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BACKGROUND GUIDE

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Background:

The first inhabitants of the Arctic region arrived approximately 4,500 years ago. These indigenous groups have lived off the land, hunting whales, fishing in lakes and crafting bows, harpoons and an assortment of other tools that allowed them to exist in such a harsh climate. Over the centuries the Arctic was visited and even settled by a variety of groups from across Eurasia and North America. Fast forward to the 1940s and there are now an estimated 2 million people living above the Arctic circle.

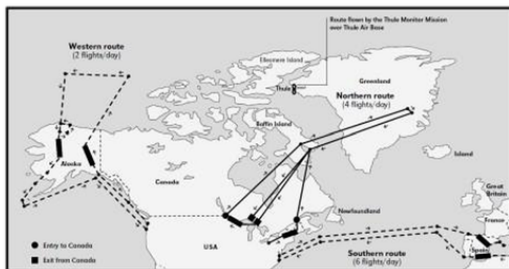
While the Arctic has always been host to conflicts between the different groups, it wasn't until the 1930s that we saw what could be considered a "militarization" of the region. Finnish and Soviet troops battled during the Winter War and just a few months later Nazi aircraft and U-boats stationed in Norway began to harass Allied shipping convoys in an attempt to starve the Soviet military of crucial supplies. Throughout the Second World War, Axis and Allied troops frequently engaged in battles across Scandinavia and the Northern reaches of the USSR. During this time the USA, the USSR and their respective allies set up dozens of bases across the Arctic.

Following WW2, as both the USA and USSR began to build up their nuclear arsenal, it became clear that flying over the Arctic was the shortest route that any bomber would have to take to either nation. This led to both sides pouring billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of troops into the region. Hundreds of additional bases were set up ranging from tiny research/espionage outposts on floating icebergs to massive air bases housing hundreds of nuclear bombers and thousands of warheads.

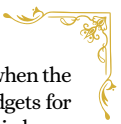
The cost to the indigenous people on both sides was immense - thousands of people and many communities were displaced or forced to abandon their traditional way of life. The Soviet Union conducted hundreds of nuclear tests in the Arctic displacing communities such as the Nenets who lived on the island of Novaya Zemlya for generations before being forcibly resettled. Over 130 nuclear weapons were tested on the island including the Tsar bomb which holds the record as the largest nuclear weapon ever produced. Today, concentrations of cesium in the soil and local wildlife still exceed healthy levels and sites housing piles of radioactive waste dot the island.

Operation Chrome Dome is a well-known USAF operation between 1961-1968 in which flights of nuclear armed bombers remained in the air 24/7 which put them in a position to either attack or respond to any attack within minutes. The operation ended in January 1968 after a B-52 bomber crashed near Thule Air Base in Greenland, 4 thermonuclear bombs fell into Baffin Bay and while the nuclear explosives themselves did not detonate, the conventional

explosives did which resulted in radioactive material and jet-fuel being spread across the landscape. This incident demonstrated the dangers of militarising such a sensitive and harsh environment. To this day parts of one of the warheads are still missing and local wildlife still shows low levels of plutonium and uranium.



As the Cold War progressed and technology developed the superpowers shifted away from bombers to intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), this resulted in the installation of dozens of early warning radar sites across the Arctic from both sides. Nuclear armed submarines also began to make frequent voyages submerged under the layers of ice for months at a time. In 1987 Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev made a speech in the Arctic city of Murmansk where he announced a shift in the Soviet foreign policy in relation to the Arctic. Gorbachev called for a nuclear weapons-free Arctic, demilitarization, and international collaboration in fields such as resource extraction , economic development, protection of the environment, indigenous people, and scientific exploration. While there were very few steps taken by either side to demilitarize the region , Gorbachev's speech helped to ease the tensions which had plagued the region for decades. There was increased cross border collaboration between scientists in the different Arctic states, the Northern Sea route was also opened for foreign vessels, and it is also believed that the Murmansk Initiative influenced the different Arctic nations into forming the Arctic Council in 1996.



While tensions were diffused in the short term it wasn't until 1991 when the fall of the Soviet Union triggered massive cuts in the defensive budgets for both the USA and new Russian Federation. As a result most Arctic bases were either abandoned or dismantled and the troops stationed there were called back. This represented the first major “de-militarization” of the Arctic in recent history, something that unfortunately didn't last long.

