



**UiT** The Arctic University of Norway

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education – Centre for Peace Studies

## **Trust and Distrust in Defence & Security Politics**

A Multi-Level Analysis of the Defence and Security Relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia

Benjamin Schaller

A dissertation for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor - March 2020



To my grandparents



We don't mistrust each other because we're armed;  
we're armed because we mistrust each other.

U.S. President Ronald Reagan



# Table of Contents

- Acknowledgments..... I
- Abstract..... III
- List of Abbreviations & Acronyms..... V
- List of Tables..... VII
- List of Figures ..... IX
  
- 1 INTRODUCTION ..... 1**
  - 1.1 Previous Research and Contribution of this Thesis ..... 4
  - 1.2 Thesis Structure ..... 9
  
- 2 CONCEPTUALIZING TRUST AND DISTRUST – A CRITICAL REALIST APPROACH ..... 10**
  - 2.1 Defining Trust and Distrust in International Relations ..... 11
  - 2.2 Conceptual Shortcomings of Previous Approaches ..... 13
  - 2.3 A Critical Realist Approach to Trust and Distrust in International Relations..... 18
  
- 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – A MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH TO TRUST AND DISTRUST IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ..... 23**
  - 3.1 The Structural Level – A Three-Layered Model of Trust in International Relations..... 24
    - 3.1.1 The Moralistic, Strategic and Practice-Layer of Trust ..... 24
    - 3.1.2 Temporal, Functional, Spatial and Relational Overlaps of Trust ..... 30
    - 3.1.3 Summary..... 31
  - 3.2 The Interpersonal Level – Building Inter-Group Trust in Defence and Security Politics ..... 32
  - 3.3 The Communicating Level – The Reproduction, Transformation or Representation of Trust .... 34
  - 3.4 Summary ..... 37
  
- 4 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH ..... 39**
  - 4.1 Research Design ..... 39
    - 4.1.1 Case Selection ..... 39
    - 4.1.2 Research Methods, Source Material and Operationalization ..... 41
  - 4.2 Ethical Considerations and Positionality ..... 49
    - 4.2.1 Positionality ..... 49
    - 4.2.2 Ethical Considerations..... 51
  
- 5 THE STRUCTURAL LEVEL OF TRUST IN DEFENCE AND SECURITY POLITICS ..... 54**
  - 5.1 Mapping the Defence and Security Relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia in Europe and the Arctic Region ..... 55
  - 5.2 Norwegian Defence and Security Politics..... 62
    - 5.2.1 Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends ..... 62
    - 5.2.2 Norwegian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations..... 68
    - 5.2.3 Norwegian-Canadian Defence and Security Relations ..... 72
    - 5.2.4 Norwegian-Russian Defence and Security Relations..... 74
    - 5.2.5 Summary..... 81
  - 5.3 Swedish Defence and Security Politics ..... 82
    - 5.3.1 Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends ..... 82
    - 5.3.2 Swedish-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations..... 85
    - 5.3.3 Swedish-Canadian Defence and Security Relations ..... 90
    - 5.3.4 Swedish-Russian Defence and Security Relations ..... 92
    - 5.3.5 Summary ..... 97

<b>5.4</b>	<b>Canadian Defence and Security Politics .....</b>	<b>98</b>
5.4.1	Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends .....	98
5.4.2	Canadian-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations .....	107
5.4.3	Canadian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations .....	110
5.4.4	Canadian-Russian Defence and Security Relations .....	112
5.4.5	Summary .....	117
<b>5.5</b>	<b>Russian Defence and Security Politics .....</b>	<b>118</b>
5.5.1	Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends .....	118
5.5.2	Russian-Norwegian Defence and Security Politics .....	132
5.5.3	Russian-Swedish Defence and Security Politics .....	138
5.5.4	Russian-Canadian Defence and Security Politics .....	141
5.5.5	Summary .....	145
<b>5.6</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>THE INTERPERSONAL LEVEL OF TRUST IN DEFENCE AND SECURITY POLITICS .....</b>	<b>151</b>
6.1	Military Training, Exercises and Operations .....	152
6.2	Exercise and Operations Planning .....	160
6.3	Arms Control & Confidence and Security-Building Measures .....	168
6.4	Other Types of Military Contacts .....	180
6.5	Conclusion .....	184
<b>7</b>	<b>THE COMMUNICATING LEVEL OF TRUST IN DEFENCE AND SECURITY POLITICS .....</b>	<b>193</b>
7.1	The Reproduction of Defence and Security Politics .....	194
7.1.1	Political Constraints .....	194
7.1.2	Institutional Constraints .....	198
7.1.3	Personal Constraints .....	204
7.1.4	Summary .....	206
7.2	The Transformation of Defence and Security Politics .....	207
7.2.1	Political Facilitators .....	208
7.2.2	Institutional Facilitators .....	210
7.2.3	Personal Facilitators .....	215
7.2.4	Summary .....	220
7.3	The Representation of Defence and Security Politics .....	220
7.3.1	Representation at the Structural Level .....	221
7.3.2	Representation at the Interpersonal Level .....	224
7.3.3	Summary .....	228
7.4	Conclusion .....	229
<b>8</b>	<b>SUMMARY &amp; CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>234</b>
8.1	Trust and Distrust in Defence and Security Politics .....	234
8.2	Successful Trust-Building on the Ground .....	236
8.3	Developing Deeper and More Stable Levels of Trust in Defence and Security Politics .....	238
8.4	Limitations and Areas for Further Research .....	239
8.5	Policy Implications .....	241
<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>244</b>
	Appendix 1 – Interview Guide .....	244
	Appendix 2 – Defence Cooperation and Contacts between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia ...	246
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>248</b>







## Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank my supervisors Prof. Gunhild Hoogensen Gjørsv and Prof. Rasmus Gjedssø Bertelsen for their continuous support, thought-provoking impulses, and advice, be it during meetings, at the side of workshops and conferences or simply while hiking up a mountain here in Tromsø. You have not only kept my academic work and me on track, but also believed in me and strongly supported my request to gain and interlope two years of professional experience without which this doctoral thesis would surely not have been the same. Thank you both so much!

This thesis would also not have been possible without my interview partners. Therefore, a very special thank you goes to Eldar Berli, Comdr. Len Tucker from the Canadian Joint Operations Command, LCol Raymond Chiasson and LCdr Alain Gilbert from the Canadian Joint Task Force North, LCol Timothy S. Halfkenny, Commanding Officer of the 1st Canadian Ranger Patrol Group, Cdre Gunnar Heløe as well as everyone else from the Norwegian, Swedish and Canadian armed forces who has taken precious time off from their busy schedules to share their incredibly valuable insights and experiences with me. In this context, I would also like to extend a particular thanks to Paal Sigurd Hilde from the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies (IFS), Jardar Gjørsv from the Norwegian Army Staff, Robert Dalsjö and Niklas Granholm from the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Kristian Åtland from the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI), the German Federal Foreign Office, the German Federal Ministry of Defence as well as the International Staff at NATO who have likewise shared invaluable insights and have assisted me in reaching out to relevant points of contact within the Norwegian, Swedish and Canadian armed forces.

