US in general. As such, Washington's failure to engage on the level of a circumpolar north has been criticized by Canadians and Europeans, but on the other hand, it has given Canada opportunity to navigate the Arctic Council, to some extent, freed from the confines of a formal and separate bilateral relationship with the US on indigenous issues-particularly in the area of initiatives to strengthen the role of indigenous peoples in regional government. This includes Canadian support of, and cooperation with trans-national NGOs such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, and the Inuit Tapirisat.

On the other hand, it has created an important point of division between Canada and the U.S., particularly in terms of the recent U.S. government push in favor of drilling for oil in the ANWR, proponents of this project claiming that oil from the refuge would lessen dependence on foreign oil, help bring down energy prices, provide jobs and ease the country's growing trade imbalance. But where the U.S. government claims that their indigenous populations are "on board", there may well be significant effects upon quality of life for Gwitch'in on the other side of the nearby Canadian boundary. They fear the decline of the Porcupine Caribou herd upon which they rely as a major food source.

While clearly there is tremendous room for improvement, the Canadian government has found itself more closely aligned with scientific research which supports indigenous knowledge and science which aligns with indigenous interests in certain strategic cases, such as that of the

Gwitch'in in Old Crow¹⁵. A potentially powerful ally, the Government of Canada, has supported the interests of the Vuntut Gwitch'in in ways the U.S. Government would not. At one point it has offered "oil" for "oil"- lucrative compensation for loss of oil revenues and supplies from ANWR lands to be made up from other energy sources in northern Canada such as the Tar sands. The offer was, however, rebuffed.

We should also observe that it is not only land borders which resonate with conflict in this area. The North Pacific Region of the Canadian North is particularly critical in this sense. Sovereignty disputes are predicted to be more pressing as global warming proceeds and the Canadian Arctic becomes a more critical route for global shipping. Disputes between Canada and the U.S. over the status of the Northwest Passage, over the now largely un-demarcated Canada-U.S. maritime border in the Arctic, will be critical within the region. The latter has real potential for dispute because of significant oil interests in the Bering Sea. It also has potential to open greater disputes concerning security and control over the continental perimeter, as accessibility to the Arctic Ocean makes the North a potential jumping off point for global terrorists.

"Canada's North Pacific Rimland" and Circumpolar Foreign Policy

The realities of the North Pacific region have had an influence upon Canada's foreign policy response to the circumpolar north and the geopolitics of the Northern Rimlands. Many of the specific protocols and programs of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), initiated by the Arctic Council, were shaped by Canadian concerns: one example is the agreement on The Conservation of Arctic Fauna and Flora. As we have seen, under the Arctic Council, Canada felt it had assumed a leadership role which suffered from the problem that there was little in the way of foreign policy to fall back on. The Canadian North had never been an arena for the development of international relations, except in reaction to very specific events which saw

¹⁵ The Vuntut Gwitch'in first Nation live on the Canadian side of the Canada-US land border in the North. They have a longstanding culture and traditions concerning the land that has been passed down over many years, and they fear that their way of life, particularly the caribou hunting tradition, will be destroyed by the oil activities in the ANWR lands. The link between the welfare of the Porcupine Caribou herd and the Vuntut Gwitch'in is particularly intense and so the Caribou themselves are yet another character in this scenario and are the main source of protein for many groups of both U.S. (Alaskan) and Canadian Indians. The Porcupine Caribou Herd has been important to the Gwitch'in for many generations and, if they have room to continue breeding, or calving, they can continue to be a part of this life process. Hunting these animals is not simply a sport, but a way of life that has endured through the increasing rise in urban destruction and population. Caribou have been described as the most important land-based species for people living in the Arctic.

recognition of the reorganization of Arctic territories¹⁶, yet within a few years Canada had shown strong leadership in developing the concept of an Arctic Council which would be a forum for discussion and environmental cooperation throughout the circumpolar region.

Canada was one of eight countries which signed the AEPS strategy, and as early as the late 1980s Canada found itself actively seeking to establish an international umbrella type political forum for international cooperation in the Arctic (Canada Foreign Affairs and International Trade 2000). Although it took longer to establish than initially expected, in 1996 with the support of the other members of the Arctic Eight the Arctic Council was formed, institutionalizing new attitudes about environmental issues and governance in the Arctic. This signaled the beginning of a Canadian foreign policy approach to the Arctic informed by a new, post-Cold War emphasis upon environment, human security, and sustainability in the circumpolar North, building upon a distinctive Canadian approach to Arctic issues. Canada's 1998 National Forum on international relations, sponsored by the Canadian Center for Foreign Policy Development was to change its traditional focus with Cold War and U.S. military security and broaden the relationship. It focused upon circumpolar relations, and argued for a foreign policy which would translate environmental concerns into a broader set of understandings about the impact of environmental degradation upon the north. The National Forum observed that ideas concerning sustainable development in the Arctic were by nature difficult to define and translate into policies which would prompt concern at the international level. In answering the ultimate question, "just where the circumpolar dimension is supposed to fit in the later scheme of foreign policy?," a consultative process identified a series of issues and recommendations, which were focused upon five key questions. These included among others "Does a northern dimension to foreign policy have relevance for all Canadians?" "Does the creation of an Arctic Council offer opportunities for Pan Arctic relations or does it simply jeopardize bilateral relations with the US?", "Should Canada champion the rights of indigenous peoples, even those outside the Canadian Arctic?", "What is the role for the University of the Arctic?", and "Should geography rather than demography establish the basis for Canada's foreign policy in the North?"

¹⁶ These events included the Alaskan panhandle purchase, Confederation (and its requirements for territorial legitimacy over crown lands and territories), Britain's ceding of the High Arctic Islands to Canada in the late 19th century, the events of the Cold War which prompted closer military alliance with the US in the Arctic and the establishment of the DEW Line, and Canada's ongoing struggle to infer sovereignty over the High Arctic when challenged by the US and other European governments.

While, in 1999, Canada launched the Northern Dimension of its foreign policy, it is clear that even then, the answers to all of these questions were not necessarily resolved-or if resolved to the satisfaction of Canadian's, would remain important in the sense of bilateral relations with the US. This is a point to which we will return in a moment. In context of Canada's goals, however, the Canadian Government observed that a clearly defined Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy would help to establish "a framework to promote the extension of Canadian interests and values, and will renew the government's commitment to co-operation with our own northern peoples and with our circumpolar neighbors to address shared issues and responsibilities". Moreover, it would "demonstrate that our future security and prosperity are closely linked with our ability to manage complex northern issues" (ibid).

