



ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2020

100 YEARS OF MULTILATERALISM
THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

GIMUN ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2020

STUDY GUIDE FUTURISTIC SECURITY COUNCIL

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GENEVA INTERNATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS
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WORDS OF WELCOME

Dear delegates of the Futuristic Security Council,

My name is Titilope Adedokun. I am pleased to be serving as Chair of the Futuristic Security Council at the Geneva International Model United Nations (GIMUN) 2020. I am a 20-year-old final year student studying Law at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. My Model United Nations (MUN) journey began three years ago. During this time, I have actively participated in local and international conferences, both as a delegate and staff member. MUN conferences are important to me because I believe they give young people a platform to solve global problems, whether these problems affect them directly or not. I am very excited to see the new delegates do the same at this year's conference.

My name is Jonatan Hermann. I am a 21-year-old Political Science major at the University of Vienna, from which I expect to graduate next summer. I will also be serving as Chair of the Futuristic Security Council at this year's GIMUN conference. I have actively participated in MUN since my penultimate year in high school. Although these days I only attend a couple of conferences a year, I am extremely pleased to be returning to Geneva and GIMUN, where last year I chaired the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

The topic before the Futuristic Security Council is 'Conflicts and territorial disputes surrounding the Arctic'. Set 11 years from now, the discussions should take into account the history of the Arctic and its development to attempt to address present issues as well as those that may arise in the future.

This year's conference embraces topics from the past, present and future. We shall play our part by examining a topic that is already heating up today and has the potential to become a major flashpoint in the future. Therefore, we are setting this Security Council in the year 2031, with an adapted and enlarged membership, which should make this committee a challenge, unlike most others.

On behalf of ourselves and the whole GIMUN team, we would like to give you the warmest of welcomes to this year's conference and to this committee. We wish you a pleasant reading and we look forward to our debates in February!

1. FUTURISTIC SECURITY COUNCIL

1.1. HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

The Security Council was created in 1945 to serve as the United Nations' organ tasked with maintaining international peace and security.¹ After the Second World War and the fall of the

¹ United Nations. 'What is the Security Council' United Nations Security Council. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

League of Nations, the United Nations and its six organs were formed to promote international cooperation throughout the world.² As the chief security organ, the Security Council had the role of restoring global peace and stability after the chaos resulting from the Second World War.³

The United Nations Charter provides for the establishment of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).⁴ The Charter also contains the Security Council's composition, powers, functions and procedures.⁵

Today, the mandate of the Security Council has been expanded. In addition to the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council may investigate and settle disputes between Member States.⁶ In situations where there are threats to, or breaches of, international peace or acts of aggression, the Security Council has the power to reprimand Member States through the use of force or by enforcing measures such as economic sanctions, military action and severing diplomatic relations.⁷ The decisions of the Security Council are binding on every Member State of the United Nations.⁸

Currently, the Security Council permanently sits at the United Nations headquarters in New York City.⁹ The Security Council has also held sessions in other cities namely: Addis Ababa, Panama City and Geneva.¹⁰ Article 29 of the United Nations Charter provides for the establishment of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council.¹¹ These subsidiary bodies comprise working groups and committees. The work of these subsidiary bodies covers a wide range of issues including counter-terrorism, non-proliferation, sanctions, conflict prevention and peacekeeping operations.¹² Other subsidiary bodies of the UNSC are the International

² United Nations. 'History of the UN'. United Nations Seventieth Anniversary. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 19 November 2019).

³ International Relations.Org. 'United Nations Security Council'. International Relations. Org. <http://internationalrelations.org> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁴ Article 7, Chapter III, United Nations Charter.

⁵ Chapter V, United Nations Charter.

⁶ Chapter VI, United Nations Charter.

⁷ Chapter VII, United Nations Charter.

⁸ Article 25, Chapter V, United Nations Charter.

⁹ United Nations. 'What is the Security Council' United Nations Security Council. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Chapter V, United Nations Charter.

