



Forum: Security Council

Issue: Keeping Peace and Ensuring Security in the Arctic Region

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Introduction

Until the end of the last century, the Arctic region was on the periphery of international relations. Difficult climatic conditions made the region unsuitable for economic development and various military or political activities, except for the actions of aviation and navy of the strategic nuclear forces of the United States and the USSR during the Cold War. The efforts of the Arctic countries were focused on the establishment of subarctic tundra territories and the coastal strip of the Arctic ocean. "Deep Arctic" remained mostly undiscovered. Its only geopolitical value was the establishment of the shortest path between the USSR and the United States for mutual nuclear strikes.

At the beginning of XXI century the situation changed. The Arctic region has become one of the major areas of geopolitical and economic contestation. First, in the Arctic there is a direct contact between the Russian Navy and a number of NATO countries. Secondly, the Arctic possess 13% of the world's oil and 30% of the natural gas, however experts are still discussing the volume of Arctic hydrocarbon deposits and the profitability of their production. Thirdly, the possibility of using the Arctic ocean for commercial purposes, especially the opening of transport corridors in connection with global warming, is being further explored. Under the influence of these reasons, the Arctic space is now considered as a full-fledged region with its own rules and logic of interactions of regional states. The most interesting thing about this region is that the main player here is not the USA, it is Russian Federation and even the Arctic NATO countries have been from to time facing the diplomatic conflicts with the United States and among each other that makes the situation in the Arctic region sophisticated and curious to explore.

Definition of key terms

Arctic states – states that possess sectors in the Arctic (USSR/Russia, Canada, Norway, Denmark, USA).

Subarctic states – states located near the Arctic and claimed in the past to create Arctic sectors (Sweden, Finland, Iceland).

The Northern Sea Route (Northeast passage) – the shortest sea route between the European part of Russia and the Far East, passing through the seas of the Arctic ocean and partially the Pacific ocean. The legislation of the Russian Federation defines its status

as "historically formed national unified transport communication of Russia in the Arctic". The beneficial aspect of it for Russia is shown on the map below.

The New York Times

September 11, 2009

A Shortcut Across The Top of the World

The Northeast Passage, across the Arctic Ocean, provides a shorter alternative for cargo vessels travelling between Europe and Asia than using the Suez Canal. It is shorter than the Panama Canal route for some voyages between the North American west coast and Europe.

LENGTH OF A VOYAGE TO ROTTERDAM FROM:

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN
12,894 miles via Suez Canal,
8,452 miles via Northeast Passage

SHANGHAI, CHINA
12,107 miles via Suez Canal,
9,297 miles via Northeast Passage

VANCOUVER, CANADA
10,262 miles via Panama Canal,
8,038 miles via Northeast Passage



THE NEW YORK TIMES
 SIGN IN TO RECOMMEND

Arctic co-management – the idea of joint decision-making Arctic and sub-Arctic countries on the fate of the Arctic. The means of its implementation is the introduction of the neutral status of the Arctic ocean.

The Arctic Council – an international forum established in 1996 on the initiative of Finland to protect the unique nature of the Northern polar zone, which also discusses regional political disputes of the Arctic region.

"Stoltenberg report" - February 8, 2009 speech delivered by the former Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg on the possibility of the Scandinavian countries to conduct a coordinated military policy in the Arctic.

The conference of the Barents region states – a project of cross-border cooperation between the border regions of Russia, Norway, Finland and Sweden.

Background information

1) XX century

The modern system of division of the Arctic was the result of a struggle between the Arctic States at the turn of XIX—XX centuries. In international law it is called sectoral division: an approach, according to which the Arctic was divided into sectors between countries of the circumpolar azimuths emanating from the extreme Western and extreme Eastern points of their Northern boundaries and converging at the North pole. In 1925,

Canada declared that all lands and Islands North of the Canadian mainland were subject to its sovereignty. In 1926 the Presidium of the CEC of the USSR decided that "all lands and Islands, both open and able to be open in the future, located in this sector, constitute the territory of the Soviet Union." Denmark in 1933 created a smaller Arctic sector on the basis of its possessions in Greenland. In 1934, Norway followed suit. The smallest sector was created by the USA in 1928 on the basis of Alaska. In this regard, Washington traditionally did not recognize the system of sectoral division, although in practice it did not challenge it.

