

**Committee:** Disarmament and International Security Committee

**Topic:** The question of Militarization of the Arctic Region

**Student Officer:** Song Taeoh

**Position:** Head Chair of Disarmament and International Security Committee

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## Introduction

Due to the impact of accelerated climate change, the volume of Arctic glaciers has decreased by over 70% compared to the 1980s. With the advancement of high-tech technology, coupled with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, opportunities have increased in various fields such as route development, tourism in the Arctic Ocean, resource utilization, trade, and global dominance competition. In response, interest in the Arctic is increasing in several countries, including Russia, the United States, Denmark, Norway, and Canada. However, countries are engaged in global psychological warfare due to the escalation of strategic competition.

In 2007, the coastal nations of the Arctic became aware that Russia had planted a titanium flag on the seabed of the Arctic. This act, carried out by two mini-submarines known as Mir-1 and Mir-2, which descended to a depth of 4,200 meters beneath the North Pole, was a symbolic gesture intended to assert Russia's territorial claim. By demonstrating that Russia's continental shelf extends to the North Pole, this action aimed to emphasize Russia's position in the region.

The actions taken by Russia have initiated a deliberate process of military buildup among the countries bordering the Arctic, including Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and the USA. The NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) has also expressed interest in the strategic developments in the Arctic. The current situation is particularly risky because there are no widespread political agreements or comprehensive legal frameworks in place to ensure the organized growth of the region or resolve political disputes over Arctic resources and sea routes. Although the Arctic Council was established in 1996 to address environmental matters, it has not yet tackled security and territorial issues.

The Arctic Ocean was originally one of the key regions where the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in active proxy wars during the Cold War. In 2021, tensions among nations escalated once

again as Russia designated the Arctic Ocean as a strategically important military hub and expanded its military presence. In response to the situation in Russia, Western countries, including the United States, conducted naval exercises in 2018. This marked the first voyage of a US carrier to the Arctic Ocean in 30 years. The exercises took place in Norway, which shares a border with Russia in the Arctic region.

In May 2020, the United States and British navies exerted pressure on Russia's strategy of militarizing the Arctic by conducting joint exercises that involved the operation of nuclear submarines in the Arctic Ocean. On May 4th, a portion of the joint training forces conducted maritime operations in the Barents Sea. In response, Russia demonstrated a strong stance on national security issues by conducting a live torpedo firing exercise under the supervision of the Russian Arctic Fleet Command in Severomorsk on May 8th.

In spite of global warming reducing the volume of the Arctic, it has also made the exploration of Arctic mineral resources more accessible. The Arctic region accounts for only 6% of the Earth's surface area, but current estimates suggest that approximately 22% of undiscovered oil and gas resources exist in this region. According to a 2008 USGS report, more than 400 onshore oil fields are currently being developed in Canada, Russia, and Alaska. These fields account for 10% of the world's conventional petroleum reserves.

Russia is planning the Arctic LNG project based on the 2016 "Social and Economic Development 2020 Plan in the Russian Arctic" as a policy framework. Based on the "National Strategy for the Arctic Region" announced in 2013, the United States is expected to engage in activities such as oil drilling in the Arctic as part of the "America-First Offshore Energy Strategy" announced by the Trump administration in 2017. Norway, one of the major coastal countries in the Arctic Ocean, has also been granted permission to explore previously uncharted areas of the Arctic Sea. Since 2016, Norway has been actively investing in Arctic development. Denmark, which includes Greenland, the world's largest island located near the Arctic Ocean, has been actively developing its infrastructure for resource supply and demand through the Greenland Petroleum Mineral Resources Development Plan since 2014. In addition, Japan and China are representative countries among non-Arctic coastal nations that have shown a significant interest in developing resources in the Arctic. Through the Sakhalin-1 and LNG-2 Projects, Japan is currently seeking ways to collaborate in the economic and scientific sectors. After announcing its intention to expand Arctic activities in the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), China has taken steps to ensure that it remains competitive in the race for resource

acquisition among Arctic coastal countries and other nations. The demonstration of this was evident with the publication of the "White Paper on Arctic Policy" in 2018.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

### **Arctic Council**

The Arctic Council is an intergovernmental consultative body that facilitates the maintenance of relationships and exchanges for activities in the Arctic region. It is a forum to discuss issues related to sustainable development and environmental protection, particularly in the Arctic region.