Current situation:

At first glance the Arctic might look like a cold, desolate environment that serves no purpose to modern humans, however underneath the surface it holds almost immeasurable wealth in the form of a variety of crucial resources. Everything from iron, aluminium, nickel, copper, gold and dozens of other metals. Moreover an estimated 13% of the planet's undiscovered oil and 30% of its undiscovered natural gas sits above the Arctic circle. This is in addition to the fact that the region already supplies 10% of the world's oil and 25% of its natural gas. Naturally these resources have been exploited for decades now, massive open pit mines and oil wells are dotted across Siberia, Canada, Scandinavia and Alaska. These activities show no sign of slowing down. In 2013 Russia commissioned the first offshore oil platform above the Arctic circle. In 2015 the largest Arctic oil platform began production in the Barents sea. Billions of dollars are being poured into opening new mines, building roads, ports , and other key infrastructure across the region. However natural resources are only a part of why the Arctic is once again in the spotlight. The Northwest passage is a shipping route through the Arctic Archipelago, it provides an alternative route between the Atlantic and Pacific that bypasses the expensive and often crowded Panama Canal. For years this passage was completely covered by ice and almost impossible to regularly navigate through. Over time the decline in Arctic sea ice, caused due to climate change, has made this route more navigable and it is seeing a steady uptake in usage throughout the year. The Northern Sea Route is another such sealane that is seeing an increase in its importance as the ice sheets recede. While historically this route has been used for intra-Arctic transportation it is now seeing increased usage to transport goods between East-Asia and Europe , bypassing the Suez Canal. 97 cargo voyages were made across the route in 2024, mainly exports from Russia to China.



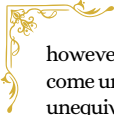
These Russian activities in the Arctic are supported by China, who view themselves as a “near- Arctic state” as mentioned in their first official Arctic policy published in 2018. China is particularly interested in developing the Northern Sea Route as an alternative trade route which would bypass the Strait of Malacca, through which approximately 60% of their trade flows through today.

The region is a part of its project to build a “New Silk Road”. has led to them increasingly conducting military exercises in the region along with Russia, and building up relations with other Arctic states such as Iceland and Finland. This joint Russian and Chinese Arctic build up has been matched by NATO, who view the Arctic and High North as vital to their goal of collective security and thus are also in the process increasing their presence in the Arctic. “NATO Arctic Sentry” and “Operation Arctic Endurance” are military missions launched in early 2026 that aim to increase the group’s military presence in the region through joint surveillance and military operations. “Cold Response” is another major NATO exercise hosted by Norway every alternate year, the 2026 edition saw over 30,000 troops from participating nations along with a host of aircraft , tanks and ships. There have also been reports of secretive talks between the Danish and American governments to open 3 new bases on the island.

In early 2026, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney announced plans to invest around 35 billion Canadian Dollars into forward operating bases in various Arctic communities which would “enable the Canadian Armed Forces to defend the Arctic without the help of allies”.

Along with this , the Canadian government also announced plans to upgrade airfields, ports, and build thousands of kilometers of highways in the Canadian Arctic territories.

Undoubtedly the biggest story relating to the Arctic in the past year has been the comments made by American President Donald Trump relating to the United States taking over Greenland. While Trump has long wanted to acquire Greenland , attempting to unsuccessfully purchase it during his first term, we have seen an escalation in the crisis after Trump didn’t rule out military force to acquire the island and even threatened tariffs on European partners until they relented to his demands. These threats were rolled back by early 2026 .



however in July 2026 Trump again reiterated his demands for Greenland to come under American control. The people of Greenland, have unequivocally rejected Trump's demands and have held protests throughout the island calling for the island to remain a self-governing Danish overseas territory. The Danish government as well as the leaders of other European nations have also rejected these demands and criticised Trump's rash behavior. This crisis has spurred military investment into the region and it is even believed that Operation Arctic Endurance and Arctic Sentry are a direct response to American aggression.

Future possibilities:

Note: Due to the myriad of possible outcomes and overall uncertainty surrounding the Arctic, the following section has been kept intentionally vague to avoid directing delegates toward any particular outcome or interpretation.

1. A return to a Cold War like stalemate: As both sides militarize the region , they perceive the moves made by the other as offensive in nature and begin to rearm themselves, locking them in an almost never ending cycle of continuous rearmament and rising tensions. This scenario will likely see a militarization of the region at a level not seen since the 1960s-1980s.
2. An agreement is reached: A treaty similar to the Antarctic Treaty is signed between nations either banning or restricting military activity above the Arctic circle and reducing the chances of any future conflict. This possibility is likely the best case scenario and could establish the region as a zone of cooperation rather than competition while still preserving its importance for scientific research and peaceful economic activity.
3. A conflict breaks out: No doubt the worst-case scenario not just for the indigenous population but all of humanity. Any armed conflict in the Arctic will have significant humanitarian and ecological consequences that could stretch far beyond the region itself. Disruptions to shipping routes, energy supplies, and resource extraction could impact the global economy while the involvement of major powers could risk escalating a regional conflict into a wider international crisis or potentially a nuclear confrontation.

Timeline:

1. 1920s and the svalbard treaty - The Svalbard archipelago is a norwegian archipelago between mainland norway and the north pole. Although Svalbard has generally been an area of peaceful cooperation, its unique geographical and legal features still make it a zone of tension. The svalbard treaty itself recognizes norwegian sovereignty over svalbard, while recognizing equal rights for nationals of treaty parties in specified economic activities. Since the 1500s, the archipelago was deemed terra nullius as it had no claims over it. The geopolitical landscape shifted drastically at the turn of the 20th century with the discovery of extensive commercial coal deposits. Corporate entities from Norway, Russia, Great Britain and the United States established permanent mining infrastructure. At the 1920 Paris Peace Conference, Allied powers sought to stabilize northern Europe while rewarding Norway for maritime logistics support during the first world war. Concurrently, post-revolution Soviet Russia was diplomatically isolated, eliminating a major obstructive voice from the negotiations. On February 9th, 1920, the Svalbard treaty was signed. Which further came into effect in the name of "Treaty concerning the Archipelago of Spitsbergen" on the 14th of August of the same year.