Three sub-Arctic States played a special role in Arctic policy: Finland, Sweden and Iceland. They did not get the Arctic sectors, although in the past claimed ownership in the Arctic. Finland after the defeat in the Second world war in 1944 lost access to the Arctic ocean through the port of Petsamo (Pechenga), which she received from the RSFSR signed in 1920 Tartu (Yuriev) Treaty. Sweden has the status of an Arctic power, although Russia disputes the right to primacy in the development of the Northern sea route. (Stockholm refers to the fact that this path was first traversed by the Swedish expedition of Nils Adolf Nordenskiöld in 1878) Iceland has no Arctic possessions due to the lack of territories beyond the Arctic circle.

Till nowadays, the status of the North Pole and the question of priority in achieving it remain controversial. In 1948, Soviet transport aircraft Li-2 landed the expedition of Pavel Gordienko and Alexander Kuznetsov on the North pole. The American side considered this fact unproven. In 1952, a transport plane S-47 brought the American expedition of Joseph Fletcher and William Benedict to the pole. Since 1909, Canada also claimed the pole. International court of arbitration in 1951 decided that in a hundred years the North pole could withdraw to Canada, if during this period another country does not prove its rights to possess this territory.

In 1979, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR decided to push the Eastern border of the Eurasian and North American continents to the West to 168°58 ' W.d. This caused a territorial dispute between the Soviet Union and the United States over offshore areas in the Bering and Chukchi seas. On June 1, 1990, the parties signed an agreement under which the disputed territory of 50 thousand square kilometers was transferred to the United States. The sea border of the USSR and the USA actually return Las to as of 1 January 1979, the U.S. Congress ratified the agreement on 18 September 1990 In the USSR and the Russian Federation's ratification did not take place. Washington does not recognize Russian claims, and Russia does not consider the agreement to have entered into force.

The conflict over the border demarcation in the Bering sea created a precedent of rivalry between the USSR and the USA in the Arctic territories. There is no clear border between the countries of the shelf zones in the Bering Strait, nor is the state border on the Chukchi sea detailed. The USA in 1924 agreed with territorial claims of the USSR to Wrangel island, but did not recognize the fact of allocation in 1935 of the East Siberian sea as separate sea space and its status of the territorial sea of the USSR. Theoretically, this allows the United States to raise the issue of the right of entry of vessels into the East Siberian sea, including Wrangel island.

In 1982, the UN international Convention on the law of the sea was signed. Its entry into force on November 16, 1994 formally reduced the boundaries of the Arctic States to 12 nautical miles from the coastline. The next 200 miles are a special economic zone in

which States have exclusive economic rights but have no right to interfere with navigation. The implementation of these decisions meant the elimination of the sectoral division system. The Arctic powers had to prove their rights to possession in the Arctic ocean again. The United Nations Convention on the law of the sea admits the jurisdiction of a state over the continental shelf (up to 350 miles from the coast) if they can prove that the continental shelf is the extension of their continental platform.

In the mid-1990s, the positions of the Arctic powers came into conflict. The United States, having the smallest sector, proposed the internationalization of the Arctic ocean. Washington's position was shared by the subarctic countries-Iceland, Sweden and Finland, which would be allowed to return to the Arctic. Russia and Canada, on the contrary, supported the confirmation of the system of Arctic sectors. Denmark and Norway, which had larger Arctic sectors than the United States and formally interested in maintaining the sectoral system, found themselves in a difficult situation. However, they had territorial disputes with Russia (Norway) and Canada (Denmark). The revision of the system of sectoral division opened before Oslo and Copenhagen, the prospects of changes in the boundaries milking in a favorable direction.

