



# North American Arctic Security Workshops

Spring 2023 Workshop Report

*Improving Understanding of the Emerging Characteristics of the North American Arctic from Varying Geographical Reference Points. The first of a series of planned workshops ranging from Nuuk to Nome.*



# North American Arctic Security Workshops

From Inuk to Nome: Understanding Arctic Regional Security from a North American Perspective



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## Executive Summary

This report is the product of the first in a series of North American Arctic regional workshops collaboratively hosted and designed by the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies (TSC), the North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network (NAADSN), and the Ilisimatusarfik's Nasiffik Center. The workshop brought together experts, practitioners, and students from the Kingdom of Denmark, Canada, and the United States to discuss the broad and multifaceted aspects affecting North American Arctic security. This report is designed to provide a record of the discussion for current and future policymakers to address the opportunities, concerns, and recommendations raised throughout the workshop. In addition, the report also highlights key themes to consider in the context of North American Arctic security.

The report begins with an introduction to the North American Arctic Security Workshops (NAASW) framework and approach to Arctic security to provide the necessary background for the remainder of the report. The Introduction details the vision of workshop planners in establishing NAASW and situates the workshop within the larger context of current and emerging Arctic security concerns. The Methodology section provides insight on the structure and planning of the workshop with an emphasis on the collaborative and constructive nature of the workshop. This section also introduces the next iteration of NAASW, tentatively planned for mid-2024 in Nunavut, Canada.

The report then transitions to the substantive outcomes of the workshop, beginning with key themes from throughout the week. The report authors synthesized the panelist comments into cohesive and reoccurring themes that can be considered important outcomes of the workshop.

These themes can be summarized as follows:

- Dual-use infrastructure
- Community-based search and rescue and disaster response
- Shared best practices across the North American Arctic
- Indigenous representation at all levels
- Strategic messaging within great power competition
- Transnational regional coordination and information sharing

Following the overview of key themes from the workshop, the report then transcribes the presentations and conversations from each of the panels. This detailed record of the workshop remains anonymous to maintain Chatham House Rule. Finally, the report concludes with an overview of the strategic foresight activity as well as concluding remarks looking ahead to the next iteration of the workshop.



## Introduction

The North American Arctic Security Workshops (NAASW) are established, coordinated, and co-hosted by the North American and Arctic Defense and Security Network (NAADSN), University of Greenland Ilisimatusarfik's Nasiffik Center (Nasiffik), and Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies (TSC). The overall concept of NAASW is to bring together diverse experts from Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark (with a specific reference to Greenland), and the United States to discuss a broad and multifaceted number of aspects affecting emerging factors of North American Arctic security. By design, the workshops conceptualize Arctic security from a considerably broader vantage point than sole defense matters.

These unclassified workshops are designed in a sequenced series construct, starting on the eastern side of the North American Arctic (Greenland), and iteratively working westward to the Seward Peninsula in Alaska's Arctic region. In doing so, the intent is to provide geographically unique perspectives that collectively compose a continental-wide mosaic of salient factors affecting the overall security of North America's Arctic region.

These factors include an improved understanding of emerging changes such as localized vantage points on climate/environmental changes, economic factors, access to energy, infrastructure, and logistics (which can affect local resilience), advances or deterioration in traditional subsistence and other food security-related concerns, cultural change factors, and rising or declining developmental endeavors (such as tourism or harvesting of natural resources). All of these variables are interrelated and impact the Arctic at the individual, regional, and national level.

Workshop planners, while focusing on the regional aspects of the North American Arctic, are also mindful that such a workshop is respectful of individual national policies and statutes of three nations that share common bonds of membership within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and two countries also sharing standard defense protocols via the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). Accordingly, every effort was made to ensure that discussions seek to gain insights from distinct geographic regions that affect a continental-wide Arctic vantage. These workshops are future-focused and will leverage the strategic foresight analysis methodology.

This new series continues and expands meaningful conversations on Arctic regional security that began in the Advancing Collaboration in Canada-U.S. Regional Security (ACCUSARS) series from 2020 - 2022, conducted by NAADSN, the University of Alaska's Arctic Domain Awareness Center (ADAC) and Nasiffik. TSC, NAADSN, and Nasiffik were pleased to convene this inaugural event in April 2023 in Nuuk, Greenland, with subsequent workshops planned iteratively across North America's Arctic, with the last currently scheduled event planned for Nome, Alaska.

As a result of changing environmental factors – in particular, warming temperatures and a significant reduction of the Arctic cryosphere – the North American region's increasing



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accessibility presents opportunities for Arctic and non-Arctic states as well as non-state actors to pursue a broad range of developmental and security related interests that may not align with those of the United States, Canada, and the Kingdom of Denmark (and which may also impact the Greenlandic people and governance that resides within the Kingdom). Although the current risks from state actors to the North American Arctic are assessed as low, the North American Arctic allies continue to monitor the changing Arctic security environment carefully. This includes the military actions of other states with the focus being exercising and enhancing domain awareness and presence in the region.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine beginning in February 2022 sent shockwaves across the Arctic. While Russia has not signaled similar aspirations for military conquest in neighboring Arctic countries, the world has witnessed a further spillover of international tensions into circumpolar affairs. Through its own malign actions, the Kremlin shattered any prior credibility as a peaceful actor within the rules-based international order. Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine prompted the seven other Arctic Council member states to expand diplomatic and economic sanctions against the Kremlin. Consequently, Russia's actions have undermined the regional Arctic governance-related body.

While the Kremlin seeks to compartmentalize the region from any other spillover effects of its war in Ukraine, Russia has regrettably weaponized its energy and food exports as tools of geopolitical coercion while at the same time insisting that it will turn to "non-Arctic states" (particularly China) to forge ahead with its regional development plans. Accordingly, questions abound about China's Arctic aspirations. China's pursuits in the scientific, shipping, and economic sectors are driven by the practical need to acquire additional energy sources for its expanding industries, fish protein for its population, and shorter routes for the world's most significant commercial shipping fleet. Like-minded Arctic states are increasingly aware of the risks of a growing Chinese presence within and across the region.

The heart of the North American Arctic is its people. Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark (specifically Greenland), and the United States are all dedicated to creating a future where Arctic residents, inclusive of the region's Indigenous Peoples, are thriving, strong, and safe. In that same spirit, the organizers of NAASW seek conversations focused on a practical range of sectors and scales that have a nexus to security for Arctic peoples: what the range of factors for security means about and for people in the region at the events conducted at specific geographic points.



## Workshop Methodology

Workshop planners devised a collaborative structure that allowed for Arctic experts, researchers, students, and practitioners to convene and discuss emerging regional security challenges. The first NAASW workshop began on day one with an opening keynote address by esteemed Northern leaders across the North American Arctic. The following panel discussions focused on the Kingdom of Denmark's Greenland in the circumpolar world, developing Arctic security risks, community-based contributions to domain awareness, and all-domain awareness requirements and solutions at a continental or regional scale. During a midday break, workshop participants heard from a traditional Greenlandic drum dancer.

On day two of the workshop, a second keynote from a Greenlandic governance leader began the proceedings, followed by panel discussions on lessons learned from disaster responses across the North American Arctic and on instruments of governance and opportunities for enhanced defense and security cooperation and collaboration.

The afternoon concluded with a strategic foresight activity on hybrid and non-traditional risks to the North American Arctic. Planners and decision-makers rely on forecasts of where Arctic changes will lead to anticipated measures to mitigate hazards and risk while leveraging emerging opportunities. Most forecast methodologies are mathematically derived and are valuable predictors of future outcomes if these are consistent with historical trends. Conversely, there is enduring value in strategic foresight activities in which a multidisciplinary community of participants with varied backgrounds, working together as a team, seeks to offer 'foresight' rather than forecasts of future conditions.

As the U.S. Office of Personnel Management rightly describes: "Strategic foresight is not about predictions of the future. In a complex and uncertain world, accurate prediction is fiction. Strategic foresight, instead, is about being prepared for different futures that are all possible, plausible, and potentially preferred." Strategic foresight calls for a detailed and systematic analysis of driving forces and trends of change before developing strategies or plans. Strategic foresight aims to find solutions and responses likely to best suit the (evolving) mission and organization. Strategic foresight activities enable better preparedness because they generate a transparent, contestable, and flexible sense of the future and, in so doing, make it possible to identify and assess assumptions we have about our current environment. Strategic foresight provides insight about the meaning of possible futures, which enables organizations to capitalize on opportunities and develop new business strategies that emerge from understanding those opportunities."<sup>1</sup>

This exercise focused on hybrid and non-traditional risks to the North American Arctic. Central pillars of Russian and Chinese approaches to strategic competition and warfare generally include

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/human-capital-management/strategic-foresight/>



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hybrid warfare, cyberattacks, cyber espionage, and disinformation campaigns – all forms of interstate competition below the threshold of conventional armed conflict. How are these, or how might these, dynamics play out in the Arctic? Breaking into four groups, participants considered this question as it pertains to a particular “sector” of security: political, economic/resources, human, and environmental.

The workshop was held in a hybrid format, focusing on in-person discussions in Nuuk and virtual participation over Zoom.gov. Chatham House protocols were in effect for the workshop except for the keynote addresses as specified.

**Workshop plan** - Panel presentations followed by a strategic foresight activity, captured, and promulgated via a comprehensive report. Chatham House protocols were in effect for the entire workshop.

**Workshop objective** - Workshop planners seek insights from workshop participants for their professional and informed perspectives in order to create a report of concerns, opportunities, recommendations, and inquiries to address anticipated challenges to the medium and longer term North American Arctic security environment (oriented to Alaska and Western Canadian Arctic).

**Subsequent Workshops** – the next planned event of this overall series envisioned as a sequenced set of workshops is tentatively planned for Spring 2024, in Nunavut, Canada

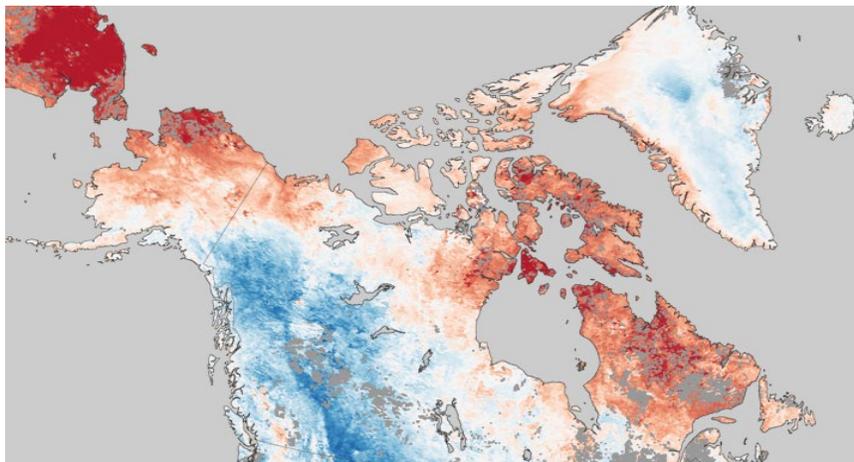


Figure 1 Graphic of North American Arctic (courtesy of NASA.gov)

## Key Themes

The inaugural NAASW brought together diverse experts from Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark/Greenland, and the U.S. to discuss multifaceted aspects affecting North American



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Arctic security, as that term is broadly defined. NAADSN, Nasiffik, and TSC deliberately and thoughtfully planned four key aspects to ensure understanding and overall event success.

First, the planners purposefully designed the event as a workshop, as opposed to a “salon” construct, so that participants could roll up their sleeves, ask critical questions, and exchange ideas.

Second, by adhering to Chatham House Rule and hosting NAASW in a university setting, the planners created a neutral, safe space for participants to engage in open and frank discussion.

Third, by intentionally building strategic foresight analysis into the agenda, the planners allowed for members of a multidisciplinary community to express diverse ideas and opinions in a respectful manner, all while building and strengthening relationships.

Fourth, the planners intentionally engaged students – as future leaders in the Arctic – in every aspect of NAASW. All participants engaged in dialogue, traded ideas, and generated potential solutions focused on the North American and transatlantic Arctic and the associated security concerns for now and the future.

The following analysis represents an overarching view of the major themes, ideas presented, and information exchanged during the two-day workshop.

## Theme 1: Greenland in the Circumpolar World

Greenland occupies a central place in Arctic life and politics. Yet, Greenland is connected to other regions in profound and meaningful ways. These connections range from the supranational and transnational to the subnational.

Greenland is geographically part of the North American Arctic, but historically, economically, and politically part of the European High North through the Kingdom of Denmark. As such, Greenland serves as a transatlantic bridge across the Arctic. Collaboration among Canada, the Greenlandic Government through the Kingdom of Denmark, and the U.S. is key to tackling the geophysical and geostrategic challenges in the North American Arctic. These connections range from defense and security cooperation institutions such as NORAD and NATO to the EU and the Arctic Council. The Greenlandic government is aware that it serves as a transatlantic bridge between the North American Arctic and European High North. As such, Greenlandic leaders know they can play a critical role in shaping Arctic security policy if they know of and have access to the proper mechanisms.

This connectivity, though, also extends beyond the supranational and transnational levels to the subnational level. Greenlanders have much in common with residents living in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut in Canada and the state of Alaska in the United States. These



people share a common culture, common history, and common challenges. Although Greenlanders are aware of the geopolitical competition between the West and China/Russia, and the strategically significant role it can play, everyday challenges of living in the Arctic remain the foremost concern, as exacerbated by climate change. Thus, knowledge exchange and information sharing among Greenlanders, Canadians, and Alaskans is important. A convening to discuss challenges, but more importantly, share best practices to meet climate change challenges could be organized. In a similar vein, collaboration among Indigenous Peoples who live in Greenland, Canada, and U.S. could be strengthened. The NAASW partners could assist by inviting Indigenous Peoples from each country to serve on panels to exchange views and educate others. The perspectives, insights, and best practices of Indigenous Peoples, in turn, could be disseminated to stakeholders in other regions of the world.

Further, sub-federal connections are economic in nature, through trade and commerce. The American state of Maine, for example, has recognized the importance of this connectivity and has actively engaged with Greenland to forge stronger economic connections. There is a real need for better understanding and integrating local and regional perspectives into the overall national and multi-national framework to counter strategic competition.

## Theme 2: Developing Arctic Security Risks

Security of the Arctic is a top priority for the United States and its Allies and partners. It is a long-term and dynamic process. Security, of course, encompasses defense. The existence of great power competition, weapons systems, and the dynamics of great power competition in the region, i.e., the action-reaction interaction of Great Powers in the Arctic region must be considered. In this regard, it is important to be mindful of the security dilemma, the signaling that it entails, and the perception of our strategic competitors and adversaries. We also must be concerned with the runaway nature of zero-sum thinking and misperception when it comes to security in the Arctic, particularly when it comes to the relationship between Russia and China.

Yet the concept of security has evolved beyond traditional defense. Economic security, human security, climate security, and environmental security are part of the North American Arctic calculus. Security risks are shared among Arctic states because these are the basis for international agreements facilitated by the Arctic Council and the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, including oil spill and environmental disaster response, search and rescue, and scientific cooperation.

How can practitioners proactively act to shape the operating environment and take advantage of opportunities to maintain Arctic security? First, a common theme that arose during the workshop was the need to develop dual use infrastructure as an essential contingency to maintaining operability, both in the civilian and military sectors within the Arctic region. Types of infrastructure include maritime ports, airfields, communications networks, and hospitals. Caution, however, is



in order, as Russia, China and other competitors could argue the NATO nations of the Arctic are collectively militarizing the Arctic.

Second, another important aspect of security is communication and information sharing. Strategic competitors and adversaries are framing the Arctic in ways that are advantageous to their national interests, which threatens democratic institutions and norms. Arctic nations aligned with NATO should be careful to use official statements and mass media consistently, preserving healthy democratic debate without providing legitimacy to strategic competitors and adversaries.

It is important to discern how Greenland fits into strategic communications of U.S. Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark and associated NATO Allies and partners, and the rhetoric produced by both Russia and China on Arctic matters. The likeminded Arctic nations should consider how to neutralize Russian and Chinese information warfare and support efforts to secure peaceful Arctic interests. Accordingly, the likeminded Arctic nations must maintain credibility in this space and preserve the rules-based international order.

At the end of the day, assessing Arctic security risks are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year and are oriented to a 360-degree vantage. And that is the challenge. The likeminded Arctic nations need to prioritize looking to the future then work backwards and must prioritize actions now to what will deter aggression in the future.

### Theme 3: Arctic Domain Awareness: Community, Regional, and Continental Perspectives

Domain awareness in the Arctic is a challenge due to the extreme climate and geography. The term domain awareness encompasses a broad set of perspectives, including the military, emerging technology, and human relations. Regardless of the perspective, domain awareness is about collecting data and sharing information from the local to the regional to the national to the transnational to the continental scales. Yet Arctic practitioners must be realistic: Achieving 100% domain awareness is impossible. There is a domain awareness gap.

Usually, practitioners think about domain awareness from the perspective of the military, who gather data from satellites and other technologies in a cloud-based system, apply quantum computing, and instantly have a complete operating picture. However, there are challenges with this picture. These challenges include the quality of the data, timeliness, filters, classification, the protection of the information, and compression. There is an implicit assumption that whoever collects the data creates the operational picture and has a monopoly on the future decision making about how to deal with that threat. This perspective may need to be reexamined.

Leveraging domain awareness at the local level complements military operational knowledge. Local perspectives are critical to domain awareness in the North American Arctic. Strengthening relationships with Indigenous Peoples across the Arctic makes sense, as those who live in and



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know the Arctic have a better perspective and understanding of what is going on than those far away. This is a different kind of “data” compared to quantitative sources. Arctic security practitioners can surely benefit thousands of eyes and ears that can provide a critically important kind of knowledge and information. Northerners can help define the challenge and consider what questions should be asked. Often, people from outside of the Arctic have a “revelation” that has been thought about and acted upon by Northern communities for years. The reality on the ground rounds out a complete understanding of the situation.