2. The cold war and arctic militarization - After the signing of the svalbard treaty, the arctic shifted into a highly securitized theater of the cold war, transitioning itself into an arena for the creation of law. - - During this time, the arctic was highly divided by NATO and the Warsaw pact. It is important to note that during this time, the UNCLOS was adopted in 1982

3. The creation of the arctic council - The murmansk initiative of 1987, was a concept introduced by the general secretary of the soviet union at the time, mikhael gorbachev, to transform the high north into an international zone of peace. Advocating for civil cooperation and joint research, providing the political bridge between the west and the ussr to engage in talks about the arctic - -

- Capitalizing on this, Finland invited eight arctic nations, namely Canada, Denmark, norway, sweden, the soviet union, the united states and themselves to a consultative meeting in rovaniemi, in 1989, called the rovaniemi process. In June of 1991, the nations formally signed the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS). This framework was a soft law f

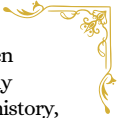
framework focused only on monitoring and assessing specific environmental threats, establishing more organs and groups under the strategy. In 1993, Canada proposed expanding the narrow focus into a comprehensive political forum with a larger ambit. Initially resisted by the USA, the negotiating parties agreed to make it an intergovernmental forum and not a formal international organisation with treaty making powers and its mandate to explicitly exclude military matters. On September 19th of 1996, the Ottawa declaration was signed, officially dissolving the AEPS and establishing the Arctic Council. - This was the primary instrument of arctic governance until the 2008 illulissat declaration 4. The planting of the Russian Flag. - - - In December of 2001, Russia became the very first nation to file an official claim to the CLCS under article 76 of the UNCLOS. Claiming an additional 1.2m square kilometers of the arctic ocean seabed asserting that two major underwater mountain chains, the Lomonosov and the Mendeleev ridge as direct geological extensions of the Russian landmass. The CLCS rejected the claim, stating that the evidence provided by Russia was insufficient and scientifically incomplete. The UN ordered Moscow to go back to the high north and gather specific bathymetric data from the deep ocean floor if they wanted the claim approved, which deeply enraged the Russian scientific community to map the deep arctic floor. At the same time, satellite mapping revealed that the arctic summer ice was melting at a record breaking pace. Scientists estimated that 25% of the planet's undiscovered oil and natural gas was trapped beneath the arctic seabed. The realization that the vast energy reserves and ice free navigation routes would soon be accessible turned into a race. Russia launched the Arktika expedition of 2007, with leader Artur Chilingarov, completing an unprecedented dive to the true ocean floor directly beneath the north pole. After which the Russians planted a 1 meter tall, rust proof titanium flag onto the seabed. 5. The illulissat declaration. - International media and non arctic states began framing the high north as a lawless frontier poised for military conflict. International academics and European politicians began calling for a comprehensive binding international treaty similar to the 1959 Antarctic treaty. In response, Danish foreign minister Per Stig Møller, and Greenland's prime minister Hans Enoksen invited only the five coastal states bordering the arctic, those being, Canada, Denmark, Greenland, Norway, Russia and the United States, to a summit in Ilulissat, Greenland, where the A5 (Arctic Five) sought to decouple hard maritime boundary sovereignty from general arctic environmental governance. Signed on May 28th 2008, the Ilulissat declaration was established.



6. The Russia-Norway Maritime Delimitation Agreement - On September 15th, 2010 the Russian president Dmitry Medvedev and Norwegian prime minister Jens Stoltenberg signed the Treaty on Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea, Resolving a 40 year old conflict clearing the way for fisheries and oil exploration.

7. The Annexation of Crimea - In March of 2014, Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine shattered post cold war security assumptions, instantly affecting relations between Moscow and the A7. launching targeted embargoes and sanctions, cutting off the transfer of advanced deep water oil drilling and arctic exploration technology to Russian state firms. For the first time since the soviet collapse, Canada boycotted an arctic council working group meeting in moscow, while the arctic security forces roundtable (ASFR) permanently banned russian participation. - - Since then, for eight years, attempts to maintain a policy of arctic exceptionalism. The council deliberately continued functional cooperation on non military issues like search and rescue and oil spills. Whereas Russia, deprived of western finance and tech due to crime, turned to Beijing. This created China's Polar Silk Road and accelerated Russia's unilateral militarization of its Northern Sea Route infrastructure, erecting new air defense bases across arctic coastlines. On February 24th, 2022, Russia launched its full scale invasion of Ukraine. making the continuation of Arctic Exceptionalism politically impossible. In a coordinated diplomatic strike, the A7 issued a joint statement announcing a complete pause on all official activities of the arctic council, refusing to send delegates to any meetings chaired by Russia and effectively paralyzing the council's governance.