The most negative position to the system of "Arctic co-management" was taken by Russia. After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, it lost most of the coast of the Baltic and Black seas. Under the influence of these reasons, the Secretary of the security Council of the Russian Federation A. A. Kokoshin in 1998 formulated the concept of the Northern strategic Bastion, with which the Northern fleet of the Russian Federation became the basis of the sea component of the Russian SNF. This circumstance was due to two factors: 1) high strategic protection of the Arctic ocean (compared, for example, with the Pacific coast of Russia) and 2) maximum proximity of ballistic missiles of submarines of the Northern fleet to the United States. The Arctic powers-members of NATO tried to reduce the water area of the Russian Northern fleet by diplomatic means.

The problem for Russia was the Northern Sea Route (NSR). Back in 1934, the USSR confirmed its status as its internal transport artery. In 1965, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR introduced the regime of the exclusive right of the Soviet government to open or close the ports of the NSR. This decision was not recognized by the rest of the Arctic countries, with the us and Sweden taking the toughest position. In 1998 the Federal law of the Russian Federation "on internal sea waters, the territorial sea and the adjacent zone of the Russian Federation" was adopted, confirming these provisions. Other Arctic powers also did not recognize the legality of Russian legislation.

To maintain the dialogue, the Arctic countries have created a consultative mechanism. Back in 1993, the first parliamentary conference on Arctic cooperation was held in Reykjavik (Iceland). its participants were five Arctic (Russia, Canada, Norway, Denmark and the United States) and three subarctic (Iceland, Sweden, Finland) States. In 1994, the standing Committee of parliamentarians of the Arctic region began to work. In 1996, on the initiative of Finland, the Arctic Council was established on its basis. Its formal goal was to develop measures to protect the unique nature of the Northern polar zone. In fact, the Council has become a dialogue platform for making coordinated decisions on Arctic issues. It includes all five of the Arctic and subarctic three States. Observer countries were Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy, China, the Republic Of Korea, the Netherlands, Poland, France, Japan, India, Singapore.



The idea of managing the Arctic through the Arctic Council was a reminder of the concept of "Antarctic co-management". In 1937, the International geographical Commission singled out a special South Ocean around Antarctica, which meant the internationalization of the Antarctic space. The international Antarctic Treaty of 1959 declared the continent "the property of all mankind" and promoted the freedom of scientific research. The Madrid Protocol of 1991 introduced a ban on mining in Antarctica for the next hundred years. The United States saw in the "Antarctic precedent" the possibility of neutralizing the Arctic on the model of Antarctica.

The idea of managing the Arctic through the Arctic Council was a reminder of the concept of "Antarctic co-management". In 1937, the international geographical Commission has allocated around Antarctica special southern ocean, which meant the internationalization of the Antarctic spaces. The international Antarctic Treaty of 1959 declared the continent "the property of all mankind" and promoted the freedom of scientific research. The Madrid Protocol of 1991 introduced a ban on mining in Antarctica for the next hundred years. The United States saw the possibility of neutralizing the Arctic on the model of Antarctica in the "Antarctic precedent".

Arctic powers differently assessed the prospects of "Antarctic precedent " for the Arctic. Only the United States supported the mechanical application of the principles of the UN Convention on international law. Other Arctic powers insisted on taking into account the specifics of the Arctic ocean, covered with permafrost all year round. At the Inari summit (Finland) on 9-10 October 2002, they blocked the attempt to introduce an "Arctic co-management" system. Only 14 may 2011 at the Arctic Council summit in Nuuk (Greenland), all eight countries of the Council signed an Agreement on cooperation in aviation and Maritime search and rescue.

In 1998, Norway proposed the concept of the Northern sea corridor, which provided for the development of transport links between the regions of the Northern and Barents seas. Norway's position was initially supported by Russia, seeing it as an alternative to the "Antarctic precedent". However, Moscow did not agree to the free entry of ships to the ports of the NSR, as established by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1965, the idea of "Arctic co-management" has not been implemented.