### **Observer**

In September 2021, thirteen non-Arctic states obtained observer status. The addition of observer states to the council was the result of a lively discussion during its biennial meeting, which highlighted the growing importance of the challenges facing the region. These observers attend Arctic Council meetings to explore ways of promoting cultural understanding and supporting scientific research. The 13 observer states include Netherlands, South Korea, Germany, Spain, Singapore, UK, Italy, India, Japan, People's Republic of China, Poland, France, and Switzerland.

### **Indigenous permanent participants**

As approximately 500,000 indigenous peoples out of 4 million inhabitants reside in the Arctic, six indigenous peoples' organizations have been granted permanent participant status in the Arctic Council. The Permanent Participants have comprehensive consultation privileges regarding the negotiations and resolutions of the Council. The participants of the Arctic Council are a distinctive characteristic, and their contributions to its endeavors across all domains are highly valuable. The six organizations granted as Permanent Participants include the AIA (Aleut International Association), AAC (Arctic Athabaskan Council), GCI (Gwich'in Council International), ICC (Inuit Circumpolar Council), RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North), and Saami Council.

### **Icebreaker**

An icebreaker is a vessel that navigates through icy waters by breaking the ice. These icebreakers are essential for the development of the Northern Sea Route. Countries such as Russia, the United States, and Canada have a large number of icebreakers. In particular, Russia, which lacks a floating port, relies heavily on icebreakers to open sea routes. Russia has unrivaled technology in the field of icebreaker manufacturing and is the only country with a nuclear-powered icebreaker. However, the use of nuclear-powered icebreakers in the Antarctic region is prohibited under the Antarctic Treaty.

## **New Cold War**

The current phenomenon of Arctic militarization and the resulting territorial disputes has led to the adoption of the term "new Cold War." In contrast to the Cold War era, which witnessed a bipolar power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union, the current iteration of the Cold War is characterized by a non-block structure, with multiple contenders vying for global dominance. This development has attracted significant attention, as multiple nations are actively challenging the dominant position of the United States and seeking to reshape the current international order.

## **Aircraft Carrier**

An aircraft carrier is a ship that carries and launches aircraft. It is a versatile vessel capable of performing the functions of a patrol ship, a destroyer, and a battleship. Considering that more than 70% of the Earth is covered by water and that most regions, except for Central Asia, have access to the sea, aircraft carriers are the most formidable assets for naval forces. In modern warfare, aircraft play a crucial role in most battles, making it imperative for 21st century navies to incorporate them as a key strategy. The price is very high, and only a few countries have the necessary technology. As a result, the United States, China, and the United Kingdom are the only countries with more than two aircraft carriers. The United States, in particular, holds a dominant position in this field. The U.S. Navy's new Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier also participated in maritime exercises in Norway during the heightened tensions between countries caused by the conflicts in Russia and Ukraine.

## **Background Information**

### **Arctic**

The Arctic is a polar region located in the North pole of the Earth. The Arctic includes the mainland of the Arctic, the Arctic Ocean, and parts of the territory of Russia, USA, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Finland. Although the Arctic has an area larger than Greenland (12,577,000 km<sup>2</sup>), it is not considered a continent because it is primarily composed of ice and glaciers. The Arctic is one of the areas where resource development is not currently active. This makes it a promising location for the tourism and mining industries. In addition, trade utilizing the Northern Sea Route, which passes through the Arctic Ocean instead of the current route that circumvents the Eurasian continent to the south, is also gaining attention.



*Map of Arctic countries included in the Arctic circle, including Russia, Finland, USA, Canada, Norway, Iceland, Denmark*

### **Difference between Arctic and Antarctica-Antarctic Treaty**

The Arctic and Antarctica have many biological and natural differences. The Arctic has a dense mass of ice composed entirely of Arctic ice and Antarctica is a continent beneath the ice, which allows for the observation of temperature and climate differences. There is a significant difference between the two regions which is the fact Antarctica has the Antarctic Treaty, while the Arctic does not have any documented inter-state treaties or laws.

The Antarctic Treaty was first signed in 1959 December 1st and is valid from 1961 to 2048. The treaty specifies peaceful use of the Antarctic land, freedom of scientific research and investigation, freezing of sovereignty claims of the land, abolishment of nuclear tests and the conservation of the ecosystem. The treaty holds an ATC M(Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting) to discuss the management and administration of the region.