At this point, I would also like to thank my former colleagues at the German Federal Foreign Office, the German Ministry of Defence as well as the Bundeswehr Verification Centre who, by contributing with their personal experiences, have significantly shaped the focus of this doctoral thesis. In particular, I would like to thank Wolfgang Günsche for his enormous dedication, patience, and clarity with which he has shared his decades of experience and expertise in conventional arms control and military confidence-building with me.

Special thanks goes also to the members of the Research School on Peace and Conflict at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), my colleagues at the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) as well as fellow PhD students and friends who have supported me and provided useful feedback and support throughout the entire journey of this doctoral thesis. In this regard, I would like to thank in particular, Anne Marit Bachmann, Cosima Meyer, Judith Ströhle, Kat Hodgson, Marc Lanteigne, Marloes Groeneveld, Max Jungmann, Philip Nelson, Sladjana Lazic, Stefan Döring, and Valeria Lazarenko for their comments and

feedback on the final draft of this doctoral thesis. I would also like to thank my former boss, Christine Smith-Simonsen, who has been an important factor in making it possible for me to gain two years of professional experience at the beginning of my doctoral fellowship. Thank you!

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends, who have always been there for me, whenever I needed them. Naming you all here in person would not only be difficult, but also would also not do justice to the strength and support that you have given me over the last years. Wherever in the world you currently are, thank you so much!

## Abstract

Trust has always played an important role in world politics. At the same time, trust remains a largely undertheorized concept in the studying of international relations. Against the backdrop of renewed political and military tensions between Russia and the West, this doctoral thesis takes a closer look at the mechanisms, processes, and conditions that lead to the formation of trust and distrust in international relations, more specifically within defence and security politics.

Previous research on trust and distrust in international relations has predominantly focused on the structural level of state-to-state relations. It suggests that trust is either the result of interest-driven cost-benefit analyses of rational state actors or the by-product of an emerging collective identity among states. However, the role of different defence and security practices, interpersonal trust between practitioners on the ground, the impact of the diverse identities, interests, and actors at the national level have largely been absent from these approaches. To address this problem, this thesis combines previous rationalist, constructivist and practice-theoretical approaches to study trust in international relations with social contact theory, and conducts an in-depth qualitative analysis of the role of trust and distrust at the structural (state-to-state), interpersonal (practitioner-to-practitioner) and what I call the communicating level (structural vs. interpersonal) in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia. In order to contribute to a broadened understanding of how trust and distrust are being perceived, experienced and how they affect the different levels in national defence and security policy-making, the analysis in thesis draws on the main defence and security policy documents of Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia as well as other central primary and secondary sources, compiles a network graph of their defence and security relations, and conducts a series of semi-structured interviews as well as a focus group discussion with various defence and security practitioners from Norway, Sweden and Canada.

The analysis of this thesis shows that trust and distrust at the structural level in international relations are largely the outcome of a constant interplay between the moralistic (national identities), strategic (national interests), and practice layer (security practices) of trust in defence and security politics. It highlights how the most durable and comprehensive trust-relations between states form around all three of these layers, which are of fluent character, tend to overlap, and can substantially differ across policy areas, regional and political settings, helping us to explain some of the different dynamics in the formation, loss and restoring of trust in interstate relations. At the interpersonal level, the analysis of this thesis shows that most forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts contribute to increased levels of trust among practitioners. However, we have also seen that the forms of military cooperation and interaction, which are particularly suitable for building trust at the interpersonal level

(e.g. joint trainings, exercises or operations) are primarily implemented between states, which already enjoy high levels of mutual trust in their relations. The trust-building effect of those measures that states implement to reduce distrust and to deconflict their defence and security relations (e.g. arms control, military confidence-building, incident prevention mechanisms), on the other hand, hardly extends beyond a very small group of subject matter experts on the ground. Finally, at the communicating level, this thesis shows that trust and distrust are not fixed properties, but they are, in fact, the outcome of a complex and constant coordination and negotiation process at the national level. This process, which is strongly affected by political (e.g. national identities and interests), institutional (e.g. hierarchies, time constraints or rotation of personnel) and personal (e.g. experience, rank, personal contacts) facilitators or constraints, often results in either a mere top-down reproduction, or a bottom-up transformation of the identities, interests and practices in the defence and security relations between states. Thus, the findings of this thesis suggest that in order to develop not only deeper, but also more stable levels of trust in their defence and security relations, it is important that states ensure a more inclusive and transparent decision-making process, allowing for a credible two-way representation of their defence and security identities, interests and practices at the structural and interpersonal level of trust in international relations.

## List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

AC	Arctic Council
ACFE	Adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
ACGF	Arctic Coast Guard Forum
ASFR	Arctic Security Forces Roundtable
BEAC	Barents Euro-Arctic Council
BEAR	Barents Euro-Arctic Region
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CETA	Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement
CFE Treaty	Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty
CHOD	Chief of Defence Staff
CJOC	Canadian Joint Operations Command
CLCS	Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
CRPG	Canadian Ranger Patrol Group
CSBM	Confidence- and Security-Building Measures
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union
EDA	European Defence Agency
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
FOH	Norwegian Joint Headquarters (Forsvarets Operative Hovedkvarter)
FSC	Forum for Security Co-operation
INCSEA	Incidents at Sea Agreement
IR	International Relations
JCG	Joint Consultative Group
JTFN	Joint Task Force North
MARCOM	Allied Maritime Command
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

NAADC	North American Aerospace Defense Command
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NORAD	North American Air Defense Command
NORDEFECO	Nordic Defence Cooperation
NORECAS	Nordic Enhanced Cooperation on Air Surveillance
NUPI	Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
NRC	NATO-Russia Council
NSD	Norwegian Centre for Research Data
NSR	Northern Sea Route
NWFZ	Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone
OS	Treaty on Open Skies
OSCC	Open Skies Consultative Commission
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAR	Search and Rescue
SIGINT	Signals intelligence
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SPA	Strategic Partnership Agreement
TMSA	Transformational Model of Social Action
VCC	Verification Coordinating Committee
VDoc 2011	Vienna Document 2011
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



# List of Tables

Table 1. Distinction between 'representational' and 'practical knowledge' (Vincent Pouliot, 2008, p. 271). ..... 14

