

## The High North

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*When it comes to security policy, there are three distinct Arctic subregions: North America, the North Atlantic and Europe, and Russia. As Arctic ice melts from climate change, the security of the United States and its allies will be increasingly challenged in the Atlantic and European Arctic subregion. Russian behavior is becoming more aggressive, the Arctic states have different priorities and approaches to regional issues, and the region lacks an international forum to resolve hard-power disputes. This chapter advances four initiatives to manage Arctic relations in light of these developments: amending the 2013 U.S. Arctic strategy to account for regional changes, creating a regional forum for security and economic discussions, initiating a Western security organization in the European Arctic subregion to complement the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and improving U.S. capabilities to operate across the Arctic. Each initiative supports U.S. regional interests at a relatively low cost.*

The security of the United States and its allies depends on preventing regional hegemony or coercion by hostile powers. Economic prosperity depends on the protection of the global commons. How do those interests play out in the Arctic?<sup>1</sup> U.S. security interests there are closely linked to our allies' and partner nations' freedom from both coercion and threats to their territorial integrity. U.S. economic interests are closely linked to the maintenance of exclusive economic zones (EEZs) for resource extraction and to regional freedom of navigation in Arctic international waters. Developments in the Arctic and neighboring regions could put security interests at risk within the next 5 years, the time horizon for this assessment.

Not all U.S. interests are applicable in all parts of the Arctic. Indeed, the premise behind this chapter is that when it comes to security policy, there are three Arctic subregions. The North American Arctic is dominated by the United States and is largely peaceful. The primary concerns

there are search and rescue and early warning of nuclear attack. The Siberian Arctic is dominated by Russia and is also largely peaceful. The final Arctic subregion is in Northern Europe and above the North Atlantic (for simplicity's sake, called the European Arctic in this chapter). This is a contested Arctic, a place of increasing security competition between East and West and the most likely Arctic subregion for instability, crises, and even military conflict. As a result, much of this chapter is devoted to the European Arctic.

Based on author interviews with more than 70 current and former senior government officials in the region, the most immediate regional concern for the European Arctic is Russia's growing proclivity to challenge the international order, as demonstrated through its actions in Ukraine, its remilitarization of its northern and eastern provinces, and its infringements on Nordic and Baltic states' airspace and territorial waters. Russian actions have heightened threat perceptions among European Arctic states and led to the belief among security professionals in the region that the Arctic will not be compartmentalized from broader geopolitical concerns for much longer. In the words of Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende, the "Arctic cannot be viewed in isolation from events elsewhere."<sup>2</sup> Indeed the relatively cooperative dynamic within the region on climate research, pollution controls, and search-and-rescue protocols is already being eclipsed by diverging policies on refugees, European integration via the European Union (EU), security policy priorities, and resource extraction.

At the same time, Arctic states have no ready-made forum for addressing regional, hard-power economic and security concerns. Going through the United Nations (UN) brings a wide variety of non-Arctic actors into the discussion, which is anathema to some Arctic states. The primary regional venue, the Arctic Council, is limited by an explicit focus on environmental cooperation and economic development. Absent a new regional forum, there is no easy way to bridge the significant differences between Nordic approaches to regional issues and those emphasized by the United States and Canada, to say nothing of Russia.

Just because a solution is hard does not make it impossible. Prudent, relatively modest initiatives could address many of these challenges and protect U.S. and Western interests across the European Arctic subregion. As discussed in more detail later, U.S. Arctic strategy should account for Russian challenges to the existing international order. The United States should establish a new confidence-building forum for economic and security negotiations in the Arctic. At the same time, the United States and its Nordic partners should engage in visible Nordic-Baltic war planning and exercises to deter Russian coercion in the region. And finally, the

## The High North

United States needs to invest in the infrastructure and surface ships to monitor, reassure, and maintain a surface presence in Alaskan waters and the European Arctic.

### **Activity in the Arctic**

The Arctic had been a relatively quiet region for 25 years, the domain of environmental scientists and scattered indigenous peoples, with pockets of industrialized activity in the European subregion. The Arctic geopolitical situation is changing rapidly, however. Climate change is one reason. Fourteen of the last 15 years have seen the warmest average global temperatures ever recorded, with 2015 breaking all previous records. And the Arctic is warming faster than the rest of the globe, with much of the European and western Russian Arctic remaining relatively ice-free for much of the year. The eastern two-thirds of the Russian Arctic clears next, while the eastern North American and Greenland portions of the Arctic remain ice-bound for much of the year. Melting ice has led to speculation that the Arctic would become a new hotbed of global activity.

Use of the Northwest Passage across Canada or the Northern Sea Route across Russia could shorten transcontinental shipment distances by at least a third compared to existing routes, and open new venues for destination tourism.<sup>3</sup> Melting Arctic ice was also seen as enabling the next resource gold rush. A 2008 report by the U.S. Geological Survey revealed that 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 percent of the world's undiscovered natural gas could lie in the Arctic, with 90 percent of that in Arctic waters, to say nothing of huge ore and rare-earth deposits in the region.<sup>4</sup> With oil prices exceeding \$130 per barrel before the 2008 financial crisis, and then fluctuating around \$90 to \$100 per barrel from 2010 to late 2014, there was every reason to expect significant oil and gas extraction in the Arctic.

Reality has diverged from expectations. The resource gold rush stalled and shows few signs of occurring in the next 5 years, in large part due to plummeting oil and gas prices.<sup>5</sup> Environmental concerns have also played a role in slowing hydrocarbon extraction in Arctic waters, particularly in Norway.<sup>6</sup> Finally, Russian extraction continues but has slowed because post-Crimea sanctions on Russia have made it impossible for Western companies to enter into joint ventures with Russian oil and gas companies, and Russia needs Western expertise, technology, and money for future offshore extraction.<sup>7</sup> These developments have put a temporary halt to additional offshore Arctic energy extraction, even if the long-term potential remains.