The failure of the "Arctic co-management" prompted the Arctic countries to intensify the struggle for the division of the Arctic ocean shelf. On December 20, 2001, Russia submitted an application to the UN Commission on the continental shelf for 1.2 million square kilometers of the Arctic shelf. But on June 28, 2002, the UN Commission recommended that Russia finalize the justification for the application due to the lack of maps of the underwater ridges of Lomonosov and Mendeleev.

On April 13, 2004 Denmark declared its rights to possess the North pole, justifying it by the connection of the pole with the underwater Lomonosov ridge connected with Greenland. This step was painfully perceived in Moscow: between Russia and Denmark there was a disputed space in the area of the shelf zones of the North pole. The prospect of submitting a revised application to the UN was also questionable. If Denmark had proved that the Lomonosov submarine ridge was a continuation of Greenland, it would have been impossible to justify its belonging to the Siberian continental platform.

On the 27th of November 2006, Norway submitted an application to the UN Commission on the continental shelf 250 thousand square km of the Arctic shelf. 15 April 2009, recognized the sovereignty of Norway only 235 thousand sq. km., which contrasted sharply with the attitude of the Commission to the Russian proposal.

On the 28th of August 2006, the administration of George Bush refused to accept the proposed by Canada, Russia and Norway options separated the shelf of the Arctic ocean on a sectoral basis of 1920s. There was an unspoken alliance of the United States, Denmark and subarctic States, coordinating their actions in the Arctic Council.

In such circumstances, Russia has increased the endeavors to defend its interests. On the 3rd of May 2007, President Vladimir Putin announced the need to intensify efforts to ensure Russia's strategic, economic, scientific and defense interests in the Arctic. In the summer of 2007 the polar expedition "Arctic-2007" was held under the leadership of the Deputy of the state Duma Arthur Chilingarov. Formally, its cause was the collection of evidence on the relationship of the underwater ridges of Lomonosov and Mendeleev with the Siberian continental plateau. 2 August 2007 its participants set the Russian flag on the bottom of the Arctic ocean under the North pole.

This step caused a negative reaction from the US and Canada. At the end of July 2007, the Russian expedition was flown by NATO air force aircraft. Representatives of the United States, Canada, Denmark and Norway condemned the installation of the Russian flag under the North pole. ("It's not the fifteenth century. You cannot travel around the world, set flags and say "We claim our rights to this territory,"" —said the Minister of foreign Affairs of Canada Peter McVeigh.) July 16, 2008 in the U.S. Congress held hearings on the construction of icebreaker fleet in the Arctic.

Moscow has taken tough measures in response. On August 17, 2007, Russia announced the resumption of regular flights of strategic aviation (see Chapter 11). On September 20, 2007, the Ministry of natural resources and ecology of the Russian Federation made a statement according to which the preliminary results of the analysis

of the earth's crust model on the profile "Arctic-2007" also prove that the Lomonosov ridge is part of the adjacent continental shelf. July 14, 2008 resumed combat duty of ships of the Northern fleet of the Russian Federation in the Arctic ocean.

2) XXI century

Russia tried to find partners in the Arctic policy. Theoretically, they could be either Canada or the Scandinavian countries. Moscow and Ottawa had fewer disagreements than Oslo, Copenhagen or Stockholm. However, after the unsuccessful Russian-Canadian consultations in 2001 and the further growth of hostility in bilateral relations, the dialogue between Moscow and Ottawa on Arctic issues was excluded for the foreseeable future. Russia has taken steps towards rapprochement with Norway — a country that also advocated the preservation of the sectoral division of the Arctic.

