Cooperation or Conflict in the Arctic

Changes in the Arctic Environment
And the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea
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Main Themes; What is the Problem?

• Changing nature of Arctic Geopolitical Security
• Evolving Northern Relationship between circumpolar states – Canada, US, Norway, Denmark, Iceland; Russia, Finland and Sweden; with Northern people; with outside world (EU; Japan, China, South Korea)
• Is a cooperative or conflictual international regime developing?
Cooperation vs Conflict

• Factors leading to Cooperation
  – i) Existing Political Good Will
  – ii) Good Cooperation between operators (those in the field)
  – iii) Acceptance of Science-based Understanding of the Region
  – iv) Existence of UNCLOS and Arctic Council
  – v) nearly two decades of non-conflict
Conflict vs Cooperation

• Factors leading to Conflict
  – i) weak international institutions
  – ii) undetermined borders
  – iii) potential huge resource base
  – iv) involvement of major powers
  – v) new technologies
The Transforming Arctic

• The Arctic is a state of massive transformation
  – Climate Change
  – Resource Development – (was $140+ barrel of oil – now $40-50)
  – Geopolitical Transformation/Globalization

• Transformation is Leading to Increased Activity – Whose Interest and Control?

• Perceptions and Reality are driving the Process

• Arctic Security Forces are now being prepared
Why the Interest is Developing:
Movement of Ice Sept 2007-April 2008

Source: Canadian Ice Service
Motivation for Interest:
Oil and Gas: Resources of the North

Source: AMAP
US Geological Survey Arctic 2008

• To determine the sources of traditional energy supplies
• No consideration of non-traditional energy
  – E.g. gas hydrates
• Main Findings
  • 30% of undiscovered Natural Gas in Arctic
  • 13% of undiscovered Oil in Arctic
Developing Geo-political Environment

• Current geo-political threat level is nebulous and low.

• Expanded Definition of Threat – Environmental; Military; Economic

• Issue is the uncertainty as Arctic States and Non-arctic states begin to recognize the significance of the Arctic
  1) Arctic as a Geopolitical Transit Point
  2) Arctic as a New Source of Resources
Confounding Nature of Arctic Security

• Non-linear Progression of Factors
  – Difficulty of understanding interaction of changes
  – Events can occur very quickly eg. Economic crisis
  – Tendency to believe if things are going well now they will continue to go well

• Complexity of North
  – Will remain a very expensive and difficult region to operate in

• Long-Term Impacts of Current Policy not Clear
  – EU Policy Statement/US Arctic Policy
  – Current naval construction
The Changing International Legal Regime

- New way of Dividing/Managing Arctic Ocean
- Issue is Ultimately Maritime
  - (exception Hans Island; Svadlands Island
- United Nation Convention Law of the Sea
  - Article 76
  - Article 234
  - International Straits/ Internal Waters
Maritime jurisdiction & boundaries in the Arctic

www.dur.ac.uk/ibru/resources/arctic
New Geopolitics of the North

• Russia
  – Renewed Assertiveness
  – Petrodollars

• United States
  – Multi-lateral reluctance/emerging concern to act
  – International Role as remaining Superpower

• Norway
  – Refocus on North
  – Growing Interest (Concern?) with Russia

• Denmark
  – Issues with Greenland – social; energy

• Iceland
  – Economic melt-down

• Canada
  – Re-examining its Arctic capabilities
  – Renewed Assertiveness
Renewed Russian Strengths

- 1990’s Period of Extreme Reduction
- 2000’s Renewal
- Russian State Rearmament Programme 2007-2015
  - 6 SSBN 995 Borey
  - 2 SSN 885 Yasen
  - 6 Diesel 677 Lada

Yury Dolgoruky
The New Russian Northern Fleet?

- Resumption of Northern Fleet Operation
  - 2 month Tour - Mediterranean & North Atlantic
  - Tour to Caribbean

- Commitment to have 5-6 Carrier Battlegroups by 2025/30
  - Northern based

  - Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky

Source: RIA Novosti
Resumption of Russian TU-95 (Bear) Arctic Flights, August 18, 2007

• If US/EU position on Northwest Passage is correct then these aircraft have the right of over-flight
Russian Surface Fleet Return to Arctic Waters

Severomosk

Summer 2008

Marshal Ustinov
US Arctic Forces

• Submarine Forces:
  • US – Seawolf and Los Angles Class; (Virginia Class?)
  • Cooperation with UK

- Missile Development

Missile Defence – Ft. Greely

USS Honolulu 2003

HMS Tireless 2007 after accident
US Military Capabilities in Alaska

- 3 wings of (22 aircraft) F-15
  - Air Sovereignty
- 1 wing of AWACS
- 26,000 troops
- New Basing for BMD
- Ongoing Concern about Ice-Breakers
  - 3 (2 reaching end of operational life)
Danish use of Arctic Seapower

Danish Military Troops on Hans Island

HDMS Vaedderen
Norwegian Arctic Focus

- The High North is the most important priority area of the Norwegian Defence - Norwegian Minister of Defence Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen – April 2008
- 5 New Frigates
  - Very capable Aegis – weapon system
- Helicopters stationed at northern base of Bardufoss
- Nov 2008 purchase of 48 F-35 from US
New Norwegian Frigates

- Fridtjof Nansen class
- 5 built in Spanish Yards
- 3 delivered to date/2 building
- Aegis system

Roald Amundsen and Admiral Kuznetsov 2008
Source: RNoAF
Canadian Arctic Military/Security Actions/Promises

- New Military/Naval Operations since 2002
- 6-8 Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessels
- Nanisivik Refueling Facility
- Northern Watch - surveillance
- Throne Speech Oct 2007
  - Northern Strategy (Sovereignty/Security)
- Feb 2008 Budget – $720 Million Icebreaker
Canadian Actions/Promises (cont.)

• June 2008 Canada First Defence Strategy (Harper White Paper)
  • Focus on Arctic Security
• Mandatory Reporting of Ship Traffic – Nordreg
• BUT
• Postponement (Cancelation?) of Joint Support Vessels
• No Announcement on AOPVs
Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessel

• “Be capable of operations in Canada’s three oceans
• Be first year ice capable in the Arctic
• Contribute to maritime domain awareness
• Support other departments, agencies and ocean research
• Have a gun armament for constabulary missions “ - DND

Source JTFN
New Non-Arctic Interests in Arctic

• Chinese interest in Polar Science, Resource sources and Transportation
• Japanese funding of Canadian research in Gas Hydrates
• South Korean Polar Ship Building
  – Samsung; Daewoo
• EU Arctic Policy
Chinese Arctic Interest

-1st Arctic Voyage: July-Sept 1999
-2nd Arctic Voyage: July-Sept 2003
-3rd Arctic Voyage Summer 2008

Xue Long in Antarctica
Conclusion

• Geopolitics Concerns reduced immediately after end of Cold War
• New concerns, challenges, opportunities are arising as Arctic is perceived/becoming more accessible
• Issues will be Predominately Maritime/Aerospace
• Can the Arctic be a point of Cooperation and confidence Building? Or will the Arctic increasingly be a point of competition/conflict