Table 2. Different effects on the levels of trust of 'falling short of', 'meeting', or 'exceeding' prior expectations.  
..... 26

Table 3. 'Temporal', 'functional', 'spatial', and 'relational' variations and overlaps of trust. Own illustration,  
inspired by Adler and Greve (2009, pp. 72). ..... 31

Table 4. The trust-building effects of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts.  
..... 185



# List of Figures

Figure 1. Russian and Belarussian troops during ‘Zapad 2017’. Photo by Igor Rudenko. Officially released by the Russian Ministry of Defence. .... 1

Figure 2. Four-stage continuum of trust. Own illustration inspired by Uslaner (2002, pp. 26). .... 11

Figure 3. Transformational Model of Social Action (TMSA) based on Harvey (2009, p. 24). .... 20

Figure 4. The three domains of Critical Realism. Own illustration based on Bhaskar (1975/2008, p. 46). .... 21

Figure 5. The 'practice', 'strategic' and 'moralistic' layer of trust in international relations. .... 29

Figure 6. Conditions for positive intergroup contacts as defined by Allport (1954) and Pettigrew (1998). .... 34

Figure 7. Multi-Level Theoretical Framework of Trust and Distrust in International Relations. .... 37

Figure 8. Degree, closeness, betweenness and eigenvector centrality (Krempel, 2011: 566). .... 43

Figure 9. Norwegian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations. .... 71

Figure 10. Norwegian-Canadian Defence and Security Relations. .... 74

Figure 11: The Reach of Russia's 'Bastion' Defence Concept (Olsen, 2017). .... 76

Figure 12. Norwegian-Russian Defence and Security Relations. .... 81

Figure 13. Swedish-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations. .... 90

Figure 14. Swedish-Canadian Defence and Security Relations. .... 91

Figure 15. Swedish-Russian Defence and Security Relations. .... 97

Figure 16. Canada’s participation in Trident Juncture '18 (Canadian Armed Forces, 2018a). .... 108

Figure 17. Canadian-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations. .... 110

Figure 18. Canadian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations. .... 112

Figure 19. Canadian-Russian Defence and Security Relations. .... 117

Figure 20. Russian-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations. .... 137

Figure 21. Russian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations. .... 141

Figure 22. Russian-Canadian Defence and Security Relations. .... 144

Figure 23. Political, institutional, and personal constraints in defence and security politics. .... 207

Figure 24. Political, institutional, and personal facilitators in defence and security politics. .... 220

Figure 25. The representation of defence and security politics at the structural and interpersonal level. .... 229



# 1 Introduction

Why do we trust each other? What contributes to its formation and how can we rebuild trust, once it has been lost? While we can probably all personally relate to these questions, they do not only play an important role in our own social lives, but also have an enormous role to play within international relations, defence, and security politics. Not least since Russia's annexation of Crimea and support of separatist groups in Eastern Ukraine, have the levels of trust between Russia and the West reached a new low and resulted in a state of political confrontation that has not been seen since the end of the Cold War. Besides political tensions, the

imposing of sanctions and counter-sanctions, these tensions have seen a notable increase in military activities, spending and mutual deterrence postures. In September 2017, for example, Russian and Belarussian troops conducted the large-scale military exercise Zapad 2017. While taking place at various locations throughout the Russian Western military district, the



*Figure 1. Russian and Belarussian troops during 'Zapad 2017'. Photo by Igor Rudenko. Officially released by the Russian Ministry of Defence.*

exercise concentrated in particular on the Belarussian territory and the Baltic Sea region. Already beforehand, Zapad, an exercise that is conducted every four years, triggered controversial debates about its size, operational goals and was criticized by Western states for the lack of transparency provided by the Russian authorities. While official Russian sources claimed that the exercise comprised a total of 12,700 troops (Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, 2017b), Western governments and NATO officials, such as Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, reinforced by more recent experiences of alleged Russian attempts to circumvent its international obligations for prior notification and to avoid the

invitation of foreign military observers,<sup>1</sup> questioned the accuracy of the numbers reported by the Russian authorities (Schultz, 2017; Sutyagin, 2017). The dispute between NATO and Russia regarding the size, objectives, and scenario of Zapad 2017 could not be resolved by a voluntary invitation of military observers from seven countries by Belarus to those parts of the exercise that took place on Belarussian territory. While the Russian Ministry of Defence after the exercise insisted to have conducted an anti-terrorist scenario (2017b), NATO sources claim that the scenario of “ZAPAD was clearly a large scale state-on-state conflict” (Johnson, 2017).

The controversial debates surrounding Zapad 2017 not only offer deep insight into the current state of affairs in NATO-Russia relations, but also underline how political tensions can result in a considerable degree of distrust and often result in an increased focus on mutual deterrence. Such tense defence and security relations, often deriving from incompatible strategic interests, carry a considerable risk of misinterpretation and unintended escalation. Measures that one side might perceive as purely self-defensive might be interpreted as provocative and offensive by the other. While most realist scholars in international relation argue that this classical problem of a security dilemma is deeply entrenched in the anarchical structure of the international system (e.g. Jervis, 1978), constructivist scholars hold that anarchy and security dilemmas are not inevitable components of the international structure, but in fact ‘what states make of it’ (Wendt, 1992). Amid such a constructivist understanding of international relations, the important questions arise of how dangerous misperceptions and escalation spirals can be avoided (maybe even reversed) and how actors can credibly reassure each other of the defensive nature of their actions. In other words, how can they ensure a credible level of trust in each other? A classical rationalist response to the question of trust in defence and security relations, would be that actors try to minimize their own vulnerability to defiance through deterring potential aggressors and by setting up measures that allow for detecting offensive actions by other actors early on (e.g. Hardin, 2002; Kydd, 2005; Lieberman, 1964; McGillivray & Smith, 2000). However, this logic not only draws an extremely negative picture of security as a simple zero-sum game, but empirically also suffers from the fact that

---

<sup>1</sup> Under the provisions of the Vienna Document 2011 (VDoc 2011) on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM) participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe are obliged to notify their military activities and to invite foreign military observers if the size of the activity reaches a certain threshold (VDoc 2011, Ch. VI). Over the last couple of years, Russia has been accused of using loopholes in the current document to avoid these obligations.