Shipping traffic has not expanded to the extent expected either. Decreasing amounts of ice do not necessarily translate into ice-free ocean transit, forcing businesses that rely on just-in-time delivery to avoid Arctic shipping. Traditional international shipping routes may be slower but are more predictable. Perhaps more importantly, uncertainty about risk has made it difficult for insurance companies to price insurance, and shipping companies are reluctant to risk Arctic transshipments without loss insurance.<sup>8</sup> The exception to the rule may be destination shipping. Even without a boom in offshore resource extraction, there is every likelihood of increased onshore economic activity from tourism, mining, new high-tech facilities, and cold weather infrastructure. That will require an increase in destination shipping, particularly for the European and Russian Arctic subregions given their less extensive ice coverage compared to the North American Arctic.<sup>9</sup>

### **Emerging Challenges**

Just because the resource and shipping gold rush has yet to occur does not mean that the region has been immune to important geopolitical developments. Three challenges will confront the next U.S. administration in the region, each focused on but not exclusive to the European Arctic: Russian activities in the Nordic-Baltic region, diverging preferences across the region on important hard-power issues, and a lack of viable international venues to discuss and negotiate solutions to regional challenges. Consider each in turn.

#### **Russia and the Nordic-Baltic States**

Until recently, post-Cold War Europe has been a region of peaceful relations based on international law, democratization, and economic and political integration. The region had operated from roughly 1990 through 2013 in the belief that armed conflict in Europe was something that belonged to a bygone era. Northern European politicians, government officials, and mass publics held the belief that international law and European solidarity were the future of international politics. In short, the regional focus was increasingly on a post-Westphalian conception of international politics centered on the European Union.

These beliefs had policy implications. Defense budgets were cut in each country, as no one perceived a real threat to European territorial integrity. For example, Norway's defense budget went from 1.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2005 to 1.4 percent in 2013. Sweden's defense spending went from 1.4 percent of GDP in 2005 to 1.15 percent in 2013. Denmark went from 1.4 to 1.25 percent of GDP. Finland

## The High North

was the only exception to the rule, increasing from 1.3 to 1.4 percent of GDP over the same period, largely because of its 833-mile border with Russia.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the focus within defense establishments was on expeditionary operations such as the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan rather than territorial defense. The result was that Denmark gutted its armored, artillery, and air defense capabilities, and Sweden essentially dissolved its army and its antisubmarine capabilities, to give just two examples.

That all changed in early 2014 with events in Ukraine. Russian actions were seen by Nordic states as a fundamental challenge to the European international order in a way that was not true with the 2008 invasion of Georgia.<sup>11</sup> Nordic states vocally condemned Russian actions. As Norwegian Defense Minister Ine Soereide noted, “We are in a completely new security situation where Russia shows both the ability and the will to use military means to achieve political goals.”<sup>12</sup> Later she went on to note that “we are faced with a different Russia. The situation has changed, and it has changed profoundly. There is no going back to some sort of normality because it does not exist.”<sup>13</sup> Carl Bildt, Swedish Foreign Minister at the time, stated, “A new sense of being exposed and vulnerable has descended on the security debates around Europe.” Soon after he noted that “Russia has emerged as a revisionist power violating and questioning the very foundations of the European order of peace and stability.”<sup>14</sup> Each country backed up its rhetoric with actions, complying with EU sanctions on Russia even when such sanctions cost them domestically, as was the case with Norwegian fish and Finnish dairy and meat exports.

Nordic states are particularly concerned about three things with regard to Russia. First, Russia demonstrated that it is willing to advance its interests through military force and has done so in Georgia, Ukraine, and now Syria. Russian military exercises involve the movement of thousands of troops and heavy equipment, sometimes without advance warning, to include exercises such as Vostok-2014 with over 100,000 troops and Western Strategic Direction with 150,000 troops, among others.<sup>15</sup> In his 2015 annual report, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg warned that “these [Russian] exercises have been used to mask massive movements of military forces.”<sup>16</sup> The Russians have used their military to repeatedly violate Nordic airspace and territorial waters, with increasingly complex military formations, most famously with mock airborne nuclear attacks against Sweden in 2013 and against a 90,000-person political convention on Denmark’s Bornholm island in June 2014, and an alleged October 2014 submarine intrusion into the waters near Stockholm.<sup>17</sup> Each time Nordic states hold an exercise, Russia responds with a larger so-called snap exercise.<sup>18</sup>

Second, Russia has deployed advanced military capabilities in the Russian Arctic, capabilities that support an antiaccess/area-denial strategy. Russia is in the process of refurbishing or creating new military bases and capabilities along its northern and western borders. The Russians have deployed advanced air defenses, interceptor aircraft, and offensive tactical weapons. Some of these capabilities should help with search-and-rescue efforts along the Northern Sea Route and serve the defensive purpose of protecting Russian strategic nuclear forces from U.S. conventional attack.<sup>19</sup> Yet new Russian capabilities also create significant problems for the United States and NATO in defending Alliance territory from Russian coercion and potential invasion.<sup>20</sup> For example, Russian air defenses located in Severmorsk, St. Petersburg, and Kaliningrad cover the airspace across Finland and the Baltic States, northern Sweden and Norway, southern Sweden, most of Poland, and parts of Germany. The Iskander-M, a nuclear-capable missile with a likely range of at least 435 miles, when deployed to Kaliningrad, puts the Baltics, Poland, eastern Germany, southern Finland, and Sweden at risk. These new Russian capabilities have led some to believe that a Russian attack on the Baltics would quickly be successful.<sup>21</sup> In this sense, new Russian capabilities in the Arctic may be useful for operations in both the Arctic and neighboring regions.

Third, and relatedly, Nordic states believe that a crisis or hybrid war in the Baltics is the most likely regional flashpoint between the West and Russia. Such a crisis would directly involve Norway and Denmark as NATO members, and probably involve Sweden and Finland due to their geographic proximities and informal ties to the Baltics. Sweden in particular has pledged to come to the aid of EU members who are subject to external attack, though they are vague about the exact nature of Swedish assistance. In the words of then-Foreign Minister Bildt, “Sweden will not remain passive if another EU member state or Nordic country suffers a disaster or an attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is similarly affected.”<sup>22</sup>

The result is that the Nordic states are increasingly focused on national and regional defense rather than expeditionary warfare. Nordic defense ministers released a joint statement on April 9, 2015, that stated, “Russia’s conduct represents the gravest challenge to European security. As a consequence, we must be prepared to face possible crises or incidents.” They went on to note that “Russian military exercises and intelligence operations in our region have increased. The Russian propaganda and political maneuvering is aiming to create a rift between states and within organizations such as the EU and NATO.”<sup>23</sup>

## The High North

The shift to national and regional defense has been particularly pronounced in Norway and Sweden and to a lesser extent in Denmark. Planned defense spending will increase in both of the former states, when measured in dollar equivalent amounts, though defense spending as a percentage of GDP will stay relatively flat or increase only slightly.<sup>24</sup> And both Norway and Sweden are crafting new defense strategies, with a focus on territorial defense rather than expeditionary capabilities.<sup>25</sup> The Norwegians have been pushing for years for a larger NATO role in the region, over the objections of the Canadians and others, and have decided that Norway must act on its own, on NATO's behalf, to secure Norwegian territory and its EEZ. In short, there has been a fundamental change in perceptions among most Arctic states regarding Russian will and capabilities, leading officials to believe that at least the European Arctic is less peaceful and stable than it was 2 years ago.