There are no clear standards or regulations for territorial claims in the Arctic. In contrast to Antarctica, which strictly prohibits unauthorized visitors to prevent damage to nature and facilitate scientific research, the Arctic does not impose any restrictions, allowing outsiders to freely enter. For military and scientific purposes, clear laws and regulations, similar to the Antarctic Treaty, are also necessary in the Arctic to prevent territorial disputes or covert conflicts.

### **Russo-Ukrainian war**

In February 2022, the Russian-Ukraine crisis broke out. The war has not only had a negative impact on international relations, including resources, logistics, and finance, but it has also heightened tensions among Arctic countries, resulting in significant changes in the global landscape. As a result, Sweden and Finland, both Arctic countries that share borders with Russia, expressed their intention to join NATO and signed the NATO accession protocol on July 5, 2022. During the Russo-Ukraine War, seven countries, excluding Russia, the chair of the Arctic Council, declared a boycott against Russia.

### **Resources of Arctic region**

1. The overall resource of the Arctic region: The Arctic Ocean is estimated to contain about 90 billion barrels of oil and 1,670 Tcf of natural gas. Additionally, it is believed to have significant deposits of other valuable minerals such as phosphorus, ash, nickel, copper, phosphate, and titanium. Efforts made by nations to address the escalating energy requirements through the exploitation of Arctic resources have become increasingly competitive. With the surge in energy demand and the upward trajectory of oil and natural gas prices, engaging in resource development ventures in the Arctic region presents a favorable opportunity for energy exploration companies to generate substantial profits. Among the five Arctic Ocean countries, namely the United States, Russia, Canada, Norway,

and Greenland, Norway is currently the only producer of oil and gas in Arctic waters. The other nations extract these resources on land and off the Arctic coastline.

2. United States of America: The US government has taken a stance on Arctic resource development that aims to limit the participation of other countries, particularly China and Russia. This position was presented in a speech at the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Finland in May 2019. The Obama administration implemented stringent regulations on the environmental impact of the oil industry, which included a ban on oil drilling in the Arctic Ocean. Since President Trump's election in 2017, the U.S. has pursued a policy of expanding oil drilling in nearly all coastal waters in order to boost domestic energy production. This shift in approach led to the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act by the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee in 2018. The act included a provision that allowed for the construction of up to six icebreakers.

Furthermore, in October 2019, the United States and Greenland signed an agreement, and the U.S. military conducted an aerial survey project to assess the potential mineral resources of Greenland. This survey, conducted in collaboration with Greenland, covered an area of 3,000 square kilometers in the southwest of Gardar Province. Prior to this, there was a diplomatic issue when President Trump expressed interest in purchasing Greenland, but his proposal was rejected by the Danish prime minister. However, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in the development of the resource sector had already been signed.

3. Norway: Norway's economy relies on the utilization of resources found in the Arctic Ocean. In recognition of this, the Norwegian government established the Arctic Ocean research institute in Tromsø, in June 2017. The primary objective of this is to promote the development of marine resources in Norway. Norway's economic growth is greatly supported by the extraction of oil and gas resources from the Arctic and surrounding seas. Currently, Norway holds a significant share of the European gas market, accounting for 25% through pipelines. The Arctic Ocean Continental Shelf has been identified as a strategic new source of oil and gas, highlighting the significance of its development. Consequently, in 2006, exploration for oil resource development was permitted in the Barents Sea and certain areas of Norway. Additionally, in 2010, the Lofoten area, which has significant oil reserves but lacks adequate environmental protection measures, was opened up for development. In 2016, Norway granted oil exploration rights to 13 oil companies in the unexplored

area for the first time in two decades, indicating an increased commitment to the active development of resources in the Arctic Ocean.

4. Denmark: Greenland, a territory of Denmark located within the Arctic Circle, is believed to possess significant oil and gas reserves. The eastern maritime basin is estimated to hold 31.4 billion barrels of oil and gas resources, while the western maritime basin is estimated to hold 17 billion barrels. Of particular interest is the third district of the Northeast Sea, where crude oil resources are estimated to reach up to 110 billion barrels. Greenland's northeastern continental shelf is also considered an untapped area rich in oil, approximately twice the size of the North Sea. Despite the vast potential, technical challenges have hindered the development of these resources.