These policy objectives are first, to enhance the security and prosperity of Canadians, especially northerners and Aboriginal peoples, second, to assert and ensure the preservation of Canada's sovereignty in the North, third, to establish the Circumpolar region as a vibrant geopolitical entity integrated into a rules-based international system, and fourth, to promote the human security of northerners and the sustainable development of the Arctic. Moreover, in connection with the pursuit of these goals, there are also four key initiatives which the Canadian Government intends to pursue. These include the strengthening of the Arctic Council, within a broader circumpolar regionalism, principally in connection with promoting dialogue "among the eight Arctic states and Indigenous northern peoples as Permanent Participants come together to discuss and decide on matters of common interest" (ibid).

The Canadian government asserted that in promoting its Arctic foreign policy, it was continuing Canada's "long-standing foreign policy tradition" in promoting international cooperation in pursuit of "shared objectives". This was to be accomplished through institution-building and "pragmatic problem solving". In doing so, however, Canada had "taken on, as a new guiding theme, the protection and enhancement of human security." The Northern Dimension of Canada's foreign policy, in other words, had become the gateway for the incorporation of new ideas about the relevancy of human security in context of environment and civil society. It was to be framed in reference to "the northern territories and peoples of Canada, Russia, and the United States, the Nordic countries plus the vast (and mostly ice-covered) waters in between". Here, the Canadian Government asserted that the challenges "mostly take the shape of trans-boundary environmental threats-persistent organic pollutants, climate change, nuclear waste-that are having

dangerously increasing impacts on the health and vitality of human beings, northern lands, waters and animal life.” (ibid)

But unlike the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in the Bering Strait region, which might be a region comparable in levels of cooperation and multilateralism to that of the North Pacific Rim Arctic region, there is no international body for an institutionalized intergovernmental (Heininen 2004), or regional cooperation which really connects Canadian Northern Dimension Foreign Policy, as yet, to the less formalized international linkages of the Pacific Rim Region. Most efforts along these lines have been undertaken by the US, and these have not been particularly successful. In 1989 a Bering Straits Regional Commission, was established between the governments of the Soviet Union and the U.S., to resolve local incidents such as illegal crossings, or to offer services in cases of emergency, but there has been no real structure or action at a higher level of governance¹⁷. As such, in the Bering Strait area there are more activities than initiatives or efforts from the top to create an international framework. While on the other hand, there is an intercontinental network for contacts and cooperation, which is flexible and based on bottom-up local and regional activities rooted in indigenous connections, on the Canadian side, however, there are indeed few connections of this type which link to the Russian North (e.g. Krauss 1994; Schweitzer 1997).

In not addressing this lack, Canadian foreign policy has been culpable. In its 2005 review of Canada's NDFP, the Canadian Government noted that while the "northern dimension" of Canada's Foreign Policy has rested upon several policy objectives, the ultimate goals being to enhance Canada's leadership role on the world stage, to establish partnerships within and beyond government, and to "engage in ongoing dialogue with Canadians, especially northerners" (Canada Foreign Affairs and International Trade 2000).

¹⁷ While in the Bering Strait area there is a lot of bilateral international and regional cooperation between Alaska and Chukotka and other parts of the Russian Far East, this cooperation is mostly US-Russia oriented and consists of non-governmental, bottom-up cooperation, which deals with political, economic and cultural issues but also includes people-to-people and family connections across the Bering Strait. The first visits were started and the contacts were re-opened by non-governmental actors and local communities. The cooperation was, however, supported by the governments of the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union / the Russian Federation, at least in the beginning. One of the basic ideas, at least from the point of view of Alaska, is to promote indigenous communities in Chukotka and their resource management on whaling, polar bears and fishery, and help to collect scientific info for example, on harvesting of whales- all issues relevant for 'sustainability. Although, the heritage of traditional contacts was important, the driving force, at least from the American side, was, however, commercial interests meaning tourism and flights between the two continents with a goal to establish again trade ties. The current cooperation is mostly run by indigenous peoples, humanitarian aid and other civil organizations, sub-national governments, and universities.

Trans-nationalism and cooperation in the Bering Sea is not a priority for Canadian foreign policy, although Canada retains high rhetorical and strategic interest in maintaining linkages with Russia through its Northern window. Indeed, this is a more general problem with respect to the Pacific North. Canada's Northern Dimension Foreign Policy (NDFP) has been quite limited in building links in this area. The Canadian Government itself notes that while there are numerous examples of bilateral initiatives with Russia and other circumpolar countries, all of these in which Canada was involved have only been loosely tied together and their links to Canada's NDFP's objectives have been tenuous (ibid).

In other words, if the goal is to broaden the northern dimension beyond a policy which deals almost exclusively with environment, the Canadian Government believes that the appropriate venue is the Arctic Council, a circumpolar institution uniquely placed to address not only environmental challenges faced in the circumpolar region, but to go beyond to face the broader challenges of developing new opportunities and enhancing capacity for trade and economic development, "as well as educational opportunities and employment mobility for Canadian youth and children in the circumpolar North" (ibid). It is in this context that the Pacific Rim becomes a critical component in the Canadian circumpolar North. Indeed, the Canadian Government's review of Canada's NDFP observes that with respect to the NDFP,

"Russia is not mentioned separately; initiatives with Russia would fall within the bilateral area. Economic opportunities and trade are not explicitly included. Much activity in this regard may be undertaken by other government departments in the context of the new domestic Northern Strategy. Actions deemed relevant to the NDFP related to economic development and trade would be funded either as bilateral initiatives or as multilateral initiatives."(Summative Evaluation of the Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy, May 2005)

Clearly, beyond the issue of building circumpolar relations through the Arctic Council, is the recognition that Canada's foreign policy within the circumpolar north must also be oriented towards Russia, and requires the potential for "developing and expanding opportunities to assist Russia in addressing its northern challenges through strengthened bilateral activities, and by working with our circumpolar partners in various regional forums and in the European Union"

(36). These are bilateral issues, according to the FDNP, and in stating it in this way, there is recognition for the development of a separate relationship with Russia and the Eurasian North, independent of the Arctic Council or the U.S. Moreover, there is an explicit understanding that while the "politics" of the Cold War "dictated that the Arctic region be treated as part of a broader strategy of exclusion and confrontation", it is now clear that "the politics of globalization and power diffusion highlight the importance of the circumpolar world as an area for inclusion and cooperation" (ibid).