The Canadian Rangers are one model or best practice for locally empowered domain awareness. The Canadian Rangers serve at least four purposes. First, they function as a tool of surveillance. Second, they serve as Northern guides, maintaining the knowledge to help navigate and survive the terrain and climate of the high North. Third, they serve as liaisons for the Northern communities to maintain positive interactions with other elements of the Canadian Armed Forces, particularly those coming up from regions outside the Canadian Arctic. Fourth, they buttress community resilience, e.g., the Junior Canadian Ranger Program teaches youth essential search and rescue and survival skills. As Reservists, the Canadian Rangers not only contribute to their communities but are shaped by the communities that they serve. Greenland, in particular, may be interested in developing a program similar to that of the Canadian Rangers for implementation. NAADSN, Nasiffik, and TSC could use their power to convene to discuss this possibility.

When it comes to domain awareness, two points to consider are 1) in order to be successful in sharing information, people have to build relationships and 2) people have to cooperate. It is important to consider how we speak to each other, how we collaborate, and how we create the appropriate relationships. In addition to the “harder” qualities of data gathering and analysis, there is a “softer” quality that concerns relationship building and understanding everyone’s roles so that we know where information should flow. This is particularly important in the Arctic, as residents and agencies wear multiple hats.

Finally, domain awareness is about information sharing, therefore, governments must continue to break down silos to information sharing. There are too many stovepipes of information to achieve a holistic view of the North American Arctic region, which inhibits the ability to make informed decisions. This is relevant to traditional security concerns and broader security concerns such as economic security. For example, although maritime data on cruise ships is collected and shared among Allies and partners through entities like Five Eyes, NAVNORTH, and NORAD, it is not shared with locals, who may benefit from data to better prepare, e.g., number of incoming tourists. At the end of the day, practitioners of likeminded Arctic nations must get to a position to connect and share information to and from the continental, transnational, national, and subnational levels, as well as with and between Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic. Indigenous communities in Greenland, Canada, and the U.S. can benefit each other and share their knowledge of and about the Arctic.



## Theme 4: Homeland Defense and Disaster Response

Given the unique geographic position and evolving strategic relevance of the Arctic, homeland defense and disaster response are essential elements of regional security. Like domain awareness, responding to disasters through search and rescue (SAR) operations can sometimes require coordination from the local to the transnational. In the North American Arctic, SAR challenges broadly speaking encompass the difficult operating environment and rapidly changing environmental conditions, limited infrastructure, communications difficulties, asset mismatch, and the tyranny of time and distance. On a very personal or community level, SAR challenges include limited survival gear, loss of land safety knowledge, weak boating safety culture, and pressures of food insecurity.

Furthermore, without adequate domain awareness, governments cannot accurately capture all the activity that is going on. There are burdens on local communities, volunteer burnout, resource limitations in terms of funding and people, limited mental health support, slow response times, and coordinating challenges with other agencies.

Nonetheless, rather than focus on challenges (and there are many), panelists recommended that we turn our attention to the strengths of the SAR community. Federal, state, and provincial officials could continue to invest resources and strengthen coordination with the SAR community at the local level. By investing resources at the local level and coordinating with local agencies and residents, governments support community resilience, foster an attitude of self-determination, and ensure an effective response. Part of the focus could be on having the physical and psychological strength to take on an unexpected situation.

One example of successful disaster response coordination in Alaska is Typhoon Merbok. Typhoon Merbok impacted the entire West Coast of Alaska, which is the same length as the entire West Coast of the lower 48 states of the U.S. This was a tremendous area where the collective disaster response community had to coordinate efforts. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) was one of the first on the scene, but in a lot of cases USCG got there in partnership with Alaska Command and the Alaskan National Guard. USCG also coordinated efforts with FEMA and local communities.

Relatedly, governments could break down communication and other barriers among the public sector, Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, the private sector, and the academy. All actors must work together to effectively strengthen resilience in at-risk, remote, and isolated Northern communities – communities that have small populations, limited infrastructure, few local emergency management resources, and little access to rapid external assistance.

Governments also could reflect on past disasters to learn what worked, what did not, and how SAR could be improved. Governments could continue to share best practices and lessons learned at all levels to strengthen response capability and resilience in the Arctic. For example, there is much to be learned from the 2017 tsunami that struck Nuugaatsiaq, Greenland. During the tsunami, the impact of delayed response times from national assets became strikingly evidence,



and proactive investments in strengthening community resilience might have made a significant difference in disaster response. Other examples of disasters include a fire destroying a diesel electric generating station in Pangnirtung on eastern Baffin Island, just across the Davis Strait. In 2010, the *Clipper Adventurer* ran aground on a known shoal in Coronation Guld with 197 people on board; six years later, the fishing vessel *Saputi* struck a piece of ice and was holed in Davis Strait with 30 people on board; and in 2018 the research vessel *Akademik Ioffe* grounded on a rocky shoal in the Gulf of Boothia, with 163 people on board. These incidents could be examined to cull best practice insights and enhance future cooperation.

At the national level, governments could develop memoranda of understanding on emergency management cooperation either bilaterally, trilaterally, or quadrilaterally on topics such as effective warning systems, risk assessment and mitigation, and funding arrangements. Finally, and perhaps most provocatively, policymakers could alter the psychology of how we look at SAR and focus more on prevention as opposed to response.

## Theme 5: Instruments of Governance and Defense Security Cooperation

The twin themes of governance and defense security cooperation capture the idea that institutions, broadly defined, are important in the Arctic. From a governance perspective, the Arctic Council is the region's most significant body. It has evolved over time. When Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, there were few discussions about the future of the Arctic Council. Rather, several meetings were held in Moscow that NATO members could not attend because these countries could not send diplomats to Moscow. In February 2022, the response was vastly different. Up to 15 international forums were held to decide what to do. The parties realized that they could neither keep up the status quo nor replicate the 2014 lack of action. Thus, the seven like-minded Arctic States produced a strategic pause. Interestingly, because it was the senior Arctic officials talking about this and negotiating the decision as representatives of their respective states, and not in their Arctic Council capacity, the Permanent Participants were not included directly in the discussion. Afterward, the Permanent Participants re-entered the negotiations on how to move forward with the Arctic Council. In June 2022, a press statement was released that the seven like-minded member states in the Arctic Council would resume work slowly on projects not involving Russia while under Russian chairmanship (in May 2023, the chairmanship passed to Norway). Russia is a “sleeping partner” of sorts. One idea proposed is that, in order for the Arctic Council to survive, it may have to revert to functioning as a technical expert panel in the short-term, such as the Barents Euro Arctic Council and the Council of Europe. In the long-term, however, this may not work, as Russia is the Arctic's largest state, and the Arctic Council is built on trust. We may see more bilateral cooperation. Whether considering the short-term or long-term, international law and international agreements will shape the Arctic governance regime.

The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is viewed as a stabilizing force for Arctic governance. The Ilulissat Declaration was an important moment where the Arctic Five made a



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commitment to the existing legal framework and, at the heart of that, UNCLOS. Currently, however, one particular legal conundrum is playing out – Russia’s continental shelf claims. Russia is currently sidelined in Arctic affairs, yet the UNCLOS Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf determined that, on a scientific basis, Russian claims to its continental shelf are valid. Some of this shelf overlaps with Greenlandic and Canadian continental shelf claims, which will require a negotiated solution when these countries receive their recommendations in the future.

Optics matter. Given that Russia is currently sidelined, plus the fact that UNCLOS provides limited guidance on how to decide overlaps, Russia could conceivably violate its obligations under UNCLOS and conduct activities without informing other parties. Perhaps Russia will not go as far as oil and gas exploration, but it could engage in seismic exploration. We need shared legal vigilance whether it comes to Russia’s continental shelf claims as well as Chinese marine scientific research activities that could encroach upon sovereign rights.

Some participants also indicated that there might be an opportunity for concerted North American action to embrace a new approach to the Northwest Passage, which Canada considers to be its historic internal waters and the United States considers an international strait. There are good reasons for all the parties to defend their legal positions, but it is time to recognize that this waterway cuts through the territorial, cultural, and spiritual homeland of the Inuit. This Inuit homeland distinguishes the Northwest Passage from traditional arguments about the Northern Sea Route.

Turning to defense security cooperation, diverse perspectives were presented. From the Greenlandic viewpoint, Denmark has the constitutional authority to determine foreign policy in the Arctic, but Greenland has the right to self-determination – the right to have its voice heard when it comes to major decisions in this area. Greenland and Denmark opened lines of communication and forged a consensus regarding Greenland’s response to the Russian invasion. Greenland took a very strong stance, condemned the Russian invasion, and implemented EU sanctions. The government in Nuuk is now in the process of posting a representative to the EU in coordination with Denmark so that Greenland has greater access to information, but also to provide information and perspective. Greenland’s increased involvement and interest in defense cooperation does not mean they want to contribute to an arms race; they are interested in representation. Also, Greenland has discussed seeking representation in NATO, in coordination with Denmark, so that Greenlanders can secure more direct information and contribute directly to alliance deliberations.

From the U.S. perspective, defense security cooperation is about capability and will. The U.S. engages in defense security cooperation so that its Allies and partners have capabilities they need, to do the things that are important to them, that contribute to overall alliance security. Various U.S. agencies that provide defense security cooperation, including the Defense Security Cooperation Agency and the Defense Security Cooperation University. Defense security cooperation also takes place through other agencies, such as the Department of Justice, U.S.



Agency for International Development, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, USCG, Customs and Border Protection, and the Drug Enforcement Agency. These agencies cover a wide spectrum of cooperation. From military sales to military financing, excess defense articles, and training.

NORAD occupies a central place in North American defense security cooperation in the Arctic. However, defense security cooperation with NATO is a priority as well. The U.S. will continue to engage in security cooperation with our Arctic allies. Cooperation in NATO must continue to ensure that our Allies and partners in the North American Arctic have the capabilities that they need, to do the things that are important to them, that contribute to overall alliance security. Several questions remain on the table: What is the strategic relevance of Greenland in the current defense environment? What should the relationship between Greenland and North American defense be? Should NATO be a part of North American defense? These are questions that require a careful reexamination, and continued conversation, among Greenland, through the Kingdom of Denmark, Canada, and the United States.

## Opportunities, Concerns, and Recommendations: As Reflected by Plenary Panels

The workshop opened with welcome remarks from workshop planners and leadership. Each of the lead organizations provided reflections on the intent and vision for the workshop, emphasizing that this is the first iteration of a series of workshops ranging from Nuuk to Nome. The focus of this first workshop is on the North American Arctic with Greenland as the eastern most location. The workshop is intended to expand participants' mental map of what North America encompasses. Throughout the week, the hope is to emphasize the “work” of the workshop, meaning participants will be thinking of issues, opportunity spaces, and different ways of conceptualizing security.

Workshop planners hope participants will engage in rich and meaningful dialogue, which will carry across subsequent workshops in order to gain different reference points of the security nexus in the North American Arctic. For this particular workshop, the hope is to gain unique insights by discussing Greenland as geographically North American, as opposed to the European context. We are looking at the North American Arctic security equation from the geophysical to geostrategic. We will approach Arctic security concerns from a multidisciplinary perspective to inform policy and drive security cooperation across the Arctic.

### Day 1: Opening Keynotes

The academic portion of day one of the workshop began with a keynote address from senior Greenlandic and U.S. officials. These remarks were considered on the record and therefore are recorded verbatim and attributed to the respective official.



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*The Honorable Vivian Motzfeldt, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Business, The Government of Greenland*

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, it is an honor to join you today on this first day of the North American Arctic Security Workshop. I would like to express my gratitude to the Nasiffik Center, the North American and Arctic Defense and Security Network, and the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies for organizing this important event. I am delighted to see representatives from the Ted Stevens Center whom I had the pleasure to meet with three weeks ago in Anchorage. Your presence here is a testament to the strong ties and cooperation that exists among Arctic stakeholders. And thank you to all of you for visiting our country.

As permanent Arctic players, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland share a common history and ancestry. Our Inuit ancestors migrated from Alaska to Canada and Greenland over 1,000 years ago, and to this day in Greenland, we feel a strong connection to our Inuit sisters and brothers in Alaska and Canada.

While we share many similarities, there are still many avenues of cooperation that are yet to be explored. The workshop presents a timely opportunity to discuss a wide range of Arctic issues and explore potential areas for cooperation.

For a long time, the greatest threat to the Greenland people has been climate change. It remains a major concern. However, the world has changed, and we now face additional security challenges.

We live in a challenging time, having just emerged from a pandemic and now witnessing war in Europe. As an ally, Greenland stands with Allied countries in condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the breach of international law. We cannot accept the lack of respect for the Ukrainian peoples' right to self-determination. The war has affected us all, and the world does not look the same as it did before.

You all know about the pause in Arctic Council activities due to the present leadership. While we understand and support the need for a pause, we hope to resume our important international arena in due course.

The Arctic Council is crucial for us as an Arctic nation, particularly when it comes to addressing shared environmental issues. As we gather here today, I hope that we can find common ground and foster further collaboration towards a more peaceful, secure, and sustainable Arctic region. The 5 active coastal states signed the Ilulissat Declaration in 2008 and it was reaffirmed by the eight Arctic Council states in 2018, committing themselves to dialogue and negotiations to settle disputes in the Arctic.

It is an honor for us to have played a part in this declaration, both as a signatory and as a host. Given the ongoing war in Ukraine, the declaration has become even more vital.

While it may be challenging for a harmonious relationship between all the Arctic states in the near future, we must maintain the desire for a peaceful and cooperative Arctic. It will take some time before proper cooperation with Russia can resume, but we must keep in mind that Russia will not disappear from the Arctic and tomorrow will inevitably come.



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As we navigate a challenging Arctic, Greenland aims to be a team player. The future will undoubtedly bring both opportunities and challenges and we believe that cooperation between Greenland, Canada, and the United States is critical in realizing our mission for a peaceful and cooperative Arctic.

We recognize the great potential for North American cooperation and stand ready to start this new partnership and expand existing ones, particularly with the United States and Canada. Despite our geographical proximity and shared Inuit heritage, trade between Greenland and North America remains limited. We believe that being good neighbors and establishing trade and connections between our nations must be a central priority for us all.

In this regard, the work of the Inuit Circumpolar Council has been essential for the last 45 years, highlighting the importance of our Inuit heritage in Greenland, Alaska, and Northern Canada. By building upon these shared cultural ties, we can continue to strengthen our cooperation and find common ground.

Although East bound trade to Europe and Asia has traditionally been our main market, we hope to establish new connections with the West in the coming years, expanding our trade potential.

Why do I bring this up? Because the more we work together and cooperate in different areas, the closer we become, the better we understand each other and the more we can cooperate on security and defense.

Greenland is a part of North America geographically. It is also strategically significant for security reasons. For over 80 years, we have had a strong security cooperation between Canada, the United States, and the Kingdom of Denmark, including Greenland. Recently I was part of a delegation that visited the American military base in the high north of Greenland. We celebrate the name change of Thule Air Force Base to Pituffik Space Base. This location has always been known as Pituffik by our people and we have continued to call it by its name throughout the almost 80 years of history.

For those that were forcibly removed from the area when the base was originally established, the history represents a painful memory. However, today it stands a symbol of security and safety for all our people and opportunity to acknowledge and heal our wounds.

With the decision to rename the base, the United States has shown its respect for our country, our cultural heritage, and the history of the base. I appreciate the gesture from the United States. I take great pride in the fact that Pituffik and Greenland are contributing to the defense, peace, and prosperity of our countries, and that our contributions are recognized.

We live in a world that is ever changing and increasingly challenging, and it is crucial for friends and allies to work together and listen to each other. That is why I would like to express my gratitude to all service members and civilian workforce who are working hard to ensure the security and defense of the people of Greenland, the United States, and the Transatlantic community from this base.



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Canada is our closest neighbor, and we can even see the Canadian Ellesmere Island with the naked eye in Greenland. We now have a land border on Hans Island, which underscores just how close we are. Nevertheless, we still have limited integration in terms of education, economy, infrastructure, and mobility across borders. However, there are positive developments to usher in South Greenland, where we have the opportunity to select a Canadian contractor, Pennecon, to build the new airport in Qaqortoq.

The United States and Canada both have consulates in Nuuk back in the 1940s and this relationship was partially created in June 2020 when the United States reopened its consulate in Nuuk, re-establishing diplomatic ties after almost 70 years.

We welcome any Canadian plan for a more official presence in Nuuk. I would like to remind you that Greenland reopened its representation in Washington, DC in 2014. Canada and Ottawa are therefore strong candidates for the next Greenlandic representation abroad.

Greenland is not only a part of North America, but also maintains a long-standing and wide-ranging relationship with the European Union. The relationship encompasses fisheries, trade, the EU's Arctic Strategy, budgetary support for education, and most recently, pre-growth sectors and research cooperation.

As part of this new strategy, the EU has announced plans to establish a physical presence in Greenland through the opening of an office in Nuuk. Critical minerals, renewable energy, and Greenland's recent decision to follow the EU's sanctions in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, have all emerged as key areas of cooperation for Greenland and the EU.

Whether we are partnering with the EU or our North American Allies, it is important that we focus on developing our trade and cooperation with Allies and partners. We must also prioritize the ownership of critical infrastructure, including local energy supply, airports, communication, and data infrastructure, and so forth. Non-Greenlandic entities will not be permitted to own such facilities.

It is crucial that we strengthen the redundancy and security of our infrastructure facilities and communication lines. The Greenlandic society cannot be dependent on what is in some cases a signal communication supply line. The vulnerability is unacceptable in a modern society that is constantly evolving and where security scenarios are rapidly changing. We need to make our country more resilient, and this is a priority for many other countries as well.

We can and must cooperate with our allies to strengthen concrete installations and facilities, and to support the international legal framework that regulates cooperation between states and peoples.

The era where security was not necessarily a major concern in the Arctic has ended. In the past year alone, Greenland has experienced several cyber-attacks. It is imperative that we take a strong stance against such unlawful and illegal actions.