there can never exist absolute certainty. Let us return to the example of Zapad 2017. After the exercise, one of the invited military observers – a Swedish arms control verification officer – explained that “from an observer’s point of view I would say it is impossible to tell if it was 12,700 or 13,061 [troops]” (Goncharenko, 2017), then tellingly adds what seems to be even more important – “I believe the Belarus agency” (Goncharenko, 2017). Without having absolute certainty, he assumed the reported numbers to be true, a behaviour that correlates with many understandings of trust as the risk of putting one’s own interests in the hands of others (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, p. 46; Hardin, 2002, p. 197; Hoffman, 2002, pp. 376; Misztal, 2013, p. 24; Welch Larson, 2016, p. 281). His *trust*, as it seems, also extended to the actual nature of the exercise, which he viewed as, “normal military business as we do in all countries with armed forces. This is not training for attacking anyone. You meet the enemy, you stop the enemy, you defeat the enemy with a counter attack. We are doing the same thing in Sweden” (Goncharenko, 2017). The controversial debates surrounding Zapad 2017 that contrast the personal experiences by the Swedish arms control officer are not only extremely insightful, but also form the basis for the main research questions of this doctoral thesis:

**What contributes to the formation of trust and distrust between states and what role do they play in their defence and security relations?**

Since many previous approaches to trust and distrust in international relations have primarily taken a top-down approach, treating states as uniform actors and disregarding the many different actors and interests involved, I have decided to take a more comprehensive approach and to analyse the roles of trust at the different levels in the defence and security relations between states. More precisely, following a critical realist approach to social research, I am looking at the *structural, interpersonal* – and what I call – the *communicating* level of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. At the *structural level*, I will build upon previous approaches to trust in international relations and assess the roles of identities, interests, and security practices in the formation of trust and distrust between states. At the *interpersonal level*, I will use social contact theory and identify the factors and conditions under which different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts are capable to lead to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. Finally, at the *communicating level*, I will discuss the interrelation between the structural and interpersonal levels of trust in defence and security politics, and assess the factors and conditions that lead to either the reproduction, transformation or credible representation of defence and security policies and relations at the structural and interpersonal level in defence and security politics.

Empirically, I have decided to focus on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia. This not only allows me to cover a broad spectrum of different identities, interests and practices in defence and security politics, but with the rather different security dynamics in the Arctic and European security environment to add an interesting comparative regional dimension to my analysis. Furthermore, the inclusion of a politically as well as militarily less confrontational region has also helped in overcoming one of the biggest challenges in the conduction of this research project, the difficult negotiation process for access to the field.<sup>2</sup>

In the subsequent sections of this introduction, I will first provide a brief overview of previous research and discuss this thesis' academic and practical contribution to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of trust and distrust in defence and security politics, before concluding with a short overview of the general outline of this doctoral thesis.

## **1.1 Previous Research and Contribution of this Thesis**

In this section, I will look at previous approaches and the ongoing scientific and political debates on trust and distrust in international relations as well as more specifically in security studies and defence and security politics. In this regard, I will also map out the contributions of this doctoral thesis to:

- a deeper theoretical and empirical understanding of the mechanisms, processes and conditions that lead to the formation of trust and distrust in international relations;
- a better conceptual understanding of the complexities, mechanisms and processes that effectively contribute to trust-building in defence and security politics as well as
- ongoing academic and policy debates on the role and future of arms control and military confidence-building.

First, this thesis contributes to a deeper theoretical and empirical understanding of the mechanisms, processes, and conditions that lead to the formation of trust and distrust in international relations. Previous theoretical works on trust and trust-building can be found in numerous academic disciplines

---

<sup>2</sup> The various reasons that motivated this case selection will also be discussed in more detail in the methodology chapter of this thesis (see 4.1.1).



(e.g. sociology, philosophy, psychology, economics, organizational studies, political science or international relations), which have approached the issues of trust and trust-building from a variety of different entry points and levels of analysis (e.g. systemic trust, institutional trust, governmental trust, organizational trust, interpersonal trust etc.) (e.g. Considine, 2015, p. 112; Michel, 2013a, p. 869; Misztal, 2013, pp. 13; Welch Larson, 2016, p. 279).<sup>3</sup> Likewise within the studying of international relations (IR), trust (or the absence thereof) has always – directly or indirectly – played an important role. Whereas realist scholars, for example, depart from a situation of general distrust and anarchy (e.g. Mearsheimer, 2014; Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979), liberalists and institutionalists argue for the possibility of cooperation and trust through the creation of international institutions, norms and laws (e.g. Keohane, 1984; Keohane & Nye, 1999) and constructivists emphasize the possibility of constructing trustful relations through the development of collective identities, norms and understandings (e.g. Finnemore, 1996; Wendt, 1992).<sup>4</sup> However, despite its centrality in IR research, trust has long remained a neglected and undertheorized concept in IR (e.g. Bilgic, 2010, p. 458; Booth & Wheeler, 2010, p. 231; Michel, 2013b, p. 86; Ruzicka & Keating, 2015, p. 9; Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010, p. 71). While constantly growing, so far, only few scholars have engaged in concrete empirical or theoretical works that explicitly focus on trust as a theoretical concept in IR in its own right (e.g. Bilgic, 2010; Booth & Wheeler, 2010, pp. 228; Forsberg, 1999; Hardin, 2002; Hoffman, 2005; Keating & Ruzicka, 2014; Kydd, 2005; Lieberman, 1964; Michel, 2013b; Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010; Welch Larson, 1997). In this context, one might also add a few historical case studies about the Cold War (e.g. Feis, 1971; Klimke, Kreis, & Ostermann, 2016) as well as the vast body of theoretical and empirical literature on trustful relations in the context of security communities<sup>5</sup> (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998b; Bellamy, 2014; Bremberg, 2015; Knutsen, 2007; Malek, 2012; Mouritzen, 2001; Williams & Neumann, 2000). Conceptually, most of these studies can largely be grouped into two different theoretical camps.

---

<sup>3</sup> For a comprehensive overview see also Hardin (2002) or Misztal (2013).

<sup>4</sup> For a comprehensive overview of various approaches to trust in IR see Ruzicka and Keating (2015).

<sup>5</sup> Security communities are generally defined as “transnational region[s] comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change” (Adler & Barnett, 1998a, p. 30) and in which trust between states plays a key role: “Dependable expectations of peaceful change, the confidence that disputes will be settled without war, is unarguably the deepest expression of trust possible in the international arena” (Barnett & Adler, 1998, p. 414).