8. A7 Realignment and Modern day Arctic. - In may of 2023, Russia's two year chairship of the arctic concluded and in a tense digital ceremony, Norway assumed chairship. To prevent the collapse of the council, Norway brokered a strict compromise with the A7, to resume low level virtual meetings with Russia but all major dialogue with Russia still remained banned. Countering this however Russia amended its official Arctic policy document, removing references to dialogue and prioritizing relations with non arctic states, namely China and India.

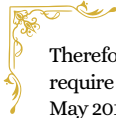


The Nordic NATO encirclement with Finland joining in 2023, Sweden formally entering in 2024 and the European Arctic becoming entirely militarized under a single command structure, for the first time in history, the Arctic Council were bound by NATO's article 5. The collective defense system. Turning the high north into the famously called "NATO Lake". Further expansions like the ICE pact and the icebreaker initiatives were designed to counter Russia. In the present, With Danish chairship of the council, environmental data sharing continues via secure digital portals. Frustrated by the deadlock however, the A5 has gone back to the Ilulissat declaration framework. Using direct UNCLOS legal channels to settle overlapping continental shelf claims such as Canada's seabed submission. The high north now remains divided. The west being fully integrated within NATO and the Russian Arctic operating closed within fortified resource outposts completely dependent on Chinese infrastructure.

CASE STUDIES:

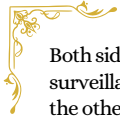
1. Arctic Warfare

The harsh climate of the region incurs three main risks: the seizing of machine oil; the freezing of rubber and plastic; and chaotic output of compasses and geospatial navigational tools around the magnetic and geographic poles. And there has been immense confusion about how to apply international law in newly emerging territory. During normal conditions, prominent terrain features are primarily used to navigate the landscape. However, when everything looks the same and operating units face the unique properties of the Arctic battlefield mentioned above, no such tools are available. To coherently extend into the next case study it is also important to note that during the Cold War, the American, British, and Soviet fleets engaged in extended combat beneath the Arctic Ocean as boomers and attack subs pursued one another. Additionally, communication is often a critical resource to conduct military operations and combat. Cold climates place additional requirements on the maintenance and use of radio equipment and tools. In such environments, exploitation and pursuit operations must be conducted discriminately. Restrictions imposed by terrain and weather conditions must be compensated for, highlighting the efficiency of small-unit operations. Moreover, communication cannot disregard one key factor. Military satellites in geostationary orbits around the equator can't make contact with Arctic ground terminals because signals are blocked by the curvature of the earth.



Therefore the dynamics of warfare in the Arctic are vastly different and require creativity and design to conduct successful operations. In fact, in May 2015 the NATO research vessel Alliance cruised off the coast of Norway to test underwater robots that could be used to hunt submarines in the Arctic. Whilst these are key factors in the topic of DMZs, another key point is the regulation of nuclear warfare and nuclear-proliferation testing. Nuclear weapon testing and other nuclear activities in the Arctic have security implications at the local and regional level, risking radiation poisoning of the people and wildlife. For instance, an explosion at Nyonoksa, near Severodvinsk and Arkhangelsk that occurred in August 2019 was attributed to a failed test of Russia's new 9M730 Burevestnik nuclear-powered cruise missile. Much ambiguity and debate concern whether this so-called "doomsday weapon" is a feasible capability for Russia to achieve at this time. Nevertheless, the accident caused a spike in radiation levels potentially endangering local people and caused the death of six Rosatom employees.

2. The Arctic and the Cold War During the 1950s, the military preparations for the Cold War had extended to even the most frigid environments on Earth. Submarines came into the focus of strategists, with attack submarines continuing to operate in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean. The creation of the USS Nautilus (1958) was such an example. The submarine was created by the US after the Sputnik Shock (1957) to respond to the Soviet Union, demonstrating the safety of nuclear propulsion. It enabled the Americans to operate in the influence zone of the Soviets, paving the way for a nuclear US Navy submarine fleet. The Soviet Union developed a similar submarine 4 years later. Facing potential nuclear attacks via the Arctic, the United States and Canada also created an intimate defence cooperation in the area. With the U.S. pressing for the construction of radar stations in the Canadian Arctic, the Distance Early Warning Line aka DEW Line was created. Its monitoring of the Arctic helped prevent attacks and gave early warnings, ultimately leading to the formation of NORAD in 1958. Besides this, the Arctic was characterised by high levels of militarization, which include the regional placement of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), long-range bombers, nuclear weapons and a host of additional military resources.