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The Government of Greenland has also decided to station a Greenlandic diplomatic employee in NATO Headquarters in Brussels in cooperation with the Government of Greenland. This we do as Greenland is part of NATO and we believe the security situation in the Arctic necessitates this.

On our end, we need to strengthen our knowledge and experience in the security and defense area, and on NATO cooperation in general. It would also help to be able to enrich the discussions in the NATO Headquarters with the Greenlandic perspectives when the talks involve the High North. However, this does not mean Greenland supports an arms race in the region. We remain committed to promoting a low-tension Arctic.

Our focus is on improving surveillance capabilities to enhance our understanding of activities and traffic in our territory. We also support the principle of dual use technology development involving civilian use to avoid contributing to an arms race.

I believe that we can address these challenges and opportunities together by sharing experience and developing our resources responsibly. I also see great potential in creating a home where decisionmakers from local governments and parliament in Alaska, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Greenland can exchange ideas and start concrete cooperation.

I have faith in future generations. Our young people are making positive progress by pursuing education, becoming professionals, and taking leadership roles in our Arctic communities. It is our shared interest to lead conversations on responsible Arctic development and benefit the people living peacefully in our regions.

As countries working together on Arctic issues, the leadership of the Arctic people will always be the center of our cooperation. This kind of cooperation has been incredibly positive and played a vital role in contributing to the sustainable economic development of the Arctic region. As we contribute to our minerals to be green transition, we can ensure that our effort benefits both peace and security in the region.

I am eager to continue this cooperation with the United States and our other partners here today. As Arctic peoples we have much to learn from one another and my team and I look forward to spending this conference listening, learning, discussing, and connecting with you all.

The potential for North American cooperation is significant. I believe Greenland is ready to start this new partnership and expand existing ones, particularly with the United States and Canada.

In closing, I would like to briefly mention our upcoming security and defense strategy. In Greenland, we are working diligently to finalize it with a strong focus on our neighbors to the West and our friend Iceland to the East. While I cannot provide further detail at this time, we will be dialogue with the political parties soon.

In conclusion, I am excited to hear the debrief and conclusions over the next two days of this workshop, and once again I would like to express my gratitude to all of you who are working to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the Arctic region. Thank you.



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*Ms. Joanie Simon, Consul, U.S. Consulate Nuuk, Greenland, Department of State*

I want to express my gratitude to Nasiffik for hosting and working together with our friends from the Ted Stevens Center from Alaska, and the North American and Arctic Defense and Security Network in Canada, to arrange this important workshop. While Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, from a polar perspective are close together—Greenland and Canada share a land border as of last year—we all know that the logistics of getting to this place make it a long journey. So, thank you so much for making that journey. Your presence here and your focus on bringing together experts to share knowledge about the North American Arctic, in the Arctic, demonstrated the value we place on listening, learning, and being here. Thank you.

It is worth emphasizing the significant role that research organizations, such as those represented here today, play in fostering collaboration and driving innovation in the Arctic. New ideas and insights are generated through collaborative efforts such as this workshop and are invaluable in informing policymakers and helping find solutions that benefit us all. As researchers, military representatives, academics, and security and government representatives, your perspectives and expertise contribute to shaping policies that can address emerging challenges in the Arctic and promote regional stability. We all recognize that the Arctic presents unique challenges and opportunities and it is clear that we need to work together to address them. Our shared security relies on strong partnerships and effective cooperation.

This is a workshop about security, and while I am certain and it is appropriate that Russia's destabilizing, brutal war in Ukraine will be at the forefront of everyone's minds, the next two days I would challenge you to also think about beyond what we would typically view as threats to our security.

Increasingly, as Church and Viviane mentioned, climate change, energy security, health crises, supply chain vulnerabilities, cyber-attacks, and the People's Republic of China, their effort to garner influence in the Arctic region, threaten the resilience of our communities and of the region as a whole. We have seen climate change shifting potential sea routes, undermining physical infrastructure, impacting the weather, and pushing fish and other animals out of their traditional waters and lands.

To mitigate our impact on the environment, and to shift from less reliable sources of energy, we are challenged to rethink how we power our societies. And the construction of new energy generation sources impacts the people who live in the places they are being built.

COVID changed the way we work, travel, source our goods, learn, and even greet one another, and many are still suffering from loss and grief. The impact of the last few years will be felt for decades. It also forced us to rethink our supply chains. Can we grow our economies, the green economies that we all envision for ourselves, if we're relying on single sources for goods and materials? How vulnerable does that make us?

And what happens if we launch into what is likely a new leap in technological advancement. This leap seems to have taken place in just the last three months even. There is something happening



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here that is big. As we see this advancement happen, how do we protect our privacy? Our infrastructure? Our ability to communicate and educate?

The spotlight that has been on the Arctic over the last few years is not going anywhere. We know the People's Republic of China is interested in increasing its influence in the Arctic; Seeking economic advantage that does not reflect the values of transparency, high labor and humanitarian standards, access to rule of law, and care for the environment that we all hold. We should not mistake a lack of broad, highly visible presence now, for a lack of interest or planning. That rather, is strategic patience.

The nature of these threats is not always immediately apparent. They do not respect borders. They are changing constantly. They are complex, interconnected. Envisioning solutions requires us to think expansively, make guesses about the future, and invest substantial resources, not only in security but in education, infrastructure, and technology development.

Security in the North American Arctic is not viewed by the United States as only about military or defense activities. We seek to address security challenges in the Arctic from a whole of society perspective. Rather than just building on a foundation of strong military cooperation and enabling traditional defense and security, we seek ways to contribute to building the strong societal foundation for its own benefit.

We've seen examples in history of societies with strong economies, governance structures, and educational institutions, proving resilient against emerging threats. From ancient Roman's victory over Carthage, to Japan resisting Western colonial incursions for hundreds of years, these stable societies retained their cohesion in the face of existential threats.

But the Arctic is a unique environment. It is a collection of diverse peoples, cultures, and governments spread over vast and challenging terrain with rapidly changing conditions. There are few formal mechanisms through which efforts to build consensus and address issues based in the Arctic can take place. The Arctic Council being one. However, unfortunately, today collaboration in the Arctic Council remains limited as a result of the brutal war Russia has waged against Ukraine.

It is more evident than ever that Arctic countries with shared values need to work closely together to improve our communication networks, infrastructure, supply chain reliability, and technological capabilities to safeguard our security in the face of existing and emerging challenges in the region. That makes this workshop today particularly timely.

Our countries share common interests in the Arctic. We envision this as a peaceful, low-tension region, where countries act responsibly and transparently, respect the environment, and benefit the people who live here. It is crucial that we collaborate closely to promote our shared stability, resilience, and security. The appointment of the US Ambassador for the Arctic, the creation of organizations like the Ted Stevens Center, and the reopening of the US Consulate in Nuuk all stand as symbols of the US commitment to the Arctic and our dedication to working hand and hand with our partners to strengthen ties, share knowledge, and learn.



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The focus of our work at the Consulate is exactly that; to strengthen the ties between the US and Greenland in areas outside of the defense and security space. We work to forge economic, cultural, scientific, and educational connections based on our shared values and common interest. Working here in Greenland, alongside local partners at different levels of government and institutions, organizations, and wonderful individuals to shape and grow this multifaceted and genuinely positive relationship between our countries is a good thing in and of itself. And, it supports cooperation in the traditional defense and security realm, which for us is coordinated through the Embassy in Copenhagen, in collaboration with the governments of Denmark and Greenland.

Partnership and collaboration among researchers, defense practitioners, and other stakeholders who understand, live and work in the North American Arctic, are key to driving innovation and finding sustainable solutions here. We are, after all, neighbors; let's continue to engage in meaningful dialogue. Let's do it at this workshop. Let's listen to each other's perspectives, share best practices, generate innovative ideas, and most importantly, translate them into action. By working together in research, education, and knowledge exchange, we can make progress in addressing the complex issues facing our Arctic and shape policy solutions for a brighter and more secure future for the region.

Thank you all for your participation and contribution over the next few days and I wish you a productive and engaging workshop.

## Day 1: Panel 1 - Greenland in the Circumpolar World

### Panel Description and Focus:

The focus of Panel 1, *Greenland in the Circumpolar World*, was to set the scene for the first iteration of NAASW taking place in Nuuk, Greenland. By providing workshop participants with an overview of the geopolitical context of Greenland, the intent was to bring together North American experts to provide background for participants to carry with them throughout the workshop. Panelists ranged from social scientists from each of the participating nations, to senior officials bringing valuable insights from their positions. In the opening remarks, the moderator noted that the transatlantic relationship is moving north and the more Greenland is a part of this, the better.

### Panel Summary:

The panel began with an overview of the relationship between Greenland and the European Union to contextualize Greenland's view of the security landscape and geopolitical environment. This relationship is particularly important because it is how Greenland participated in international relations. The EU functioned as a political and economic shelter to Greenland. The first panelist highlighted the following events for workshop participants:



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1973: Greenland becomes part of EEC with Denmark. Denmark was in favor and Greenland was opposed, but Greenland did not have decision-making capacity and was forced into EEC.

1979: Greenland receives home rule, new referendum with EEC membership in 1982

1985: Greenland leaves the EU but becomes Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) – tripartite negotiations among Greenland, Denmark, and EU Commission

1992: Greenland has representation in Brussels, gets funding, important for Greenland

2002: The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) was organized into an association – OCTA – the OCT-EU Forum, tripartite meetings, and the Partnership Working Parties

2006: Partnership agreement

2021: Renewed EU-Greenland sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement

2023-2024: EU office opened in Nuuk.

The establishment of the EU office in Nuuk was largely driven by climate change, and the transition toward a green economy and green energy. We must keep the Arctic a sustainable and peaceful place for international collaboration. A new strategy is coming out from the EU that states that it should be a safe, stable, sustainable, peaceful, and prosperous Arctic. This comes as a time in which regional cooperation with Russia is suspended.

For Greenland, long-term EU cooperation has contributed to strengthening the education system and enhancing learning opportunities, as knowledge and skills are essential for Greenland's socio-economic development.

2021-2027: Greenland will receive €225 million in assistance as an EU strategic outpost.

The next panelists examined Greenland through a lens of connectivity and Arctic defense architecture. They explained that Greenland is being shaped by changing notions of connectivity over time, meaning how it is related to the North Atlantic networked policy and a North American defense architecture. Greenland has always been in the same geographic location, but what has changed is how Greenland is connected to the rest of the world. A specific location does not define geopolitics, but instead it is the interactions through infrastructure, transportation, trade, and networks. Prior to the modern system, Greenland was connected through migratory patterns or the North Atlantic networked polity such as Vikings. After World War II, however, Greenland became connected to the rest of the world through the North American defense architecture and the establishment of Pituffik Space Force Base.



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The reorganization of the U.S. defense architecture with the creation of European Command (EUCOM) and Northern Command (NORTHCOM) altered Greenland's connectivity. Despite its geographic proximity to North America, it was placed in the latter combatant command. The panelists elaborated that because Greenland was placed under EUCOM, Greenland only started gaining traction in Danish defense and foreign policy thinking in the middle of the 2000s. Prior to 2007, there was next to no mention of Greenland or the Arctic in Danish foreign policy documents. In 2017, the connectivity of Greenland started changing and began forging connectivity to the defense of North America. Greenland could not be seen in isolation from the defense of North America. And with the new NORAD/NORTHCOM strategy in 2021, the aim was to integrate the security of North America into the global defense architecture. We need to rethink connectivity to North America and what kind of connections will be needed for the future of Arctic security.



Figure 2 Circumpolar view of the Unified Command Plan Areas of Responsibility. See U.S. Department of Defense.

The third panelist examined Greenland through the lens of multilateral cooperation. He began his remarks with a personal anecdote that the driftwood in his garden is Siberian pine carried to Greenland by the Arctic Ocean currents. Through this story, he highlighted the importance of the Arctic Ocean to Greenland, and more broadly the importance of Arctic cooperation and the Arctic Council for Greenlanders. The Arctic Council is the most important Arctic forum, and it is hard to think about Arctic cooperation without an Arctic Council. Yet, given the current War in Ukraine, things are incredibly complicated. It is important for Greenland to have a say within the Kingdom when talking about the Arctic and the Arctic Council.

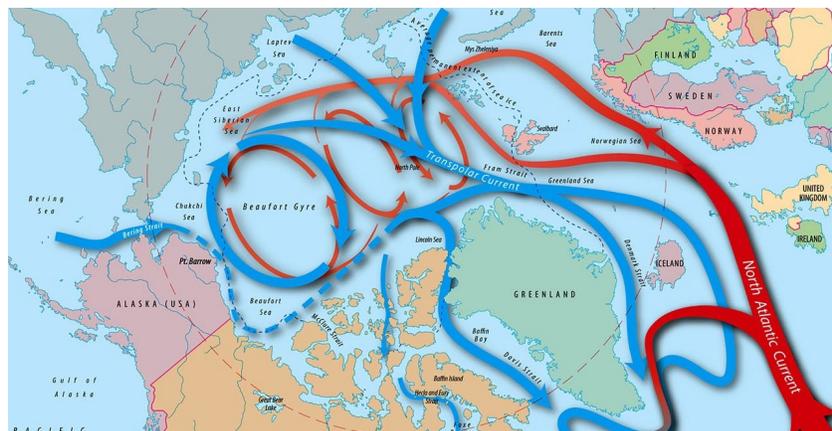


Figure 3: Graphic showing ocean currents of the Arctic region. Courtesy of NAASW speaker presentation (Chatham House Rules prevent further disclosure).

Greenland is an Arctic nation: its people, culture, and geography are the Arctic.

The Nordic Council of Ministers (comprised of representatives from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Faroes, and Greenland) represents a learning ground for Greenland. Yet, Greenland does not have autonomy to work on its own in the Nordic Council of Ministers and it wants an independent voice someday. The West Nordic Council is important to Parliamentarians in Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands. Both of these bodies are the inspiration for more North



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American cooperation among Alaska, the northern territories in Canada and Greenland, and this is very much on the mind of politicians. There is an opportunity for this shift now, and the panelist sees politicians being proactive in this space. The panelist believes that we have to institutionalize and have funds for more formalized cooperation because Northerners must discuss security and these issues together.

The fourth panelist proposed that trade between North America and Greenland is too limited. It is important to expand our mental map of what the North American Arctic constitutes. This includes bringing New England and Maine into these conversations due to geographic proximity. Furthermore, we need to broaden our perspectives of security beyond just defense. The panelist argues that the underdeveloped relationship between Greenland and North America is due largely to American confusion about Greenland. The panelist read the following expert form *Underworld* by Don DeLillo to demonstrate this point:

*“Did you ever look at Greenland on a map?”*

*“I guess I have, once or twice perhaps.”*

*“Did you ever notice that it's never the same size on any two maps? The size of Greenland changes from map to map. It also changes year to year.”*

*“It's large,” she said.*

*“It's very large. It's enormous, but sometimes it's a little less enormous, depending on which map you're looking at.”*

*“I believe It's the largest island in the world.”*

*“The largest island in the world,” Marvin said. “But you don't know anyone who's ever been there, and the size keeps changing. What's more, listen to this, the location also changes. Because if you look closely at one map and then another, Greenland seems to move. It's in a slightly different part of the ocean. Which is the whole juxt of my argument.”*

*“What's your argument?”*

*“You asked so I'll tell you. That the biggest secrets are staring us right in the face and we don't see a thing.”*

*“What's the secret about Greenland?”*

*“First, does it exist? Second, why does it keep changing its size and its location? Third, why can't we find anyone who's personally been there? Fourth, didn't a B-52 crash about ten years ago that the facts were so hush-hush we still don't know for sure if there were nuclear weapons aboard?”*

*He pronounced it “nuclear.”*



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*"You think Greenland has a secret function and a secret meaning. But then you think everything has a secret function and a secret meaning," she said.*

*"The bigger the object, the easier it is to hide it. How do you get to Greenland? What boat do you take? Where do you find an airport that has a flight to this main city that nobody knows the name of, and nobody has ever been to? And this is the main city. What about the outlying areas? The whole enormous island is one big outlying area.*

*What color is it? Is it green? Iceland is green. Iceland's on TV. You can see the houses and the countryside. If Iceland is green, is Greenland white? I'm only asking because nobody else is asking. I have no personal stake in this place...."*

The panelist highlighted that this quote is talking about the extent and limits of American imagination when it comes to Greenland. The most recent issue that caused consternation about Greenland was the proposed purchase by former President Trump. Greenland is important to the security of the United States, but Americans are grappling with confusion and a mishandling of Greenland. The United States must learn from mistakes through dialogue. The most contentious aspects of the Denmark-U.S. relationship are about Greenland.

What new ideas could transform the U.S.- Greenland relationship? This panelist suggested trade, and that we must plant the notion of New England as an Eastern counterpart to Alaska. Maine has the imagination to think about Greenland in new ways. Senator Angus King has been active in promoting trade, cultural, and educational exchanges with Greenland. Gov. Janet Mills brought the largest delegation to the Arctic Circle Assembly (45 people) to figure out how Maine can get involved in the transforming North Atlantic relationship through trade and exchanges. The Icelandic shipping company moved from Virginia to Maine – this geographic shift was significant, and the number of trips increased by 25%. Portland has improved infrastructure to connect Greenland and the Arctic.

To conclude, the panelist suggested that geography is an imaginative construct of imagination and Mainers are thinking about this in the context of the Arctic. Voyages between Nuuk and Portland are being explored, and we must have the vision to not be confined by Westphalian borders that have constrained us for too long.

The final panelist examined threats to the Arctic by strategic competitors through messaging and the information environment. Strategic competitors articulate the Arctic in ways that are advantageous to them. We need to think about how Greenland fits in a space that is now contested. Russia and China often have different interests and realities than those of our partners and allies. However, while China and Russia are joined in strategic documents, they have different interests and realities in the Arctic. China maintains the concept of Strategic Patience while Russia wants to establish itself as the dominant Arctic state and undermine the legitimacy of the U.S.