The first camp consists of rationalist and game theoretical models, which largely reduce the complexities of trust and trust-building to repeated games between rational actors in the international system and in line with liberalists and institutionalists, link the formation of trust to a reduction of risk in cooperation through increased information and possibilities for sanctioning or punishing diverging behaviour (e.g. Hardin, 2002; Kydd, 2005; Lieberman, 1964; McGillivray & Smith, 2000). The second camp is rooted in a constructivist school of thought and focuses on the role of normative factors, policies, institutions and identity formation that eventually contribute to the development of trust between different actors in the international system (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998b; Forsberg, 1999; Hoffman, 2002; Keating & Ruzicka, 2014; Mercer, 2005).<sup>6</sup> However, critics of both camps have come to conclude that previous conceptualizations of trust in IR have so far failed to develop a deeper understanding of the different mechanisms, factors, and background conditions that constitute trust and its formation at the various levels of state-to-state relations. Their critique centres around five main conceptual shortcomings:

- First, the reduction of trust to either the outcome of calculated choices by rational actors or the by-product of a shared identity (e.g. Becker, 1996; Booth & Wheeler, 2010, p. 234; Mercer, 2005, pp. 99; Michel, 2013a, pp. 886, 2013b, pp. 91; Rathbun, 2009, p. 374, 2011, pp. 268; Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010, pp. 72; Uslaner, 2002, pp. 16; Väyrynen, 2000, p. 114).
- Second, the remarkable absence of security practices (e.g. Michel, 2013a, p. 875, 2013b, pp. 93; Pouliot, 2008, pp. 278, 2010, pp. 11).
- Third, the lack of accounting for different levels of trust between different actors, policy areas, regional settings in international relations, which might also help explain why trust is usually much easier lost than rebuilt (e.g. Adler & Greve, 2009, pp. 75; Welch Larson, 1997, pp. 724)
- Fourth, a lack of attention to the interpersonal level of trust in state-to-state relations (e.g. between state officials) (e.g. Booth & Wheeler, 2010, pp. 232; Michel, 2013a, p. 872; Rathbun, 2009, p. 356; Welch Larson, 1997, pp. 713).
- Fifth, an insufficient account of the complexities of state bureaucracies and national decision-making processes (e.g. the interplay between different levels of hierarchy) (e.g. Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 975; Misztal, 2013, p. 15; Pouliot, 2008, pp. 260).

---

<sup>6</sup> These two strands are often also referred to as 'strategic' and 'moralistic trust' (e.g. Uslaner, 2002).

By developing a multi-level theoretical framework of trust and trust-building that combines moralistic, strategic and practical understandings of trust, allows for overlaps and variations across different national actors and policy areas and which sufficiently takes into account the interpersonal level of trust in interstate relations, this thesis will make an important theoretical contribution to the studying of trust and distrust in international relations.

Secondly, this thesis also contributes to a deeper conceptual understanding of the complexities, mechanisms, and processes that might effectively contribute to military confidence-building between states. The absence of a more thorough conceptual understanding of trust and trust-building has also negatively affected the research agenda on arms control and so-called Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM).<sup>7</sup> Generally, there exists a large amount of empirical studies that focus on the application of arms control and CSBM in different empirical settings, mostly in the relations between NATO and Russia (or previously the Soviet Union) (e.g. Barnaby, 1975; Bertram, 1976; Borawski, 1986; Bull, 1961; Darilek, 1992; Krass, 1985; Kühn, 2013; Lachowski & Rotfeld, 2002; Nation, 1992; Peters, 2000; Welch Larson, 1997). However, either many of them have been conducted in the form of commentaries, policy analyses, empirical case studies or conference contributions without explicit notions or references to theory or refer more loosely to a more general realist or liberal institutionalist tradition. As such, they discuss arms control and CSBM either primarily in relation to logics of balance of power (e.g. Bull, 1961; Carter, 1989; Peters, 2000; Schelling & Halperin, 1961; Schofield, 2000; Sheehan, 1983) or with regard to addressing the problems of security dilemmas between states (e.g. Bertram, 1976; Borawski, 1986; Darilek, 1992; Lieberman, 1964; Rittberger, Efinger, & Mendler, 1990; Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010; Schmidt, 2013; Vick, 1988). However, a more thorough understanding of how arms control and CSBM actually contribute to the formation of trust, in particular at the interpersonal level of practitioners, but also more generally at the structural level of interstate relations, is usually missing.

---

<sup>7</sup> Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM) are not a theoretical scientific concept, but a policy comprised of different mechanisms that aim at increasing transparency over military forces, equipment and activities and to contribute to an increased level of predictability and trust in the defence and security relations between states (e.g. Borawski, 1986; Darilek, 1992; Bull, 1961).

Finally, this thesis also contributes to ongoing academic and policy debates in defence and security politics, in particular on the role and future of arms control and military confidence-building. Because of the conceptual gaps on trust and trust-building, there has also emerged an incomplete understanding of the mechanisms and tools by which states might be able to develop more trustful defence and security relations. This problem has become particularly evident in the strong emphasis on mechanisms of verification and compliance in academic and policy debates on arms control and CSBM, which I would argue, are rather a sign of remaining distrust, while mechanisms that actually contribute to trust-building remain often underexposed or focus on the wrong actors or levels of hierarchy in national decision-making. In this regard, this thesis with its comprehensive and multi-level analysis of how different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts might contribute to the formation of trust at the structural and interpersonal level in the defence and security politics, while make an important contribution to ongoing debates about the role and future of arms control and CSBM in defence and security politics. Furthermore, with its empirical focus on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia, I hope to also be able to not only contribute to ongoing discussions about how to deepen and strengthen the defence and security relations among Western states, but also to the difficult question of how to stop and maybe even reverse the current trend of deteriorating trust in NATO-Russia relations.

In sum, with their narrow top-down focus, previous approaches to the studying of trust and trust-building in international relations and security studies have failed to generate a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the different mechanisms, processes, factors and background conditions that constitute trust and its formation at the various levels of state-to-state relations. This gap has also led to an insufficient understanding of how different mechanisms and tools, such as arms control and CSBM, might be able or designed in a way that they contribute to more trustful defence and security relations between states. Therefore, by developing a more comprehensive multi-level theoretical framework of trust and trust-building, its abductive research design and a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the role of trust and distrust in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia, this thesis will make an important theoretical, empirical and policy contribution to the studying of trust and distrust in international relations and security studies as well as to the academic and policy debates on the role and future of arms control and military confidence-building.

## 1.2 Thesis Structure

This doctoral thesis explores the role of trust in defence and security politics as well as the factors, processes and dynamics that contribute either to its loss or to its formation. The thesis is structured around eight closely interlinked chapters.

**Chapter 1** introduced the central problem statement and main research question of this thesis, provided a concise overview over previous research on the role of trust and distrust in international relations, and discussed the main contributions of this thesis to current academic and policy debates.

**Chapter 2** defines trust and distrust by highlighting central conceptual shortcomings of previous approaches to trust and distrust in international relations and by discussing the benefits of a critical realist epistemology and ontology to the studying of trust and distrust in defence and security politics.