The decline in oil and gas production in Greenland's North Sea has raised concerns about the region's energy supply. In response, the Greenland Autonomous Government announced plans in 2007 to develop new natural gas reserves and improve infrastructure. The 'Kingdom of Denmark for the Arctic 2011-2020' strategy was introduced in August 2011 to address this issue. This joint strategy between Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands aims to extend the continental shelf, protect the environment, develop resource extraction technology, and promote international cooperation. Denmark pursued an application to extend the continental shelf in three coastal areas of Greenland by 2014, with the aim of resolving territorial conflicts through peaceful cooperation.

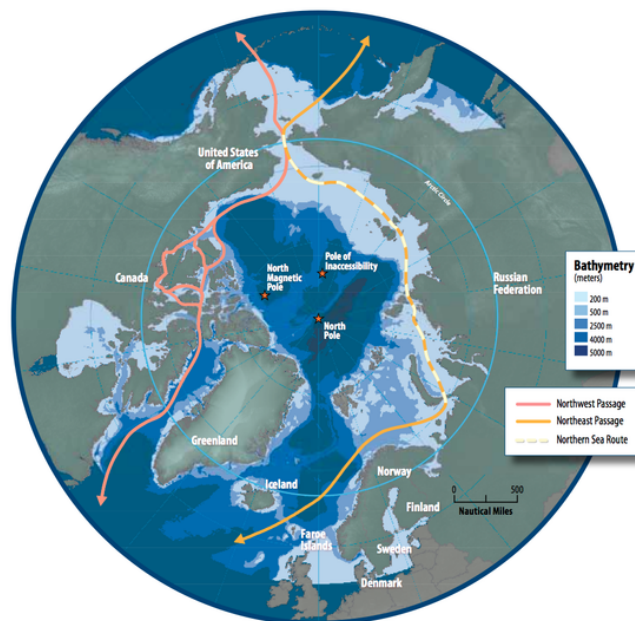
### **Northern Sea Routes (Polar Routes)**

As Arctic routes, the most notable routes currently are the Northern Sea Route and the Northeast Passage. These Arctic routes pass through the La Perouse Strait and the Bering Strait, and they are in close proximity to Russia. The NSR (Northern Sea Route) and NEP (Northeast Passage) have very similar routes, and most of the NEP routes are included in the NSR. Therefore, these routes are collectively referred to as the Northern Sea Route. Until the 20th century, the Arctic could not be effectively utilized due to the presence of numerous icebergs and drifting ice. However, its significance has recently become more apparent due to advancements in communication and shipping technology, as well as the reduced impact of Arctic warming.

The NSR is a valuable transportation option for shipping and trade between countries, and it is not limited to the summer season. Currently, cargo ships traveling from Busan, South Korea, to



Rotterdam, Netherlands, have to sail approximately 22,000 km through the Suez Canal. However, by utilizing NSR, the distance can be reduced to only 15,000 km. This route offers potential savings in canal usage costs, fuel costs, and travel time. East Asian countries, such as China, Japan, and South Korea, will benefit economically from having new access options to Europe. Additionally, the Arctic is expected to become a global energy superhighway for the exchange of various natural resources, including hydrocarbons. Establishing robust supply networks to the AZRF (Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation) will guarantee the uninterrupted transportation of goods to ports and emerging economic hubs. Overall, the countries involved will gain prominence in international trade.



*Map of Northwest passage, Northeast passage, Northern sea route, including bathymetry*

### **Arctic Warming and its influence on Arctic ways**

Since 1979 the warming in the Arctic region has accelerated compared to the rest of the region. According to numerous studies that have progressed for 44 years, the Arctic is warming more than 4 times faster than the globe. The main reason for the acceleration of Global warming in the Arctic region is due to Polar amplification. The main cause of Polar amplification is regional factors, such as carbon dioxide emissions from the Arctic region. This leads to an increase in temperature and a decrease in glaciers. As a result, there is a decrease in reflection on the surface of the atmosphere, allowing more solar heat to reach the ground and ocean surfaces of the Arctic. In addition, long-distance factors have been studied as influencing Arctic amplification. Through phenomena, especially El Nino, tropical heat is transferred to the Arctic by wind. However, physical processes that

occur at a distance from the poles, such as warming in tropical areas and changes in atmospheric winds and currents, do not play a significant role in polar warming.

Due to the aforementioned phenomena, the Arctic has experienced a decrease of over 70% from 1979 to 2021, going from 1,0700 km<sup>3</sup> to 6,100 km<sup>3</sup>. However, with the decline of Arctic glaciers, scientists have announced that in about 10 years, the Arctic route through Russia will be available year-round. As Arctic warming accelerates the opening of Arctic routes, competition for dominance in the region is intensifying.