¹² United Nations. 'Functions and Powers'. United Nations Security Council. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), among others.¹³

1.2. MEMBERSHIP AND MANDATE

At its inception, the Security Council consisted of 11 members: five permanent members and six non-permanent members elected for terms of two years.¹⁴ Over time, the Security Council consisted of 15 members: five permanent members and ten non-permanent members.¹⁵ The permanent members were the United Kingdom, Russia, France, China and the United States.¹⁶ In 2031, the Security Council will be made up of twenty members. There will be seven permanent members, namely: the United Kingdom, China, the United States, Russia, the European Union, India and a rotating African seat that will be occupied by Nigeria. These permanent members will all be granted a veto power.¹⁷

The non-permanent members are elected by the General Assembly for a term of two years each.¹⁸ In the election of non-permanent members, equal geographic representation and contribution to international peace and security are important considerations.¹⁹ In terms of geographic distribution, they are grouped as follows: Asian and Pacific, African, Eastern European, Latin American, Western European, and other States.

As mentioned earlier, the mandate of the Security Council primarily consists of maintaining international peace, security and stability.²⁰ It also consists of promoting human rights and freedoms, developing cordial relations among countries, and fostering cooperation in solving global problems.²¹ In accordance with its mandate to promote international peace and security, the Security Council resolves disputes by conducting investigations²² through the use of various measures such as mediation, conciliation, judicial settlements and negotiation,²³

¹³ United Nations. 'Subsidiary Organs Branch'. United Nations Security Council. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

¹⁴ Resolution A/RES/1999 (XVIII)

¹⁵ Article 23, Chapter V, United Nations Charter.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Article 27, Chapter V, United Nations Charter.

¹⁸ Article 23, Chapter V, United Nations Charter.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ United Nations. 'Functions and Powers'. United Nations Security Council. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Article 34, Chapter VI, United Nations Charter.

²³ Article 33, Chapter VI, United Nations Charter.

and the appointment of special envoys.²⁴ The Security Council may make recommendations on issues regarding disputes between Member States, keeping in mind the legal jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.²⁵

Where the situation has been aggravated, the Security Council may make recommendations²⁶ or enforce certain measures which the disputing parties are bound by. These measures include severing diplomatic ties,²⁷ economic sanctions,²⁸ financial penalties and restrictions,²⁹ etc. The Security Council may also take further action - demonstrations, blockades and military operations.³⁰

1.3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PAST ACTIONS

As can be inferred from the name, the Security Council's primary responsibility is that of maintaining (global) peace and security. In practice, it does so by holding regular meetings where crises and conflicts are discussed. In 2019, for instance, the Council paid particular attention to the situations in Libya, the Middle East and the Central African Region. However, it has also dealt with 'cooler' areas, such as maintaining peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Cyprus. In addition, it has touched on broader areas of discussion such as threats to international peace and security, and children in armed conflict.

As an executive body of the United Nations, it is the Security Council's responsibility to remain fully informed of all matters of conflict around the world and articulate an international response. Its toolbox comprises various measures and actions, such as compiling reports, levying sanctions, authorising military interventions and launching peacekeeping operations. All of these actions can be undertaken through resolutions. Informally, the Security Council facilitates interactions between States or between States and other actors on the side-lines through lobbying.

As of yet, the Security Council has not taken any action on the Arctic region. One of the most relevant international agreements concerning the Arctic preceded the United Nations Security Council by 25 years and is known as the Svalbard Treaty. This was agreed within the

²⁴ United Nations. 'Functions and Powers'. United Nations Security Council. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

²⁵ Article 37, Chapter VI, United Nations Charter.

²⁶ Article 40, Chapter VII, United Nations Charter.

²⁷ Article 41, Chapter VII, United Nations Charter.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ United Nations. 'Functions and Powers'. United Nations Security Council. <https://www.un.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

³⁰ Article 42, Chapter VII, United Nations Charter.

framework of the League of Nations in its first year of existence. Another relevant treaty is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which entered into force in November 1994, although its content leaves many areas of Arctic activity open to interpretation.