**Chapter 3** develops the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis. To this end, the chapter introduces a multi-level framework that conceptualizes trust and distrust at the structural, interpersonal, and communicating level in defence and security politics. At the structural level, the framework combines moralistic, strategic, and practice-theoretical conceptualizations into a three-layered model of trust and distrust in the relations between states, defines the main mechanisms behind the formation and loss of trust, and discusses different forms of overlaps between the different layers and stages of trust in international relations. At the interpersonal level, the framework develops indicators and conditions for assessing the ability of different forms of military cooperation and interaction to contribute to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. Finally, at the communicating level of trust, I conceptualize the complex interplay between the structural and interpersonal levels of trust and in line with a critical realist approach, reflect upon the factors and conditions that lead to either the reproduction, transformation or representation of existing trust levels in defence and security politics.

**Chapter 4** outlines the methodological approach of this doctoral thesis. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section presents the research design of this doctoral thesis and to this end elaborates on the reasons that have informed the case selection, methods and sources used for the analysis of the main research question of this thesis as well as operationalizes the theoretical framework set out in chapter two. The chapter concludes with a critical reflection on positionality and a concise discussion of the main ethical challenges of this research project.

For reasons of clarity, the analysis of this doctoral thesis has been divided into three separate analytical chapters. **Chapter 5** focuses on the structural level of trust in defence and security politics. To this end, it first maps and discusses the underlying structure in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia and identifies some of the most important actors, venues and forums in their relations. The chapter continues by analysing to what extent their relations are currently characterized by collective, compatible, incompatible or opposing defence and security interests and identities as well as by different defence and security practices, namely deterrence, deconflicting, reassurance, or collective action. **Chapter 6** takes the analysis of the role of trust and distrust to the interpersonal level and in line with social contact theory assesses how different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts contribute to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. **Chapter 7** concludes the analytical part of this doctoral thesis and focuses on the interrelation between the structural and interpersonal level of trust in defence and security politics. More specifically, it focuses on the factors and conditions that lead to either the reproduction, transformation or representation of defence and security policies and relations at the structural and interpersonal level in defence and security politics.

**Chapter 8** summarizes the main findings of this doctoral thesis, problematizes some of the limitations of the research design of this doctoral thesis and concludes by a short discussion of additional observations, highlighting possible areas for future research and by deriving a number of policy recommendations for practitioners and policymakers in defence and security politics.

## **2 Conceptualizing Trust and Distrust – A Critical Realist Approach**

In this chapter, I define the main concepts and elaborate upon the ontological and epistemological foundation of this doctoral thesis. First, I define *trust* and *distrust* as a four-stage continuum, and distinguish trust from the closely related concepts of *trustworthiness* and *confidence*. Afterwards, I continue by briefly reflecting upon previous conceptualizations, discuss some of their main shortcomings and conclude by elaborating upon the benefits of applying a critical realist epistemology and ontology to the studying of trust and distrust in international relations.

## 2.1 Defining Trust and Distrust in International Relations

Despite extensive research on trust in various academic disciplines, scholars have so far been unable to agree on a commonly shared definition (Bilgic, 2010, p. 458; Booth & Wheeler, 2010, p. 229; Considine, 2015, pp. 113; Hardin, 2002, pp. 54; Lewis & Weigert, 1985, pp. 974; Misztal, 2013, p. 13). However, most scholars seem to at least have come to an agreement that trust always implies some level of risk, as actors base their own interests and faith into certain (usually positive) expectations about the likely behaviour of other actors (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, p. 46; Booth & Wheeler, 2010, p. 230; Hardin, 2002, p. 7; Hoffman, 2002, pp. 376; Krass, 1985, p. 287; Luhmann, 1973, pp. 24; Misztal, 2013, pp. 18; Rathbun, 2009, p. 349). These elements also inform the minimum definition of trust of this thesis, as holding ‘positive expectations about other actors’ behaviour under risk’.

Based on this minimum definition, we can distinguish *trust* from *trustworthiness*, which describes the process by which actors come to form expectations about the likely behaviour of others (e.g. Becker, 1996, p. 45; Hardin, 2002, p. 28). Another important distinction that should be drawn is that between *trust* and *confidence*. While some authors have used both terms interchangeably (Misztal, 2013, p. 16), others distinguish between *confidence* as some form of reassured expectation (e.g. based on previous experience) and *trust* as a more general belief in the trustworthiness of the other side (e.g. Keating & Ruzicka, 2014, p. 756; Luhmann, 2000, pp. 96; Misztal, 2013, p. 16; Uslaner, 2002, p. 4). In short, we can look upon confidence as a more situational form of trust. In order to reflect this understanding, I decided to rely on Uslaner’s differentiation between *generalized* and *particularized trust* (2002, pp. 26) and in the further course of this thesis will refer to confidence as particularized trust. In addition, I will complement Uslaner’s initial ideas and distinguish between distrust in its particularized and generalized form. As such, trust and distrust in this thesis are defined along a four-stage continuum that ranges from generalized and particularized distrust on the one end, to particularized and generalized trust on the other:

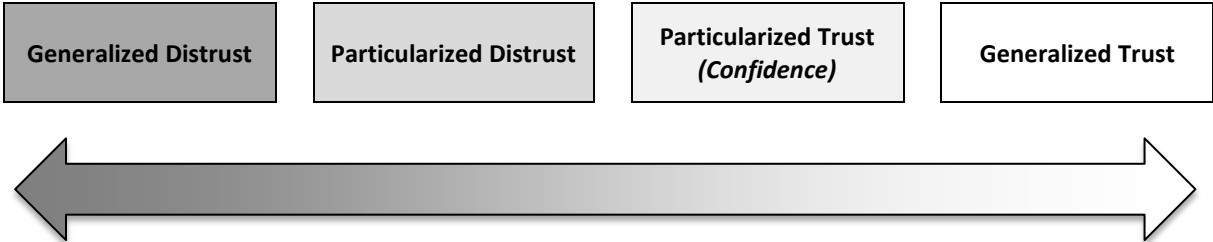


Figure 2. Four-stage continuum of trust. Own illustration inspired by Uslaner (2002, pp. 26).

At this point, I would like to emphasize that these four different stages of trust and distrust are not seen as path-dependent, nor that it is always possible to distinguish clearly one stage from another, but that the relations between actors can develop in different directions of trust or distrust at any given time.