## **Possible solutions**

To mitigate the potential for a single country to establish a monopoly in the Arctic region and to prevent the unilateral militarization of the area, it is imperative to strengthen the authority and expand the scope of activities of the Arctic Council. Given that the Arctic issue transcends the interests of the eight Arctic states, it is essential to involve multiple nations in conferences addressing scientific research, resource management, conservation, and the specific issue of Arctic militarization.

In a similar vein to the Antarctic treaties that safeguard the natural environment of Antarctica and establish guidelines for research activities, it is imperative to establish documented laws or treaties among nations regarding the Arctic region. A fair and equitable treaty that guarantees the rights of individuals to live in the Arctic, including the establishment of independent and lasting partnerships, while also promoting the fair distribution of Arctic resources and supporting sustainable development, will help prevent dogmatic militarization and minimize potential harm to the Arctic ecosystem.

One of the primary reasons why many countries are paying attention to the Arctic is the Arctic route. These Arctic routes are not only controlled by countries that have the largest share of the Arctic Ocean, such as Russia, but also require a treaty to promote trade between nations and prevent conflicts over the rights to these routes.

## **Major parties involved**

**United States of America**

Besides Russia, the United States has significant interests in the Arctic region. Despite the burden of a stretched military budget due to other situations such as engagements in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other pressing matters, the United States possesses a formidable fleet of nuclear-powered submarines that can operate for extended periods underwater and beneath the ice cap. In 2011, the US Navy deployed the submarines USS New Hampshire and USS Connecticut in Arctic waters for the ICEX-2011 exercises, which aimed to enhance Arctic training. These submarines also support the SCICEX program, which was initiated in 1993. This program grants American scientists access to areas beneath the ice cap that would otherwise be inaccessible to the broader scientific community. A report from the US National Academy of Sciences warns that climate change has the potential to disrupt the delicate security equilibrium in the Arctic, even among close allies. It also suggests that the US may not be adequately prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. Additionally, a recent study commissioned by the US Navy has emphasized the need for the United States to enhance its military preparedness in the Arctic. This is due to the melting summer sea ice, which is leading to a global competition for resources in the region.

The main objectives of the U.S. Arctic Policy include ensuring national security, protecting the Arctic environment and wildlife, promoting environmentally sustainable economic development, strengthening cooperative institutions among the eight Arctic nations, involving indigenous communities in decision-making processes, and enhancing scientific monitoring and research efforts. On January 9, 2009, President Bush signed the National Security Presidential Directive-66 (NSPD-66) on Arctic Region Policy, replacing the previous Arctic policy directive from the Clinton era. Currently, the Obama Administration and its departments are pursuing NSPD-66 as the active Arctic policy framework. The U.S. Arctic Policy Group is an interagency working group composed of federal agencies involved in research and monitoring, land and natural resources management, environmental protection, human health, transportation, and policy-making in the Arctic. The APG (Arctic Policy Group), chaired by the U.S. Department of State, meets monthly to develop and implement U.S. programs and policies in the Arctic. This includes initiatives that are relevant to the activities of the Arctic Council. The OPA (Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs) within the State Department's Bureau of OES (Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs) is responsible for formulating and implementing U.S. policy on international matters related to the oceans, the Arctic, and Antarctica.

## **Russian Federation**

Russia is adjacent to the Arctic Ocean, with over half of its coastline located at 70° north and approximately four-fifths of its territory situated at 60° north. Russia has a larger population than other Arctic regions in terms of both population and society. Currently, the Arctic region of Russia is home to approximately 2 million people, which accounts for about half of the total population of the Arctic region, estimated to be around 4.2 million. This also has significant implications for Russia, as it accounts for more than 11% of the Russian economy. Of these, 87% live in cities, and there are 46 cities in Russia's Arctic region with a population of more than 5,000.

Russia has been the most assertive among the coastal countries in expressing its military strategy for the Arctic region. The Commander of Land Forces of Russia has informed the Federation Council Committee on Defense and Security about plans to establish a specialized motorized infantry brigade for operations in the Arctic. This brigade is expected to consist of approximately 8,000 soldiers and will be stationed in Pechanga, near the border between Russia and Norway. Interestingly, the Russian Defense Ministry has also stated that the composition and equipment of the Arctic Brigade were designed with the Norwegian and Finnish Arctic forces in mind. Additionally, the Russian Navy has platforms specifically designed for combat in the Arctic regions. These platforms are located in Murmansk, as well as in the Siberian and Far Eastern military districts.

## **Canada**

Canada's military carries out three main operations in the Arctic: Operation Nanook in the Eastern Arctic, Operation Nunavut in the High Arctic, and Operation Nunakput in the Western Arctic. These operations are collaborative endeavors that seek to enhance coordination and cooperation among different departments in northern Canada. Operation Nanook, which began in 2007, is a significant exercise focused on Arctic sovereignty and emergency preparedness. It includes activities such as patrolling, military maneuvers, and exercises to contain oil spills.

Canada introduced the "Canada First Defense Strategy" in 2008, which prioritizes the country's defense and reinforces its Arctic sovereignty. This strategy includes plans to enhance Canada's defense capabilities by 2028. The "Northern Strategy" was unveiled in 2009, signaling a change in Canadian Arctic policy. This shift involved expanding defense efforts in the Arctic Ocean, in addition to the previous focus on the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In terms of military strategy, Canada currently has 18 CP-140 anti-submarine patrol aircraft stationed on the east coast for surveillance operations in the Arctic region. Additionally, eighty F/A-18 combat attack aircraft are deployed at

bases in southeastern and central Canada, as well as in Arctic regions such as Inuvik in the Northwest Territories, Iqaluit, and Rankin Inlet in Nunavut.

## **Norway**

In 2009, Norway relocated its Operational Command Headquarters from Stavanger in the southern region of the country to Reitan near Bodø in the northern region. This relocation was undertaken to gain a deeper understanding of the activities and trends in the High North, which are crucial to Norway's national interests in the region. Norway is also making changes to its military forces to enhance its capabilities in the Arctic. In addition to constructing five frigates with Aegis capabilities, they are also building several guided missile patrol vessels and Coast Guard vessels capable of operating in icy conditions.

## **Denmark**

The Danish government has announced a plan for the Arctic region from 2010 to 2014. As part of this plan, they intend to spend an additional 600 million kroner annually, with a portion of the funds allocated to enhancing the defense of Greenland. The Thule base, located in Greenland, will play a central role in their military strategy for the Arctic. Since World War II, the Thule base has been under the operational command of the United States. It is equipped with a monitoring station for the US Ballistic Missile Warning System, as well as military satellite ground facilities. The Royal Danish Navy has maintained a year-round presence in Greenland, supported by Agdlek-class patrol vessels that are specifically designed for surveillance and patrol operations.

## **China**

In relation to the Arctic Ocean, China's activities have attracted international attention. China established a research base in the Svalbard Islands in 2008 and has been conducting Arctic surveys using the icebreaker "XueLong." China has not yet published a strategic direction or white paper specifically addressing its activities in the Arctic Ocean. China's economic and military endeavors, such as resource exploitation, fisheries, and military control, are not disconnected from its broader interests. Lack of jurisdiction over the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf in the Arctic poses a limitation. Current policies of regional hegemony, naval presence, and economic growth

indicate that a future strategy for the Arctic, centered on clearly defined national interests, is likely to develop and be characterized by a strong level of adaptability.

## **Sweden**

Sweden is committed to advancing sustainable development in the Arctic region, encompassing economic, social, and environmental aspects. The country aims to collaborate with other Arctic countries to significantly reduce global emissions of greenhouse gasses and short-lived climate pollutants. Sweden will contribute data and action proposals to enhance the long-term resilience of Arctic communities and environments, as well as their ability to adapt to a changing climate. This will promote resilience to climate change and create conditions for long-term sustainable development in the region. Efforts to reduce emissions of persistent bioaccumulative organic pollutants are also necessary.

The Swedish government is striving to become a prominent nation in climate and environmental research, with a specific emphasis on studying the human impact of climate change. The country's growth and competitiveness will benefit from increased free trade and efforts to address technical barriers to trade in the Arctic region. Sweden will work to ensure that the extraction of oil, gas, and other natural resources in the Arctic occurs in an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable manner. It is crucial to develop regional cross-border cooperation in maritime and aviation rescue, impose stricter safety requirements on maritime transportation, and leverage Sweden's expertise in environmental technology across multiple sectors.