The most obvious regional response, NATO membership for Sweden and Finland, does not appear to be a viable option. It is true that NATO membership is for the first time being openly debated in both countries, which represents a break from past practice. That said, neither Sweden nor Finland is on the verge of applying for NATO membership, though that is not out of the question should Russia take more aggressive actions in the region. Three factors have affected their decisions on NATO membership.

First, no one in either country knows what might be the international ramifications of applying for NATO membership. Those ramifications weigh particularly heavy in Finland, which shares a long border with Russia. Some in Finland believe that Russia's newfound aggressive posture makes NATO membership imperative for national defense and regional stability, particularly given that neither Finland nor Sweden can unilaterally defend itself from Russian attack or do so bilaterally with its Nordic neighbor. Others argue that applying would needlessly antagonize Russia, worsening rather than increasing regional stability. Russian officials have played to those fears in public statements.<sup>26</sup>

Second, there is also a bilateral dimension at work. Neither country wants to apply for NATO membership without the other. Politicians and civil servants in both Sweden and Finland want to avoid repeating the coordination problems associated with their EU membership applications, when Sweden unexpectedly moved ahead with its request after promising Finland that both countries should join the EU together. So while the current government in Helsinki might be amenable to joining NATO if Sweden were also on board, it will not move without Sweden, and the current Swedish government is opposed.

Third, as the Swedish example demonstrates, there are domestic political dimensions to this debate. Some political parties have built opposition to NATO membership into their party platforms; to change would be to redefine what their party stands for. The current minority coalition government in Stockholm, for example, is comprised of the Social Democrats and the Green Party. The Social Democrats are internally divided on NATO, and the Greens are firmly opposed to NATO membership. So despite support for NATO membership from the main opposition parties in Sweden, and growing support from the public, the government has no plans to apply for membership largely because it would split the governing coalition.<sup>27</sup>

Absent NATO membership, both countries' defense decisions have focused on increasing interoperability with NATO countries and weapons systems. The intent is that if a conflict occurs and a political decision is made to side militarily with the Alliance, Sweden and Finland can be seamlessly folded into NATO operations. More generally, Nordic states have increased their intelligence cooperation, information-sharing, multinational training and exercises, and shared use of airbases and port facilities. The Swedes and Finns have partially integrated their air forces and navies, and they have entered into a new agreement on air force cooperation in peacetime. That pooling and sharing does not extend to combat operations during crisis or war, however, which is consistent with their nonaligned status. We thus have the beginnings of regional security cooperation, but nothing like a Nordic military alliance. Instead, all states in the region are looking to the United States for leadership and security assurance.

Current defense trends—spending patterns and regional defense cooperation—will continue absent another Russian incursion into Ukraine, an invasion of Moldova, or military aggression in the Baltics. Regional security cooperation will remain limited to peacetime exercises, training, and intelligence-sharing. Defense budgets will grow only very slowly, if at all. Sweden and Finland will remain outside NATO. Combined, these measures will be inadequate to provide for Nordic defense needs. The United States—not NATO—will continue to be seen as the ultimate security guarantor by countries in the region.

### **Differences Among Nordic, North American, and Russian Perspectives**

Arriving at policy solutions to ensure stability across all three Arctic subregions will be difficult, not least because the Nordic states approach regional issues differently than do North American states and Russia. Multilateralism is the venue/method of choice for Nordic international relations



## The High North

| Table 1. Relative Power of Arctic Nations |                       |                              |  |  |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| Nordic                                    |                       |                              |  |  |
|   | Population (millions) | 2014 GDP (USD billions), PPP | Military spending as percentage of GDP | Territory in square kilometers (arable land) |
| Denmark                                   | 5.58                  | 250.7                        | 1.37 (2013)                            | 43,000 (25,300)                              |
| Finland                                   | 5.48                  | 221.7                        | 1.47 (2012)                            | 338,000 (2,500)                              |
| Iceland                                   | 0.33                  | 14.3                         | 0.13 (2012)                            | 103,000 (124)                                |
| Norway                                    | 5.21                  | 346.3                        | 1.4 (2012)                             | 324,000 (7,100)                              |
| Sweden                                    | 9.8                   | 450.5                        | 1.18 (2012)                            | 450,000 (28,800)                             |
| Non-Nordic                                |                       |                              |  |  |
| Canada                                    | 35.1                  | 1,596                        | 1 (2014)                               | 9.9 million (465,300)                        |
| Russia                                    | 142.42                | 3,577                        | 3.49 (2014)                            | 17.1 million (1.25 million)                  |
| United States                             | 321.37                | 17,350                       | 4.35 (2012)                            | 9.83 million (1.65 million)                  |

*Source:* Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, available at <[www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)>.  
*Key:* GDP = gross domestic product; PPP = purchasing power parity

for geopolitical and cultural reasons. The United States, Canada, and Russia have often taken a more unilateral route when their vital interests are at stake.

The Nordic focus on multilateralism and international law is at least partly due to their geopolitical reality as relatively small European powers. Table 1 lists common measures of power for each Arctic nation. The Nordic states *combined* have fewer people, a smaller GDP, and far less territory and arable land, and spend roughly the same amount on defense as does Canada, which is the least powerful of the non-Nordic Arctic states.

Multilateralism makes sense for relatively weak powers surrounded by more powerful neighbors, and Nordic states have utilized multilateral approaches to advance their national interests since well before the end of the Cold War. Working through multilateral institutions such as NATO, the EU, and the UN creates partners that can help balance against more powerful states such as Russia. This is particularly true when thinking about the security and environmental implications of Nordic economic reliance on the Baltic and North seas. Linking their economies to the EU—even if to varying degrees—and its relatively stringent monitoring and regulation help protect their economies from predation by larger powers.

Emphasizing international law is another way of constraining great power behavior. As Icelandic Prime Minister Sigmundur Cunnlaugsson noted, “Small states usually favor multilateralism where our voices can

be amplified and it is easier to bring messages across. Small states are also heavily dependent on adherence to international law.”<sup>28</sup> The Nordic states base their own behavior on international law even when they are temporarily disadvantaged by such rules. Debate over the first and second Nord Stream pipelines through the Baltic Sea is an example. Security communities in both Sweden and Finland warned against European dependence on Russian gas, just as officials from Eastern Europe have been warning. Both countries, however, have taken positions on Nord Stream based on United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and EU rules rather than basing their policies on unilateral interests. In the words of one senior Nordic diplomat, “The moment we start disregarding international law is the moment that we open the door for Russia to do the same.” The perspective inside the region is that international law maintains the stability that they so depend on for their economic and political success. Abandon international law and Russia will do the same more frequently and blatantly than it does now.

The Nordic preference for multilateralism and international law also fits with its cultural predilection for *domestic* stability and the rule of law, as well as their domestic political history of coalition governments. Nordic states are consensual democracies. They have adopted proportional representation electoral systems that regularly produce multiparty governing coalitions, as displayed in table 2. Decisionmaking in coalition governments is by necessity done only after considering multiple perspectives and reaching compromise solutions. Minority coalitions, when they occur, require compromise even beyond the governing coalition to pass legislation. The broader or more fragile are governing coalitions, the more inclusive and status quo oriented their policies tend to be.

Contrast this with North American and Russian behavior, which often defaults to unilateral national decisions. This should not be surprising from either an international or domestic perspective. We know from table 1 that non-Nordic Arctic states are more powerful internationally, and in many cases are able to act unilaterally even when opposed. Non-Nordic Arctic states also stand in stark contrast when it comes to their electoral systems, as displayed in table 2, where winner-take-all electoral rules bias these governments away from compromising with opposition parties.

An example of how these differences have played out is each Arctic nation’s positioning with respect to oceans management within its respective EEZ. Both Canada and Russia have unilaterally claimed that the Northwest Passage and waters of the Canadian Archipelago (Canada) and the Northern Sea Route (Russia) are internal waterways subject to their unilateral control. In contrast, the Danes convened the five Arctic

## The High North

| Table 2. Ruling Governments in Arctic Nations  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Nordic   |   |  |
|  | Current Government  | Previous Government*   |
| Denmark  | Rasmussen government (June 2015)**<br>Venstre Party                                     | Thorning-Schmidt government (2011–2015)**<br>Social Democrats<br>Social Liberal Party<br>Socialist People's Party  |
| Finland  | Sipilä government (May 2015)<br>Centre Party<br>National Coalition Party<br>Finns Party | Katainen/Stubbs government (2011–2015)<br>National Coalition Party<br>Social Democrats<br>Green League<br>Swedish People's Party<br>Christian Democrats<br>Left Alliance |
| Iceland  | Gunnlaugsson government (2013)<br>Progressives<br>Independence Party                    | Sigurðardóttir government (2009–2013)<br>Social Democrats<br>Left-Green Party  |
| Norway   | Solberg government (October 2013)**<br>Conservatives<br>Progress Party                  | Stoltenberg government (2005–2013)<br>Labour Party<br>Socialist Left<br>Centre Party   |
| Sweden   | Lefven government (October 2014)**<br>Social Democrats<br>Green Party                   | Reinfeldt government (2010–2014)**<br>Moderates Party<br>Liberal People's Party<br>Centre Party<br>Christian Democrats   |
| Non-Nordic   |   |  |
| Canada   | Trudeau government (October 2015)   | Harper government (2011–2015)  |
| Russia   | Putin government (May 2012)   | Medvedev government (2008–2012)  |
| United States  | Obama government (January 2009)   | Bush government (2001–2009)  |
| <p>* <i>Previous Government</i> signifies the government holding office since the previous election, where there was a transition in governing coalitions. So while Canada's Stephen Harper held the prime minister's office from 2006 to 2015, his party only achieved majority status following the 2011 elections.</p> <p>** Signifies a minority government.</p> |   |  |

coastal states to draft the multilateral 2008 Illulissat Declaration, which asserted the so-called Arctic Five's right to govern Arctic waters under the terms set out by UNCLOS.<sup>29</sup> So while the Canadians and Russians made unilateral declarations, the Danes proposed a multilateral agreement that reaffirmed the role of international law and by doing so kept Arctic governance largely in the hands of the Arctic Five.<sup>30</sup> Two different categories of states produced two different approaches to accomplish similar goals.

Finally, it should be noted that the Nordic preference for multilateralism is under threat from within Europe. As discussed elsewhere in this volume, European multilateralism is fraying based on differing northern and southern European reactions to the 2008 global financial crisis, na-

tional vulnerability to the vagaries of Russian energy policy, and disputes over refugee policy and the related phenomenon of rising nationalistic or populist political parties across Europe. The recent influx of refugees, in particular, has had a caustic effect on European unity. Waves of refugees have led to the reimposition of border controls in some states, such as between Denmark and Sweden. In the words of one Nordic diplomat, “National refugee policies are tearing the EU apart.” Finnish President Sauli Niinisto recently stated, “Europe cannot withstand uncontrolled migration for much longer. Our values will give way if our capacity to cope is exceeded.”<sup>31</sup> The refugee crisis has also contributed to the rise of nationalist parties. The Danish People’s Party, True Finns party, and Sweden Democrats are all growing in strength and are examples of such movements. Arriving at multinational solutions is more difficult when European states’ policies are influenced by nationalism. All this has led influential European officials to publicly voice concern for the future of the EU.<sup>32</sup>

European unity will be increasingly under strain due to the refugee crisis, nationalist parties, uneven access to non-Russian energy resources, and economic vulnerability. As a result, Nordic countries will increasingly look to the United States for leadership and reassurance given the growing cracks in the European system. Bilateralism vis-à-vis the United States may quietly replace multilateralism in the practice of international relations in the region, though Nordic countries will maintain their attachment to multilateral rhetoric.

### **Challenges to Future Arctic Cooperation**

The final challenge involves future international cooperation in the Arctic. To this point the primary venue for Arctic cooperation has been the Arctic Council.<sup>33</sup> Formed in 1996, the council by design deals exclusively with environmental protection and sustainable development. It does not have decisionmaking authority, but council discussions have increased scientific and environmental cooperation in the region and led to formal multilateral agreements under UN and International Maritime Organization authority; these include agreements on search-and-rescue responsibilities (2011), oil spill prevention and response (2013), and a Polar Code for ships operating in polar waters.<sup>34</sup> At the bilateral level Arctic states have peacefully demarcated offshore EEZ claims between Russia and the United States and between Russia and Norway. In 2010, the Norwegian and Russian governments established protocols on fishery quotas and hydrocarbon extraction.

Despite this record of cooperation, there are significant differences among the eight Arctic nations in terms of the priority represented by

## The High North

the Arctic for each country. Those differences matter when the issues in question represent vital interests (security and prosperity) rather than tertiary interests (scientific cooperation and shipping protocols). It is relatively easy to get regional cooperation on tertiary national interests even if not all Arctic nations see the region as a priority. Region-wide cooperation becomes difficult, however, when some nations believe the issue in question is a vital interest but others do not, or when states have diametrically opposed interests.

The Arctic as a distinct region is only a priority for some Arctic nations. The Norwegian government, for example, has consistently seen the Arctic as its top priority in large part because so much of its EEZ, its export revenue, and Norwegian maritime traffic are located in European Arctic waters. The Russian government has prioritized the Arctic because Russia's strategic nuclear submarine force is home-ported in Murmansk, and northern Russia contains abundant hydrocarbon, mineral, and timber deposits. The Canadian government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper saw the Arctic as a priority issue principally for domestic political reasons dealing with economic development of the northern Canadian provinces and with Canadian control of the Northwest Passage.

But other countries in the region have placed Arctic issues much lower on their agendas. Sweden has few direct interests in the Arctic beyond environmental stewardship and has focused more of its attention on economic and political relations with its neighbors to the south and east. Finland is much more focused on the Baltic Sea and relations with Russia, Sweden, and the EU than it is on the Arctic per se. The current government in Iceland sees the Arctic as a priority, but the same could not be said for previous governments. The Danes see the Arctic through the prism of their territory in Greenland and the Faroe Islands, and their main concern there is in ensuring the local people are eventually self-sufficient. And last but not least, the United States essentially ignored the Arctic as a policy issue between 1991 and 2015.<sup>35</sup> Even the Barack Obama administration's recent efforts to highlight the Arctic seem to be a small piece in the administration's larger climate agenda, rather than a focus on the Arctic for its own sake.

If getting all regional countries to pay attention to Arctic issues is difficult, it is even more difficult to get agreement on issues of vital national interest, particularly in the European Arctic. Take the question of resource extraction. Finland would like to engage in mining above the Arctic Circle with fewer environmental constraints. Sweden wants strict environmental controls on mining and oil extraction, but less regulation of recreation. The Green Party in Sweden, a member of the two-party coalition government, would like to halt all oil and gas extraction from

Arctic waters. Norway is particularly sensitive to policy differences on resource extraction because so much of Norway's GDP comes from offshore hydrocarbon extraction, fisheries, and aquaculture. Though the Norwegians have an agreement with Russia on fisheries and hydrocarbons, the same is not true with regard to fishing quotas between Norway and Iceland, Scotland, the Faroe Islands, or the EU, leading to a significant dispute between Norway and Iceland over mackerel overfishing in 2012.

Rival territorial claims continue to bubble up to the surface. The most complex and potentially dangerous involves Norway's claim to the waters around the Svalbard archipelago. Norway believes these waters are part of its EEZ, while Russia believes these are international waters governed by the terms of the 1925 Spitzbergen Treaty.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, Denmark and Russia have submitted competing claims to the Lomonosov Ridge in the central Arctic Ocean. The Canadian government has long argued that the Northwest Passage is an internal waterway, over quiet U.S. objections.<sup>37</sup> The official arbiter of undersea territorial claims under the terms of UNCLOS is the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, which has shown little desire to reach a definitive ruling on these competing claims, instead asking for more scientific data (from the Russians in particular) and by some views hoping that the claimants will negotiate a solution on their own.

And finally there is the issue of Arctic management. The five Arctic coastal states have repeatedly asserted authority over and responsibility for Arctic waters within their EEZs. Such claims pit them against the three other Arctic states (Finland, Iceland, and Sweden) as well as non-Arctic states with interests in the Arctic (China, India, Japan, and Poland). These jurisdictional disputes have complicated decisions on designating permanent observers to the Arctic Council and may have led to the creation of the annual Arctic Circle forum, which brings together Arctic and non-Arctic states, nongovernmental organizations, and business interests to discuss Arctic governance and other topics.

The Arctic, particularly the European Arctic, will not be compartmentalized from broader geopolitical concerns for much longer.<sup>38</sup> Too many important issues are infringing on the peaceful scientific cooperation that has ruled to this point. Western relations with Russia, competing economic interests among Arctic states, and potential territorial disputes will increasingly infringe on Arctic political discourse. Again, in the words of Norwegian Foreign Minister Brende, "Arctic cannot be viewed in isolation from events elsewhere."

For the next 5 years the Arctic Council will be limited to sidebar issues such as scientific research and nonbinding pollution protocols—issues that are not central to international affairs as commonly under-

## The High North

stood. Anything more, particularly with regard to security policy or issues where there are significant political disagreements, will remain in limbo because of underlying policy differences, the lower priority of the region compared to other regions, and the absence of viable regional forums where hard-power issues can be discussed.

### Policy Recommendations

Four policy initiatives could improve the regional situation in the Arctic from a U.S. perspective. First, the United States needs a new Arctic strategy that accounts for the differences between the North American, European, and Russian Arctic subregions.<sup>39</sup> As I argue elsewhere, the resulting U.S. strategy should account for developments on the political and security fronts. That strategy should have three goals.<sup>40</sup> The United States should prevent either Russia or China from dominating the European Arctic subregion in terms of economics or security. Regional participation by both countries is inevitable (and, one could argue, desirable), particularly regarding Chinese investment. Dominance by either power, however, would undercut U.S. influence and commitments and put at risk U.S. interests in protecting the global commons. Another goal could be preventing an environmental disaster in any part of the Arctic. This requires that existing cooperation continue on shipping protocols, fisheries management, and oil spill prevention and response—something in the interests of all Arctic coastal states. A final goal could be fostering responsible private-sector investment in the North American subregion. Specific actions here could include providing U.S. loan guarantees, tax incentives, or access to government climate and geological data in exchange for private-sector creation of needed Alaskan infrastructure.