2. TOPIC: CONFLICTS AND TERRITORIAL DISPUTES SURROUNDING THE ARCTIC

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The Arctic is the northernmost part of the Earth.³¹ Almost completely frozen in ice,³² the land within the Arctic region is bordered by eight different countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States.³³ These countries all have territorial claims over lands in the Arctic region, with the Arctic Circle passing through them.³⁴ These eight countries make up the members of the Arctic Council,³⁵ an intergovernmental organization whose aim is to promote cooperation, coordination and interaction within the Arctic region and among interested stakeholders.³⁶

In recent years, global warming has led of the Arctic's ice to melt rapidly,³⁷ which, along with being a problem in itself, has contributed to rising sea levels³⁸ and other negative effects on the environment.³⁹ However, as the ice melts, other relevant issues emerge. These include the 'race' for the rich deposits of natural resources in the Arctic region, territorial disputes and national sovereignty, the fate of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, climate change and

³¹ National Geographic Resource Library. 'Arctic'. National Geographic. <https://www.nationalgeographic.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

³² Ibid.

³³ Arctic Centre, University of Lapland. 'Arctic Region'. Arctic Centre. <https://www.arcticcentre.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

³⁴ New World Encyclopedia. 'Arctic Circle'. New World Encyclopedia. <https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

³⁵ Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council, 1996.

³⁶ Arctic Council. 'The Arctic Council: A backgrounder'. Arctic Council. <https://arctic-council.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

³⁷ NASA. 'Arctic Melts Raises Sea Levels and Reinforces Global Warming'. Earth Matters. <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov> (accessed 18 November 2019).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Carbon Brief. 'Five Reasons Why the Speed of Arctic Sea Ice Loss Matters'. Carbon Brief. <https://www.carbonbrief.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

the increased militarisation of the Arctic.⁴⁰ The Arctic is extremely rich in oil and natural gas deposits, along with various mineral resources.⁴¹ In fact, it has been estimated that the Arctic contains about 412 billion barrels of oil, which is said to account for 22 per cent of the world's undiscovered oil and gas deposits.⁴² Furthermore, the Arctic is home to a plethora of minerals including zinc, copper and iron.⁴³ It is therefore no surprise that the race for the Arctic's resources, also known as the 'Second Cold War' has left the countries of the Arctic region and a few interested observers such as China taking different approaches to assert their authority and lay claim to its fertile lands.⁴⁴ For example, four Arctic States, namely Russia, Denmark, Canada and Greenland, an autonomous territory within Denmark, have laid claims to the oil-rich Lomonosov Ridge,⁴⁵ while China continuously refers to itself as a 'near Arctic State'.⁴⁶

The issue of territorial claims in the Arctic has been contentious and has previously led to disputes between States. One such notable dispute was the 'Whiskey War' between Canada and Denmark over Hans Island.⁴⁷ In addition, by virtue of the UNCLOS, each Arctic State has a territorial sea of 12 nautical miles⁴⁸ and an exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles.⁴⁹ However, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the United States have all claimed beyond this, up to the continent shelves as their national waters.⁵⁰ Although, it must be noted that this was done in accordance with the provisions of the UNCLOS⁵¹, four States currently lay claim to the Lomonosov Ridge.⁵²

⁴⁰ Spohr, Kristina. 'The Race to Conquer the Arctic - the World's Final Frontier'. New Statesman America. <https://www.newstatesman.com> (accessed 18 November 2019).

⁴¹ National Geographic Resource Library. 'Arctic'. National Geographic. <https://www.nationalgeographic.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

⁴² Osborn, Andrew. 'Putin's Russia in biggest military push since Soviet fall'. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com> (accessed 18 November 2019).

⁴³ Wojcik, Jeppe. 'Getting Arctic Raw Materials Requires a Gentle Hand'. Science Nordic. <https://sciencenordic.com> (accessed 18 November 2019).

⁴⁴ National Geographic Resource Library. 'Arctic'. National Geographic. <https://www.nationalgeographic.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Wong, Andrew. 'China: We are a 'Near Arctic State' and we want a 'Polar Silk Road'. CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com> (accessed 18 November 2019).

⁴⁷ Levin, Dan. 'Canada and Denmark Fight Over Island with Whiskey and Schnapps'. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁴⁸ Article 3, UNCLOS.

⁴⁹ Article 57, UNCLOS.

⁵⁰ IBRU: Centre for Borders Research. 'Arctic Maps'. IBRU: Centre for Borders Research. <https://www.dur.ac.uk/ibru> (accessed 18 November 2019).