On 27 April 2010, President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg of Norway initialed in Oslo an Interstate agreement on the principles of Maritime delimitation and cooperation in the Barents sea and the Arctic ocean. On September 15, 2010, the Parties signed an Agreement on Maritime delimitation and cooperation in the Barents sea and the Arctic ocean. The disputed area of the continental shelf (175 sq. km.) was divided equally: about 88 thousand sq. km to side. Russia and Norway have pledged not to claim each other's sovereign rights beyond this line and have recognized each other's exclusive rights to fisheries within their sector. The parties confirmed the rights of the Joint Russian-Norwegian fisheries Commission established in 1976.

At the same time, Russia abandoned a significant territorial sector in the Barents sea. Neither "The Svalbard Treaty" (1920), nor resolution of the Norwegian starting in 1947. By the terms of those documents, Oslo has guaranteed the demilitarization of Spitsbergen and the right of the USSR to conduct economic activity and its special economic rights in the archipelago. The absence of reference to these agreements allowed Norway to raise the issue of revising the status of Spitsbergen, including the elimination of Russian settlements.

The Murmansk Treaty, despite private losses, was to bring strategic benefits to Russia-Norway's recognition of the arc TIC borders of the Russian Federation. However, at the II Arctic forum in Arkhangelsk on September 22-23, 2011, the Norwegian side did not recognize Russia's rights to the Norther Sea Route.

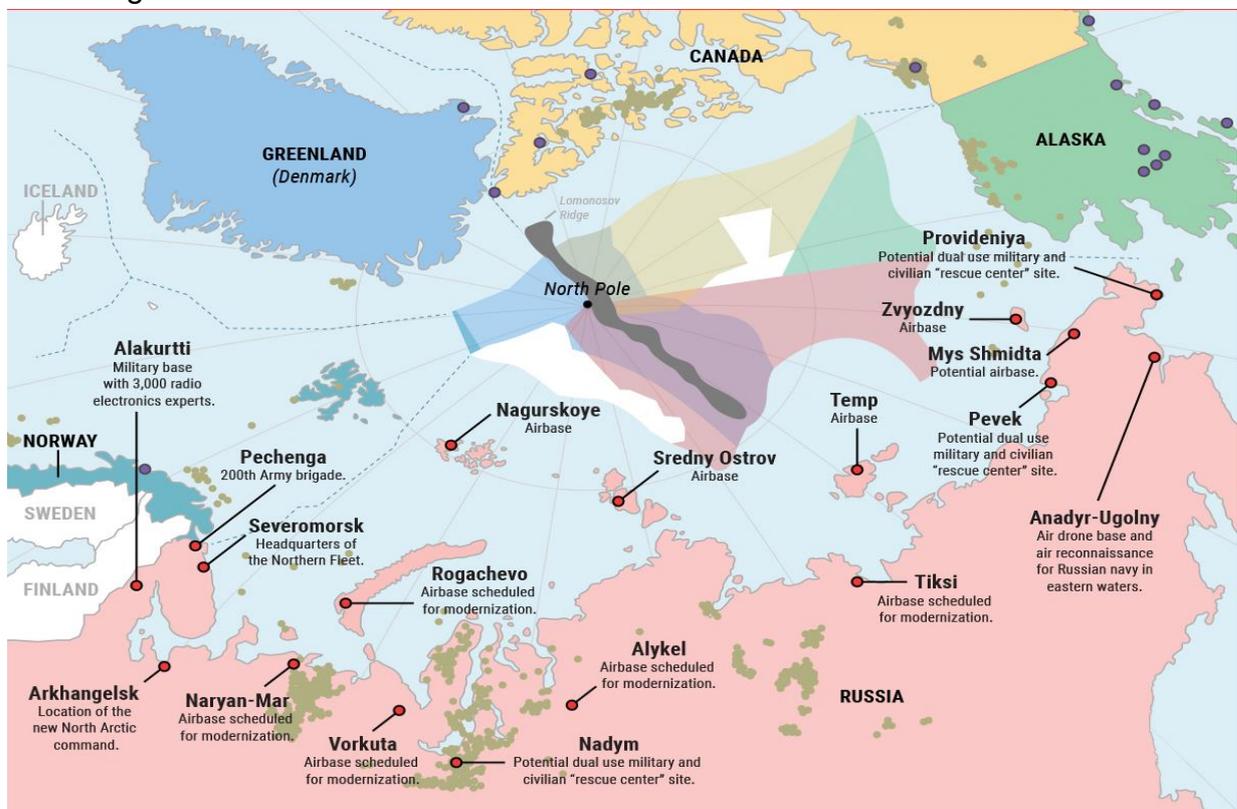
On June 3-5, 2013, a conference of the Barents region was held in Kirkenes (Norway). It was initiated by Russia after the series of incidents in the Barents sea in the autumn of 2011 that proved that the Norwegian side is squeezing Russian fishermen from the Spitsbergen area. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev held working meetings with the heads of government of Norway, Finland, Iceland and the Minister of foreign Affairs of Sweden. A Russian-Norwegian agreement on cooperation in the field of border crossing was signed. A meeting of the regional Council of the Barents region was held, which was attended by the heads of the Russian regions. The Kirkenes Declaration of heads of government, adopted on June 5, 2013, positively assessed the role of the Russian-Norwegian Murmansk Treaty of 2010 and emphasized the "innovative potential" of the Barents region.