Both sides (US and the Soviet Union) also developed very extensive surveillance systems that would allow them to have warnings of attacks by the other side.. After the Cold War, there were important efforts to reduce many of the nuclear strategic forces and a considerable reduction of the deployment of conventional military forces in the region not only by the USSR/Russia and the United States but also by most of the northern NATO allies such as Canada, Norway and Denmark. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 did not reduce the strategic importance of the Arctic, and the Russian Federation has continued a policy of exploration and territorial claims in the region. The closest to which the United States and Russia were able to eliminate the central importance of nuclear weapons came in the 1990s under a number of nuclear weapon reduction agreements. Two of the most important were the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) (and the negotiations for the proposed START II and III) and the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation (AMEC) agreement. START I saw a significant reduction in the number of nuclear strategic and tactical weapons. At the same time, AMEC was a combined agreement between Russia, the US, Norway (and later the UK) to decommission many former Soviet nuclear-powered submarines. The Arctic, in fact, long has seen the juxtaposition of cooperation and competition, and its history pertaining to the Cold War should be judged upon. The New START Treaty replaced the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which expired on 5 December 2009. On 21 February 2023, the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, announced to the Federal Assembly that Russia would suspend the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (the 'New START Treaty Signed on 8 April 2010 and entered into force on 5 February 2011). Less than a month earlier, the U.S. The Department of State had assessed in an annual report that Russia had failed to comply with New START due to its refusal to permit on-site inspections and to reschedule a required treaty meeting. New START required Moscow and Washington to exchange data on their strategic nuclear arsenals twice a year. Until now, despite the disputes, the two countries had expressed their ongoing adherence to the treaty's central limits, data exchanges, and notifications. But Putin's decision to suspend the treaty will halt the data exchanges and prompt further concern about the number of Russian strategic warheads.

This is concerning since NEW START is the last remaining bilateral arms control treaty between the U.S. and Russia. Russia is a party to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which permits suspension under specific conditions. Article 62 describes those conditions, focusing on the notion of “fundamental change of circumstances.” Russian Senator Konstantin Kosachev zeroed in on this point in his presentation to the Federation Council, stating that the US “intent to defeat Russia” constituted a “fundamental change” as defined by Article 62. Afterward, Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov stressed that US assistance to Ukraine is the main driver for the “fundamental change” determination by Russia. Former Russian Ambassador to the United States Sergei Kislyak added that the alleged US intent to inflict a “strategic defeat” on Russia ran the risk of transforming New START into an instrument contributing to this strategic defeat, rather than the mechanism of strategic stability that it was originally intended to be.

3. Demilitarization Zone of Ukrainian Nuclear Plants Russia-Ukraine The covert Russian invasion of the Ukrainian autonomous republic of Crimea in February 2014 sparked a war between Russia and Ukraine. When Russian and local proxy forces seized territory in Ukraine's Donbas area in April 2014, the conflict widened; during the following seven years, combat in eastern Ukraine would claim the lives of more than 14,000 people.



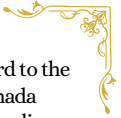
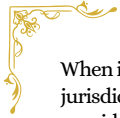


Russia began a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Despite significant gains achieved by Russian forces in the early stages of the conflict, Ukrainian defenders resisted Russian attempts to annex Kyiv and other important cities and soon began conducting counter-attacks against Russian strongholds. Though this case study is not pertinent to the specified area of the agenda it is very important to keep in mind for the course of the committee. Fears of a nuclear disaster have been raised since the Russian military took control of the site in early March and there have been many strikes nearby. Moscow and Kyiv have denied liability, and the report made no mention of who should be held accountable for the damage its inspectors had found. António Guterres, the UN secretary general, has asked for a demilitarized zone to be established around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power facility, which would entail the evacuation of Russian occupying forces and an agreement from Ukrainian forces not to advance. On Tuesday, Rafael Mariano Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), led an inspection visit to the occupied Zaporizhzhia plant and presented a report to the security council. Rafael Mariano Grossi made recommendations, which Guterres supported. The report attested to the presence of Russian servicemen and military hardware, including army vehicles, at the site. Vasily Nebenzya, the Russian ambassador to the UN, claimed that Ukrainian forces had just shelled the plant and claimed that Russian forces were defending it. The request for a security zone, which Moscow has so far rejected, went unanswered by him. The IAEA report, according to Nebenzya, was not something he had time to read. Russia has rejected UN requests for a demilitarized zone to be established around Europe's largest nuclear power station, which Moscow's soldiers have been occupying since early March and is located in an area of Ukraine that will soon serve as a new front in the conflict. Vasily Nebenzya, Russia's permanent delegate to the organization, said Interfax on Friday that Moscow needed to "protect" the Zaporizhzhia plant. He claimed that if its forces left, the facility would be "vulnerable... to provocations and terrorist attacks." According to the IAEA report released, the organization was "gravely concerned" about the "unprecedented" scenario at the plant, which is controlled by the Russian military but run by Ukrainian technicians, and it recommended immediate action to avert a nuclear tragedy. Although the continued shelling hasn't yet resulted in a nuclear emergency, it nonetheless poses a continual threat to nuclear security and safety with the ability to affect crucial safety functions and have a significant impact on radiological outcomes.