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² National Geographic Resource Library. 'Arctic'. National Geographic. <https://www.nationalgeographic.org> (accessed 18 November 2019).

2.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After the discovery of natural resources in the Arctic towards the end of the 19th century, some mining activities were carried out by Governments and private companies in the region, such as the Klondike Gold Rush of the 1890s in Alaska or the mining of coal ore on Spitsbergen Island.⁵³ Furthermore, when the cold war began, the Arctic served as a route to transport weapons and food supplies to the warring factions.⁵⁴ During this time, many countries, such as Germany, even built weather and radar stations across the Arctic.⁵⁵

28 years after the cold war ended and the Arctic has seen a rush for its natural resources, increased militarisation, commercialisation, research and environmental degradation.⁵⁶ So, while the Arctic remains one of the coldest regions on Earth today, it is undoubtedly heating up due to the presence of military and research stations, together with commercial pursuits, which its melting glaciers have paved the way for.

For many, it appears that Russia is slightly ahead of its peers in staking its claim to the present and future of the Arctic. In 2007, Russia was the first to plant its flag in the seabed underneath the North Pole.⁵⁷ Today, it has built about 475 military sites in the Arctic region.⁵⁸ In fact, Russia is said to currently possess the largest ice-breaker fleet in the world, made up of some 61 ice-breakers and other vessels.⁵⁹ Other Arctic countries are slowly building their military capability to rival Russia's own. For instance, Norway currently has a fleet of 11 ice-hardened ships⁶⁰ while Canada has an ice-breaker fleet of 16 vessels.⁶¹

⁵³ New Internationalist. 'The Arctic: A History', New Internationalist. <https://newint.org> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ The Editorial Board. 'A new Cold War where? In the Arctic, of course'. Chicago Tribune. <https://www.chicagotribune.com> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁵⁸ Ilyushina, Mary. Pleitgen, Frederik. 'Inside the military base at the heart of Putin's Arctic ambitions'. CNN. <https://amp.cnn.com> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁵⁹ Shea, Neil. 'Scenes from the new Cold War unfolding at the top of the world'. National Geographic. <https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Canadian Coast Guard. 'Icebreaking Fleet of the Canadian Coast Guard'. Icebreaking Operations Services. <https://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca> (accessed 19 November 2019).

In terms of territorial disputes, a few have occurred between the Arctic countries. The Barents Sea conflict between Norway and Russia officially began in 1974.⁶² The dispute was over parts of the Barents Sea containing oil and gas deposits.⁶³ In 2010, the dispute was resolved and a treaty for the exploration of oil in the Arctic was eventually signed.⁶⁴ The widely-known dispute between Denmark and Canada over Hans Island is another example.⁶⁵ However, both countries have resolved to settle this dispute. At the signing of the Ilulissat Declaration in 2008, five Arctic countries resolved to work together to prevent political or military tensions in the Arctic, promote safety of life at sea and protect the ecosystem.⁶⁶ Today, the major territorial conflict in the Arctic stems from the claims laid to the Lomonosov Ridge by Canada, Russia and Greenland (Denmark).

Russia was the first country to begin commercial drilling in the Arctic in the early 20th century. In 1932, they discovered large deposits in the Yarega oil field, which led them to begin prospecting and exploring oil in the Arctic.⁶⁷ Norway, one of the world's largest producers of natural gas, has also made developments in drilling in the Arctic.⁶⁸

Beyond this, some non-Arctic countries have also become interested in the Arctic region over the years. This includes China, which refers to itself as a near-Arctic State. There are currently 13 countries with observer status in the Arctic Council: France, Germany, Italy, China, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, Japan, Poland, South Korea, Singapore and India.⁶⁹ Some States and organizations such as South Africa and the European Union have also established research stations in the Arctic region.

Since its inception, climate change has been at the heart of the new cold war brewing in the Arctic. The melting ice creates opportunities for commercial activities in the Arctic, while, at the same time, leads to devastating effects on the land for its indigenous peoples. Over the

⁶² Niklas, Witte. 'The Barent Sea Conflict: Russia and Norway Competing Over Fossil Fuel Riches in the Arctic'. *Inquiries Journal*. 2013. Vol. 5. No. 09.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Harding, Luke. 'Russia and Norway resolve Arctic border dispute'. *The Guardian*. <https://amp.theguardian.com> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁶⁵ McGwin, Kevin. 'Denmark, Canada agree to settle Hans Island Dispute'. *Arctic Today*. <https://www.arctictoday.com> (accessed 19 November 2019).