Having defined trust and differentiated the concept from trustworthiness and confidence, let us now turn to the factors and conditions that might form and facilitate its formation. Like the concept's actual definition, also the factors and ways by which actors might come to form trust in their relations has not only remained a theoretically underdeveloped, but also widely contested issue among scholars in international relations (Booth & Wheeler, 2010, p. 252; Considine, 2015, p. 113; Kydd, 2005, pp. 12; Rathbun, 2009, p. 349). While realists, due to the anarchy in the international system and the competition of states for power and survival, generally reject the possibility of trustful relations between states (e.g. Mearsheimer, 2014; Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979), liberalist, institutionalist and constructivist scholars have provided different accounts for their emergence. Liberalist and institutionalist scholars, largely reduce trust to rational calculations about the interests, gains and risks involved in cooperation and hold that trust can only be achieved through sufficient information about the interests, preferences and capabilities of different actors as well as credible means for monitoring and if necessary sanctioning or punishing their behaviour (e.g. Hardin, 2002, pp. 24; Kydd, 2005, pp. 6; McGillivray & Smith, 2000, p. 821). This understanding of trust is also sometimes referred to as 'confidence', 'strategic' or 'knowledge-based trust' (Uslaner, 2002, pp. 16, but see also Michel, 2013b, pp. 94; Rathbun, 2009, pp. 349). Constructivist scholars, on the other hand, hold that states are capable of overcoming the state of anarchy by constructing more trustful relations through the development of shared identities, which set normative boundaries for their behaviour and serve as a source for the formulation of common interest (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998b; Forsberg, 1999; Hoffman, 2002; Mercer, 2005; Wendt, 1995). This is also understood as 'moralistic trust' and describes a more general belief about the trustworthiness of other actors (Uslaner, 2002, pp. 17, but see also Michel, 2013b, p. 94; Rathbun, 2009, p. 351).<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of the different theoretical strands of trust in IR see Ruzicka and Keating (2015).



## 2.2 Conceptual Shortcomings of Previous Approaches

In their critique against previous conceptualizations, many scholars have come to agree that trust is more than just a conscious rational decision-making process or merely a by-product of emerging collective identities. Instead, they have argued that both camps have failed to develop a deeper understanding of the different mechanisms, factors and background conditions that constitute trust and its formation at the various levels of interstate relations (e.g. Becker, 1996; Booth & Wheeler, 2010; Mercer, 2005; Michel, 2013a, 2013b; Pouliot, 2008, 2010; Rathbun, 2009, 2011; Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010; Väyrynen, 2000; Welch Larson, 1997). Their critique has centred around five major conceptual shortcomings:

The first line of criticism focuses on the unidimensional focus in trust research on either its strategic or its moralistic form, which both seem insufficient in grasping the complexities and dynamics of trust and distrust in international relations in their entirety (e.g. Becker, 1996; Booth & Wheeler, 2010; Mercer, 2005; Michel, 2013a, 2013b; Pouliot, 2008, 2010; Rathbun, 2009, 2011; Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010; Väyrynen, 2000; Welch Larson, 1997). However, to understand this shortcoming fully, it is important that we not only focus on the differences between both camps, but also on what both actually have in common. This commonality finds itself in an inherently quantitative approach to trust and its formation. For example, while rationalist accounts focus on the role of increased information and mechanisms for monitoring compliance, they fail to explain trust beyond such a mere reduction of risks in the cooperation and transactions between different actors (e.g. Becker, 1996, pp. 49; Booth & Wheeler, 2010, p. 234; Michel, 2013b, pp. 87). The same conceptual flaw is also inherent in constructivist conceptualizations of trust, which often simply emphasize a growing sense of affiliation and identity through a quantitative increase in interactions and interdependence between actors (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, pp. 45; Deutsch et al., 1957, p. 58), but fail to provide a more qualitative account of these interactions. In other words, it would be naïve to assume that all types of interactions are equally capable of contributing to trust and that none might contribute to its loss (e.g. insults, fights, accusations etc.). As also Booth and Wheeler underline “the context is important, not just the encounter” (2010, p. 257). The overemphasis on identity in constructivist conceptualizations of trust is only further exacerbated by the fact that identities might change over time (e.g. Garofano, 2002, p. 506) and that actors can hold several different identities at the same time (e.g. Smith, 1992, pp. 58; Wendt, 1992, pp. 397), making it difficult to argue which identity might have been formative for the development of mutual trust and which has not. Therefore, as a consequence of the lack of a more thorough comprehension of the mechanisms and internal dynamics of trust and distrust in international relations, various authors have called for a more comprehensive conceptualization of trust in which its material,

societal, but also the unarticulated personal, behavioural and emotional elements are eventually brought together (Becker, 1996; Booth & Wheeler, 2010, p. 234; Mercer, 2005, pp. 99; Michel, 2013a, pp. 886; Rathbun, 2009, p. 374, 2011; Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010, pp. 72; Uslander, 2002, pp. 16; Väyrynen, 2000, p. 114).

The second, closely related strand of criticism, relates to the remarkable absence of security practices in previous conceptualizations of trust and trust-building. What makes this absence so remarkable, is the fact that while nearly all definitions of trust contain notions and references to behaviour and beliefs, they have so far largely reduced

them to “the logics of consequences, of appropriateness, and of arguing” (Pouliot, 2008, p. 258, but see also Keating & Ruzicka, 2014, pp. 758).

Therefore, standing in sharp contrast, practical scholars have criticized the ‘representational bias’ in traditional approaches,

which detaches their analysis from the contexts (urgency, time pressure, proximity etc.) and social realities of the social phenomena and actions they try to investigate. As Pouliot states: “What scientists see from their ivory tower is often miles away from the practical logics enacted on the ground. For instance, what may appear to be the result of rational calculus in (academic) hindsight may just as well have derived from practical hunches under time pressure” (2008, p. 261). Thus, instead of only seeing the source of social action in conscious and reflexive decision-making processes, practical scholars also emphasize the importance of looking at the “inarticulate, practical knowledge that makes what is to be done appear ‘self-evident’ or commonsensical” (Pouliot, 2008, p. 258). Such ‘practical’ or ‘tacit knowledge’ might include elements, such as intuition, background knowledge, experiences, or routines (Pouliot, 2008, p. 271, but see also Benton & Craib, 2011, pp. 46). In short, instead of only looking at what states and state officials think, say and feel, practice scholars argue that it is at least equally

	<i>Representational knowledge (knowing-that)</i>	<i>Practical knowledge (knowing-how)</i>
<i>Cognitive status</i>	Conscious, verbalizable, and intentional	Tacit, inarticulate, and automatic
<i>Mode of learning</i>	Acquired through formal schemes; reflexive	Learned experientially, in and through practice; unsaid
<i>Relation to practice</i>	“Behind” the practice; knowledge precedes practice	Bound up in the practice; knowledge is in the execution
<i>Nature of inferences</i>	Explicit and prone to justification	Implicit and self-evident
<i>Direction of fit</i>	Mind-to-world (observing)	World-to-mind (doing)
<i>Type of reasoning</i>	“In situation X, one should do Y” (instrumental or normative reasons)	“In situation X, Y follows” (thoughtlessness)
<i>Popular categories</i>	Scheme, theory, model, calculation, reasoning	Commonsense, experience, intuition, knack, skill