Yet at the same time, the recent foreign policy review suggested that the circumpolar North is still seen by Canadians in context of traditional geopolitical paradigms. For example, recent review of NDFP in Canada suggests that the Pacific Rim is a priority region, in the sense that Canadians are more concerned with the role of NDFP in strengthening the Arctic Council as an international forum, in its ability to work with Russia to address its northern challenges, or in terms of increasing northern cooperation with the European Union and circumpolar countries, than in promoting sustainable economic opportunities and trade in the North. The new human security paradigms-sustainable economic development and strengthening support for education within the circumpolar North-score lower support, suggesting that the Canadian public and its decision-makers continue to use heuristic devices like the Rimlands Theory to perceptually position the North Pacific region in globally strategic ways, in relation to Eurasian as well as U.S. relations. This reflects a sense of Canada's positioning in global context, and the continuing relevance of the idea of Eurasian Heartlands to Canadian foreign policy.

Conclusions

In this paper, the point is made that Rimlands are significant heuristic devices because they insert a sense of geographical location and context into more generalized concept of world order and balance of power. We explore Canada's role in the North Pacific Rimlands through the lenses of circumpolar regionalism and its relationship to a broader strategic and globalized geo-economic agenda. We argue that the idea of strategic space and traditional geopolitics and competition, has been modified somewhat by a new paradigm within the Canadian North, in general, and the Pacific North in particular, but that there remain clear traditional security issues.

This paper also speaks to the issue of the relationship between Canada and the North Pacific from the point of view of the circumpolar North. It argues that the Canadian circumpolar

North is an important part of what traditional geo-politicians have called the world's Rimlands strategic area in context of the balance of power and access to industrial resources on a global scale. Our lack of attention to the Pacific, and indeed the North Pacific in Northern Dimension Foreign Policy, has resulted from a century of geopolitical formulations which underscore Eurasian centrality-from the European side. While we cannot escape to some extent the notion that Canada and the Pacific Northwest exist on the sidelines as part of a world order focused elsewhere, it has become clear in recent decades that this is not the case.

Indeed, we suggest that Canadian foreign and northern policies must orient themselves to this perspective, and that recent development at the policy level recognize this important fact. Yet in doing so, a new conceptual emphasis upon the Pacific Rim is required, specifically the North Pacific Rim. Such emphasis recognizes the relationship between the North American continent, the circumpolar North and its Pacific, not just Atlantic connections. Canada's recent foreign policy review suggests that in the future the Canadian north will focus more clearly upon building regional linkages with North Pacific rim countries, and that the role of the Canadian North will be critical in this effort.

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Multilateral versus Unilateral Actions: Balancing the needs for International Governance in the New Arctic.

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Introduction

In May 2008, representatives of five Arctic states meet in Greenland.¹⁸ Each of these states,

¹⁸ Denmark, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, "Conference in Ilulissat, Greenland: Landmark Political Declaration on the Future of the Arctic," May 28, 2008

[<http://www.um.dk/en/servicemenu/News/ConferenceInIlulissatGreenlandLandmarkPoliticalDeclarationOnTheFutureOfTheArctic.htm>].

including Russia, Canada, United States, Denmark (for Greenland) and Norway, has the potential to claim an extended Arctic continental shelf. At the end of the meeting, the head of the Danish delegation that hosted the meeting claimed it a tremendous success and that it had shown how well the existing multilateral framework worked. He then went on to state that there was no need for an Arctic treaty since the five Arctic nations could work out any differences between themselves.¹⁹ However, this perspective is not universally accepted. Some suggest that Arctic governance is headed increasingly to a “free for all” based on the unilateral actions of interested states.²⁰ There is growing debate as to whether the exiting international regime is sufficient, or if Arctic states are increasingly turning to unilateral action. If indeed the latter is occurring, there is a fear that such action will lead to increasing tension and disputes in the north. This discussion paper will consider whether or not the existing multilateral framework is sufficient or if there is a need for new arrangements.

Creating the Situation

The Arctic has remained the least developed international region in the world. Prior to the Second World War it was only the northern indigenous populations with their long history of thriving in the north that were able to live in the region. Individuals from more southern locations could survive only with the greatest of efforts (and in many instances did not survive !) As a result the entire area tended to be ignored and avoided by the rest of the world. However, by the end of the Second World War technological advances allowed for southerners to enter and habitate in the region. Unfortunately, the onset of the Cold War meant that hostility between the northern states ended any opportunity for the development of an international cooperative regime. Instead of allowing the new technology to foster cooperative behaviour between the circumpolar states, the Arctic became a major strategic location of competition. If a nuclear war had occurred between the USSR and NATO, the Arctic would have become of the principle battlefields.

When the Cold War ended, efforts to develop international institutions and arrangements began in earnest. Of particular note was the creation of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy

¹⁹ Kim McLaughlin, “Denmark Seeks Unity over Arctic Claim,” *Reuters* May 21, 2008, [<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L21892809.htm>].

²⁰ Scott Borgerson, “Arctic Meltdown,” *Foreign Affairs*,” vol 87, no 2 (March/April 2008).

(AEPS) and its successor the Arctic Council.²¹ However, while these organizations have had some success, most notably the production of the *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment*, these efforts have not created a viable multi-lateral Arctic body.²² Instead, the existing regime can best be thought of as an immature and fragmented region-system. However events are now developing that are refocusing the attention of the world on the Arctic. The twin forces of climate change and increased resource demand are combining to make the Arctic an increasingly important section of the world. As the ice recedes and the price of oil and gas expand, both Arctic and non-Arctic states are now examining how the Arctic region can be used to their benefit. The question now is the manner in which this increased attention will be managed. Will the Arctic be developed through the use of multilateral tools or will individual states decide whether to act in a unilateral manner? Will the Arctic nations be able to work together to ensure that an increasingly assessable Arctic is developed in cooperatively in a sustainable fashion? Or will it once again become a region of interstate competition?