⁶⁶ The Ilulissat Declaration was adopted in Ilulissat, Greenland on May 28, 2008.

⁶⁷ Kontorovich E, Alexey. 'Oil and Gas of the Russian Arctic: History of Development in the 20th Century, Resources, and the Strategy for the 21st Century'. *Science First Hand*. 2015. Vol. 41.

⁶⁸ Breum, Martin. 'Norway defends new Arctic oil drilling'. *EU Observer*. <https://euobserver.com> (accessed 19 November 2019).

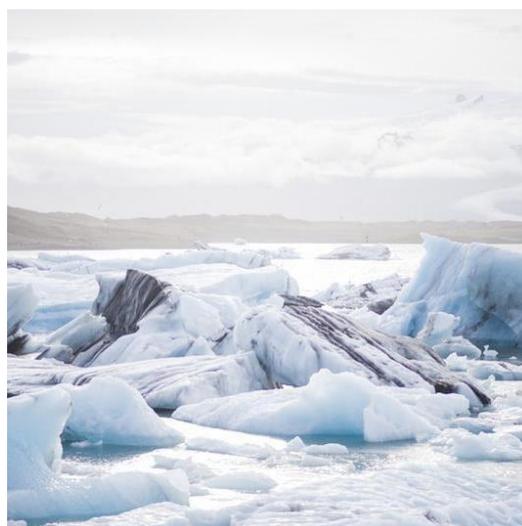
⁶⁹ Arctic Council. 'Observers'. Arctic Council. <https://www.arctic-council.org> (accessed 19 November 2019).

years, this has led to their displacement,⁷⁰ economic hardship and the degradation of their environment.⁷¹

“Taken alone, climate-related disasters, conflict and insecurity each threaten human security and development. But their convergence can lead to catastrophic impact on people and societies.” - Achim Steiner

2.3. CURRENT ISSUES

This being a Security Council set 11 years in the future from today, the situation in the Arctic would by this stage have developed into one of the dominant crises on several fronts. As outlined in the previous section, the main areas of interest are those of climate change and the environment, territorial disputes and the militarisation of the region. All these aspects are interconnected and should, therefore, not be considered in isolation.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL TRADE

Now 11 years into the future, the Earth is dealing with the irreversible effects of climate change. The international community's inability to effectively address the climate crisis has led to Arctic ice melting at an alarming rate, especially during the summer months. Given that the Arctic Sea is largely free of ice during this time, shipping lanes, particularly in the Northern Sea Route, have become a very viable option in many industry sectors. By using the Northeast Passage, cargo ships can travel from East Asia to Northern Europe up to two weeks faster than when using the Suez Canal route.⁷² This route passes almost entirely along the northern coast of Russia and has only recently started attracting most operators. However, China and its State-owned operator saw the potential of Arctic shipping lanes earlier than most,

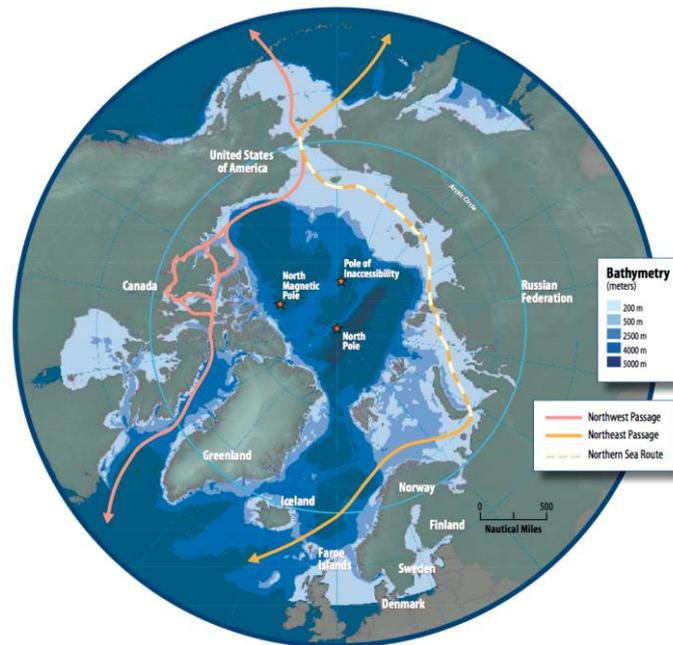
⁷⁰ Ferris, Elizabeth. 'A Complex Constellation: Displacement, Climate Change and the Arctic People'. Brookings Institute. <https://www.brookings.edu> (accessed on 19 November 2019).