A turbine lubricating oil tank and the rooftops of many buildings, including one that housed a used fuel transporter vehicle, were among the areas shelled. The city of Enerhodar, which is near the plant, had blasts earlier, according to Dmytro Orlov, the Ukrainian mayor who governs from outside of Russian-controlled territory. Reiterating its steadfast allegations that Ukrainian soldiers had been bombarding the plant, Moscow. According to Kyiv, Russia has been fabricating these events in order to erode international support for Ukraine and possibly use them as justification to disconnect the plant from the Ukrainian power grid and take its output. Implementation of the demilitarization zone A “demilitarized zone” is an area, agreed upon between the parties to an armed conflict, which cannot be occupied or used for military purposes by any party to the conflict. Demilitarized zones can be established by a verbal or written agreement in times of peace or during an armed conflict. The subject of the agreement is normally an area that fulfils the following conditions 1.all combatants as well as mobile weapons and mobile military equipment have been evacuated; 2.no hostile use is made of fixed military installations or establishments; 3.no acts of hostility are committed by the authorities or by the population; and 4.all activity linked to the military effort has ceased. But as of now whilst the Ukrainian parliament encourages and supports the UN decision for a demilitarization zone, the Russian forces do not support it with a strong stance of defense although, according to the ICRC, police forces can be stationed in a DMZ to keep peace and order. Till recent date, solutions to the threat of nuclear power plants remain ambiguous and a DMZ still hasn't been implemented.

4. The Northwest Passage (Diplomatic)





When it comes to the Northwest Passage, the main issue is in regard to the jurisdiction or authority should the regulation or law be made. Canada considers the NWP to be part of its internal waters, fully under Canadian jurisdiction, according to the UNCLOS. However, this has not been accepted by the United States and the EU, who believe it is an international strait. How so? The Northwest Passage, a strait connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans that passes through the ice-covered Arctic, is one of the "straits which are used for international navigation" under Article 37 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), according to the official position of the United States government.¹ The Northwest Passage, on the other hand, is claimed by Canada to be a domestic sea and not an international strait by any definition. The importance of the classification of the strait revolves around whether there is a right of innocent passage for foreign ships within the Passage. Inconsistently using a number of arguments during the past century, the Canadian government has argued that the Arctic Archipelago, which includes the Northwest Passage, should be regarded as Canadian internal seas. Its defenses have included the sector principal's application, assertions of historical title, its present stance, and the use of straight baselines. However, if a strait satisfies the criteria of Article 37 of the UNCLOS, a claim to sovereignty under a straight baseline theory has no influence on the rights of vessels crossing the strait: the movements of the vessels are governed by transit passage. The trespassing of the US ship "USCGC Polar Sea" in 1985 sparked controversy when it navigated the NWP from Greenland to Alaska without the formal authorization of the Canadian Government. This led to further events, the aftermath being that both countries agreed to tolerate each other's views, despite not accepting either one's positions. Another point to mention is the impact of the route pertaining to global maritime transportation, world economy, and trade. This seaway could potentially offer a quicker journey than already existing routes including the Panama Canal, Cape Horn, Suez Canal, etc. The NWP still requires major investments for its infrastructure, escort vessels, staging ports, etc. But though that, it is certain that future tensions will increase. For instance, any move by Canada to restrict or prohibit passage through the Passage in the upcoming years may make it more likely for UNCLOS III member nations with interests in the Arctic to file a claim against Canada in a global court better known as an international tribunal in ILf now.

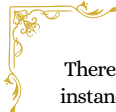


As of now, disputes related to the United States and the Northwest Passage remain diplomatic, but under increasing tensions and historical background, the resources of the Northwest Passage must not be a catalyst for armed disputes under the name of military operations and shouldn't be subject of exploitation by either party causing or provoking future armed conflicts. Thus the development of a DMZ could be discussed but isn't an absolute necessity as of now.

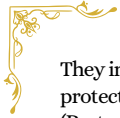
5. Lomonosov Ridge and Beaufort Sea Dispute (Diplomatic) The Lomonosov Ridge is an underwater ridge, claimed by Canada, Greenland, and Russia. It leads from Greenland via the North Pole to Siberia, always remaining underwater. If claimed, the ridge can allow for more harvesting rights and enable countries to build artificial islands. Additionally, the ridge plays a symbolic role, in regards to its proximity to the North Pole. Claiming the ridge as a part of their respective continental shelves can allow the country to exercise a certain influence on the pole itself. All three countries have sent various missions and expeditions to map and gather evidence for their respective claims. And tensions rise. Though it remains diplomatic. Moving towards the Beaufort Sea, Adding to the increasing number of commercially driven disputes within the Arctic is The Beaufort Sea Dispute between the United States and Canada involving the offshore hydrocarbon reserves and other natural resources. The border between Yukon and Alaska in the Beaufort Sea is a long-standing issue that is now being accelerated by climate change. The original source of the dispute can be traced back to the wording of the 1825 Anglo-Russian treaty, between Russia and Great Britain. These treaty rights were later inherited by the US in 1867, and Canada in 1880, from Russia and Great Britain, respectively. Canada claims that the treaty delineates the boundary at the meridian line of the 141st degree on both land and sea; whereas the US claims that it is simply a land boundary and that normal maritime boundary delimitation applies beyond the coast. This may cause conflict as Canada strongly opposes the beliefs brought by the US. Regardless, both diplomatic disputes must be kept in mind whilst in committee though it does not call for a demilitarization zone.