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The panelist began by examining what messaging is being promulgated by Russian state media. First, the dominant narrative in Russian media is that the U.S. and NATO are destabilizing forces in the Arctic. Whereas Western narratives often highlight Russia's military buildup in the Arctic, Russian narratives emphasize the opposite, and the idea of a Russian threat is ridiculous. Second, Russian messaging states that Arctic States are pawns of the U.S. and it is a continuation of U.S. colonialism and interference in internal affairs of other Arctic States. This narrative seeks to delegitimize the American presence. Lastly, the narrative that Arctic states' participation in the U.S./EU sanctions damages their own Arctic economic interests intends to undermine support for sanctions in other Arctic states suggests that the sanctions are actually hurting those states more than Russia.

The important question for this panel is how does Greenland fit into this narrative? Russia wants to destabilize, sow confusion, and create uncertainty within Greenland. This is a landmark moment for Greenland and the Faroes for supporting sanctions against Russia and explicitly articulating their stance against the Russian war in Ukraine.

The panelist next looked at CCP narratives and China's Polar interests. For years, the People's Republic of China official statements and state-run media have asserted that China is a "near-Arctic state" and an "important stakeholder in Arctic affairs" with the right to a greater role in Arctic governance, defining the region as a global common rather than a strictly regional space. Lacking a geographical connection to the Arctic, China legitimizes this status through extensive scientific research, investment, and economic development in the North.

China seeks to advance the "community of human destiny" or "community with a shared future for mankind" in the polar regions. This term is an increasingly dominant frame in Chinese messaging, which encompasses the idea that China must be more active in shaping global affairs as it seeks to realize the "Chinese dream" of what Xi Jinping refers to as the "great rejuvenation" (essentially, China's return to the center of world civilization). At the Arctic Circle Assembly last year, the Chinese Ambassador to the Arctic declared that – as a member of the UN Security Council, perhaps it should have the ability to interfere in Arctic affairs through the UN if the Arctic Council cannot get its act together – China wants to be seen as an influential but responsible actor in global affairs, which colors its approach to regional engagement.

The Arctic is not as central or important to China as the writings of many Western Arctic commentators might suggest. Beijing's main preoccupations are still closer to home. Given the small Chinese footprint in the Arctic and hypothetical military threat in or through the Arctic, what accounts for the vigor with which many political and academic commentators insist that the United States and its Arctic state allies must mount a military response to China in the region? Narratives tend to conflate the more hypothetical risk that China poses as an international actor in the Arctic with the real risk that it already poses as a regional actor in the Pacific. The danger is that over-inflated or misplaced fears about China's military threat to and in the Arctic may prove to be a strategic distraction, diverting Arctic states attention and defense resources from elsewhere. In this sense, prematurely elevating China to military peer or near-peer competitor status in the



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Arctic can divert attention from parts of the world where its capabilities and interests actually warrant such status.

Looking ahead, we expect that Russia will escalate its narrative in terms of stated positions and interests by operationalizing intent. Previous passive and/or seemingly semi-benign statements may become hardened positions. In these phases, information will be used to assess resolve, create confusion, invoke reactions, and seek to dictate momentum. The West must be careful to use official statements and mass media consistently, preserving healthy democratic debate without providing Russia the legitimacy that it seeks. As allies and partners work to navigate through the exhausting rhetoric and deter increased dangers, the West must effectively compete in all aspects of the information environment. The like-minded Arctic states maintain a profound advantage in their shared responsibilities, values, and principles, while Russia is increasingly isolated. In this context, the Western allies must take proactive measures to neutralize Russian information warfare and support efforts to secure Western Arctic interests.

## Question and Answer

Q: What is the role of Greenland relative to NORTHCOM/NORAD? If we look at the Nordic Agreement, it seems as if since 2017, they have been developing something that resembles a Nordic version of NORAD in terms of shared airspace, maritime space, and article 3 connecting it to America. So where does Greenland fit in developing the Nordic security environment? How do we tie what is happening with NORTHCOM and NORAD with Greenland?

A: Defense and security is not a Greenlandic competency, but they do still have an opinion and a perspective. Greenland is on the North American continent geographically and is not Nordic, whereas Denmark is Scandinavian, so there is a difference. Greater cooperation with Iceland is an idea. This could be through SAR, or maritime awareness, and not just hard security. Greenland is in another space geographically.

A: We haven't talked about the history of disagreement between the Danish Defense Ministry and the United States. There was a concern about the view of Russia toward Denmark after the second world war – Denmark was hesitant to allow the U.S. to do military operations because it did not want to provoke Russia. This is still a sentiment in the government and can be seen in the reluctance to participate in exercises such as Noble Defender. Is this reluctance still relevant? What about Greenland? Russia is very interested in maintaining the status quo and doesn't want a stronger U.S. presence in Greenland. I could imagine seeing increased partnership in air space, data sharing, or image sharing among the Nordic countries and NORAD, but not being fully integrated with NORAD.

Q: How do you see cooperation between Russia and China in the future with regard to the Arctic?

A: Often it is important to think of time horizons. In the short-term, China is in a phase of having done a mix of different ways of dealing with the Arctic states including wolf-warrior diplomacy, friendship building, restoration of relations with actors like Norway, and more positive messaging with paternalistic sub-messaging. Right now, we are seeing a bit of a recalibration or reimagining



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what has worked on the part of China where we will see soft overtures for China to evaluate out what works, but not expecting any bold action.

Looking to the medium term, it depends on how the Beijing-Moscow relationship unfolds. If Beijing can exploit Russia's mistakes to then continue to strengthen economic relationships with Europe and the United States. The panelist doesn't see China being a bold revisionist military actor in the Arctic. Over the next 10 years, China will add more layers to its legitimacy as Arctic stakeholder and then be pragmatic in terms of where it can leverage geostrategic realities. The Arctic is not so important to China that it will drive the agenda and take precedence over other priorities. What are China's legitimate interests and rights as an international stakeholder in the Arctic with which we are fine? Of course, China is interested in shipping, but if China is crossing lines and breaching rules, we point it out. The important thing is that we must maintain credibility in this space. We don't want to undermine our own commitment to the rules based international order.

A: We must take care not to demonize China. They comprise 1/5 of the world's population and are an increasingly important market for the West. For Greenland, seafood exports to China are the basis of the economy. The idea is to try to find a way to cooperate with China at a sensible level but also be cautious and be analytical. We must maintain trade with them, we need them for the system we have built over the past 40 years.

A: Cryolite was a strategic mineral only found in Greenland and is a key ingredient to aluminum. It was used to make aircraft in WWII. We assume that China's interest in Greenland is rare earth metals. As we've seen with two economic shocks, the first with COVID and the second with the Russian invasion of Ukraine and associated energy shock – the idea of electrical renewable resources necessitates rare earth metals, which puts Greenland back on the map. The lesson we can learn from cryolite is that Greenland had a moment. Eventually, mines were exhausted, and other resources were found. Greenland, therefore, should take advantage of this moment of economic happening and be wise about how they make the most of it.

A: It is important to examine China's interest in deep sea research and mining access. Fifteen years ago, outer continental shelf claims were an emerging development. If you look at current claims, there is almost nothing unclaimed. Therefore, China is very limited in this mining space with limited benefit for China to invest in these capabilities in the Arctic. That being said, China could limit others from owning these resources.

Q: Does Arctic exceptionalism exist? It seems that Arctic exceptionalism is being challenged and may be dead. How do we keep Arctic exceptionalism instead of speculation?

A: The priority list in the Pentagon is driven by current events. We have to deal with things happening now, not things that you think are important.

A: Arctic exceptionalism is challenged, but not dead - U.S. Arctic Policy 2022 represents a wish to continue broad Arctic cooperation.



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A: We are seeing a lot of cooperation on the ground –in working groups through the Arctic Council– even without Russia. How do we continue to make progress? It will be interesting to see when Norway takes chairmanship.

A: Is Arctic exceptionalism politically pragmatic or purely an academic concept? Exceptionalism was born out of political pragmatism – if people keep saying it exists, it will. There are many exceptional elements of the Arctic; You can't fight a war in the Arctic, you can't invade and therefore Greenland does not need traditional defense, and so this means something in terms of how you think about fundamental issues of statecraft.

A: It is important to tell your story – climate change is where Arctic exceptionalism is really relevant to the rest of the world. The Arctic is on the front lines of something unprecedented. Greenlanders need to get the story out, people are curious.

A: From the academic reading of it, the panelist doesn't think Arctic exceptionalism ever existed. It is an overly grand idea that every aspect of the Arctic is exceptional. So, what is exceptional that may make it a pathway to re-engage with competitors or adversaries when appropriate? Is it exceptionally at risk of spiraling into chaos? Russia made this mess, and they must be the ones to restore trust in international order; the Arctic may be one of those pathways back.

## Day 1: Panel 2 - Developing Arctic Security Risks

### Panel Description and Focus:

This panel was designed to examine the concept of Arctic security ranging from traditional defense matters to broader elements of human and environmental security concerns. Over time, the concept of Arctic security has evolved with the changing vernacular of the national security enterprise. For example, looking at the U.S. National Strategy for the Arctic Region, the language includes defense and homeland security, environmental stewardship, governance, etc. The U.S. National Security Strategy contains a fairly robust section on the Arctic. It is important to consider how we can act proactively to shape the operating environment and take advantage of opportunities to maintain Arctic security. In this session, panelists were asked what Arctic security means from their vantage point, and further, what are the top three challenges they view vis-a-vis Arctic security. There are many possible futures for the Arctic.



### Panel Summary:

The first panelist posited that security means freedom from fear. The panelist added that his greatest fear is miscalculation, meaning an incident occurs and things spiral out of control, and the international community does not have the ability to calm the situation down or deal with the consequences. Thinking about the Arctic in this context and how we are going to be free from fear in the Arctic region, we must look back at history. After the Battle of Britain, Winston Churchill said, “Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed to so many by so few.” The panelist argued that if we look 50 years into the future, we may say that about Greenland.

If we think about the Arctic Ocean in the summer 50 years from now with no sea ice, and we have ships from competing powers transiting the Arctic—military, commercial, cruise liners, and tourists—and there is some kind of incident or miscalculation, and things spiral out of control: What is going to be the result?

Winston Churchill also said, “No one can guarantee success in war, except deserve it.” The question then is, what do we need to do now to deserve success in any potential future conflict? A future conflict is not desirable, and it is not inevitable. A future war may be preventable, but we are talking about unforeseen circumstances that spiral out of control as the driver of conflict. Is it winnable? Most certainly, but the question is how we do that in the context of Greenland and the circumpolar world.

We must be prepared. The Minister laid the foundations in her opening remarks. Firstly, dual use infrastructure to prepare to win (ex: Germans built an airfield into the Audubon when building the road system) – we can do that with ports, airfields, communications networks, hospitals – everything that we need to not have to station forces in Greenland, but to operate, when necessary, from Greenland. If we imagine what victory will require, we can build it into modern infrastructure. Second, developing connectivity, awareness, and understanding is essential to develop a society that understands its place in a potential conflict. We need to increase trade as a tool of investment and developing awareness. In line with that comes more cooperation among politicians and opportunities for dialogue where miscalculation might have previously occurred. We need to prioritize looking to the future then working backwards. We must prioritize our actions now to what will help us win in the future.

The second panelist argued that security is a mindset that changes over time. Recently, we have witnessed recently how that mindset has changed dramatically. What we see now in Europe and the Western world is a very focused mindset, a very clear-cut mindset, because we know absolutely what we are talking about. Secondly, security is also about circumstances and the framework or connectivity. One thing that is on the panelists’ mind is how a ripple somewhere can create a wave somewhere else, particularly in the Arctic. Thirdly, there is no narrow definition of

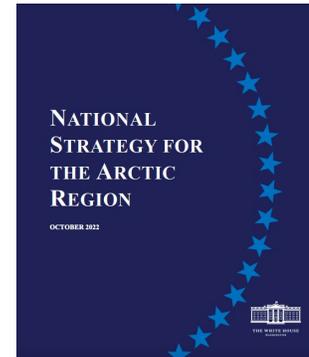


Figure 4: Front cover of the National Strategy for the Arctic Region, 7 October 2022. White House Publications, United States of America.

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security. Security is all domains, axes, climate change, and miscalculations. It is a 360-degree risk – and that is the challenge.

This panelist's area of responsibility is about 25% of the whole of the U.S. He has police authority in an area that is approximately three times the size of Germany. This poses a concern about how he performs his military tasks but also balances safety concerns. The panelist's primary concern is surveillance. It is a concern, a task, and a challenge. We now see a togetherness in the Arctic, which is quite unheard of; we have a number of NATO nations who have made the decision to eliminate the red tape and established bilateral and multilateral cooperation that, 18 months ago, was unheard of. There is still room for improvement, but there is a will and determination to rise up to this challenge together.

The third panelist examined the question from the hypothetical Russian perspective, introducing the concept of ontological security – the existential questions that nation states face and the preservation of state identity. This has particular relevance to Russia and its interest in the Arctic. In the contemporary security environment, the panelist hears and feels a very palpable sense of fear and anger when we discuss Russia, and specifically when we speak about confidence building opportunities with Russia and the end of Arctic exceptionalism. This is largely justified; Russia is conducting a brutal and illegal war and is going to have to pay for its crimes. They have disrupted relationships in the region. The worry is that when we start to deny Russia's legitimacy, we must think about Russia's ontological security. When states feel that their identity is threatened and delegitimized, that is a threat to security and stability and creates a tremendous risk. At some point this war will end and Russia may wish to rejoin the Arctic community. The question we must ask is, what environment do we want to create when that day comes? Should we avoid creating a space that makes it impossible for Russia to be legitimate? In the short-term, no. But at what point down the road do we reestablish those confidence building mechanisms? We need to be mindful of the signaling and narratives that we tell when we talk about Russia. What would we be giving up considering that Russia also needs to feel secure in the Arctic.

The fourth panelist divided Arctic security in two ways: 1) What does it mean for my/our security? 2) What is the Arctic security regime as a system? To understand Arctic security, we need to understand it as a long term and dynamic process. Arctic security did not start in February 2022 with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Arctic exceptionalism was actually a narrative that existed because of U.S. predominant power after the Cold War. The U.S. had certain interests, and its commitment to rule of law – and ultimately the protection of American security interests – facilitated the development of Arctic exceptionalism. Nevertheless, the Arctic regime that formed is more of an American-dominated Arctic security environment, which the West appreciates and enjoys.

The panelist argues that if we are to understand Arctic security, there are three critical variables to understand as an interactive long-term process:

1. *The existence of great power competition:* Arctic security started in 1947 when the Cold War started. There existed two countries that posed a perceived existential threat to each other. This same tension continues today.



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2. *Weapon systems:* Weapons systems determine how a conflict is conducted. For the Arctic, the weapon systems of note are the nuclear bomb and the delivery systems. The delivery systems then feed into what makes this an Arctic issue, and that is geography. The transition from bombers to missiles made Greenland especially important. When moving into the post-Cold War era, everyone assumed that the U.S.-Soviet and U.S.-Russia tensions would cease to exist. Of the post-Soviet countries, Russia did not give up nuclear weapons. Russia's GDP is abysmal, yet they still maintain rusting submarines from the pre-Cold War era. During the time that the U.S. was the hegemon they continued to develop their nuclear weapons capabilities and defensive systems such as the Patriot missile. So, when Putin came to power in 1999, he stripped away the language of Yeltsin and Gorbachev that had previously eliminated the existential threat. In 2002 and 2003 Russians were investigating how to counter U.S. dominance in their missile systems – hyper sonics are long-term weapon systems that must be developed with intent. They did not just emerge in Russia in 2022. The question then is, why the Arctic? Russia is dominant in the Kola Peninsula, and we must use hypersonic to address this threat. By the time we get to 2008, we see the redevelopment and procurement processes in the U.S. shift to respond to Russian weapon systems development.

3. *Dynamics of great power competition in the region:* We have to understand it is the active-reactive interaction of Great Powers in the region. In 2023, if we want to understand where this is going, recognize that Russia is coming into a system with an Arctic Council with 7 NATO members versus one non-NATO member. The next question to ask in terms of weapon systems is what the Russians and Americans are now learning in the Ukrainian War that will play a role in the Arctic Region.

To conclude, the panelist stated their fear for the Arctic region is what will happen if China invades Taiwan and American attention is completely redirected and no longer focused on the Arctic? Secondly, what is happening in the context of nuclear deterrence vs nuclear war fighting? Chapter three of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) report is clearly an effort to respond to Russian nuclear development in the polar region. Where does that go? The logic dictates that you must then consider nuclear warfighting.

The fifth panelist started with an overview of higher end Arctic security risks. Today, that is the potential for low end risks that are manageable, escalating to a point that they become much more difficult to manage. The panelist focused on security risks that are shared among Arctic states, because these are the basis for international agreements facilitated by the Arctic Council and Coast Guard Forum in the last decade such as oil spill response, SAR, scientific cooperation, and environmental disaster.

These are the most present risks, and while in earlier years we may have thought of these low-end risks as manageable, these agreements were pulled together to bring Russia closer to the other Arctic states in order to facilitate cooperation. In the current geopolitical environment, an incident similar to these lower end risks has the potential to rapidly go off the rails.

For example, an oil spill in Chukchi Sea would be carried by ocean currents across the border to the U.S., or a SAR mission in Russian territory that needs to involve cross border authorities. In an atmosphere with very little communication and information sharing, the first notice we may get of



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an incident might be when oil appears on our shores, or wreckage is found. Further, efforts to address an incident could trigger confrontation, which could lead in unpredictable directions. Also keeping in mind, Russia has a horrible safety record (Ex: Losharik submarine caught fire a few years ago). Both Russian civilian and military platforms have a high risk of safety violations. We have some very high-end systems floating around and if there was an incident, we would not have good communication about what is going on.