⁷¹ Arctic Centre, University of Lapland. 'Arctic Indigenous Peoples'. Arctic Region. <https://www.arcticcentre.org> (accessed on 19 November 2019).

⁷² Astrasheuskaya, Nastassia, and Henry Foy. "Polar Powers: Russia's Bid for Supremacy in the Arctic Ocean." Financial Times, April 28, 2019. <https://www.ft.com/content/2fa82760-5c4a-11e9-939a-341f5ada9d40>. (accessed 08. December 2019)

incorporating it in its Belt and Road Initiative. As a result, China has become the leading player in this market. Russia, who pays transit fees, is also profiting from this passage and hopes to make major economic gains from a previously unused region.

Unfortunately, increased levels of shipping in the Arctic, even if only during the mostly ice-free summer months, exacerbates environmental issues. Shipping has a comparatively large carbon footprint and one which is difficult to counteract prior to creating biofuels or synthetic fuels. With the increased viability of Arctic shipping routes, not only will the Arctic feel greater environmental effects, but shipping is likely to expand globally, further contributing to the climate crisis. In addition to disrupting the Arctic's ecosystems, receding Arctic Sea ice also paves the way for commercial fishing, which could do further damage to the Arctic's already fragile natural environment. Furthermore, the vessels currently used in the Arctic are often more environmentally damaging than most as the ice-breaking oil and gas tankers carrying the Arctic's huge natural resources are exorbitant polluters.⁷³



NATURAL RESOURCES

The Arctic is estimated to hold around a quarter of the planet's untouched natural resources, with oil and natural gas being the most attractive and plentiful, followed by large quantities of minerals, including copper, iron ore and nickel. These untouched reserves have sparked what is called the "Arctic Resource Race" and are the cause of numerous territorial disputes in the region.⁷⁴

On an environmental level, the opening of the Arctic undoubtedly exacerbates the existing problem of overreliance on fossil fuels. Given the roles such energy sources play in rising emissions, the opening of new oil fields, natural gas sites and mines can only negatively

⁷³ "The Melting Arctic Is Now Open for Business." The melting Arctic is now open for business, August 28, 2019. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/08/map-shows-how-ships-navigate-melting-arctic-feature/>. (Accessed on 08 December 2019)

⁷⁴ Dillow, Clay. "Russia and China Vie to Beat the US in the Trillion-Dollar Race to Control the Arctic." CNBC. CNBC, February 6, 2018. <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/06/russia-and-china-battle-us-in-race-to-control-arctic.html>. (accessed 08. December 2019)

impact the climate, exacerbating the effects which led to the melting of Arctic Sea ice in the first place.

Economically speaking, the region's natural resources reserves present both risks and opportunities. For the parties holding claims to the resources, they represent an economic guarantee for the future. For Russia, for instance, the oil and primarily natural gas reserves found on what it claims to be its territory is viewed as the rock upon which its historically shaky economy can stand, and potentially catapult it into a leading position once more. Similarly, the economic potential beneath the sea represents a powerful incentive for the Northern European countries, the United States and Canada. China, despite not having any claims to the region itself, views the Arctic as a place of great economic value, with access to cheap fossil fuels to support its production boom. In addition, it represents contract and investment opportunities for its corporations.