LEGALITIES ICRC And The 1949 Geneva Conventions The ICRC's only goal has been to provide protection and aid to those who have been harmed by war and turmoil since its founding in 1863. It does this through taking active action all across the world, fostering the growth of international humanitarian law (IHL), and advocating for governments and all those who use weapons to uphold it. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Geneva Conventions, and the evolution of humanitarian action are all key themes in the book. The Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Statutes, and the decisions of the International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent serve as the foundation for the ICRC's operations. The ICRC is a neutral, impartial organization that provides humanitarian protection and aid to those who have been the victims of war and armed conflict. It responds to crises and encourages adherence to and incorporation of international humanitarian law into domestic legislation. The Geneva Conventions became operative on October 21, 1950. Ratification increased steadily throughout the years: in the 1950s, 74 States ratified the Conventions, followed by 48 States in the 1960s, 20 States in the 1970s, and another 20 States in the 1980s. Early in the 1990s, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and the former Yugoslavia, 26 countries ratified the Conventions. The number of States Parties has increased to 194 as a result of seven new ratifications since the year 2000, making the Geneva Conventions applicable worldwide. The first Geneva Convention protects wounded and sick soldiers on land during war - Following the adoption of versions in 1864, 1906, and 1929, this Convention constitutes the fourth revision of the Geneva Convention on the Wounded and Sick. There are 64 articles in it. These shield the injured and ill as well as medical, religious, and other staff members, as well as medical units and transports. The distinguishing insignia are acknowledged by the Convention as well. It comprises two annexes that include a model identity card for medical and religious employees as well as a draught agreement regarding hospital zones. The second Geneva Convention protects wounded, sick, and shipwrecked military personnel at sea during war - This Convention took the place of the Hague Convention of 1907 for the Adaptation of the Geneva Convention's Principles to Maritime Warfare. In terms of both structure and content, it closely resembles the first Geneva Convention.



There are 63 articles that are especially relevant to naval warfare. For instance, it safeguards medical ships. A sample identity card for those in the medical and religious fields is included in one of its appendices. The third Geneva Convention applies to prisoners of war - The 1929 Prisoners of War Convention was succeeded by this one. It has 143 articles, compared to the 1929 Convention's 97. According to Conventions I and II, a wider range of people qualify for the status of prisoner of war. Particularly with regard to the labor performed by prisoners of war, their financial resources, the relief they receive, and the legal actions taken against them, the conditions and locations of captivity were more clearly specified. Following the end of active hostilities, the Convention established the principle that prisoners of war must be immediately liberated and returned home. There are five annexes to the Convention, each of which has various model rules and identification and other cards. The fourth Geneva Convention affords protection to civilians, including in occupied territory - Prior to 1949, the Geneva Conventions only applied to combatants; they did not apply to civilians. The events of World Conflict II demonstrated the terrible repercussions of not having a convention for the protection of civilians in times of conflict. The 1949 Convention takes into account the outcomes of World War II. There are 159 articles in it. It has a brief section on general population protection from the effects of war but skips over the hostilities themselves, which were eventually covered in the Additional Protocols of 1977. The majority of the Convention focuses on the status and treatment of protected individuals, making distinctions between the circumstances of foreigners on the territory of one of the parties to a conflict and civilians living in an occupied area. It contains specific rules on humanitarian support for those living in occupied territory and outlines the duties of the occupying power towards the civilian population. It also includes a specific regime for the care of interned civilians. It comprises three annexes that include model cards, model rules for humanitarian aid, and model agreements on hospitals and safety zones. The additional protocols The number of non-international armed conflicts and wars of national liberation increased in the two decades that followed the establishment of the Geneva Conventions. Two Protocols Additional to the four 1949 Geneva Conventions were subsequently adopted in 1977 in response.