The potential for environmental disaster in the Arctic is another important element of Arctic security. We know the physical environment in the Arctic is changing rapidly. The 2017 Tsunami in Karrat Fjord was a climate disaster that was triggered by a landslide caused by melting permafrost. We should expect more climate related physical disasters across the Arctic. In the context of cross-border cooperation where we may have to surge response assets into the region, many of these assets will be military. In the Arctic civilian authorities have relatively thin capacity and will immediately lean on the military. This may appear quite threatening across the border. It is a very fraught environment and that is the panelists' biggest concern for the current Arctic security environment.

It is incumbent on Arctic states to talk through these scenarios, to plan them out, to run exercises, to have contingency plans, and to have some level of planning in place with how to engage with Russia. Additionally, we must make sure that civilian and military authorities that are not proximate to that relationship are aware of the contingencies. At the senior level, a lack of familiarity with the Arctic may drive less unexpected consequences.

The final panelist framed their response as the risk and runaway nature of zero-sum thinking when it comes to security in the Arctic. In the discourse of Arctic security, often military, economic, and environmental risk calculations are in competition in how they are perceived and dealt with. This zero-sum thinking is generated within the Arctic but also transplanted into the region.

Looking at Chinese commentary, if you look at China's Arctic policy today versus five years ago, we're seeing retrenchment in many ways. A lot of China's previous ambitions have hit a wall due to economic or strategic reasons. Yet, there is still a tendency, including in a lot of commentary outside of China, to perceive China's Arctic policy as well as the Polar Silk Road as still advancing steadily and almost inevitably. The evidence, however, does not suggest this and a lot of what China was planning has not come to fruition. Much of the Polar Silk Road does not exist outside of Russia and this is not what the Chinese planner had in mind. Yet, we still have the misperception that China is advancing in the Arctic. Given this retrenchment, China will try to go back to basics and seek Arctic advancements through scientific diplomacy, shifting away from economic areas. China has an interest in the rights and responsibilities of non-Arctic actors, as discussed in the Arctic Forum in Tokyo.

The second point here, which is key in talking about misperception, is what is the nature of the relationship between China and Russia in the Arctic. It is disturbing to see the trend of treating the two states as equal in character and capacity. Even more so, looking at the Sino-Russian relationship we are seeing even more retrenchment. China is interested in buying cheap Russian oil, but Chinese companies are reluctant to invest in oil and gas in Siberia and investment is



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happening at a muted pace. Looking at the recent meeting between Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin, there was a great deal of discussion on the Arctic, but China did not give a great deal of support for the Siberian power project. There seems to be some reluctance in China to tie itself to a country that may experience significant power loss in the near future. We need to understand the relationship and not assume that they are in complete alignment on Arctic security.

Finally, we must look at the concept of dual use again and how China is framing the narrative in the Arctic. Looking at Chinese media, there are suggestions that it is the U.S. and NATO that is responsible for the militarization of the Arctic region. This is causing a great deal more friction in the region and puts into question how cooperation can take place in the future. There is a trending word known as “de-risking.” It poses the question on whether it is possible to engage China in the Arctic while minimizing risk. We cannot ignore China as a security challenge, but can this risk be measured and accommodated?

Q: Icelandic model of Coast Guard vs Denmark’s military model for Greenland for domain awareness. How do you establish dual use infrastructure without knowing the explicit need?

A: Use the Greenlandic model. The point of domain awareness is data collection. So, the primary challenge is the restrictions that you put on data sharing. Surveillance is job number one. It is important to keep in mind resourcing. You don’t need to necessarily define scenarios of dual use, but simply the capacity you might need. You need to build these realities into the infrastructure.

A: You need a range of capabilities to cover the whole range of tasks.

Q: Threat and security risks to communication systems in the Arctic

A: We must watch the second phase of the Ukrainian war closely to see where Russians and Ukrainians find success/ failure. Regardless, it is important to have multiple duplicative options for communication.

A: Redundancy is key, and these systems are vulnerable. It is impossible to patrol all the many miles of cables. There is a renewed effort to run a cable across the Arctic. This would be tremendously important and present an opportunity for dual use as it has numerous benefits both for the military and civilian users. Between climate and security vulnerabilities, resilient communication needs to be redundant and dual use.

A: You need data centric, zero trust, multi-factor authentication at the software edge. You can’t protect your networks, but you can protect the data and continually validate the users that are plugged into your network. Secondly, you have to know who is on your network. If you have Chinese components in your network, then you cannot operate on a classified system. Your network has to be compatible with your aspirations.

## Day 1: Panel 3 – Arctic Domain Awareness: Community, Regional, and Continental Perspectives (Comparative Perspectives)

### Panel Description and Focus:



*Improving Understanding of the Emerging Characteristics of the North American Arctic from Varying Geographical Reference Points Ranging— from Nuuk to Nome —*



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Arctic domain awareness encompasses a broad set of perspectives ranging from the military, to emerging technology, to the human relations component. To start, it is important to first understand what Arctic domain awareness is and further, whether our nations are domain aware. This panel is aimed at answering that question through a variety of perspectives from Greenland, Canada, and the U.S. For the Arctic, domain awareness is a challenge due to the extreme climate and geography. For countries like Canada, the Canadian Rangers are an essential resource to understand what is happening in the Northern territories because they live in and see the environment every day. In the U.S., Alaskan Natives are often the first to see changes in their region. Those who live in and know the Arctic have a better perspective and understanding of what is going on than those far away.

## Panel Summary:

The panel began with an introduction to the Canadian Rangers and specifically the First Canadian Ranger Patrol Group. Their area of responsibility is the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. This area amasses to about the size of Western Europe with about 130,000 inhabitants, so it is extremely vast. The Rangers exist as a tool of surveillance and function as Northern guides. Rangers maintain the knowledge to help navigate and survive the terrain and climate of the high North. Additionally, the Rangers serve as liaisons for the Northern communities to maintain positive interactions with the Canadian armed forces, particularly those coming up from the South. Lastly, the Canadian Rangers also buttress community resilience. One example of this is the Junior Canadian Ranger Program where youth are taught essential SAR and survival skills. The Canadian Rangers have evolved over time with the communities they serve. Currently, the First Canadian Ranger Patrol Group is in 65 of 73 communities in the region. The communities themselves have shaped the Canadian Rangers over the past 75 years. The First Canadian Ranger Patrol Group has become more consultative, and tailors their interactions to the individual community. There is a headquarters in Yellowknife composed of soldiers who then function as liaisons with the Canadian Rangers back to the larger armed forces.

From the perspective of the Canadian Rangers, domain awareness means sharing information. Canada is incredibly vast, and people and agencies are wearing multiple hats. In order to be successful, they have to cooperate in order to share information. When we look at domain awareness, it is important to consider how we are speaking to each other, how we collaborate, and how we create the appropriate relationships. Domain awareness is relationship building and understanding everyone's roles so we know where information should flow. It is easy to ask questions in the Arctic region where there are so many unknowns, but what Northerners can do is help define what important and what questions we should be asking. Oftentimes there is a great revelation from Southerners that something that has only recently become important to them has been important to Northern communities for years.

The next panelist examined the domain awareness question as well as the advantages to Indigenous Peoples of having the Canadian Rangers in their communities as well as the advantages for the Canadian military of having Indigenous knowledge from the Canadian Rangers. Northern Canada is a collective group of Indigenous communities. The Canadian Rangers own



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their own programs and are there to help facilitate training and outreach. To promote domain awareness, the Canadian Rangers maintain relationships with the communities so there is better understanding and positive relationships with the community. There is constant communication between the Canadian Rangers and the community to better understand how they can help and facilitate these programs.

From the Alaska perspective, the panel moderator suggested that in order to achieve domain awareness you have to consider all threats in order to be prepared to respond. The Canadian Rangers are a great example of having people on the ground do understand the human dimensions of domain awareness through relationship building. What we lack across the Arctic is collaborating with people that live on the land. There are thousands of people that live on the land and could provide eyes and ears. There is a hierarchy of data, knowledge, and information. Satellites and technology provide data and information, but it is important to match that with the reality on the ground for the complete understanding of the situation.

The third panelist discussed the importance of continental all domain awareness through the lens of absolute and relative challenges. We tend to think of domain awareness as very air centric, with the majority of information coming from radar and satellites through space. Absolute domain awareness is knowing 100% of what is going on within a region, which is impossible. This then presents the issue of a domain awareness gap.

The dominant idea around all domain awareness is that it is all about technology, which tends to preference air and space. However, the challenges are the relative considerations, meaning the quality of the data, timeliness, filters, classification, the protection of the information, and compression. There is an implicit assumption that whoever collects the data creates the operating picture and has a monopoly on the future decision making about how to deal with that threat. Whoever is collecting the information gets to interpret the threat. This concept is not examined closely enough and implies that militaries will often be front and center in generating information and then responding. The Canadian Rangers contribute value because they bring community and Indigenous knowledge that is historically undervalued and particularly in the Arctic context. Access to this information will be critical to future policy making in the Arctic region. Right now, we are too stove piped to be able to do this. There are too many seams and pipelines of information to achieve a holistic view of the Arctic region, which inhibits our ability to make informed decisions.

The moderator added that the challenge we in North America face is that we may never be able to achieve all domain awareness since it is so broad and resource intensive. We have to rely on alternative resources beyond the military. Alaska used to have a very strong National Guard entity called the Alaska Territorial Guard that provided domain awareness through a network of rural people across Alaska. The Alaska Territorial Guard was converted into a regular National Guard set of units that was much more embedded as part of the regular military, and now has essentially disappeared. In contrast, Canada has been able to maintain the Canadian Rangers. It would be very useful for Greenlanders who are looking to create more domain awareness to look at the Canadian Rangers or Alaska Territorial Guard as low level, volunteer approaches to gathering information across the Arctic.



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The first panelist added that in order for a community to buy into domain awareness, it needs to be mutually beneficial. The success of the Canadian Rangers is that surveillance happens, and that information goes to Joint Task Force-North (JTF-N). Conversely, JTF-N also requests information and operational best practices from the Northern communities. By integrating Indigenous feedback and perspectives into the Canadian Rangers, operations are conducted in a way that works for the Northern communities. The focus of the Canadian Rangers is on mobility and survival, and they strive to contribute value to these communities.

The third panelist added that looking to the maritime context, Canada has the Marine Security Operation Centers that are essential to understanding the Arctic operational environment. The center on the East Coast covers all federal government agencies that have anything to do with the collection of maritime data. The problem is that, although the picture that is created is valuable and shared with the Five Eyes, NAVNORTH, and NORAD, at no time is local information included or shared with locals. For example, locals don't know about cruise ships coming in, so they aren't prepared (ex: having cash for tourists, more products to sell). We are so focused on collecting information at the state and federal level, but we are completely missing the value of on the ground human intelligence and local information. Further, it is not just about sucking up information but also who should be able to access information. Because there are more than just state-based threats, it is also economic sustainability. In an Arctic context that means informing locals about incoming tourists and the resource and infrastructure surges necessary to support them.

The moderator added to this by focusing on the importance of having people in places where traditional infrastructure may not be able to reach. In Alaska for example, there are very few SAR capabilities in the isolated communities. If an aircraft crashes, with conditions around -40 degrees with ice fog, SAR aircraft won't be able to take off to find victims. However, if there is a network of local communities trained in SAR, you can have a team out on snow machines within four hours. It is important to consider more than dual use infrastructure, but also dual use organizations. This is a low resource operation that can have an important impact on Arctic functionality. In the Arctic, community members wear multiple hats. The capabilities of these individuals are vast and can be supported and amplified as a resource.

The first panelist added that community resiliency is on the ground SAR capability. When there is an incident in the Northern territories of Canada, the Canadian Rangers do not have to wait for the State or Federal level to activate resources. Most people wear multiple hats, so the Canadian Rangers are also the SAR and can share resources across communities. Most local Indigenous community members maintain vast capabilities in order to survive in the Arctic.

The third panelist noted that the challenge then is that we need to do a better job of explaining to people who come to the Arctic that we are highly dependent on volunteers when it comes to SAR. People come to the Arctic with a false sense of the capabilities that are there and the resilience and planning needed is lacking. This then thrusts the Canadian armed forces into a last-ditch role of SAR. Communication is really important to all domain awareness. Locals have to bear a lot of



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wear and tear on their personal equipment to be able to continue to support SAR. We need to find a way to reimburse locals for the fuel and equipment that is essential in an Arctic context.

The final question posed by the moderator was how to improve domain awareness across the Arctic?

The third panelist argued that we need more cross-state coordination. The assumption within the security space is that everything will be in a cloud-based system, and we will be able to apply quantum computing or AI and instantly have a complete operating picture. However, there is a whole ecosystem underneath that needs to be connected. We need to consider how we get messages down to local responders and connect to other government departments. If a military asset detects something, that does not necessarily mean a military response is the best tool or capability to address the problem in the Arctic. All domain awareness isn't isolated from the military sphere.

Additionally, do not underestimate the importance of Indigenous-to-Indigenous consultation and information sharing. For example, the North Water Polynya is the largest in the world and is co-managed by the Indigenous people of Greenland and Canada. We need to expand our understanding of what it means to have all domain awareness in a region to include Indigenous knowledge.

The moderator added that one of the areas we could potentially improve upon is working on collaboration from east to west among the Indigenous peoples of the U.S., Canada, and Greenland. Most of the work in the Arctic is conveyed North to South between Alaska and DC or Yukon and Ottawa. Indigenous peoples have a history of working together across borders, but in the contemporary state system this prevents deeper cooperation. However, Indigenous communities of the U.S., Canada, and Greenland have the potential to be of huge benefit to each other due to their shared knowledge of and about the Arctic.

The second panelist emphasized the need for communication among Inuit communities to improve domain awareness. From Canada you can hear Greenland over the radio. Even without meeting Greenlandic Inuit before, there is a shared history, culture, and language. This is a connection that we can continue to build on and work towards Arctic security and domain awareness.

The first panelist reiterated the need to build relationships with local populations to create trust and a shared understanding of what constitutes Arctic security and how domain awareness contributes.

## Question and Answer:

Q: How do you incorporate Indigenous perspectives at the national/ federal level to impact policy, strategy, and funding? How do you ensure the contingencies in local communities are accounted for? The national element can't classify the local assets as a reliable element of policy. How do you change that?



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A: There are a few assumptions there that we need to address. The first is that Arctic Indigenous communities don't have the kind of capacity to interact and organize at the policy level. We need to rethink these assumptions. For example, the Inuit Tapirit Kanatami represent all Inuit people in Canada's Arctic have realized that in order to work with Ottawa, they have to have the same point of contact reporting system. Now they have the capacity to pass on the collective information of the Inuit to the federal government while also acting as representation to the Inuit people. The federal government is not the apex of information for the Arctic region. With constant turnover in the government, we need to stop expecting that the Indigenous people will have the connections and come to the government with information.

A: On the policy side, the Canadian Army is working to build awareness and exposure to the Arctic. We need to foster long-term education and understanding of the Indigenous communities. This needs to occur in all government agencies, not just the military.

A: To answer the question on local dependability for disaster response, the Arctic and Northern communities can't count on the federal government either. Typhoon Merbok destroyed many Alaska villages, and the federal government was not able to adequately respond. FEMA operated on the assumption that they could drive up to the Northern regions of Alaska, but there are not even roads to drive on. It is an unfair expectation then, to demand a guarantee from the Native people. That being said, there are ways for the government to collaborate with tribes directly to contract support. In Alaska, the tribes have taken over a number of federal responsibilities in more isolated regions. For example, healthcare was unsatisfactory when managed by the federal government, so now the tribes manage and own their own world class healthcare system.

A: Our Greenlandic counterparts might be interested in the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee. This is a new method of building policy streams to deliver programs and support Inuit development in Canada. They are currently establishing a working table on sovereignty, defense and security that includes the Canadian Rangers and SAR in order to have a say in defense modernization, policy, infrastructure, and decision making that impacts Northern communities. This is a step in the right direction to include Indigenous communities throughout the entire policy making process.

Q: How do we ensure that communities remain secure and resilient? What is being done and what should be done to ensure these communities have access to adequate food, education, opportunity, housing, etc.? If these communities are as strategic as you say, then we need to use that as a political tool to ensure that they are resources appropriately and remain secure. However, we need to be cautious in using the narrative of the Arctic peoples as a tool since that has echoes of forced relocation and colonialism.

A: We need to offer opportunities for young people to want to stay in their communities. You can't force someone to want to stay there. We need government funding of certain projects, but it is also a self-determination question. Are the community of Indigenous people self-determined enough to want to maintain their way of life?



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A: From the Canadian perspective, there is a reinvigoration of culture and tradition within the Indigenous communities. Their elders are more willing to celebrate their culture and maintain the heritage.

A: Within Canada, we consistently do not provide the necessary infrastructure to local communities. Their water and electrical systems are all over 50 years old. They are highly dependent on diesel. The only time the Canadian government pays attention to Northern territories is when there is a larger strategic challenge such as Chinese investment. We are routinely derelict in our duties to Canadian citizens. This basic lack of infrastructure will also be what inhibits all domain awareness. The Canadian government needs to get serious about critical infrastructure.

Q: Of the domain awareness functions, which is in highest need of improvement: gathering, coordination, sharing, or fusion?

A: All of the above. The focus seems to be on getting increased information, but instead the question should be, about the information that we have, are we using it effectively? More information is not always better. What we need more of is connection and strategic pairing of information

Q: Can you give us a real-life example of the benefits of the Junior Canadian Ranger Program?

A: There are three components of the Junior Canadian Ranger Program: Traditional skills, life skills, and Ranger skills. One of the most rewarding has been to teach trapping. This is a traditional skill and a life skill to be able to survive off of the land and utilize a sustainable resource in your own community and create a source of revenue for your community.

## Day 2: Opening Keynote

Day two of the workshop opened with remarks from Mr. Kenneth Hoegh, head of Greenland Representation in Washington, DC. The address guided workshop participants through an overview of Greenland Foreign Policy from 1261-2023, with a focus on U.S.-Greenland relations. The following is an official record of the remarks.