But, despite the launch of border projects, Russia failed to achieve recognition of its rights to the Soviet Arctic sector and the Northern sea route from Norway. In the mid-

2010s, the prospects of the Russian-Norwegian partnership began to raise doubts, especially in connection with the sanctions imposed by the parties against each other due to the Ukrainian events. More attention to Russian diplomacy was given to Denmark, which is 15 December 2014 applied for 350 thousand square km of the Arctic shelf. The task of the Russian-Danish dialogue was to delineate the disputed underwater ridges in the area of The North pole.

In August 2015, Russia submitted to the UN a "Partially revised submission of the Russian Federation with respect to the continental shelf of the Russian Federation in the Arctic ocean" in order to classify the seabed and its subsoil in the Central part of the ocean as a natural extension of the Russian land territory as an extended continental shelf of the Russian Federation. Russia insists that the Lomonosov underwater ridge, which runs from the new Siberian Islands through the North pole towards Canada and Greenland, as well as the Mendeleev uplift located to the East, are the position of the Eurasian continent and, therefore, do not fall under the 350-mile limit. The area of about 1 million sq. km under consideration was included in the first application of the Russian Federation in 2001, from the 11th session of The Commission on the limits of the continental shelf in June 2002. with an indication of the lack of detail from the application of maps of the seabed topography and the validity of the continental nature of the Lomonosov ridge and its relationship with the mainland. The new application of 2015 was supported by the results of 10 years of integrated geological and geophysical research.

At the same time, it is crucial to mention the increasing presence of the Russian military forces in the region and their overwhelming superiority in the number of nuclear icebreakers that makes it really hard for NATO to compete in the geopolitical game in the Arctic region.



To conclude, the struggle for the re-division for polar spaces has become an integral feature of the world politics of the early XXI century. The repartition of the Arctic is carried

out under the cover of the draft revision of the system of "sectoral division," and the norms of the International Law of The Sea. The Arctic Council has not yet been able to carry out an agreed audit of the "sectoral division" system. So today the struggle for the redistribution of the Arctic shelf spaces came to the fore.

Major countries and organizations involved

- Russian Federation
- United States of America
- Canada
- Norway
- Denmark
- Finland
- Sweden
- Iceland

Useful links for the preparation

https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1700/RR1731/RAND_RR1731.pdf

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/January-February-2018/Why-Alaska-and-the-Arctic-are-Critical-to-the-National-Security-of-the-United-States/>

<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/security-in-the-arctic--a-norwegian-perspective/id2351274/>

<https://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/101133/GRADU-1495110005.pdf?sequence=1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DleYtdO8go0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dV67yJHoPvw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbrKLnH8wLA>