However, one must also consider the impact of such reserves on the world's remaining countries. With these resources split between a handful of States, energy dependence is bound to increase, which itself has geopolitical repercussions. Russia, which has long used its natural resources as a political tool in its quest to regain its role as a top tier power, both regionally and internationally, will seek the opportunity to increase the reliance of its neighbouring States on Russian energy. Likewise, the United States can build on their growing role as an energy exporter to maintain their premier position among world powers. With the release of vast energy and mineral deposits, global markets are bound to be affected, especially countries around the world whose economies rely on their natural resource exports.

MILITARISATION

While the Arctic's economic potential and the effects of climate change on its environment are both extremely pertinent to this issue, they alone do not make it a concern for the Security Council and could therefore be dealt with separately in other United Nations bodies. However, what really brings this issue to the Security Council's attention is the increasing militarisation of the Arctic region, largely, but not exclusively, based on the factors outlined in the two previous sections. While the region has witnessed instances of militarisation before, most notably during the cold war, it has always paled in comparison to other zones of contention around the globe. For Russia, the frozen Arctic Sea has long served as a natural barrier and defence installation. However, with that ice disappearing rapidly during the summer, its Government has made an effort to strengthen its defences along its northern border. Significant resources have been spent on strengthening defences, including the reactivation and renovation of old cold war era military bases along the northern coast, such as those at Murmansk, alongside the construction of new bases equipped with the latest

technology. Furthermore, Russia possesses the strongest nuclear-powered ice-breaker fleet of all the Arctic countries which, coupled with its powerful Northern Fleet and newly created special Arctic Units of its armed forces, give it an imposing presence in the region.

Even during the cold war, the Russian presence in the Arctic was aggressive compared to that of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), who sought to adopt a protective, rather than aggressive, stance. This trend has resurfaced, and while Russia was the first to react to changing circumstances, other Arctic States have also taken similar measures. Following decades of inaction, the United States has started building a fleet of icebreakers and weaponising existing ones. The country's military has also held an increasing number of training exercises in the Arctic region and remains the world's foremost military power.

Canada, the Arctic region's third biggest power, dramatically increased its defence spending over the last decade and has refreshed its military by also introducing an Arctic naval flotilla in 2020. In addition, it has held military exercises in its own Arctic territory, much like the United States and Russia.

Finally, the smaller States present in the Arctic, specifically Denmark and Norway, have also increased their military spending and have purchased new equipment and updated their capabilities. However, these naturally pale in comparison with the three largest countries represented in the region. With Canada, the United States, Denmark and Norway all being NATO members, this organization is well represented and has itself held military exercises and large-scale war games in the Arctic, which the Russian Government has deemed extremely provocative.⁷⁵

2.4. BLOC POSITIONS

As is often the case in international politics, certain blocs exist. These can be based on bilateral or multilateral relationships among States and include historical factors (special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States; colonial ties), political and regional factors (between major powers and smaller powers) and blocs based on an alignment of two or more countries' strategic interests (e.g. in this case Russia and China).

2.4.1. AFRICA

⁷⁵ Shea, Neil, and Louie Palu. "A New Cold War Brews as Arctic Ice Melts." As Arctic ice melts, a new Cold War brews, November 26, 2019. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2018/10/new-cold-war-brews-as-arctic-ice-melts/>. (Accessed on 08 December 2019)

Far from the Arctic, at first glance, Africa appears to be entirely unaffected by this issue. However, there are indeed areas affecting some (if not all) of its States. Countries such as Nigeria and Angola have economies strongly reliant on the oil industry and are among the world's ten largest oil exporters. Considering the impact that the release of Arctic oil would have on market movements, it is in the interest of African natural resource exporters to protect their share of this crucial market. Individual positions on climate change must also be factored in, especially with rising sea levels. However, the African States in the Council can still be considered swing votes. Unaffected by the territorial disputes, the political ties of the countries represented with the major powers involved could be a decisive factor. This is particularly relevant to the economic influence wielded by China and the United States.

2.4.2. ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

For the Asian-Pacific (A/P) States represented in the Council, limiting the impact of climate change will be of utmost importance for this topic. However, Japan and South Korea also stand to gain from the opening of Arctic shipping routes, as well as the resulting mineral wealth that would enter the global market. All four major A/P countries represented in the Council are geopolitical and military allies to the United States, although all four are also under China's sphere of influence, itself being the world's new largest economy and a military power in its own right. Tonga, as a small island State, is mostly concerned by the environmental repercussions of melting Arctic Sea ice but remains an important swing vote for the major powers.