History of Greenland all begins with the arrival of Paleo Inuit Culture in Greenland around 4500 BP (2500 BCE). It is important to note this because these are the people of Greenland. From 980 AD - ca.1500 AD, the Norsemen settled in South Greenland. These Norsemen agreed to become a Norwegian possession and accept the Norwegian king as their regent. After a lengthy process



Figure 5: Hvalsey Church Greenland. Courtesy of NAASN speaker presentation (Chatham House Rules prevent further disclosure).



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of negotiations from 1247 to 1261, Greenland became a Norwegian possession in 1261 through a verbal agreement. Around the same time, from 1000-1300, the Inussuk culture arrived in Greenland, which is now the present-day Inuit culture of Greenland in the Northernmost area. In 1397 the Kalmar Union was established between the Kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden and Norway thereby establishing the first formal connection between Denmark and Greenland. Though, at the time Denmark's Queen Margaret may have never heard of a place called Greenland. (Pictured above Hvalsey Church, Greenland)

In 1408, we see the last official record of the Norse people in Greenland. By the late 1400's, The Norse communities died out, meaning the community instituting the connections to the Kingdom of Norway is no longer in Greenland. The areas that were occupied by the Norse were in the Southwest region, whereas the Inuit occupied all of Greenland. Still, the Norwegian Kings, and later Danish kings, continued to claim sovereignty over Greenland, despite a new people and culture, the Inuit, had replaced the Norse in Greenland. This is why the Norse history around 500 years ago is referred to as this historic incident, because the primary story is actually the Inuit culture of Greenland. The map to the right shows the occupation of Greenland by the Inuit peoples from the Bering Strait and the Norse from Iceland. Despite the King's agreement, the Inuit end up occupying most of Greenland from around 1500. The Inuit people re-migrate to Greenland from 1000-1500 without knowing the 1261 agreement. These people are North American and for that reason, Greenland is in all respects geographically, culturally, and linguistically a part of North America.

Hans Egede renewed the Scandinavian interest in Greenland. In the 1600's there was a massive interest among European whalers in hunting off the Greenland coast. Whale and seal oil were used for streetlights in Europe. In 1721, the Dano-Norwegian priest Hans Egede arrived in Greenland (close to Nuuk) and became the founder of the Lutheran Church of Greenland. The Dano-Norwegian claim in Greenland was connected to the abandoned Norse settlements. Hans Egede came to convert the Catholic Norse to the Lutheran faith, but met only Inuit, thus starting the Greenland mission and colonial trade. From then on, the Dano-Norwegian colony of Greenland was expanded and one colonial trading station after another was founded around Greenland. By 1814, Greenland formally becomes part of the Danish Kingdom after the dissolution of the Danish-Norwegian union, due to the Treaty of Kiel (after the Napoleonic Wars).



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Up through the 1800s, Greenland's sea mammal oils (whale and seal blubber) proved to be a good source of income for the colonial administration, until the 1880s (when mineral oil was introduced). Additionally, from 1854 on there were good yields from the cryolite mining in South Greenland in Ivittuut. Cod fishing began to develop from the early 1900s in East Greenland. Gradually the entire population became Christian, with the last persons being baptized in East Greenland and Avanarsuaq. However, there were still some culturally positive events. We also began to see a written system for the Greenlandic language. This contributed to the expansion of public education and information. In 1861 the newspaper, "Atuagagdliutit" was established and still runs as a bi-weekly publication distributed nationwide. Additionally, forms of democratic initiatives were assessed around this time, but the main power remained with the Danish colonial authorities.

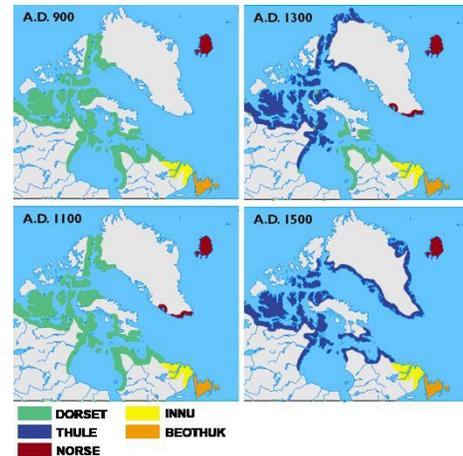


Figure 6: Historical summary of the people dynamics of Northeast Canada and Greenland. Courtesy of NAASW speaker presentation (Chatham House Rules prevent further disclosure).

The turning point for Greenland was World War II. Greenland was occupied by Nazi Germany on April 9, 1940. Thereafter, the colonial administration in Greenland had very little contact with Copenhagen. This marked a distinct change in Greenland's relationship with Denmark.

The Faroe Islands and Iceland were occupied by British forces in April and May of 1940. The UK and Canada planned an occupation of Greenland, but the U.S. warned the UK of any such initiative, referring to the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. Soon after, the Danish Ambassador in Washington DC, Henrik von Kauffmann, declared not to comply with orders from Copenhagen, should these be issued under German pressure. Mr. Kaufmann had a trump card towards the U.S., namely Greenland and the colonial administration. One year after the Nazi occupation of Greenland, he made an agreement on April 9, 1941, with the U.S. concerning the defense of Greenland. The answer from the Danish Government in the German controlled Copenhagen, was to charge Mr. Kaufmann for high treason. However, Kaufmann was forgiven by the Danish government after the war and treated very much as a hero. Notably, the income from the mining industry in Greenland supported the diplomatic activities of Mr. Kaufmann.

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On April 9, 1941, the Danish Ambassador in Washington DC, Mr. Kauffmann, signed an agreement ("on behalf of the King", as it was expressed, though having no authority from Copenhagen) on the defense of Greenland - and thereby gave permission for the Americans to build bases in Greenland. The colonial Country Council in Greenland endorsed the agreement. On July 6th, 1941, an armada of U.S. military vessels arrived in Tunulliarfik / Eriksfiord in South Greenland, to build the military and airfield Narsarsuaq, code name: Blue West One. It took them half a year to build the runway, from the time they arrived at the time the first plane landed. The American military had arrived in Greenland and were here to stay. Nearly 5,000 people were stationed at Narsarsuaq during WWII, making it one of the biggest communities in Greenland at the time. Today there are only around 150 people there. (Pictured above: Narsarsuaq Air Base during WWII)



*Figure 7 Narsarsuaq Air Base during WWII. (Courtesy of NAASW speaker presentation (Chatham House Rules prevent further disclosure).*

Greenland became de facto independent during WWII (1940-45), due to the German occupation of Denmark. The U.S. and Canada established consulates in Nuuk. The Americans were interested in Greenland for two reasons 1) a military need for basing and refueling and 2) to secure minerals for the American industry, especially the cryolite from the Ivittuut mine in Southern Greenland. WWII was a booming economic time for Greenland. The Danish Governor of Greenland Mr. Aksel Svane became Greenland's representative in the United States and Canada, seated in New York, and the Danish Governor for South Greenland, Mr. Eske Brun, became the governor for all of Greenland, seated in Nuuk. (Pictured above: Ivittuut mine)



*Figure 8: Ivittuut mine development. Courtesy of NAASW speaker presentation (Chatham House Rules prevent further disclosure).*

After WWII, the Danish colonial authority returned to Greenland and the Americans were expected to leave, but the Americans had decided to stay. Further, among the Greenlanders, there was a desire for change and in 1946, the U.S. offered to buy Greenland from Denmark, but Denmark declined the offer. The UN worked for the abolishment of the European colonial empires, meaning the colonized should be given their freedom.

The defence agreement of 1951 superseded the Kauffmann 1941 agreement. This was an agreement between two NATO-countries, as Denmark and the U.S. were among the founding members in 1949. The agreement secured continued U.S. military presence in Greenland and is still the foundation for the U.S. presence in Greenland today, though a number of supplementary agreements are now linked to the defence agreement. It was established two years before



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Greenlanders gained their constitutional rights, which is why the Danish foreign minister signed the agreement as a colonial power. There has long been a widespread political desire in Greenland for a modernization of the agreement, whereby the colonial master's signature is replaced by the signature of a politically elected Greenlander.

On the Danish side, the strategy they decided on was to make Greenland a part of the kingdom, meaning turning the colony into an overseas county. An amended Danish Constitution was approved on May 28, 1953, through a referendum in Denmark only, concerning a constitutional amendment. Greenland gained two members (out of 179) in the Danish parliament from 1953 (the Faroese had had theirs since 1849). All Greenlanders thereby became Danish citizens (and given constitutional rights) on June 5, 1953. The U.S. consulate closed in Nuuk in October 1953. Gradually the former colony became dependent on subsidies from Copenhagen, unlike the self-reliant community that existed before WWII. This made Greenland more fragile.

Greenland underwent rapid development in the 1960s and 1970s, with large Danish government investments mostly led by Danish experts. The U.S. deployment of nuclear weapons in Greenland was secretly accepted by the Danish government and was later revealed during the 1990's. Slowly the Country Council of Greenland gained more power, including having an elected Greenlandic chairman from 1967, and being the Danish Governor before 1967. Further, an office was established for the council in 1967. However, the power was still rooted in the Ministry of Greenland, a successor to the colonial administration of Greenland. Gradually, an opposition emerged, firstly among the established politicians asking for full equality within the kingdom. Since the early 1970's, younger Greenlandic academics and politicians have been campaigning for a home Rule system such as the Faroes.

Finally, Home Rule was granted to Greenland on May 1st, 1979, after a timely process modeled after the Faroe arrangement. Competencies and political power moved from Copenhagen to Nuuk. Through this, we saw improvements in living standards, infrastructure development, hydro power developments, airports, and ports etc. A gradual acquisition of legislative and executive competencies were handed over through the 80's. Greenland had a referendum in 1982 and left the EU in 1985 after having a successful "Grexit"-process.

Through the Igaliku Agreement in 2004 we went from a bilateral to a trilateral relationship. This was an amendment and supplement to the Defence Agreement of April 27, 1951. The agreement was signed in Igaliku on August 6, 2004. The agreement mandated the following: The Government of Greenland become an equal partner in the defense cooperation; Thule Air Base was to be the only defense area in Greenland and the flag of both Greenland; Denmark and the United States shall fly over Thule Air Base (now Pituffik Space Base); the United States will consult with and inform both Denmark and Greenland,



Figure 9 Igaliku Agreement Tri-lateral Agreement Signing, 2004. Photo credit to NAASW presenter, (Chatham House rules prevent further disclosure).



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prior to significant changes to military operations or facilities in Greenland; the Government of Greenland may appoint a liaison representative at Thule Air Base; and a Joint Committee is formed to address civilian cooperation between the U.S. and Greenland.

Self-government for Greenland was granted on June 21, 2009. Greenland continued development of autonomy from Denmark through the acquisition of most areas of legislative and executive power. There was a particular desire in Greenland to take over the legislative and executive power over minerals and hydrocarbons, which was achieved in 2010. There are still a number of areas of legislative and executive power Greenland is awaiting to take over from Denmark, such as fiscal responsibilities.

The agreement with Denmark, with the adoption of the Self-Government Act in 2009, allowed for all administrative areas to be taken over, except: citizenship, monetary/financial policy, defense, foreign policy, and the supreme court. Greenland also gained the rights to become independent through an agreed process between Greenland and Denmark, based on a referendum in Greenland.

The preamble of the act is as follows, “WE, MARGRETHE THE SECOND, by God's Grace Queen of Denmark, hereby announce that:

The Danish Parliament has passed the following Act, which We have ratified by giving Our assent:

Recognizing that the people of Greenland is a people pursuant to international law with the right of self-determination, the Act is based on a wish to foster equality and mutual respect in the partnership between Denmark and Greenland. Accordingly, the Act is based on an agreement between Naalakkersuisut (Greenland Government] and the Danish Government as equal partners.”

This is extremely important because it is the way we should run our nations in all that we do.

(Pictured: Queen Margaret II handing the act to Mr. Josef Moltzfeldt, Speaker of the Inatsisartut, The Greenland Parliament)

The final competence on foreign policy remains though in the Danish Foreign Ministry, and foreign policy on Greenland is still considered part of the Kingdom's overall foreign policy. However, the Self-Government Act implies that the Government of Greenland must be involved in the implementation of the foreign and security policy of the Kingdom concerning Greenland (and the Arctic). The Government of Greenland and the Danish Government have thereby a needed and on-going daily cooperation and communication on foreign policy issues concerning Greenland and the



Figure 10: Denmark's Queen Margaret delivering the documents of self-governance to Mr. Joseph Moltzfeldt, Speaker of the Greenland Parliament, 2004. Courtesy of NAASW speaker presentation (Chatham House Rules prevent further disclosure).



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Arctic. The latest development in Greenlandic foreign policy is the renaming of Thule Air Force Base as Pituffik Space Base in April 2023.

There was a renewed U.S. interest in Greenland and the Arctic during the Obama administration and the U.S. chairmanship of the Arctic Council from 2015-17. State Department representatives started frequent visits to Greenland in 2015, in relation to energy and minerals. The U.S. Coast Guard started capacity building with Greenland on port security in 2017. A U.S. diplomat started to work solely with Greenlandic issues in 2018, firstly working out of the Embassy in Copenhagen, and now in the U.S. Consulate in Nuuk, established on June 10, 2020. Greenland welcomed the DoD unilateral statement from 16 September 2018 on U.S. dual-use investments in Greenland. The U.S. Congress committed funds for bilateral U.S.-Greenland cooperation in Spring 2020 conducted through the Joint Committee. An offer to buy Greenland occurs in August 2019, to which Greenland responds, “Not for sale, but open for business.” Finally, Secretary of State Antony Blinken conducts an official visit to Greenland on May 20, 2021, reconfirming the U.S.-Greenland relationship.

The October 28, 2020, compromise established the Base Maintenance Contract (BMC) at Pituffik Space Base. Previously, the contract was awarded to a U.S.-company in 2013. This contrasted with previous practice, where Danish or Danish-Greenlandic companies had obtained the contract. There was thus a crisis between the parties during the following years, and a compromise was sought between the partners. The October 2020 compromise established a diplomatic exchange between the Kingdom of Denmark and the U.S., ensuring the BMC would be awarded to a majority Danish-Greenlandic owned company, being a Greenland resident company, with management presence in Greenland, and with ensured targets for training and employment of Greenlanders. The BMC-contract was awarded to a company in December 2022, according to the aforementioned criteria.

Additionally, a Common Plan was agreed upon between Greenland and the U.S., to enhance U.S.-Greenland Cooperation, focusing on: Trade, Investment, and Economic relations; Energy and mining sector cooperation; Educational Ties; Tourism Sector Cooperation; Nature management cooperation. The implementation is based on funds from the U.S. Congress, funded from 2020 onwards. The activities are planned and rooted within the Joint Committee. Further initiatives were agreed for Improved Cooperation at Pituffik.

The establishment of Pituffik Space Base on April 6, 2023, was an important day and symbol of renewed cooperation between Greenland and the U.S. The original Greenlandic name was recognized as the official name. Ambassador Leventhal recognized the hardship and pain for the local Inughuit-community, caused by the forced movement in the 1950s during the creation of the base. Further, the U.S. Ambassador acknowledged the importance of Pituffik Space Base, "keeping North America safe and secure" and linking the defense of North America and Europe. Minister Motzfeldt, on behalf of the Government of Greenland, recognized the U.S. respect recognizing cultural heritage, and the history of the base. (Pictured below: Renaming Ceremony for Pituffik Space Base)





Figure 11: Renaming of Thule Air Base to Pituffik Space Force Base, 2023. Courtesy of NAASW speaker presentation (Chatham House Rules prevent further disclosure).

In the last 10 years, several diplomatic missions were established in Nuuk. In 2013 Iceland established a diplomatic presence. The U.S. followed in 2020 and the UK in 2023. Greenland has representation in Copenhagen (1979), EU (1992), Washington, DC (2014), Reykjavik (2018), and Beijing (2021).

The overall policy of the Government of Greenland is to, together with the Danish Government, ensure a peaceful, secure, and collaborative Arctic, on the basis of the Ilulissat Declaration. The U.S. presence in Greenland has continued from 1941 until today, though with only one U.S.-based left, the strategically important base is Pituffik. Additionally, civilian airports in Greenland maintain a military importance, primarily Kangerlussuaq airport. Moving forward, Greenland wants to keep and develop good relations between the U.S. and the Government of Greenland, and there is a common wish to further develop the relations. Also, they want to keep and develop good relations with the European Union, with Greenland being part of the OCT's associated with the EU. Greenland aspires for a good relationship with the UK, especially within trade, economic development, and research. Finally, Greenland hopes to develop an independent role in Arctic politics (i.e., The Arctic Council) since we are the only Arctic people of Denmark. The Government of Greenland will continue to develop towards more autonomy, a sustainable economy, and less dependence on subsidies from Denmark, with a final goal of independence.

## Day 2: Panel 4 – Homeland Defense and Disaster Response

### Panel Description and Focus:

Given the Arctic's unique geographic position and evolving strategic relevance, homeland defense and disaster response are essential elements of Arctic security. A secure homeland requires a broad range of functions and capabilities to maintain persistent presence and all domain

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awareness. This panel focuses on homeland defense and disaster response from several perspectives. Panelists represent each of the North American countries and various agencies within their respective governments to provide a comparative perspective on the topic. In doing so, the hope is to share best practices and lessons learned and leverage regional relationships to strengthen response capability and resilience in the Arctic.

## Panel Summary:

The first panelist presented on SAR and emergency management in the North American Arctic. The panelist's primary thesis was that SAR needs to be considered as part of the response to climate change and cannot be siloed as either environmental hazard, security, climate, or safety. This is something relevant from the national level to the community level. His thesis was drawn from a series of SAR roundtables conducted across Nunavut by the Canadians last fall in Qikiqtani, Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot. The roundtables included a diverse range of organizations and perspectives involved in SAR, including Canadian Rangers, first responders from communities, and Inuit community leaders.

The agendas for the roundtables were set in consultation with community leaders to reflect their needs. Topics included SAR strengths and challenges, SAR best practices and lessons learned, future requirements for SAR, solutions and new approaches, and infrastructure needs. Despite the fact that the roundtables were conducted at the local level, many of the concerns represented reflect those at the federal level. Some of the challenges in terms of SAR were derived previously in academic work, but also through presentations that organizations from Nunavut made to parliamentary committees, etc.