These goals deconflict the myriad crosscutting priorities, threats, and opportunities of the Arctic nations. The first goal aligns the United States with every Arctic nation except Russia and is just the sort of assurance that Nordic states (and their Baltic neighbors) have been looking for from the U.S. Government. The second goal focuses on the environmental concerns of the Arctic coastal states and their economic self-interest. Even Russia, with its less-than-stellar environmental record, has an interest in maintaining fish stocks, and the Western-based oil companies that Russia will need to extract oil and gas from the Barents and Kara seas have the reputational and fiduciary need to engage in relatively careful extraction in Arctic waters. The third goal is attractive to those in Alaska, and if expanded across the Arctic could be attractive to Canada, Denmark, and Iceland, each of which wants more investment in its Arctic territories.

As a second policy recommendation, the United States should propose an Arctic forum to discuss political and security concerns across the region, but particularly within the European Arctic subregion. A lack of recent transparency on hard-power issues is a significant challenge in the region. Western states do not trust Russian military activities and political statements. Within the Nordic region, states are pursuing diverging refugee policies. On the political level, changing government coalitions and domestic political dynamics have fostered a sense of uncertainty regarding international commitments. The focus of this new forum should be on transparency and confidence-building measures, on everything from refugee policies to military exercises to joint energy initiatives. The forum could be modeled on the existing Nordic Council but with a broader agenda and with the added participation of the United States and Canada, possibly the Baltic States, and ideally Russia if possible. It would leave environmental and scientific discussions to the Arctic Council and private-sector economic cooperation to the recently created Arctic Economic Council.<sup>41</sup>

Third, the United States should work with its Nordic allies and partners to develop a Northern European security architecture that complements but stands apart from NATO efforts. As noted earlier, it is unlikely that Sweden and Finland will apply for NATO membership, much less join the Alliance, in the next few years barring another significant Russian act of aggression in Europe. There are simply too many domestic and bilateral impediments in the way. Moreover, key NATO members (including some officials in Canada and Denmark) believe the Alliance should focus on instability to the south and east rather than devoting precious resources to the north. A northern European security organization under a U.S. imprimatur, however, is not beyond the realm of possibility.

The organization could be modeled on the existing Nordic Defense Cooperation (NORDEF),<sup>42</sup> which links Nordic states in peacetime information-sharing, military education, training, and exercises.<sup>43</sup> A “deepened” NORDEF could include an implicit security guarantee among Nordic states, explicit war plans with designated chains of command to respond to a Russian attack against either the Nordic or Baltic states or a closure of the Baltic Sea, and exercises to test and demonstrate those plans. This new security architecture could include active U.S. participation in exercises and prepositioning of U.S. weapons in the region that could contribute to those war plans.<sup>44</sup> The United States would not be entering into a new alliance commitment to Sweden and Finland. Rather the United States would be operating with existing allies (Norway, Denmark, and possibly the Baltic States) and partner nations (Sweden and Finland) to generate viable war plans for the Nordic-Baltic theater, particularly



## The High North

those focused on countering Russian antiaccess/area-denial capabilities.<sup>45</sup> Even without an alliance commitment across the region, such a northern European security architecture could greatly improve the planning and exercise frequency necessary to prepare for a variety of wartime scenarios, which could itself act as a deterrent to Russian aggression.<sup>46</sup>

Fourth and finally, the United States needs to increase its capabilities, both civilian and military, to operate in the North American and European Arctic subregions. Relatively inexpensive capabilities could be acquired today or in the near future that would support a variety of U.S. Arctic strategies. The most immediate priorities are in sensors, communications, and surface ships. Sensors are necessary for even rudimentary maritime domain awareness. The United States needs better civilian capabilities in this regard to regulate shipping and avoid maritime accidents, including oil spills. Better civilian and military communications are needed for everything from coordinating search and rescue to managing sea and air traffic. Communications are particularly challenging given the lack of radio or cellular infrastructure in the region and the mismatch between high northern latitudes and the orbital paths of most communications and geopositioning satellites. Perhaps most importantly, the United States needs to improve its naval capabilities to demonstrate a maritime presence across the region, but particularly in the European Arctic where the United States has NATO commitments. At the least, that will require more U.S. Coast Guard icebreakers and ice-capable Navy surface ships. The Coast Guard has begun exploring the acquisition of a new icebreaker, but no real money has been allocated for a new vessel.<sup>47</sup>

This chapter begins by noting that the security of the United States and its allies depends on preventing regional hegemony or coercion by hostile powers. Economic prosperity depends on protecting the global commons. Developments in the Arctic and neighboring regions could put both interests at risk within the next 5 years. The four initiatives listed above—developing a new U.S. Arctic strategy, creating a regional forum for security and economic discussions, initiating a regional security organization to complement NATO, and improving U.S. capabilities to operate in the Arctic—support U.S. interests in the region at a relatively low cost.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this chapter, I follow the U.S. Government's definition of the *Arctic* as anything north of the Arctic Circle, at approximately 66 degrees, 34 minutes north latitude. See <[www.arctic.noaa.gov/faq.html](http://www.arctic.noaa.gov/faq.html)>. U.S. law (15 U.S. Code § 4111) also adds all U.S. territory and territorial waters north of the Aleutian island chain to the defi-

## Auerswald

nition of the U.S. Arctic. Others define the Arctic by a maximum average July temperature or by the northernmost tree line. Norwegian officials call the Scandinavian portion of the Arctic the *High North*, though there is no precise territorial delineation associated with that term.

<sup>2</sup> Borge Brende, "The Arctic: Important for Norway, Important for the World," *Harvard International Review* 36, no. 3 (Spring 2015).

<sup>3</sup> The Northern Sea Route is the more viable, near-term shipping route from a climate perspective.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, "Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal," Fact Sheet 2008-3049, available at <<http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2008/3049/fs2008-3049.pdf>>.

<sup>5</sup> Gordon Kristopher, "Why Is the Breakeven Price of Crude Oil So Important?" *Market Realist*, January 15, 2015, available at <<https://marketrealist.com/2015/01/breakeven-price-crude-oil-important/>>; U.S. Department of the Interior, "Interior Department Cancels Arctic Offshore Lease Sales," October 16, 2015, available at <[www.doi.gov/press-releases/interior-department-cancels-arctic-offshore-lease-sales](http://www.doi.gov/press-releases/interior-department-cancels-arctic-offshore-lease-sales)>. The partial exception is the Norwegian government's new drilling concessions awarded in mid-May 2016 for areas in the Barents Sea, but drilling test wells will not start until 2017, with no guarantee that extraction will occur in the near future.

<sup>6</sup> The Swedish government, for example, has called for a prohibition on hydrocarbon extraction unless stringent conditions are met: "We want only companies that can assume the entire cost of a disaster to be granted permits to extract oil in the Arctic." See "Government to Strengthen Arctic Environmental Policy," January 25, 2016, available at <[www.government.se/articles/2016/01/government-to-strengthen-arctic-environmental-policy/](http://www.government.se/articles/2016/01/government-to-strengthen-arctic-environmental-policy/)>.

<sup>7</sup> That said, Gazprom continues to extract gas and oil from the Yamal Peninsula, though most of those wells were established before sanctions took effect.

<sup>8</sup> "Cooperation Needed to Allay Arctic Risks," *Lloyds.com*, September 8, 2014, available at <[www.lloyds.com/news-and-insight/news-and-features/emerging-risk/emerging-risk-2014/cooperation-needed-to-allay-arctic-risks](http://www.lloyds.com/news-and-insight/news-and-features/emerging-risk/emerging-risk-2014/cooperation-needed-to-allay-arctic-risks)>.

<sup>9</sup> Arctic economic development is a priority in the Arctic strategies of each Arctic nation.

<sup>10</sup> Bergt-Goran Bergstrand, "Military Expenditure Trends in the Baltic Sea States, FOI Memo 5544," Swedish Defense Research Institute, December 9, 2015. Figures for North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members are comparable to those reported in Jens Stoltenberg, *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2015* (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, January 28, 2016), available at <[www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int)>.

<sup>11</sup> The 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia took place outside of Europe and was a conflict where blame could be placed with both sides.

<sup>12</sup> See Ine Soereide's interview with Reuters, May 20, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> See Ine Soereide's interview with CNN, February 26, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Carl Bildt, "Statement at IISS [International Institute for Strategic Studies], London," September 19, 2014; "Statement on the Ukrainian Crisis," September 22, 2015. This was in marked contrast to Bildt's praise for Russian cooperation with Europe before Crimea in statements such as "Russian foreign policy has become oriented towards serving the goals of this cooperation, which is very welcome." Carl Bildt, "Russia and the World," Keynote Speech at the Andrei Sakharov Foundation Conference, Moscow, May 21, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> The most disturbing exercise before 2014 from the perspective of Nordic-Baltic security was Zapad-2013, which took place in late 2013 and focused on the "defense" of Kaliningrad. For exercise numbers and composition, see Johan Norberg, *Training to*

## The High North

*Fight: Russian Military Exercises 2011–2014*, FOI-R-4128-SE (Stockholm: Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> Stoltenberg.

<sup>17</sup> “Russia Carried Out Practice Nuclear Strike Against Sweden,” *The Local SE* (Stockholm), February 3, 2016, available at <[www.thelocal.se/20160203/russia-did-practice-a-nuclear-strike-against-sweden](http://www.thelocal.se/20160203/russia-did-practice-a-nuclear-strike-against-sweden)>.

<sup>18</sup> For example, the June 2015 Arctic Challenge exercise, with 4,000 Western troops and 115 airplanes operating out of Scandinavian airfields, was immediately matched by a Russian snap exercise involving 12,000 troops and 250 planes.

<sup>19</sup> Strategic Forecasting, Inc. (Stratfor), “Russia in the Arctic: A Different Kind of Military Presence,” November 11, 2015, available at <[www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia-arctic-different-kind-military-presence](http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia-arctic-different-kind-military-presence)>; Ekaterina Klimentko, *Russia’s Arctic Security Policy*, Policy Paper 45 (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, February 2016); Heather Conley and Caroline Rohloff, *The New Ice Curtain: Russia’s Strategic Reach to the Arctic* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 2015).

<sup>20</sup> For a discussion of Russian capabilities, see “The Security Dimensions of the Arctic Region,” *Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences*, no. 2 (April–June 2015), 93–113, available at <[http://kkrva.se/hot/2015:2/waldemarsson\\_mfl\\_arctic\\_reg.pdf](http://kkrva.se/hot/2015:2/waldemarsson_mfl_arctic_reg.pdf)>.

<sup>21</sup> David Shlapak and Michael Johnson, *Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO’s Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics*, RR-1253-A (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2016), available at <[www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND\\_RR1253.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND_RR1253.pdf)>.

<sup>22</sup> Carl Bildt, “Presentation to the Riksdag on Foreign Affairs,” Stockholm, February 19, 2014. Identical language was agreed upon by parliamentary vote in 2009 though it did not receive much attention at the time. Finland has taken a similar policy position, though it does not publicize that fact. These positions are consistent with Article 42.7 of the Treaty of Lisbon, which states:

*If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defense policy of certain Member States. Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defense and the forum for its implementation.*

Available at <[www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-europe-an-union-and-comments/title-5-general-provisions-on-the-unions-external-action-and-specific-provisions/chapter-2-specific-provisions-on-the-common-foreign-and-security-policy/section-2-provisions-on-the-common-security-and-defence-policy/129-article-42.html](http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-europe-an-union-and-comments/title-5-general-provisions-on-the-unions-external-action-and-specific-provisions/chapter-2-specific-provisions-on-the-common-foreign-and-security-policy/section-2-provisions-on-the-common-security-and-defence-policy/129-article-42.html)>.

<sup>23</sup> *Joint Communiqué of Nordic Defense Ministers*, April 9, 2015, available at: <<http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=126747&GUID=A6A5DF01-72E4-45BD-8B29-488EE055ACC1>>.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Sweden Ministry of Defense, “The Swedish Defense Bill 2016–2020,” April 24, 2015. For projected regional numbers through 2020, see Bergstrand.

<sup>25</sup> Swedish Major General Anders Brännström noted in early 2016 that Sweden will focus more on territorial defense and less on international peacekeeping and peace-enforcement due to the increasing Russian threat. See Gerard O’Dwyer, “Russian Aggression Drives Swedish Defense Spending,” *Defense News*, February 7, 2016, available at <[www.defensenews.com](http://www.defensenews.com)>.

defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/warfare/2016/02/07/russian-aggression-drives-swedish-defense-spending/79841348/>. Yet, projected defense spending will not provide for adequate national defense against Russia and does not account for big-ticket replacements for aging fighter aircraft, naval ships, and submarines.