2.4.3. RUSSIA AND CHINA

These two permanent members of the Security Council share a strategic interest in the Arctic. Russia has a strong territorial claim to large parts of the Arctic and the Lomonosov Ridge, deeming its mineral wealth essential to strengthening and revitalising its economy that has fallen to the edge of the world's top 20. Russia remains the strongest military power in the region, having dedicated much attention to the Arctic over the last 20 years. China, despite not being an Arctic State, is determined to stake a claim and values the Arctic for its shipping routes as part of its Belt and Road Initiative, as well as the wealth of natural resources crucial to the manufacturing elements of its economy. The combination of Russian military power and Chinese economic muscle, as well as these countries' shared interests in the region and political pragmatism make them natural partners.

2.4.4. LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN STATES

With three countries represented, none of which are remotely close to the Arctic, the Latin American and Caribbean States represent a sizeable bloc of potential swing votes. Despite

their geographical alignment, the countries differ in many ways. Chile traditionally has a good relationship with the UK and the Western powers. Cuba is a traditional Russian ally. Brazil, however, is altogether more difficult to nail down. Chile may have input based on its own experience as a near-Polar nation (in Antarctica), while Brazil, as the dominant regional power attempts to solidify its position on the world stage.

2.4.5. NORTH AMERICA

Represented in the UNSC by the United States and Canada, the North American bloc represents a potent force on the Security Council. Both countries stand to gain from territorial claims to the Arctic, which is reflected in the economic and military efforts being made by both. As with most other countries on the list, they must balance their economic interests with their environmental policies to determine their position. Both also risk the potential of escalating tensions, although the United States is by far the bigger military power.

2.4.6. WESTERN EUROPE

Courtesy of having the European Union as a permanent member, most of Western Europe is represented in the UNSC as one bloc. The European Union, through Denmark, Finland and Sweden is itself a player in the Arctic. Still trailing behind as an autonomous military actor, the European Union is closely aligned with NATO, with several of its members being part of the organization. Nonetheless, the European Union is careful to determine its position, as it recognises the need for a harmonious relationship with Russia while trying to protect its own strategic interests. The European Union's preference is for a multilateral solution with the de-escalation of tensions in line with its vision of itself as a value based foreign policy actor.

2.5. GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Bearing in mind the sovereignty of States, how can the Security Council play a greater role in the resolution of territorial disputes in the Arctic region?
2. How can the United Nations, in conjunction with the Arctic Council, establish a treaty which regulates both the militarisation of the Arctic and commercialisation of the Arctic's resources?
3. How can the devastating effects of climate change on the indigenous peoples of the Arctic region be mitigated?
4. Is the economic potential of the Arctic reconcilable with the global impact of climate change? If so, how should the two be balanced?

2.6. RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

Given the setting of this Security Council, it will be more difficult for you to find futuristic concrete policies on this issue. Nonetheless, we suggest that you start as you usually would for any topic in any committee: by gathering an overview of your country's involvement with the issue, including its past and present positions. For those countries involved directly, most have issued an Arctic Policy, which should look ahead well into the future.

For those delegates representing countries not directly involved, or without anything resembling an Arctic Policy, we recommend considering your country's positions on other affected issues, such as the environment and climate change, as well as the ties of your country to others represented in the Council. This futuristic scenario will require a greater degree of extrapolation than most other committees. However, this also requires you to have a broad research base in order to logically develop the position for your country 11 years into the future. Finally, as always, Wikipedia is a good starting point, but please make sure to also broaden your search!

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4. COUNTRIES PRESENT IN THE COMMITTEE

Federal Republic of Nigeria (Rotating African Seat)

Higher Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (European Union)

People's Republic of China

Republic of India

Russian Federation

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

United States of Americaⁱ

Canada

Commonwealth of Australia

Federative Republic of Brazil

Kingdom of Norway

New Zealand

Republic of Chile

Republic of Cuba

Republic of Korea

Republic of Palau

Republic of South Africa

United Republic of Tanzania

United Arab Emirates

ⁱ Countries in bold are permanent members