SAR challenges identified at the roundtable included rapidly changing environmental conditions (sea, ice, weather), limited survival gear, personal locators, and marine charts, loss of land safety knowledge, weak boating safety culture, pressure of food insecurity, and increased outside activity. A big reason they pulled information from previous presentations to frame the discussion was to demonstrate that they respected Northern communities and had listened to previous concerns, rather than having to start from ground zero and repeat the same conversations over again. Specific to the Arctic region, SAR response challenges included the difficulty/ danger of the operating environment, limited support infrastructure, communications difficulties, fewer vessels of opportunity to respond to a maritime incident, asset mismatch, and the tyranny of time and distance.

From the perspective of the roundtable participants, the following areas were identified as emerging SAR challenges:

- Increasing caseload-When we are making assessments in terms of risk on a national level or regional level, the calculus may not be accurately capturing all of the activity going on and the burdens on communities.
- Challenges in recruiting and keeping volunteers-Maintaining volunteers is a challenge for SAR because many essential components are dual-hatted.
- Volunteer burnout- Volunteers tend to get burned out due to high demand.



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- Training and equipment gaps-limited resources
- Paperwork- All volunteer SAR teams are often crushed with paperwork associated with federal funding after returning from a mission.
- Funding issues- Inconsistent funding impacts capability
- Limited mental and physical health support- Highly interconnected communities feel deeply when members of the community are lost.
- Social media- Enabler of localized domain awareness but challenges volunteers because of high propensity for criticism despite voluntary service
- Slow response times from primary SAR assets- National and federal vessels
- Unclear mandates and/or operations decisions- who is responsible for what?
- Tasking/ coordination/ cooperation issues

One thing that was noted across the roundtables was the strength of the SAR community. Generally speaking, most research and analytics tend to focus on gaps and weaknesses. However, there is a general shift across Canada to emphasize the strengths, expertise, and tremendous capacity at the local level. By investing resources at the community level, we might actually be able to help support not only community resilience, but at the same time reduce the burden on the national system.

Roundtable participants were able to discuss and learn from disasters in emergency response such as the 2017 tsunami in Greenland, Nuugaatsiaq. During the tsunami it was evident the impact of delayed response times from national assets, and what investments in community resilience might have made a significant difference. Examples of this include diesel electric generation stations on Eastern Baffin Island just across the Davis Strait. They also stressed a community which was in a state of emergency for a month, and they had to charter a massive Russian airframe to be able to fly in a new generator. We wouldn't be able to do this today for obvious reasons.

The question then is, how can communities, governments, industry, NGOs, and researchers work together to effectively strengthen resilience in a-risk, remote, and isolated Northern communities, which have small populations, limited infrastructure, few local emergency management resources, and little access to rapid external assistance?

The risks of insufficient SAR operations are apparent with numerous examples. In 2010, the Clipper Adventurer ran aground on a known shoal in Coronation Guld with 197 people on board; in 2016 the fishing vessel Saputi struck a piece of ice and was holed in Davis Strait with 30 people on board; in 2018 the research vessel Akademik Ioffe grounded on a rocky shoal in the Gulf of Boothia, with 163 people on board. As we anticipate the next cruise season, it is essential that we remain cooperative between nations.

Looking at disaster response requirements, the roundtables identified effective alerting systems, speed, situational awareness, scalability, the “three Cs,” knowing when to go big, disaster workforce, organizing spontaneous volunteers, and social capital.

Several lessons were developed through the roundtable.



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- Are the Canadian Rangers a potential (and sustainable) model for Greenland?
- What can the Groenlandsvogter / Greenland Rangers and other volunteers learn from the voluntary community-based groups established in Nunavut and vice versa?
- Are there applicable best practices from the Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Region's Auxiliary expansion or its Training and Exercise Program?
- What can Canada learn from the Danish Arctic Response Force?
- What might Canada learn from the SAR relationship between Danish Defence and Greenland Air?
- What works for SAR prevention?
  - Does the SAR insurance policy of the Government of Greenland reduce SAR cases?
- Is it time for a Regional Mass Rescue Operation Planning Committee?
- What can we learn from respective crisis management systems? (political/ strategic - operational - tactical)

Finally, based on these questions, the panelist suggested the development of various memoranda of understanding on emergency management cooperation either bilaterally with the Danish Government and Government of Greenland, trilaterally with Canada, or quadrilaterally with the U.S. Possible topics for the memorandum include effective warning systems, building community resilience, approaches to volunteers, supporting vulnerable people, risk assessment and mitigation, funding arrangements, best practices, and lessons learned.

The second panelist examined community response for SAR from the localized Alaska perspective. Many of the results of the roundtable discussed by the first panelist were reiterated through first-hand experience having lived in a small rural community. The panelist emphasized how many of these communities are self-reliant, often wearing multiple hats. Additionally, the lack of mental healthcare for community based first responders who repeatedly save or recover close friends and family takes a serious toll on volunteers. However, if you are from a small remote community, you have to continually be prepared for these types of situations or the job will never get done. We have to rely on ourselves; This is why self-determination is so important. If you wait for help in Alaska, it could be up to 24 hours.

The first order of homeland defense and disaster response should always be at the village/community level. The panelist shared that he personally has been involved in responses to earthquakes, floods, fires, volcanoes, boating accidents, etc. Though we may wish for federal and state disaster response, they rarely show up on time, so the local level always must be prepared. However, disasters often overload community resources. Small communities rarely have the capacity to address large disasters such as oil spills. From the perspective of the federal and state levels, coordinating, training, and equipping efforts across communities through the State Emergency Response Commission was the most efficient and effective method of disaster response in rural regions. From the local perspective, the best we can do is to continue to show up and volunteer, because if you don't, there often won't be anyone else. In Alaska and the Arctic more broadly, self-sufficiency is important because of the tyranny of time and distance. It is critical for those of us on the land and from the land to be involved. Local communities must be trained, resilient, and mentally tough.



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The third panelist discussed the perspective of local law enforcement within Greenland and shared a brief overview of the structure and mission set of the organization. In Greenland, the SAR mission is shared between the police and the Joint Arctic Command. The Greenlandic police are present with police stations in 18 of the largest communities across Greenland. This is important because they are integrated locally with the communities, providing eyes and ears on the ground, and communicating quickly back to headquarters. That being said, there is often still a long response time to get to some of the more vulnerable places.

There is a disaster response law within Greenland that designates levels of responsibility. The police have the main coordinating responsibility, meaning they manage resources and capability. There are three levels of response. The police are primarily responsible for disaster response. If there is a larger crisis or an investigation involving criminal activity there is another level called GBS, where other sectors come in and meet with police to coordinate involvement (health department, fire department, etc.). The highest level is the Crisis Management Staff from the Department of Health coordinated by the chairman.

Regarding SAR, the Greenlandic police maintain a close relationship with JACO and Air Greenland. The police have a special authority that is different from Denmark and the Faroes, which includes SAR, so they have 6 vessels. The biggest concerns for the Greenlandic police vis a vis SAR are cruise ships and oil spill response. Resourcing SAR is especially a concern on the East Coast which is sparsely populated with only one police station and no vessels. It would take a lot of effort and time if something happened in the northeast of Greenland. Communication is essential in disaster response. In Greenland, almost everything is on Facebook and oftentimes crucial messages can go out on Facebook and other social media.

The final panelist examined the challenges of homeland defense and disaster response in the Arctic from the perspective of the U.S. government and specifically Congress. The panelist argued that one of the ways you can understand prioritization within a government is by conducting an audit, to see exactly how resources and money are spent. If you look at homeland defense and disaster management in the Arctic, the two most important agencies are DoD and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The DoD budget is \$700 billion, and DHS is \$50 billion. When looking at how the U.S. government spends that money, you quickly realize there are areas where we want to spend money and where we need to spend money.

The areas that we want to spend money on include upgrades to our hard-defense structure such as the DEW line and Northern Warning System (NWS). This costs a lot of money to upgrade and is routinely debated in policy circles. We are debating this because there are important strategic threats in the Arctic. Yet, over the last 20 years, the U.S. has spent over \$2 trillion dollars responding to natural disasters. Just last year, in Western Alaska, Typhoon Merbok struck. The U.S. response to the typhoon is quickly going to surpass \$100 million.

To offer lessons learned, within the field of homeland defense and disaster response particularly in the Arctic from a U.S. perspective, we need to define the difference more clearly between homeland defense and disaster response. To further elaborate, the very vernacular of the words



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changes the way that we think about solutions-why not look at disaster defense, or disaster prevention.

Second, we need to alter the psychology of how we look at this equation. For example, if indeed it is a changing geostrategic environment that has forced us to relook at upgrades to the NWS, there are new weapons and new employment systems therefore we change the way we need to equip the radar, which means we need to look at the way we fund it. There is a changing physical environment, but it is response rather than prevention. We need to readjust the way we look at our psychology.

Third, what we have addressed throughout the workshop is that there are basic infrastructure needs that need to be met before more complex structure needs. There is irony in the fact that it is difficult to get broadband access in rural Alaska, yet we have some of the most complex radar systems.

Finally, the U.S. needs to assess the budget and look at what we need versus what we want. If we were to go back and look at all the money we have spent in the Arctic, the majority is on disaster response. This is the money we needed to spend. Money spent on upgrading radar systems could be argued as money we want to spend.

The final panelist spoke to the unique role of the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) within DHS as the bridge between homeland defense and homeland security. From the perspective of the USCG, we are seeing a growth in activity from the Russian and Chinese in the Arctic (North of Bering Sea and Aleutian Chain) over the last couple of years. The USCG is the visible surface presence in the Arctic maritime domain. Their commitment is to meet presence with presence. The USCG has diverted assets to address the threat in the Arctic when they encounter Russian military task groups or surface action groups, as well as Chinese surface action groups in the Bering Sea. Most recently, the USCG encountered a joint Russian and Chinese surface action group for the first time. These groups are operating legally, within international rule of law, and the USCG wants to ensure they continue to do so.

This becomes a capacity issue for the USCG. If we are sending out assets to engage with strategic competitors, we are pulling assets away from other mission sets such as SAR or disaster response. An emerging concern for the USCG is growing capacity to meet the challenge of increased activity from strategic competitors in a region that is also growing commercially. The same number of assets have been used to cover Alaska for several decades. This makes homeland defense and disaster response competing priorities.

Though the USCG is the main federal presence in the Arctic for homeland defense and disaster response, they do not do it alone. It is a collaborative effort with DoD counterparts in the Arctic, as well as with other federal, state, and local entities. We have to work cooperatively on multiple fronts. Typhoon Merbok is a good example of the collaborative disaster response within Alaska. Typhoon Merbok impacted the entire West Coast of Alaska, which is the same length as the entire West Coast of the lower 48 states of the U.S. This was a tremendous area where the collective disaster response community had to coordinate efforts. The USCG was one of the first on the



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scene, but in a lot of cases USCG got there in partnership with Alaska Command and the Alaskan National Guard. USCG also coordinated efforts with FEMA and local communities.

USCG does a lot of outreach, capacity building, and training with local communities throughout the year so when a disaster hits, relationships are in place. Conversely, USCG also learns from local communities about their concerns and knowledge of Alaska. You can't surge into the Arctic; you must be present and conduct exercises ahead of time. That means having a coordinated effort across the federal spectrum ahead of time. There are some federal entities that have been slow to respond in Alaska. The forward deployed assets for Alaska's emergency response are located in Seattle, WA. There are a lot of assumptions made by policymakers who do not understand the infrastructure limitations in the Arctic.

This is a problem, and particularly with Typhoon Merbok, fuel had to be imported by barge since communities couldn't get electricity from the central power grid. Since the typhoon happened during the Alaskan winter, we had to ensure that marine headers were in place to transfer fuel. Communities had to make a choice between rebuilding homes or resupplying food. The federal, state, and local levels need to collaborate to address these kinds of issues. The solution was to give communities the basic necessities so that they could shelter in place for the winter. There was no evacuation plan, despite 75 mph winds, 50 ft waves, and homes 10-15 ft underwater. Any type of disaster response at this magnitude will require a whole community and whole government response.

From the international perspective, the U.S. is the only Arctic nation that does not have territorial waters on the North American East side. Yet, we are still very actively involved through bilateral and multilateral agreements with our Arctic partners such as the Arctic Coast Guard Forum. The Forum conducts tabletop and live exercises to establish relationships. Even with the pause with Russia, we contribute to see very strong interest from the other Arctic 7 to continue these exercises to communicate and work together for an effective response.

## Question and Answer:

Comment: It is important to understand how the U.S. responds to a disaster in Greenland given the U.S. military presence, since it is not well understood. The military commander can respond immediately if there is an immediate danger to life. Anything else and they must call the consulate. The Secretary of State must ask the Secretary of Defense for assistance, who would send orders to the Base Commander at Pituffik. This can go very fast, but it must go through this chain. Secondly, NATO has a Euro Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC). They will, on the behalf of the requesting government, organize the donations of all NATO states so they can phase and sequence the assistance most effectively at the disaster location.

Q: How can Greenland establish their own Inuit SAR organizations?

A: Firstly, it is a collective effort, so creating your own or doing it alone would be a mistake. It is essential to maintain partnerships with all agencies at all levels.



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A: When you look at scale, which is critical here, Greenland must take action to support resilience at a local level which doesn't require coordination at a higher level. Each entity within the SAR and disaster response ecosystem exists on its own, it is how these entities work together and support each other that is important. The panelist argued that local entities should not wait for international and national level coordination to happen. The whole government and whole of society are very difficult in practice; everyone has their own mandates, missions, and jurisdictions. If we wait for coordination across all these levels, we may never be ready. Act at the local level and support community resilience to be able to bounce forward. Focus on having the physical and psychological strength to be able to feel confident, to take an unexpected situation and be able to be confident that you're going to have the self-awareness and ability to withstand it and work through it. You can and should act at the local level but build towards the aspiration at each level to figure out where it is beneficial to be coordinated.

A: Of the more than 80% of police who are permanently living in Greenland, about 70% are focused only on SAR. All other disaster preparedness is with the local municipality and authority.

Q: What about planned relocation from the perspective of human rights-based approaches to emergency management. How do we harness future funding, for example loss and damages from the Paris Climate Agreement, into things like planned relocation, preparedness, and retreat? Are there examples of effective planned relocation of small communities in the Arctic? Considering mining, cruise ships, etc., disaster planning goes to municipalities, which don't have disaster management plans, yet they are most vulnerable. What would be needed to advance disaster response and preparedness outside Nuuk?

A: It has to be a priority for politicians for it to happen. That being said, we can work in close cooperation with other authorities, including the Greenland government, to be prepared for another tsunami.

A: Firstly, we have to define success. That definition matters most for the people who are being relocated. Successful relocation for politicians might be in cost efficiencies or preferred locations. Within the conversation, we need to make those two perceptions of success match up as much as possible.

A: No, I do not have an example of a successful relocation. Alaska has 30 or more red-listed communities facing obliteration and Alaska is not successful in any of these instances. There are lots of potential problems. But primarily, who is responsible for moving us? Many communities are so used to waiting for state, or federal funding that never comes, that things don't ever get taken care of. There is a lot of money spent on disaster relief, but the federal government cannot legally fund planned disaster relief. Despite knowing many of these communities will fall into the ocean after each storm surge, we cannot plan to resettle the community.

A: Canada also does not know a successful example at the community level. Perhaps individual parts of communities are able to adjust. A great topic to examine is community disaster response plans. This is very granular, but it is important to ask how current they are or how realistic they are. Process matters, and in this process do we have the correct authorizations? It is important to



define responsibilities especially if you are relying on volunteers in the aftermath of a disaster. What you can't surge in the Arctic is trust. It is understandable why these communities are apprehensive about agreeing to be relocated when many of these communities already don't have anything close to sufficient housing or basic infrastructure. All these interactions must be predicated on trust.

## Day 2: Panel 5 – Instruments of Governance and Defense Security Cooperation

### Panel Description and Focus:

Among the eight recognized Arctic states—Canada, Denmark (via Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States—there is a long history of cooperation in the Arctic region. International, regional, and subregional mechanisms endured within the Arctic because of a shared perception that cooperation benefited each of the member states. However, in February 2022 everything changed. The geopolitical environment was upended with the Russian invasion of Ukraine and forced any cooperation to a halt. This panel examines how governance mechanisms have and will continue to evolve within the Arctic to address factors such as climate change, economics, and geopolitics as well as how we can establish mechanisms to mitigate risks before they potentially escalate into conflict.

### Panel Summary:

The first panelist examined Arctic governance from the Greenlandic perspective. In the days leading up to 24 Feb 2022, things intensified in the communications between Greenland and Denmark as they gained more information. Prior to that over the last few years, Greenland and Denmark had some political discussions on the competencies, or lack thereof, within defense, security, and foreign affairs. Denmark has the constitutional authority to determine these competencies, but of course Greenland has the right to self-determination – the right to have its voice heard when it comes to major decisions in this area.

So, this led to more involvement from Greenland. Greenland acquired more secure lines of communication, which allowed for more conversations with Denmark with regard to defense and security sectors. On the day of 24 Feb 2022 there were many calls between Danish and Greenlandic ministers and civil servants, such that by the end of the day Greenland had formulated a position after consulting with all political parties. Though there is no formal forum for dialogue among the political parties, a consensus was developed in a very substantial way.

The Greenlandic people saw what was going on in Ukraine and none of the political parties could accept the invasion, so for the first time, Greenland took a very strong stance and condemned the Russian invasion and implemented the EU sanctions. Greenland has a foreign and security committee that must be respected and has a fast-leading process, but it was important for the Greenlandic Prime Minister to have consensus. This is the first time that Greenland took a position like this. This was possible because of the greater involvement and information on defense and



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security. After many years of repeating, “nothing about us, without us,” we were in a position to use information, which obligated Greenland to take a position within the international community. This gave Greenland greater responsibility. What has happened in Ukraine has pushed Greenland’s political development in security and defense matters.