The Existing Nature of the Arctic Regime

The Arctic not developed a robust multilateral framework of international governance. There are almost no treaties that are specific to the Arctic. The one exception is the 1973 Polar Bear Treaty (Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears).²³ Nominally dealing with the protection of the Polar Bear population in Canada, the US, the USSR, Norway and Denmark, the real rationale of the treaty was to provide for a confidence measurement for the superpowers in a time when NATO and the USSR were attempting to improve relations through detente. Since that time there have been no other specific Arctic treaties. Instead what has developed is a series of international agreements (soft international law), and several general international treaties/conventions that have an impact on the Arctic but are not specific to the region.

²¹ Rob Huebert “New Directions in Circumpolar Cooperation: Canada, the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy and the Arctic Council,” *Canadian Foreign Policy* 5 no.2 (Winter 1998).

²² Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, *Impacts of a Warming Arctic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2004).

²³ *Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears*, Oslo, November 13, 1973
[<http://pbsg.npolar.no/ConvAgree/agreement.htm>].

The AEPS and Arctic Council

The main international multilateral body that was created for the Arctic is the Arctic Council. An initiative of the Canadian Government, it was first proposed as a means of improving relationships between the Arctic nations as the Cold War ended. The original proposal put forward by the Canadian Government in 1989 did not receive much support. However, the idea of a multilateral Arctic based organization resonated with the Finnish Government, who pursued a related initiative that focussed on providing environmental protection for the Arctic. Working closely with Canadian officials, Finnish officials were successful in gaining the support of all eight Arctic states - (Russia, US, Canada, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Denmark for Greenland) for the creation of a new agreement to protect the Arctic environment. This body was called the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS).²⁴

The AEPS represents the first multilateral effort encompassing the Arctic in the post-Cold War era. It focussed on examining and remedying transboundary environmental issues in the north. It included several innovative elements with an emphasis on achieving a shared understanding of mutual problems. Even as late as the early 1990s there remained limited understanding of the magnitude or cause of northern environmental problems. The AEPS established a series of working groups that brought together governmental experts from the eight Arctic nations to achieve a common understanding of trans-boundary pollution in the Arctic. The AEPS also pioneered the inclusion of northern indigenous peoples' organizations as partners. Groups such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and Saami Council were granted the status of Permanent Participants that allowed them to fully participate on all elements of the AEPS with few exceptions. The eight state members retain ultimate power over any decision regarding funding. But while the aboriginal groups are excluded from the process in making such decisions, the fact remains that the AEPS seldom made decisions involving financial issues. Hence the Permanent

²⁴ *Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy - Declaration of the Protection of the Arctic Environment* June 14, 1991 [http://www.Arctic-council.org/Archives/AEPS%20Docs/artic_environment.pdf].

Participants tend to be included in all activities of the AEPS..²⁵

However, the AEPS was limited in three ways. First, because it was an agreement and not a treaty, the state parties were not compelled to act. Any contribution to the agreement was voluntary. That meant that the burden was not evenly shared. Some of the member states, such as the United States, were not enthusiastic in their support while others, such as Russia, were either unwilling or unable to allocate resources in its activities. This meant that the other members often had to bare much of the burden to act.

A second limitation of the AEPS occurred with its focus on environmental issues. There is no doubt that such issues needed to be examined in an internationally cooperative fashion. But the circumpolar Arctic faces other issues beyond the environment degradation. There are issues surrounding the social and economic development of the region and its people, as well as issues related to geo-political concerns that need international attention.

The shortcomings of the AEPS led Canada to push for the creation of a new body that would go beyond the AEPS's mandate. Specifically, Canadian officials wanted to create a multi-lateral organization that could address all issues pertaining to the north including international politics and security. Ultimately, the Canadians were successful in creating a new international organization in September 1996 named the Arctic Council. The working groups of the AEPS were transferred to the Arctic Council. The Council also entrenched the role of the permanent participants.

The greatest success of the Council has been in the area of the environment. The Council was instrumental in undertaking the *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment*. This landmark study brought together the world's leading experts in a massive study that not only demonstrated that climate change is occurring in the Arctic but that it was fundamentally changing the very nature of the region. Follow-up studies have shown that the rate of melt

²⁵ Rob Huebert, "The Arctic Council and Northern Aboriginal Peoples," in *Issues in the North* vol.3, edited by Jill Oakes and Rick Riewe, Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute, 1998, pp.123-134.

is now accelerating and may soon led to a period of complete open water in the entire Arctic Ocean.

From a scientific and public awareness perspective, this study and the general work of the Arctic Council have been outstanding. However, where it has not been nearly as effective has been in the area of policy development. Because it does not require its members states to act, most of its activities have been conducted on meager budgets. Its ability to act as a multilateral policy development body have also been handicapped by by the fact that it is specifically forbidden to address security issues, a requirement insisted upon by the Americans in return for their membership on the council. This restriction has resulted in a general reluctance of the Arctic Council to deal with any issue that relates to geo-political topics. The Council has also refused to deal with issues pertaining to both fisheries and whaling in the north.

The Arctic Council has also been unable to address policy related issues concerning climate change. Both the American administration of George Bush and the Canadian Administration of Stephen Harper have opposed the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change. This has made it difficult to achieve agreement on what steps are necessary to address the problems created by climate change in the Arctic. The Bush administration in particular was reluctant to allow the Arctic Council to provide policy advice. It is now hoped that this will be changed by the new Obama administration. However, it is too soon to know what changes -if any - are coming.

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

The one international treaty that is the most relevant for the Arctic region is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Convention is known as the “constitution of the oceans.”²⁶ It has codified existing customary international maritime law and created new elements of international ocean governance.

²⁶ Stated by Tommy Koh in United Nations, *The Law of the Sea: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea with index and Final Act of the Third Conference on the Law of the Sea* (New York: UN, 1983) xxxiii-xxxvii.

In general almost all of the provisions of the Convention either have or will have an effect on Arctic waters and most importantly the sections that establish the maritime zones. These are the Exclusive Zone (EEZ) (Part V) and the Continental Shelf (Part VI and specifically Article 76). Part III establishes the rights and responsibilities for the use of international straits. Article 234 is the one article that is specific to the Arctic. It allows coastal states that border ice covered waters to enact special environmental legislation to protect the waters. The Convention also provides mechanisms and techniques for the resolution of disputes (Part XV) and requires that all states that ratify the Convention must resolve any differences in a peaceful manner (Article 279).

While the Convention was completed in 1982, it did not come into force until 1994. Among the Arctic nations, Iceland ratified it in 1984, Finland, Sweden, Norway ratified in 1996, Russia in 1997, Canada in 2003 and Denmark in 2004. However, the United States has not acceded to the treaty.²⁷ The American Government has maintained that it accepts all sections of the Convention except for Part XI (the section dealing with mining of mineral resources on the high seas and beyond state jurisdiction). However, by not acceding to the Convention it is unclear how the US can join the specific bodies created by it. In the last days of the Bush Administration, the Americans released a new Arctic Policy.²⁸ The policy statement stated that the American Government viewed accession to the Convention as a priority. The fact that the administration released the document with less than two weeks left in its mandate suggests otherwise. While some observers are hopeful that the new Obama administration will now accede, there have been no statement yet made.

UNCLOS provides the foundation for international ocean governance. However its

²⁷ Since the US never signed the treaty it now needs to accede rather than ratify. They are basically the same.

²⁸ Office of the President *National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD 66 – Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD 25* – Subject: Arctic Region January 9, 2009. Located at <http://media.adn.com/smedia/2009/01/12/15/2008Arctic.dir.rel.source.prod_affiliate.7.pdf>.

impact in the Arctic is unknown. While it provides guidance for the rights and responsibilities of international straits and their use for international navigation, the treaty does not provide an answer to whether or not the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage are international straits or internal waters. The Convention does provide alternatives to resolve the dispute but does not compel the states parties to resolve their differences.

Likewise, the creation of EEZ under the terms of UNCLOS created boundary disputes for several of the Arctic nations when they extended their jurisdiction to 200 nautical miles from their coasts. Canada has a dispute with the United States in the Beaufort Sea and a small dispute with Denmark on the delimitation of their EEZs in the Lincoln Sea. Norway and Russia also have dispute in the Barents Sea. The United States and Russia had seemingly resolved their differences in the Bering Sea, but there are suggestions that the Russian Government may not ratify the agreement that had been reached. Once again, the creation of these new zones has generated disputes as Arctic states make overlapping claims. If and when the various states decide to resolve these overlaps the Convention does provide guidance on how to do this.

Currently the greatest attention that the Convention has attracted in the Arctic is due to Part VI. Each of the Arctic states in the position to do so -Canada, US, Norway, Russia and Denmark- are in the process of determining the outer limits of their extended Continental Shelf. The Convention requires that states claiming control over an extended continental shelf established through geological surveying of their prospective claim. Each state has a 10 year period following their ratification of the Convention to complete this survey. Within this time period, any state making a claim must submit its findings to the relevant UN body -the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf- that will provide an evaluation of the scientific merit of their surveys. It will then be up to the neighbouring states to resolve any overlap that may emerge once the CLCS has approved the technical elements of the claim.

There has been considerable attention focussed on the efforts of Canada, Denmark and

Russia to determine the extent of their northern continental shelf. In the summer of 2007, the Russian effort was highlighted by their placement of their flag at the ocean bottom of the north pole.

An interesting debate is now developing as to what these efforts represent. In May 2008, the Danish Government convened a meeting in Ilulissat, Greenland. They invited the Governments of Russia, Canada, United States and Norway to discuss their upcoming claims and to reach an understanding as to how to manage the process in a cooperative and peaceful manner. At the end of the meeting the Danish hosts declared that the meeting was a success. Furthermore, all five participants agreed to a declaration in which they agreed that the existing international framework was sufficient to develop the Arctic in a peaceful and cooperative fashion.²⁹ They went on to state that there was no need for additional legal instruments and that there was specifically no need for an Arctic treaty that created new multilateral instruments for cooperation.

Are new Multilateral Tools Needed?

This position has been criticized by some. Environmental groups such as the WWF have argued that the lack of existing legal instruments in the Arctic needs to be remedied by the development of a binding multilateral agreement.³⁰ Given that the amount of resource development in the Arctic is expected to increase, now is the logical time to develop new rules to protect the environment and not later.

There is also a flaw in the logic of those who suggest that the existing framework is sufficient. The reality is that the Arctic Council has not been able to develop policy. It has been very useful in reaching a common understanding of the environmental problems in the north, but its very structure has prevented it from being able to develop the common

²⁹ The Ilulissat Declaration Arctic Ocean Conference Ilulissat, Greenland, 27 – 29 May 2008, [http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/Arctic/Ilulissat_Declaration.pdf].

³⁰ Timo Kovurova and Erik Molenaar *International Governance and Regulation of the Marine Arctic: Overview and Gap Analysis* (Oslo: WWF, 2009).

http://assets.panda.org/downloads/gap_analysis_marine_resources_130109.pdf

agreement to address those problems.

There is even a greater problem in relying solely on UNCLOS. The treaty is indeed a major milestone in the promotion of ocean governance. But a reliance on it for the Arctic as the major instrument is problematic for two reasons. First, by its very nature it does not address issues related to the land mass of the Arctic. It has some articles that deal with land-based marine pollution but these are few and limited. But beyond this it is a treaty that deals with the oceans and not the land. Even more problematic is the continual refusal of the United States to join it. While successive presidents since Reagan have supported the Convention, and both the Departments of Defence and State strongly support it, the American system for ratifying international treaties makes it very unlikely that the US will soon become a party to it. The most recent US Arctic Policy makes a strong call for the American accession to the Convention. But there is still no sign that the Obama administration intends to take action on this issue. The US Senate is required to pass all US treaties by a 2/3 majority. There has been enough Republican Senators who continue to view the treaty as a tool of the 3rd world and the UN to prevent it from passing. It is possible that the most recent changes in the 2008 election may have shifted the balance of power. However, since the attention of the Government has been almost exclusively on the current economic crisis has meant that it is not yet known if there is a 2/3 majority now in support of the Convention. It is in the American interest to be a party, but this does not seem to influence the thinking of a minority of senators who are enough to block its passage. Thus for the foreseeable future, the US will remain outside of the central multi-lateral instrument for the emerging Arctic regime.

Increasing Unilateral Capability

But while the Arctic states have clearly indicated their reluctance to build upon the sparse multilateral framework in the region, several are now in the process of building up their ability to act unilaterally. Canada, Russia, Norway and the United States are now redeveloping abilities of security forces in the region.

The United States has continued to maintain a powerful military presence in the state of

Alaska. It has about 26,000 troops permanently stationed in region as well as three wings of (approximately 22 aircraft/fighter wing) F-15 fighters as well as a number of AWAC surveillance aircraft. The United States also has placed one of its two Ballistic Missile interceptor sites in Alaska at Ft Greely (about 70 miles from the Alaska/Yukon border).

Throughout the Cold War the American Coast Guard saw some of its capabilities decrease and now is only operating three icebreakers (one of which is now in a state of extended refit and may not be repaired). However, there are now discussions underway to decide how to rebuild the Coast Guards' Arctic capability.³¹

The Norwegian defence minister announced in the Spring of 2008 that Norway would be refocusing its defence policy to the north and added that the budget would be increased on a continual and substantial manner.³² The Norwegians are also in the process of building five new frigates (in Spanish yards) that will have a limited ability to operate in ice conditions.³³

Canada resumed training operations in the Arctic in 2002. It has also announced that it will be building between 6-8 Arctic offshore patrol vessels that are being specifically designed to operate in first year ice. To support this capability the Canadian navy will also be opening a new replenishment site (some are calling it port) in the high Arctic that will allow for the refuelling of these vessels. At the same time, Canada is also developing new means of providing better surveillance in the north including the recent launch of new

³¹ Ronald O'Rourke, *Coast Guard Icebreaker Modernization: Background, Issues, and Options for Congress - CRS Report for Congress* RL 34391 (Washington: Congressional Research Service, September 11, 2008) [<http://fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/RL34391.pdf>].

³² Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Norwegian Defence 2008* (Oslo: 2008) [http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/FD/Dokumenter/Fakta2008_eng.pdf]

³³ Endre Lund, "Norway's New Nansen Class Frigates: Capabilities and Controversies," *Defence Daily Industries*, (June 7, 2008) [<http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/norways-new-nansen-class-frigates-capabilities-and-controversies-02329/>].

radar based surveillance satellites.³⁴

While the post-Cold war period Russian northern armed forces remained large in numbers, their capability was substantially reduced. Most naval and air assets were not maintained and much of the northern fleet simply allowed to rust in its harbour. With the resurgence of the Russian economy brought about by the rise of the price of oil and gas, the Russian Government is now rebuilding its northern capability. Both former President Putin and current President Medvedev have placed the rebuilding of the Russian forces ability to operate in the north as a core priority. To this end, the Russian navy has now commenced surface operations in northern waters in 2008.³⁵ Likewise the Air Force also resumed long range Arctic air patrols in the fall of 2007 with the return of the TU 95 Bear and TU 160 bombers.³⁶ The Government has also stated that it now intends to rebuild its navy. The Russians have already built a new large nuclear powered ice-breaker and are now preparing to rebuild their entire fleet.

This list is not exhaustive, but should make it clear that the period of limited military activity in the Arctic is about to end. In particular the main Arctic states with large maritime zones are becoming very concerned about their ability to know what is happening in their Arctic region and to be able to act.

³⁴ Rob Huebert “Canada and the Changing International Arctic: At the Crossroads of Cooperation and Conflict” in *Northern Exposure: Peoples, Powers and Prospects for Canada’s North* edited by Frances Abele, Thomas J. Courchene, F. Leslie Seidle and France St-Hilaire (Montreal: IRPP, Forthcoming). [<http://www.irpp.org/books/archive/AOTS4/huebert.pdf>].

³⁵ The Russian Federal Ministry of Defence, “Russian Navy Resumes Presence in Arctic Area,” *News Details* (July 14, 2008). [<http://www.mil.ru/eng/1866/12078/details/index.shtml?id=47433>].

³⁶ Martin Sieff, “Russia upgrades bomber-ALCM force for the 21st Century,” *UPI.com* (January 5, 2009). [http://www.upi.com/Security_Industry/2009/01/05/Russia_upgrades_bomber-ALCM_force_for_21st_century/UPI-39951231177215/].

Unilateral versus Multilateral Action

The Arctic is increasingly a very busy international region. However, existing multilateral instruments are sparse and are not designed for a rapidly changing environment. Perhaps more troubling is the unwillingness of Arctic states to develop new instruments of cooperation. Their willingness to invest in improving their northern security capabilities suggests that they do recognize that change is coming. But are ultimately preparing to depend on their own ability to protect their own northern interests.

This in itself is not out of place. States are ultimately responsible for the security of their people, including their northern inhabitants. The military remains one of the best providers of search and rescue and any other disaster relief. Thus there is no question that new security capabilities are needed so that northern states know and can act when their interests are being threatened. But this does not preclude the Arctic states developing new multilateral tools to work cooperatively.

Maritime disputes in the Arctic are numerous and increasing as the northern states develop their continental shelf claims. Why not develop a body or agreed process that can operate strictly for the Arctic states for the purpose of resolving these differences? States will develop oil and gas on a large scale in the near future. While most of these fields will be developed within the control of a specific state, the environmental consequences of an accident or spill will not. Now is the time to develop both a cooperative regime to ensure that any accident is handled as quickly as possible and an international agreement governing search and rescue that goes beyond the current regime.

Other economic activities that will cross national boundaries will require new arrangements. As new fish stocks move north because of climate change, there will be a need for a regional fishery agreement that is both dynamic and effective. Once again it seems that creating such an agreement would be easier to do before national interests become entrenched.

The list goes on, but the fact remains that there will be a growing international presence in the north involving Arctic and non-Arctic states. This will require governance systems

that go beyond what the system now provides. The question is when and how will they be developed. Will they be created to respond to an increasing series of disputes that will inevitably arise over time and as such tend to develop in an ad hoc and piece meal basis? Or will they be created in a rational and comprehensive manner that will allow the north to develop as an increasingly important and busy international region.

These are the questions that now face the Arctic nations. It should be clear that there is a need to start thinking about new systems of governance in the north. This is not to suggest that states need to begin to surrender their sovereignty in the north. Instead it is to recognize that the north is changing and if the northern states do not work together there will be a substantial cost that all will have to bear.

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What Type of Global Governance Do We Need in the Arctic?

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Russia

Introduction

Due to various well-known reasons the Arctic has, during the last decade, started to progressively attract more and more international attention. It is not only the different dimensions of modern human life – economic, political, social, cultural, etc. that are the focus of attention but their substantial overlap and interaction generating various conflicts of interests. The ways in which these conflicts can be resolved are of crucial significance for securing peace, stability and well-being in Arctic countries, and the globe as a whole.