They impose restrictions on how wars are waged and increase the protection of victims of both international (Protocol I) and domestic (Protocol II) armed conflicts. The first international treaty that was solely concerned with non-international armed conflicts was Protocol II. The Red Crystal, a new emblem that shares the same international standing as the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems, was created in 2005 after the adoption of a third Additional Protocol. Additional Protocol I - international conflicts Additional Protocol II - non-international conflicts Additional Protocol III - additional distinctive emblem. When it comes to DMZ the ICRC has outlined articles, clauses, and customary international law such as - Rule 36 - Directing an attack against a demilitarized zone agreed upon between the parties to the conflict is prohibited *Note - State practice establishes this rule as a norm of customary international law applicable in both international and non-international armed conflicts Article 60 - Demilitarized Zones 1. It is prohibited for the Parties to the conflict to extend their military operations to zones on which they have conferred by agreement the status of demilitarized zone if such extension is contrary to the terms of this agreement. 2. The subject of such an agreement shall normally be any zone that fulfills the following conditions: (a) all combatants, as well as mobile weapons and mobile military equipment, must have been evacuated; (b) no hostile use shall be made of fixed military installations or establishments; (c) no acts of hostility shall be committed by the authorities or by the population; and (d) any activity linked to the military effort must have ceased. Article 85 - Repression of breaches of this Protocol 3. In addition to the grave breaches defined in Article 11, the following acts shall be regarded as grave breaches of this Protocol, when committed wilfully, in violation of the relevant provisions of this Protocol, and causing death or serious injury to body or health: (a) making the civilian population or individual civilians the object of attack; (b) launching an indiscriminate attack affecting the civilian population or civilian objects in the knowledge that such attack will cause excessive loss of life, injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects, as defined in Article 57, paragraph 2 (a) (iii); (c) launching an attack against works or installations containing dangerous forces in the knowledge that such attack will cause excessive loss of life, injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects, as defined in Article 57, paragraph 2 (a) (iii); (d) making non-defended localities and demilitarized zones the object of attack; (e) making a person the object of attack in the knowledge that he is 'hors de combat'

Past Solutions

1. Antarctic Treaty System One of the most powerful international models for regional demilitarisation is the Antarctic Treaty (1959). It bans military measures, such as military bases, manoeuvres and weapon testing, and fosters peaceful scientific cooperation. The model of the Antarctic can not be replicated in the Arctic because it includes “sovereign states” and “permanent populations”, but it does show that states can put in place legally binding limitations on military presence in areas of strategic significance.

2. Proposals for the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Arctic Countries. The concept of an Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) has been proposed in several proposals throughout history. These proposals have been about limiting the use and testing of nuclear weapons in the Arctic and the peaceful use of the Arctic. There is no total Arctic NWFZ yet but these are steps toward the development of future measures to reduce nuclear risks in the Arctic.

3. Confidence-Building Measures Instead of full and immediate withdrawal of the military, states may take steps to implement **confidence-building measures (CBMs)**. These can include warning of military exercises, exchange of military information, communication hotlines and agreements to avoid dangerous manoeuvres of military aircraft and ships. These can help to minimize the chance of accidental escalation without compromising on the legitimate national security interests.

4. UN Monitoring in the Demilitarized Areas A precedent of international monitoring of demilitarization is given in the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP). A series of Security Council resolutions was used to monitor the demilitarisation of the Prevlaka peninsula by UN military observers. This illustrates the ways in which the UN can assist in verifying compliance with a negotiated demilitarisation agreement.



Past Resolutions & International Frameworks

UNSC Resolution 1038 (1996) UN military observers were given permission to supervise the removal of the Prevlaka peninsula and set a precedent for the international supervision of demilitarization.

UNSC Resolution 1119 (1997) Continued the UN monitoring mechanism in Prevlaka and continued international supervision of the demilitarized area.

UNSC Resolution 1147 (1998) Further, expanded the responsibilities of the UN in relation to demilitarization process.

UNSC Resolution 1362 (2001) UN military observer forces are to be allowed to continue to monitor compliance with the demilitarization arrangements.

UNSC Resolution 1424 (2002) Sustained the monitoring system and continued international control of the demilitarized zone.

UNSC Resolution 1437 (2002)

Before the end of the UNMOP operation, further continued the UN monitoring mechanism. Ottawa Declaration (1996) Founded the Arctic Council, which became the main platform for cooperation between the Arctic countries. The Council's mandate does not, however, include military security and necessary measures would have to be taken outside the Council.



QARMA_s

Q1. How is it that the Antarctic Treaty will not work for the Arctic?

The Arctic is not Antarctica, but rather has sovereign territories, permanent populations and established maritime jurisdictions. Arctic demilitarization would therefore need to be negotiated in a framework among sovereign States and not simply to declare the entire Arctic area demilitarized.

Q2. Who will be responsible for policing an agreement to disarm the arctic?
A UN-authorized monitoring mechanism may be set up, based on the precedent of UNMOP in Prevlaka.

Q3. What would be the effect of the demilitarization on the states if they were to remove all military forces?

A: Not necessarily. A phased approach may be to initially limit offensive infrastructure and nuclear deployment and destabilising military activities, while still maintaining the necessary defensive, search and rescue and sovereignty related capabilities.

Q4. If the Arctic Council is in place, why should the UN get involved?
The Arctic Council has a non-military-security mandate and its primary forum for cooperation is on environmental, scientific and socioeconomic matters. A UN mechanism could then focus on the security aspect.

Q5. Which is the most realistic first step to Arctic demilitarization?
Immediate steps towards confidence building measures, transparency of military forces and notification and/or restrictions on specific deployments such as those likely to be destabilising would be more readily attainable than the final removal of military force.

Q6. How to ensure demilitarization is actually followed?

Verification may take the form of inspections, satellite monitoring, military information exchanges/UN observers as agreed and consented by participating states.

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