For years, Greenland has talked about having representation in NATO. They are now in the process of stationing someone there in coordination with Denmark in order for Greenland to have more information, but also to provide information and perspective. Greenland’s increased involvement and interest in defense governance does not mean they want to contribute to an arms race, but rather representation. Greenland is very much fighting for Arctic exceptionalism. The minister has met with NATO leadership and gradually developed understanding and appreciation for Greenland’s perspective. Even though Greenland may be a newcomer to this game, they do not apologize for their positions. But they also know it is a very difficult and complex scene to step onto, and Greenland has historically been a bit more neutral in its positions. The previous PM of Greenland said we are part of NATO, and what has happened in the world has only strengthened that position.

The second panelist addressed Arctic governance from the perspective of defense security cooperation in the context of NATO. Primarily, it is about capability (and will, though they go hand and hand) if you want to defend interests. Looking at defense security cooperation, the panelist examined “why,” “how,” and “what.”

From the U.S. perspective, the “why” is so that our allies and partners have capabilities they need, to do the things that are important to them, that contribute to overall alliance security. How does it work?

The United States has a Defense Security Cooperation Agency. There is a Defense Security Cooperation University to teach security cooperation. The bottom line is, anything that you think you need, you can get, and someone will give it to you and then we’ll negotiate the price later. The process is very important because it involves all of our partners and allies. The U.S. Regional Commands (EUCOM, NORTHCOM) run a strategic planning process; in that plan, we do everything by, with, and through the U.S. Ambassador. The Ambassador pulls together all the different elements of the U.S. Government into a single coherent approach or plan to help our allies and partners. The military, defense security cooperation, and regional commands are all coordinated through this plan with the Ambassador.

“What?” If you need it, or if you can imagine it, you can probably get it. There are several processes, such as foreign military sales, foreign military financing, excess defense articles (when DoD no longer needs something, it is made available to other parts of the U.S. government, and then partners). Training is also available, as well as maintenance. The need for training in a lot of very specific areas can be made available.

In the NATO context, the NATO Strategic Investment Program takes NATO money and invests it in strategic infrastructure that would be available to all NATO members in a crisis situation. For example, NATO could build a port if it is available for all NATO members to use in a crisis. The



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NATO Exercise Program is also very robust. Most recently in 2019, NATO conducted the Trident Juncture Exercise in the Arctic with more than 50,000 troops. There is also a NATO School in Germany with hundreds of courses open to allies and partners.

Finally, other agencies in the U.S. government also do security cooperation, which also goes through the U.S. Ambassador. The Department of Justice does police training, U.S. Agency for International Development, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, USCG, Customs and Border Protection, and the Drug Enforcement Agency – all do training. Again, you must go through the consulate, to the embassy, to EUCOM for defense security cooperation.

The third panelist examined governance through the perspective of diplomacy, principles, and legal order with a focus on the Arctic Council. Specifically, the panelist discussed the impact of the pause in operations in the Arctic Council. There are many people affected by the Arctic Council ranging from academics to policymakers. The panelist's remarks focused on what has happened to and within the Arctic Council over the last 14 months.

We must first go back to 2014 Crimea, there were a few discussions about the future of the Arctic Council at the time. There were a number of meetings in Moscow that NATO members could not attend. Since we were not sending diplomats to Russia at the time, we were not allowed to participate in person in the discussions.

In February 2022, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the panelist had to prepare a note for the Danish minister telling him about the situation. They had 10-15 international forums to decide what to do with Russia. There was a profound feeling that they were fighting for Arctic exceptionalism to preserve the Arctic Council, but they quickly realized that it was very difficult to keep up the status quo and could not replicate the 2014 solution. After discussion with colleagues in Nuuk, the consensus was that something needed to be done. The seven like-minded Arctic states produced a strategic pause. Although it was the senior Arctic officials talking about this and negotiating the decision, they did not do it in their Arctic Council capacity, they did it as representative of their states. This also means that the other half of the Arctic Council, the Permanent Participants, and Indigenous Peoples, were not part of that discussion because it was decided at the state level. Slowly, the Permanent Participants re-entered the negotiations on how to move forward with the Arctic Council. In June 2022, there was a press statement released that we wanted to resume work slowly within the Arctic Council on projects not involving Russia all while under Russian chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

On 11 May 2023, Norway is supposed to take over chairmanship of the Arctic Council. We want to make it a smooth transition process. But again, what about the day 2 scenario? The status quo is not an option if we do not revitalize the Arctic Council. Arctic exceptionalism is important because climate change is happening faster here than anywhere else in the world, so the work of the Arctic Council is extremely important for the people of the Arctic. On the other hand, we cannot do business as usual with Russia. The seven like-minded Arctic states and Permanent Participants are moving in the right direction.



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We have to preserve the Arctic Council, but we also don't want to create a governance vacuum in the Arctic. We don't want to throw Russia into the arms of other stakeholders, who do not have the same rights and responsibilities of the legitimate Arctic states. For geopolitical reasons, we need to preserve the Arctic Council. But at the same time, we need to accept Russia as some sort of sleeping partner. We want to make it work for the Arctic Council, and for people of the Arctic.

For the last decade, the Arctic Council has received a lot of attention. Some might say too much; it has grown to include many issues from climate, change, natural resources, trade, etc. The Arctic Council has become too sexy. We have Chinese diplomats saying they want a seat at the table to be part of negotiations. This is not a legal entity. We have expert discussions to support the people of the Arctic. Perhaps for the Arctic Council to survive we need to revert it back to an expert panel.

To conclude, the panelist brought up two examples to compare the Arctic Council from a technical perspective. The first is the Barents Euro Arctic Council, a sub-regional corporation with Russia and other Arctic States, but not including the U.S. and Canada. It creates a whole different dynamic – a micro-Arctic Council. The Russians love the forum because it allows them to accept more space. However, again the other Arctic states decided that they can't have any activities involving Russia while the war in Ukraine is ongoing. Russia responded forcefully and eventually left. Secondly, in the Council of Europe, the same situation played out and Russia was suspended. This means that millions of Russian citizens can no longer go to the European Court of Human Rights to have their case heard. These are two examples where you need to be technical and specific about the legal mechanisms you have set up, because they do have consequences.

Being in the Arctic governance space, you must be specific about cooperation and international agreements dealing with the Arctic. We want to keep the international institutions that we have now, but perhaps in the future we can see more regional or bilateral cooperation. These institutions are built on trust, but we are in an era of need.

The fourth panelist examined the law and its value as a stabilizing force because it is supposed to give us predictability of outcomes. The panelist began by referencing the Ilulissat Declaration as an important moment where the Arctic 5 made a commitment to the existing legal framework and at the heart of that, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We must be careful not to overestimate the practical outcomes of those rules. The rules don't cover all of the game. The extended continental shelf is an example of this.

The Article 76 process in UNCLOS has been followed by Russia, Denmark, and Canada, which is terrific, but the role of the commission is only to evaluate science. This won't help in determining the boundaries of the extended continental shelf between Russian, Greenland, and Canada, which is stated in paragraph ten. Drawing the continental shelf boundaries is up to the states themselves through trilateral diplomatic talks and negotiations.

In this critical phase of the game, UNCLOS gives very limited guidance and further, we are not talking to Russia at the moment. The convention tells us delineation must be decided by an agreement by the states to achieve an equitable solution. So, what happens in the meantime—optics matter. In February 2023, the UNCLOS Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf



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(CLCS) issued its recommendations to Russia, and stunningly agreed on a scientific basis, with the Russian submission. However, those same areas may be proven to be part of the Greenland and Canadian continental shelf when they receive their recommendations in a decade. So, what will the Russian Federation do? Here again, the rules are a bit vague. Article 83 [paragraph 3] does not say that states have to wait for all the parties to receive their recommendations. In fact, there is language that “in the spirit of understanding and cooperation” states shall make every effort to enter into provisional arrangements of a practical nature until the boundaries are decided.

There is some case law in Article 83. A state could argue that Article 83 is not a moratorium and the emphasis on “practical arrangements,” is actually for provisional utilization while they wait for the boundaries to be decided. A state will not violate this obligation to enter into practical arrangements if it does not receive requests from its fellow neighbors. Given the current situation with Russia, the likelihood of requesting a provisional arrangement is slim. More likely, Russia could violate the obligation if it conducts activities without informing other parties.

Then, the second obligation kicks in, which states that neither of the parties are supposed to do anything that will jeopardize or hamper the final delineation of the agreement. Yet Suriname and Guyana state that we must not stifle the party’s ability to pursue economic development in the meantime, you just can’t do permanent physical damage to the marine environment. This could mean you couldn’t go so far as to exploit oil and gas resources, but you could use seismic exploration activities.

Russia, so long as it informs its neighbors, could perform some activities within the rules. So, in the face of uncertainty, in all this strategic military planning, we should consider a coordinated strategic approach to these legal gray areas. At the very least, we should consider shared legal vigilance. This could apply to marine scientific research activities by China for instance or continental shelf activities.

Looking to the future, there might be an opportunity for concerted action to embrace a new approach on the Northwest Passage. There are good reasons for all the parties to defend their legal positions, but the panelist argued that it is time we recognize that this waterway cuts through an Inuit homeland. It cuts through the territorial, cultural, and spiritual homeland of the Inuit, and that certainly distinguishes it from the Northern Sea Route. This is something to consider when addressing the challenges of the Northwest Passage.

The final panelist examined security cooperation in the context of NORAD and the Tri Command Structure: that is the relationship between NORAD as a binational command, U.S. Northern Command, and Canadian Joint Operations Command, which is a bilateral relationship that is distinct from the two national commands.

To begin, the shortest distance from Greenland to Canada – via Ellesmere Island – is 10 km. The distance from Greenland to Labrador is roughly half of that from Greenland to Europe. What is the strategic relevance of Greenland in the current defense environment? The panelist suggested that, although there are clearly political motives within Europe underlying the relationship, Greenland is



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of little to no strategic relevance to Europe. Yet, it resides in the realm of NATO on paper, and in terms of U.S. Unified Command structure, it is assigned to EUCOM.

Greenland in strategic terms is much more vital to North American defense than it is to Europe and European NATO. During the Cold War, Greenland was largely strategically irrelevant, notwithstanding Thule AFB which had the ballistic missile early warning system, but the threat environment, primarily aerospace control, did not provide a significant role for Greenland. This has all changed today, primarily due to technology. The Eastern side of Greenland is now the North American Eastern Flank. New technology enables the tracking of bombers carrying long range missiles or long-range sea-launch missiles, which can be launched from the eastern side of Greenland to North American targets.

The need to move forward and thinking in terms of the NORAD aerospace control mission, which is the development of forward operating locations to be able to meet the threat by demonstrating the capability to meet the threat as far away from vital military and civilian industrial targets in North America relative to the dynamics of deterrence now is in play in terms of Greenland itself. This requires a rethinking of the relationship with Greenland and of course Denmark and North American defense arrangement. Both Canada and the U.S. have jealously guarded North American defense as their own. NATO has really never been involved in North American defense. What should the relationship between Greenland and North American defense be? There are a number of possible models such as the bilateral relationship with the U.S., like Iceland. Given the nature of the threat environment, compressed time, the need to develop and sustain a credible North American defense capability for the defense of the homeland, there has to be an examination of that relationship and where do Canadian interests lie.

Finally, Canada has traditionally had the policy position that NATO should stay out of the Arctic. This has changed. Is Canada really committed to a true NATO presence in the North American Arctic defense and security, or rather, are bilateral arrangements the path to go?

## Question and Answer:

Q: Is UNCLOS adequate to manage, protect, and secure the Arctic and therefore no Arctic treaty is required? If yes, why, and how?

A: Yes, I think it is important that the Arctic be treated the same as the Mediterranean, Caribbean, etc. I'm confident in saying that because the Law of the Seas convention does give a big role to coastal states in the region. There is a bias in UNCLOS that regional solutions and regional action are the way to go. So, by saying that UNCLOS is the appropriate regime to govern the Arctic, it is saying that the coastal states have a real leadership role and should probably step up to deal with some of the regional issues.

A: Agreement on Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean is a state-of-the-art product of the implementation of UNCLOS. You have the Arctic Coastal states leading the process and you have an inclusive process where you have all the relevant stakeholders contributing. Despite the situation that we have right now, it is still up and running. It is a very strong instrument.



Q: Should there be a closer relationship between Greenland and NORAD?

A: It is not news that Greenland is not part of the EU defense system and is closer to North America. Greenland, Denmark, and the U.S. have the 1951 Defense Agreement where the U.S. guarantees the defense of Greenland. So, Greenland is already part of that way of thinking. Things that need to be done still need to be done even if the Arctic Council can't work on those issues. When major states cannot work on issues, Greenland will work with who it can ensure that it works. For example, at the Arctic Circle Assembly, a number of Canadian Northern Premiers were presenting on things that Greenland politicians are saying. The identification came immediately. Greenland wants to develop cooperation with Canadian and Alaskan counterparts at the subnational level. Perhaps that is an issue with the Arctic Council; that it is only experts and states at the table. Greenland wants to cooperate with like-minded entities that have commonalities on things we can help each other with. Greenland will fight for the Arctic Council – it is important for climate science, ocean science, and living conditions of people living in the Arctic, but there may be other governance options. Can Greenland develop something else that may be more down to earth, people to people, social issues, housing, education, transport, etc. all these things that Arctic communities have in common.

A: NATO pursues a 360-degree approach to security, clearly the threat is from the East. Therefore, the perspective is to the East and always has been. But NATO deployed forces to North America in support of NORAD after 9/11. The role of North America in dealing with the threats to the East is to reinforce NATO – the role of everyone between North America and Europe will be very important.

A: It is important to acknowledge that 9/11 was a one-off and the uniqueness of that situation, and the realities of the historic relationship from a more historic perspective. The context of the North Atlantic has changed dramatically. In response to the question, 5-6 years ago NORAD officials explored a basing analysis and have gone back to look at the feasibility and utility of old WWII bases, including in Greenland, Newfoundland, and Camp Century base. There are issues going on and the extent to which Danish and Greenland officials are aware of this thinking and are getting access to this thinking on where North American defense will go as it is changing dramatically, is vitally important for Denmark, Greenland, and Canada.

## Strategic Foresight Activity

To conclude the workshop, participants engaged in a strategic foresight activity focused on the instruments of Arctic defense and security cooperation. Participants were asked to engage with various future scenarios for the Arctic within a 2-5- and 10–15-year time horizon. Within these scenarios, participants then examined their assumptions for the imagined scenarios and the necessary mechanisms to address potential challenges. Acknowledging the existing (or former) mechanisms for security dialogue which were conceived in specific contexts (e.g., AC, ACGF, ASFR, NORAD, IMO, NATO) workshop planners then posed the following questions:

1. Which remains sufficient today and may remain so in the near future?



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2. Which are insufficient and what could or might replace/supplement them?
3. How can/might a North American bloc influence these mechanisms? What might impede our collective ability or desire to do so?

Participants were given broad authority when imagining future scenarios including “exceptional” opportunities, in a North American context, for Arctic security cooperation and/or partnerships. Following the introduction to the strategic foresight activity, participants then self-selected their breakout group theme for discussion with workshop moderators.

## Conclusion

The inaugural workshop in the NAASW series held in Nuuk in April 2023 convened diverse experts from Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark/Greenland, and the United States to discuss a multifaceted number of aspects affecting emerging factors of North American Arctic security. NAADSN, Nasiffik, and TSC relied upon a workshop construct, a scenario analysis exercise, and relationship-building opportunities as diverse ways to focus on the dynamic security challenges in the North American Arctic. The workshop was led by experts, students, and practitioners, and supported by staff, who provided the means for the engagement to take place. These ways and means collectively ensured that the ends were achieved – workshop planners gained insights to address anticipated challenges to the medium and longer term North American Arctic security environment (oriented to Alaska and Western Canadian Arctic).

Participants, in turn, walked away with greater awareness and knowledge of North American Arctic security challenges and opportunities. These challenges and opportunities include dual-use infrastructure, community-based search and rescue and disaster response, shared best practices across the North American Arctic, and Indigenous representation at all levels. There also are challenges and opportunities related to strategic messaging within great power competition and transnational regional coordination and information sharing.

All-in-all, the workshop was a success. Yet there is more work to be done. There is a strong need for stakeholders to continue to dialogue and work together on the most pressing challenges impacting North American Arctic security. Importantly, stakeholders need to push themselves to think outside of the box in addressing these challenges. Equally as important, experts, students, and practitioners must continue to address Arctic security challenges together. NAADSN, Nasiffik, and TSC will build on the momentum of this workshop to convene subsequent events planned iteratively across the North America’s Arctic, the next in Nunavut in 2024, and the last scheduled in Nome, Alaska in 2025. At the end of the day, it is envisioned that the NAASW will provide a North American comparative perspective on Arctic security to current and future policymakers – a perspective that is not only needed, but required, in order to get Arctic security right.

In closing this experiment of conducting a “3 host” sponsored workshop series created a significant opportunity to advance a broad and multidisciplinary set of understandings of the



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developing security landscape of North America...that Nasiffik, NAADSN and TSC will continue to refine and pursue as these workshops work westward from Nuuk across North America's Arctic.

For our respective teams and to the benefit of NAASW #1 participants, the prior report is published and released effective 06 October 2023.



Figure 12 Photo of Several of the NAASW planners

## NAASW Report #1 Acknowledged and Released by the following designated officials:

**Dr. Rasmus Leander Nielsen**, Head of Nasiffik, University of Greenland, Nuuk, Greenland, Kingdom of Denmark.

**Dr. P. Whitney Lackenbauer**, Network Lead, North American and Arctic Defense and Security Network, Trent University, Peterborough Ontario, Canada.

**Maj Gen (Ret), U.S Air Force, Randy "Church" Kee**, Senior Advisor, Arctic Security Affairs, Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, United States of America.

## Primary Authors:

**Dr. Kathryn Friedman**, North American Arctic Policy Specialist, Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies

**Hannah Smith**, Strategic Communications Specialist, Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies

