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DRAFT REPORT

on the Arctic: opportunities, concerns and security challenges
(2020/2112(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

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The European Parliament,

- having regard to Title V of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), notably Articles 21, 22, 34, and 36, as well as to Part Five of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to its resolutions of 9 October 2008 on Arctic Governance¹, of 20 January 2011 on a sustainable EU policy for the High North², of 12 March 2014 on the EU strategy for the Arctic³, and of 16 March 2017 on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic⁴,
- having regard to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) of 13 September 2007, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 December 2007,
- having regard to its resolution of 3 July 2018 on violation of the rights of indigenous peoples in the world, including land grabbing⁵,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 November 2008 entitled ‘The European Union and the Arctic region’ (COM(2008)0763), and to the joint communications of 26 June 2012 entitled ‘Developing a European Union policy towards the Arctic region: progress since 2008 and next steps’ (JOIN(2012)0019) and of 27 April 2016 entitled ‘An integrated European Union policy for the Arctic’ (JOIN(2016)0021),
- having regard to the relevant recommendations of the Delegation for Northern cooperation and for relations with Switzerland and Norway and to the EU-Iceland Joint Parliamentary Committee and the European Economic Area (EEA) Joint Parliamentary Committee (DEEA),
- having regard to the Summary of the results of the public consultation on the EU Arctic policy of January 2021,
- having regard to the Commissions communication of 11 December 2019, on the European Green Deal (COM(2019)0640),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 8 December 2009 on Arctic issues, of 12 May 2014 on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region, of

¹ OJ C 9E, 15.1.2010, p. 41.

² OJ C 136E, 11.5.2012, p. 71.

³ OJ C 378, 9.11.2017, p. 174.

⁴ OJ C 263, 25.7.2018, p. 136.

⁵ OJ C 118, 8.4.2020, p. 15.

20 June 2016 on the Arctic and of 9 December 2019 on the EU Arctic policy,

- having regard to Council Decision 2014/137/EU of 14 March 2014 on relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other,
- having regard to the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy of June 2016,
- having regard to the national Arctic strategies, in particular those of Arctic states, namely the Kingdom of Denmark, Sweden and Finland, as well as those of other EU and EEA Member States,
- having regard to the European Union Maritime Security Strategy,
- having regard to the Space Strategy for Europe, published by the Commission on 26 October 2016 (COM(2016)0705),
- having regard to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) concluded on 10 December 1982 and in force since 16 November 1994,
- having regard to the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 16 November 1972,
- having regard to International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples,
- having regard to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),
- having regard to the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean of 3 October 2018 (CAOF agreement),
- having regard to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR),
- having regard to the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code) of the International Maritime Organization,
- having regard to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) of 1974, the international Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) of 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 and by the Protocol of 1997, the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) of 1978, as amended in 1995 and 2010, the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) of 1972, the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL) of 1965, and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) of 1979,
- having regard to the Svalbard Treaty (previously the Treaty concerning the Archipelago of Spitsbergen), of 9 February 1920,

- having regard to the Ottawa Declaration of 19 September 1996 establishing the Arctic Council,
 - having regard to the statements adopted at the Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum in Reykjavik, Iceland, in May 2015, in Archangelsk, Russia, in November 2013, in Tromsø, Norway, in February 2011 and in Brussels in September 2009,
 - having regard to the North Atlantic Treaty, the Warsaw Summit Communiqué, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw of 8-9 July 2016 and the analysis and recommendations of the reflection group appointed by the NATO Secretary General entitled ‘NATO 2030: United for a New Era’,
 - having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0000/2021),
- A. whereas since the end of the Cold War, the Arctic has been a zone of peace and international cooperation, and the goal of the international community should be to keep it as such;
 - B. whereas the Arctic is home to over four million people, including more than 40 different indigenous ethnic groups and half a million EU citizens;
 - C. whereas the future of the Arctic requires a broader understanding and actions reaching beyond the regional level owing to the direct link between the geopolitics and security of the Arctic and its environmental situation;
 - D. whereas the effects of climate change in the Arctic and the re-emergence of geopolitical competition in the region may impact the economic development of the northern hemisphere;
 - E. whereas the region’s geo-economic importance is quickly growing due to competition for its natural resources and the emerging new maritime routes;
 - F. whereas primary responsibility for the preservation and sustainable development of the Arctic lies with the Arctic states;
 - G. whereas cooperation in the field of scientific research is now, more than ever, crucial to overcoming the challenges brought about by pollution and climate change;
 - H. whereas the governance model of the Arctic has so far proven to be effective;
 - I. whereas the remit of the Arctic Council is limited, giving it the flexibility to adapt to new challenges but also making it less able to respond to all the issues affecting the Arctic;
 - J. whereas, the essential role of international law, in particular the UNCLOS and the conventions of the IMO, should be reaffirmed and reinforced;
 - K. whereas the EU’s engagement with the Arctic is based on history, geography, economy

and research, and whereas the EU has consistently demonstrated its commitment to a peaceful, environmentally clean and cooperative Arctic;

- L. whereas Russian obstruction has since 2014 denied the EU formal observer status to the Arctic Council;
- M. whereas the military importance of the Arctic is rapidly increasing due to the progressive and steady re-militarisation of the Russian Federation, significantly increasing the likelihood of military confrontation in the region;
- N. whereas China has engaged in a long-term effort to enhance its position in the Arctic, declaring itself a ‘near-Arctic state’, with the ambition of becoming a ‘polar power’;

International cooperation as the bedrock of a safe, stable, prosperous, accessible and peaceful Arctic

1. Considers that the Arctic plays a crucial role in keeping the environmental balance of the planet and aims to maintain the region as a zone of peace and international cooperation;
2. Notes, however, that interest in the Arctic and its resources is growing because of the negative effects of climate change and resource scarcity, creating new opportunities for economic development but also increasing the risk of confrontation;
3. Emphasises that the Arctic states hold the primary responsibility for tackling issues within their territories; reiterates that international law is the cornerstone of the legal framework regulating inter-state relations in the Arctic and underlines the importance of the UNCLOS;

(Re-)Entry of geopolitics into the Arctic

4. Highlights that the prospect of Arctic militarisation carries substantial security risks in and beyond the region; notes that the Arctic plays a crucial role in the security of Europe as whole;
5. Urges the Russian Federation to enact its Arctic policies in full respect of international law and to be mindful of the consequences of its actions; is therefore worried by the military build-up pursued by Russia, including the development of anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) capabilities;
6. Underlines that cooperation with Russia in the Arctic should be consistent with the principle of selective engagement and should not jeopardise the goals of sanctions against Russian actions elsewhere;
7. Considers that the inclusion of the Arctic by China in its economic development programmes, with the aspiration to integrate the Arctic’s northern sea route into its Belt and Road Initiative (as a ‘Polar Silk Road’), as well as the Arctic’s prominent place in the military strategy of the Russian Federation, are cause for concern and challenge any idea that the Arctic could be dealt with as a self-contained region;

Safeguarding freedom of navigation

8. Welcomes the IMO's Polar Code and calls for an assessment of its implementation, as well as of that of the standards and obligations under the SOLAS and MARPOL conventions;
9. Insists that it is crucial that the right of innocent passage of foreign ships through territorial seas be preserved and regrets all efforts made by the Russian Federation aimed at closing its navigable Arctic routes;

Sustainable development and exploitation of strategic resources

10. Underlines the importance of the Arctic for EU energy security;
11. Is of the opinion that the Arctic should play a central role in the European Raw Materials Alliance, boosting Europe's output of critical minerals and cutting dependence on China for rare earth metals;
12. Notes the signing and entry into force of the CAOF agreement, which represents an ambitious and innovative step towards tackle the problems of the Arctic;
13. Underlines the importance of taking precautionary approach to Arctic fisheries, at all stages, and encourages the adoption of a sustainable, science-based approach; is concerned by the inability of Arctic coastal states to agree on how to divide quotas on transboundary fish stocks and expresses its support for existing regional fisheries management organisations;
14. Is concerned by the persistent intention of the Russian Federation and China to pursue far-reaching and highly impactful exploitation projects without appropriate assessment of their environmental impacts;

Serving local communities and preserving the rights of Indigenous peoples

15. Reiterates its call to actively involve all the inhabitants of the Arctic, and particularly indigenous peoples, in decision-making processes concerning development choices;
16. States that the exploitation of the Arctic's resources should benefit local inhabitants; advocates, in this regard, for a stronger link between businesses operating in the Arctic and local communities;

More EU in the Arctic, more Arctic in the EU

17. Recognises the validity of the three founding pillars of the integrated EU policy for the Arctic, namely climate change, sustainable development and international cooperation;
18. Welcomes the updating of the EU's Arctic policy, which should also reflect new security realities; is of the opinion that the EU should engage with stakeholders which have a vested interest in promoting regional stability and prosperity;
19. Regrets Russia's veto of EU observer status in the Arctic Council; supports the EU's continued *de facto* membership of Arctic Council working groups;

20. Stresses the need for the EU and its Member States to maintain constructive relations with Arctic states and underlines the need for the EU to keep engaging with the indigenous peoples of the Arctic;
21. Is of the opinion that issues of security in the Arctic should also be part of consultations and cooperation with NATO, which can use the framework of the NATO-Russia Council to resolve misunderstandings, de-escalate tensions and prevent crises;
22. Calls for the Arctic to be included as one of the objectives of the EU's Strategic Compass, similarly to the NATO Reflection Process;
23. Calls for the aims of the new Arctic Strategy to be reflected in the EU's programmes, projects, finances and relevant legislation, as well as in the work of the relevant EU agencies;

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24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.