## **Finland**

Finland's Strategy for the Arctic Region 2013 designates the entire country as part of the Arctic, with approximately one-third of its land mass situated above the Arctic Circle in the province of Lapland. Despite its considerable size, Lapland has a relatively low population of just under 180,000 inhabitants, while Finland as a whole has a population exceeding 5,500,000.

Finland has made significant contributions to various industries in the Arctic region, including Arctic construction, Arctic environmental technology, and the development of Arctic infrastructure, transportation, and navigation in ice-covered waters. The country also hosts several Arctic research and educational programs and institutions. Lapland, in particular, is home to several biological research stations that focus on the study of Arctic ecology. The Arctic Center, an institute affiliated

with the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, conducts interdisciplinary research on the impacts of global changes on the natural balance of Arctic nature and Arctic societies.

The Sámi people, an indigenous group, reside in Sápmi, an area spanning the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The Sámi population is estimated to be between 50,000 and 80,000, with approximately 10,500 individuals located in Finland. The preservation of Sámi languages and culture is overseen by an autonomous Sámi parliament in Inari, Finland.

## Timeline Of Events

Date	Description of event
1925	<b>Svalbard Treaty</b> The treaty governs and determines the status of the Svalbard archipelago in the Arctic Ocean. The settlement was expanded to include more than 40 nations, which reflects the diversity of contemporary society.
December 1959	<b>The Antarctic Treaty</b> The treaty specifies peaceful use of the Antarctic land, freedom of scientific research and investigation, freezing of sovereignty claims of the land, abolishment of nuclear tests and the conservation of the ecosystem.
1996	<b>Ottawa Declaration</b> The Arctic Council was established in 1996 through the Ottawa Declaration as a platform aimed at fostering collaboration, coordination, and engagement among the Arctic states. This inclusive forum involves the participation of Arctic Indigenous communities and other residents in addressing important issues such as sustainable development and environmental preservation in the region.
August 2007	<b>Russian Federation, planting flag on the North pole</b> In August 2007, Russian scientists planted a flag on the seabed at the North Pole. This was a remarkable achievement and made headlines, but it did not make the pole Russian.
January 2009	<b>President Bush signed the National Security Presidential Directive-66</b>

	<p>On January 12, 2009, the George W. Bush Administration issued two presidential directives: National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 66. This directive, released as a result of an interagency review, establishes the policy of the United States regarding the Arctic region and directs the implementation of related actions. It replaced a previous presidential directive from 1994 that addressed Arctic and Antarctic policy but only applied to the Arctic region. It also addresses various issues related to the region, including international governance, the extended continental shelf and boundary matters, and promotion of international scientific cooperation</p>
<b>July 2022</b>	<p><b>Emergence of new NATO members putting pressure on Russia</b></p> <p>Sweden and Finland, both Arctic countries that share borders with Russia, expressed their intention to join NATO and signed the NATO accession protocol</p>
<b>May 2023</b>	<p><b>Reykjavik-Declaration</b></p> <p>The Declaration outlines various measures that the Member States have committed to. These measures include expanding cooperation programs, fostering synergy between monitoring and advisory bodies, strengthening institutional dialogue between the Court and the Committee of Ministers, and promoting political dialogue with national and local authorities.</p>

## UN Involvement, Resolutions, Treaties and Events

### Svalbard Treaty

The Svalbard Treaty is an international agreement that was first signed on February 9, 1920, by 14 countries. The treaty governs and determines the status of the Svalbard archipelago in the Arctic Ocean. The settlement was expanded to include more than 40 nations, which reflects the diversity of contemporary society. It granted the right to participate in various economic endeavors, such as mining, and emphasized the significance of equal access for all nations to promote international



cooperation and prevent any single country from monopolizing resources. Despite granting certain rights, such as mining and hunting, to other countries, Norway maintains complete sovereignty over Svalbard.

### **Reykjavik-declaration**

The Reykjavik Declaration emphasizes the responsibility of Member States to comply with the judgments of the European Court. It calls for a more cooperative and inclusive approach, based on dialogue, to address the non-implementation of these judgments. The Declaration outlines several actions that Member States have committed to. These actions include scaling up cooperation programs, promoting synergy between monitoring and advisory bodies, strengthening institutional dialogue between the Court and the Committee of Ministers, and encouraging political dialogue with national and local authorities. The Declaration also calls for the Committee of Ministers to enhance the available tools for supervision and to take appropriate steps in cases of non-execution or persistent refusal to execute judgments.

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