While discussing many controversial international problems of modern life it is global governance (GG) that frequently comes to the stage as one of promising approaches towards the existing challenges. By GG we usually mean regulatory activities being executed on a relatively wide multilateral basis, not necessarily on a 100% global basis. Even some leading actors in this area do not have universal participation, the World Trade Organization with its 153 members being an obvious example. Global governance *per se* applies to various spheres of human

performance – political, economic, environmental, etc. The main focus here will be on the author's field of economics.

The need for GG ultimately results from two basic reasons. First, many types of modern activities tend to internationalize or even globalize. In other words, even if these activities directly take place in relatively narrow geographical regions (such as the North, tropical rain forests, etc.) they largely depend upon an international environment and their implications are significant for the whole international community. Second, activities under review cannot be implemented according to a pattern of “self-regulation”. Within an economic context this pattern generally refers to as much as possible of market mechanism regulation in line with the famous concept of the “invisible hand”.

Is the North a proper subject for global governance?

The two reasons for GG mentioned above could be used as criteria to answer this question. Generally speaking, *international importance* of the region really doesn't require any extensive justification (at least among the participants of NRF). Nevertheless, with respect to some cases it might be sensible to specify various aspects of the “international dimension”. Here the Russian Federation energy sector provides a really good example.

First, one should mention the high level of export orientation typical for Russian oil and gas extraction. According to RF Energy balance for 2006 31% of natural gas and 52% of extracted oil was exported. At the same time, main Russian deposits of these natural resources are largely concentrated in the North of the country.

Second, due to various reasons, largely technology-driven, Russia is interested in international capital inflows to the industry. That is first and foremost true in the case of prospecting. Currently it is largely financed (more than 60% of the total in 2005-2006) from the companies' own resources, while domestic and foreign investments (in official statistics they are calculated together) account for a little more than 18% of overall expenditures. Long term implications of an issue have been and currently are very significant indeed. In particular, a volume of so called deep prospecting drilling in 2005-2006 equaled about 20% of the 1990 level. Meanwhile, recent changes in the regulation of foreign investments in strategic industries might create certain limitations for FDI inflows to the energy sector of RF economy.

Third, shipment of Russian energy resources depends on as well as contributes to the formation of international transport corridors. RF in general could benefit from growth in transit trade.

Fourth, RF competes in energy markets with economic agents from other countries. This has many closely connected economic and non-economic international implications. In particular, claims to extended continental shelves presented by RF as well as Canada, US, Denmark and Norway clearly illustrate the point.

As for the applicability of *“self-regulation” insufficiency criterion* several economic arguments appear to be appropriate. First, the urgent need for accelerated economic growth in the Arctic is greater than in many other places on our planet as it has remained the least developed international region in the world.

Second, any large-scale economic activities, especially those based upon pure commercial incentives generate here quite a number of various external effects, mostly negative ones. The 5th NRF Open Assembly Position paper of Lawrence D. Weiss from the Alaska Center for Public Policy focuses the issue with respect to health care arguing for an urgent need in public health infrastructure and other non-market components. The same is largely true with respect to social, cultural, and environmental aspects.

Third, the assimilation of Arctic natural resources with the framework of sustainable development is a very high-tech-intensive type of project. In particular, it requires substantial contribution from the sphere of fundamental research. In its turn, fundamental science in general heavily depends upon financial support provided by the nation state and/or the international community.

Fourth, the high level of heterogeneity in the modern economy of the Arctic should also be considered. Here one could refer to the Position paper of Dr. David C. Natcher at the 5th NRF Open Assembly, who discusses “subsistence economy” and “wage-earning economy” as two different components within the economic system of a contemporary North. From his point of view these components are largely complementary to each other. Meanwhile, even if they are either alternatives or mutually independent one still cannot regulate them by the same set of instruments. In other words, a market mechanism which presumably corresponds to the latter component clearly does not fit the former.

Last but not least, some aspects of Arctic development might be perceived as an example of a special kind of public goods – global public goods (GPGs). It is generally understood that the provision of various public goods is one of the major goals justifying the economic dimension in the performance of the state. Under the circumstances a whole set of non-market decisions has to be made. Their efficiency, possible repercussions and specific mechanisms of decision-making ultimately constitute public choice theory subject-matter.

In their turn, GPGs are goods whose benefits extend to all countries, people, and generations. Environmental protection and conservation of biological diversity represent the most obvious examples of this kind. Each of them is of a clear and extreme relevance to the Arctic. In his 5th NRF Open Assembly Position paper Rob Huebert sensibly claims that “twin forces of climate change and increased resource demand are combining to make the Arctic an increasingly important section of the world... both arctic and non-arctic states are now examining how the region can be used to their benefit”. Under the circumstances with respect to the discussion above one might argue that the notion of GPGs combines the *international importance criterion* with that of “*self-regulation*” *insufficiency*.

Barriers to Global Governance

A growth in the number and magnitude of challenges/threats faced by states in the Arctic tend to facilitate unilateral regulation. Even with respective measures being legitimate and quite often logical enough, seen from the standpoint of individual countries, nevertheless a certain trend towards reduction in GG’s scope/scale/effect is generated. The 5th NRF Open Assembly Position papers of Lassi Heninen and Rob Huebert provide an interesting contribution to this issue.

Meanwhile the author of this paper considers the expansion of unilateralism mentioned above to be a dangerous trend. The fact that in the short run unilateral steps (due to relative quickness in decision-making and implementation) might provide some positive results makes this trend even more menacing. The point is that in the long run unilateralism is most probably doomed to collapse. Historically and in retrospect the experience of the Great Depression vividly demonstrates how the widespread practice of beggar-my-neighbour policy failed to prevent economic crisis and generated a proliferation of conflicts contributing to the tragedy of World War II.

Moreover, from a theoretical point of view various interpretations/applications of prisoners' dilemma suggest that it is precisely unilateral measures that tend to generate first-worst results. Of course, one might argue that in the case of prisoners' dilemma unilateralism contrasts with a bilateral type of cooperation, not a multilateral one. Indeed, comparison of these two presents a certain problem. Nevertheless, they are by no means a 100% mutually exclusive, often complementing and supporting each other. Furthermore, during the last sixty years or so global institutions have constituted a foundation of a general international architecture, which in spite of all its shortcomings and individual failures have ultimately managed to ensure a certain progress in the development of mankind.