<sup>26</sup> For example, see Jorge Benitez, "The Bully to the East," *U.S. News and World Report*, August 6, 2015, available at <[www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/world-report/2015/08/06/russia-bullies-sweden-and-finland-away-from-joining-nato](http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/world-report/2015/08/06/russia-bullies-sweden-and-finland-away-from-joining-nato)>.

<sup>27</sup> A September 2015 poll showed that 41 percent of Swedes supported NATO membership, up 10 points from May, versus 39 percent opposed. See Gerard O'Dwyer, "New Poll Shows Sharp Shift in NATO Support," *Defense News*, September 17, 2015, available at <[www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/leaders/2015/09/17/new-poll-shows-sharp-shift-nato-support/32549641/](http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/leaders/2015/09/17/new-poll-shows-sharp-shift-nato-support/32549641/)>.

<sup>28</sup> Sigmundur Gunnlaugsson, "Iceland in a Sea of Change," speech delivered at St. Gallen Symposium, May 7, 2015.

<sup>29</sup> The five Arctic littoral states are Canada, Denmark (via Greenland), Norway, Russia, and the United States. The text of the Illulissat Declaration is available at <[www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Illulissat\\_Declaration.pdf](http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Illulissat_Declaration.pdf)>.

<sup>30</sup> Philip Steinberg, Jeremy Tasch, and Hannes Gerhardt, *Contesting the Arctic* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1–6, 73–74.

<sup>31</sup> Sauli Niinisto, "Speech at the Opening of Parliament on 3 February 2016," available at <[www.presidentti.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=341376&culture=en-US](http://www.presidentti.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=341376&culture=en-US)>.

<sup>32</sup> Alastair MacDonald and Noah Barkin, "European Leaders Fear the Refugee Crisis Will Tear the EU Apart," Reuters, January 18, 2016, available at <[www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/european-leaders-fear-the-refugee-crisis-will-tear-the-eu-apart\\_569cf-c32e4b0778f46fa010c](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/european-leaders-fear-the-refugee-crisis-will-tear-the-eu-apart_569cf-c32e4b0778f46fa010c)>.

<sup>33</sup> Other venues include the United Nations and its subsidiary entity (International Maritime Organization), European Parliament, Nordic Council of Ministers, and NATO, depending on the issue and the countries involved.

<sup>34</sup> For additional information on the Polar Code, see <[www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/polar/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/polar/Pages/default.aspx)>. For texts of the agreements on Arctic search and rescue and oil spills, see <[www.state.gov/documents/organization/205770.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/205770.pdf)>; and <[www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/05/209406.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/05/209406.htm)>.

<sup>35</sup> The United States maintained a robust scientific research agenda in the area and has been a mainstay in the Arctic Council. It also has a nuclear submarine presence in the region and military facilities in Alaska. That said, the Arctic has not been a priority region for U.S. policymakers since the Cold War.

<sup>36</sup> See statements by Leonid Kalashnikov, Russia's First Deputy Chairman of the Duma's Committee on International Affairs, quoted in Thomas Nilsen, "Norway Summons Russian Ambassador," *BarentsObserver.com*, April 20, 2015, available at <<http://barentsobserver.com/en/politics/2015/04/norway-summons-russian-ambassador-20-04>>.

<sup>37</sup> For a review, see Donald Rothwell, "The Canadian-U.S. Northwest Passage Dispute," *Cornell International Law Journal* 26, no. 2 (Spring 1993), 331–372.

<sup>38</sup> According to Swedish Supreme Commander General Micael Bydén, "We also know that areas in our region, the Baltic and increasingly the Arctic, constitute areas of friction between Russia and the West." Quoted in O'Dwyer.

<sup>39</sup> The current U.S. strategy for the Arctic was written in 2013, before events in Crimea. See *National Strategy for the Arctic Region* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2013), available at <[www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/nat\\_arctic\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/nat_arctic_strategy.pdf)>.

## The High North

<sup>40</sup> David Auerswald, "Geopolitical Icebergs," *Proceedings* 141, no. 12 (December 2015), 18–23.

<sup>41</sup> The Arctic Economic Council is a public-private entity that seeks to coordinate business activities in the region. See <<http://arcticeconomiccouncil.com>>.

<sup>42</sup> For information on Nordic Defense Cooperation (NORDEFECO), see <[www.nordefco.org](http://www.nordefco.org)>. For a discussion of NORDEFECO expansion to the Baltics, see Henrik Breitenbauch, "Strengthening Nordic-Baltic Defense Capabilities," in *Advancing U.S.-Nordic-Baltic Security Cooperation*, ed. Daniel Hamilton, Andras Simony, and Debra Cagan (Washington, DC: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2014), 135–155.

<sup>43</sup> Note that while information-sharing is proceeding well, coordinating weapons acquisition across NORDEFECO nations has proved difficult in the extreme.

<sup>44</sup> The Obama administration has begun this process with its \$3.4 billion request for fiscal year 2017 to deploy weapons and equipment to Eastern Europe. Prepositioning standoff weapons and refurbishing and hardening airfields in the Nordic states are critical additional steps, however. On the administration request, see Mark Landler and Helene Cooper, "U.S. Fortifying Europe's East to Deter Putin," *New York Times*, February 1, 2016, available at <[www.nytimes.com/2016/02/02/world/europe/us-fortifying-europes-east-to-deter-putin.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/02/world/europe/us-fortifying-europes-east-to-deter-putin.html)>.

<sup>45</sup> Note that the United States already participates in exercises involving Nordic members of NATO and partner nations such as Sweden and Finland. The proposal here is to tailor those exercises to more accurately reflect war plans that include Swedish and Finnish territory and militaries as full participants.

<sup>46</sup> Deeper transatlantic security cooperation for the European Arctic was one of the subjects discussed at the May 2016 U.S.-Nordic summit. See "U.S.-Nordic Leaders' Summit Joint Statement," May 13, 2016, available at <<http://tpk.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=346273&culture=fi-FI>>.

<sup>47</sup> Yasmin Tadjdeh, "Coast Guard Releases Solicitation for New Polar Icebreaker," *National Defense*, January 13, 2016, available at <[www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7c996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825cada7aa2&ID=2060&utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=New%20Campaign&utm\\_term=%2ASituation%20Report](http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?List=7c996cd7-cbb4-4018-baf8-8825cada7aa2&ID=2060&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=New%20Campaign&utm_term=%2ASituation%20Report)>.