The frequently negative attitude regarding GG results to a large extent from a widely shared opinion, according to which the expansion of international economic organizations and other elements of inter- and even supra-national regulation tends to diminish the power of the nation state. Meanwhile, this point of view could be sensibly challenged. One of the leading Canadian experts in the field of the international trading system is most probably right in arguing that:

“Every trade negotiation is an affirmation of sovereignty. The whole idea of entering into international agreement is to impose the rule of law – one country agrees not to do some things and to do other things in particular ways, in return for other countries agreeing to do the same. The 1947 General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) involved such commitments, as did the 1935 and 1938 bilateral agreements between Canada and the United States. In fact, these commitments strengthened Canada as a nation, because they made the country stronger economically and because trade and other matters came to be governed by agreed rules of international law, not by decisions made unilaterally in Brussels, Tokyo, or Washington”(Hart, 2002:8).

Network model of global governance: basic advantages and limitations

At the moment the majority of social scientists would most probably agree that prospects of mankind's future economic and social development largely depend on whether a sustainable GG model will be worked out and implemented. In order to provide adequate answers to a whole new set of challenges faced by the contemporary world this model should inherit some basic features

of an old multilateral system and at the same time get rid of its imperfections. In the opinion of the author of this paper a *network model of global governance* might provide an appropriate solution. A comprehensive discussion of the issue is presented in Joseph S. Nye Jr., John D. Donahue (2000).

Within the framework of this model nation states actively collaborate with various international, national and sub-national institutions representing the business community as well as with nongovernmental organizations. A constructive dialogue with academia, mass media, trade unions and other stakeholders is also a matter of the utmost significance. It is worth mentioning that the net could be considerably flexible. The model assumes no formal *a priori* established hierarchy. The exact configuration of the net and precise allocation of responsibilities between its participants ultimately has to be defined by a specific task/project put in the agenda. The approach mentioned above would stimulate greater coordination among various regulators involved. At the same time, due to the fact that possible opponents of certain regulatory measures to be introduced are included into discussions, the model tends to provide some kind of “steam exhaust valve” to relax political and social pressures.

Moreover, a GG network model might bring extra benefits by giving new life to the advantages of traditional society. This is an extremely interesting issue which is often totally neglected. Indeed, traditional societies (in many – if not most – cases aboriginal communities of the North fit this pattern perfectly) tend to have very important advantages in comparison with modern ones. They are very efficient in terms of decision-making, very minor resources are needed to make choices – one just has to obey existing traditions. Under the circumstances the more comprehensive set of adequate rules are elaborated by global regulators and then accepted by the Arctic community as some kinds of “new traditions”, the less room is left for excessive empty discussion on often purely abstract alternatives; the less incentives/possibilities exist for law avoidance. Economic, political and social actors would simply focus on their main activities.

In terms of the more specific Northern context the question of how existing regulators (in particular, intergovernmental ones) fit the pattern of GG network model appears to be relevant. With respect to the Arctic Council the answer is generally speaking positive rather than negative. At the same time, at least one reservation should also be made. In line with the famous “war is too serious issue to leave it to military”, one (assuming – even or especially – well-known limitations of Arctic Council in dealing with hard security) might argue that “Arctic issues are

too serious to leave them to Arctic Council”. In other words, international community in general and the North in particular could probably benefit from certain forms of “outsiders” participation in governance of the region. It would facilitate a global dimension of the process making it more appropriate to answer GPG nature of many Northern issues. Additionally, while including new stakeholders into the net we usually tend to increase levels of certainty/predictability with respect to their interests and possible steps.

When trying to evaluate the GG network model one cannot ignore its limitations. A relatively smooth and sustainable functioning of the model requires distinct answers to several key questions. First, how can successful development be revealed? A quantitative assessment of whatever success typically assumes that we should measure certain gains. From a mainly economic perspective (to say nothing about other dimensions) there are several options. The most obvious one is GDP per capita. At the same time, economic expansion for a long period of time has been and still largely is accompanied by a growing deterioration of the environment. It is not by chance that for some environmentalists GDP stands for Gross Domestic **Pollution**. From that perspective the Human Development Index (HDI) appears more balanced. But it also has certain drawbacks. One might argue that a single indicator (even if much like the HDI it is calculated as a composite of several individual indicators) doesn't fit at all. Meanwhile, a comprehensive set of indicators on the one hand lacks a clear focus, on the other requires criteria for attributing specific weights to each of them.

Let's assume that we finally managed to provide some kind of an appropriate solution. Now, since a large variety of stakeholders is involved the next question emerges, namely what should we strive for? Here again there are several alternative approaches with their own “pluses” and “minuses”:

- Maximization of “net gains”? Sounds attractive enough, but this option admits substantial elements of zero-sum-game where the less protected, less powerful actors tend to lose.
- Pareto optimality? At least no losers, but the gap between the poor and the rich might increase.
- Gains for all? A little better, but still no guarantee against the widening of the gap mentioned above.

- Maximize the gains to the least well-off member(s)? Based upon John Rawls' ideas this is probably the best possible option from the perspective of fairness. But then what about efficiency, incentives to work hard?

In addition to these problems mentioned above the GG network model requires for its efficient implementation a special approach to the sharing of responsibility by major regulators. This approach should be broad enough to cover as much as possible of both national and international stakeholders. Moreover, responsibility under review has to spread over current as well as future generations. Finally, it must extend not only towards human beings but also towards animals, birds and plants. Here the wisdom of indigenous peoples might provide a good example. In his 5th NRF Open Assembly Position paper David Natcher argues that for many Aboriginal peoples their relationship with animals is based on reciprocal transactions. In these exchanges animals give themselves to hunters in exchange for the hunters' respectful treatment of them as non-human persons.

Conclusion

It goes without saying that all these preconditions are not that easy to put into practice. A lot of difficult questions are waiting to be answered. The model has its own costs in terms of time, human resources, and certain limitations with respect to individual/corporate/national freedom. Nevertheless, there is hardly any acceptable alternative. On the one hand the chances for sustainable development without global governance are minor, if not close to zero. On the other hand, the traditional pattern of GG has clearly demonstrated its insolvency and requires serious democratization to become viable.

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