*Table 1. Distinction between ‘representational’ and ‘practical knowledge’ (Vincent Pouliot, 2008, p. 271).*

important to also look at how trust, distrust and security are actually enacted in practice (Michel, 2013a, p. 875, 2013b, pp. 93; Pouliot, 2008, pp. 278, 2010, pp. 11).<sup>9</sup>

The third conceptual critique is deeply rooted in the reduction of states in previous approaches to simple uniform actors, which overlooks many of the processes, issues and dynamics that in reality shape and constitute foreign, defence and security policy-making. More precisely, while previous approaches to trust in international relations have largely looked at state interests and identities from the point of elites or in their entirety (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998b; Keating & Ruzicka, 2014; Kydd, 2005), only few have come to acknowledge the fact that identities, interests and practices might differ between regional contexts, policy areas as well as between the various actors involved in national decision-making (e.g. different ministries or government agencies) (e.g. Adler & Greve, 2009, pp. 75; Welch Larson, 1997, pp. 711).<sup>10</sup> For example, it is absolutely conceivable that states, or at least parts of their administration, have established some form of particularized trust in one policy area or regional setting (e.g. on environmental or economic cooperation in the Arctic), but continue to distrust each other in another (e.g. in their defence and security relations in Europe).<sup>11</sup> Therefore, by simply reducing states to uniform actors, previous conceptualizations have failed to grasp some of the complexities and dynamics of trust and its formation in international relations. One of these dynamics, which certainly requires more conceptual attention, is the often quick and radical loss of trust, after serious disruptions in the relations between states. These could be caused by the outbreak of violence, conflicts, or other forms of perceived or intended betrayal and stand in sharp contrast to the often long and difficult process of building or restoring trust. For example, this could and still can be observed in the significant loss of trust in NATO-Russia relations in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea and support of insurgent groups in

---

<sup>9</sup> The so-called 'practice turn' in IR has its roots in the writings of scholars, such as Pierre Bourdieu (1977), Anthony Giddens (1984), Michel Foucault (1977) or Theodore Schatzki (2001).

<sup>10</sup> While Adler and Greve focus on 'temporal', 'functional', 'spatial' and 'relational' variations of different security mechanisms and practices (2009, p. 72), Welch Larson discusses the instrumental nature of having negative conceptions of other states for the purpose of increasing legitimacy of foreign policy decisions (1997, pp. 711).

<sup>11</sup> This view corresponds with Adler and Greve's argument to look at different theoretical concepts in IR – in their case 'balances of power' and 'security community' – as different security mechanisms and practices, which might be in constant overlap (2009, pp. 62). I will get back to some of their ideas in the next section of this chapter.

Eastern Ukraine. However, while previous approaches to trust acknowledge that an “intended betrayal of our trust is a cause for enormous pain and distrust” (Misztal, 2013, p. 24, but see also Becker, 1996, p. 59; Michel, 2013b, p. 102) and while there exists a general agreement among scholars that trust is much easier lost than rebuilt (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, p. 46; Luhmann, 1973, p. 63), there is a remarkable absence of a more thorough conceptual understanding of this phenomenon. One of the few exceptions<sup>12</sup> has been provided by Deborah Welch Larson, who has tried to explain the often long and difficult process by which states come to form trust in their relations by what she refers to as ‘time lags’. These, she argues, are the consequence of the difficulties in detecting compliance, the need for repeated observations of cooperative behaviour and the tedious process by which actors are updating their views and beliefs about each other (1997, pp. 724). However, while her ideas certainly provide useful answers to the often long and difficult process of building trust, they cannot explain the often enormous ‘snowball effect’ that negative experiences and disruptions can have on the loss of trust in the relations between states. In this regard, Torsten Michel’s discussion about the different consequences of ‘disappointment’ and ‘betrayal’, which he traces back to different situations of trust (2013b, p. 102), might provide us with some useful points of reference. In addition, I argue that instead of looking at states as coherent uniform actors, it is important to explore how regional, policy-, time- and actor-related differences in interests, identities, help us explain and better understand some of these different dynamics that can frequently be observed in international relations.

The fourth conceptual shortcoming likewise originates from the critique of a traditional top-down approach to trust in IR and centres around the absence of a better focus on the ‘human factor’ or interpersonal level of trust in state-to-state relations (e.g. between state officials). Apart from the already discussed critique against purely rationalist or constructivist accounts of trust, both camps have so far also failed to sufficiently account for the fact that the mechanisms that they depict as contributing to the formation of trust (e.g. increased interactions, identity-formation or rational-choice calculations) are actually conducted by humans, namely in the form of entrusted state agents. As Booth and Wheeler rightfully point out: “[In building trust in the] relations between collective political units (nations, states, ethnic groups, etc.) [...] the human factor remains to the force, because relations between these units takes place through the agency of human actors playing political roles” (2010, p. 229, but see also

---

<sup>12</sup> Another example is Hardin’s account of asymmetries between trust and distrust (2002, pp. 90).

Michel, 2013b, p. 91). The important role of this human factor in trust was also pointed out by historical studies of the Cold War (e.g. Forsberg, 1999, p. 606; Welch Larson, 2016, p. 283). As a direct consequence of this important role of the human factor in the development of trust and distrust between states, several authors have pointed at the need for the inclusion of a socio-psychological and interpersonal dimension in the conceptualization of trust and distrust in interstate relations (e.g. Booth & Wheeler, 2010, pp. 232; Michel, 2013a, p. 872, 2013b, pp. 104; Rathbun, 2009, p. 356, 2011, p. 268; Welch Larson, 1997, pp. 713). Their argument does not imply that scholars of international relations should suddenly merely concentrate on the role of individual values, feelings and emotions of individual agents, and ignore the structural, political and social context in which their interaction are taking place, but that the inclusion of sociological and psychological elements into existing conceptualizations of trust might be able to shed light on differences and variations in perceptions and behaviour of states in otherwise seemingly similar situations (Rathbun, 2009, p. 356).

The fifth and final conceptual shortcoming of previous conceptualizations of trust is closely related to the ‘black-box’-approach that often characterizes the studying of international relations, obscuring many of the complex processes, dynamics, and structures that in reality define state bureaucracies and national decision-making processes. With their predominant top-down approach to trust, these approaches have promoted a highly simplistic and inaccurate picture of international relations and national decision-making, in which trust is assumed to simply flow from the structural level of states to the interpersonal level of state officials and practitioners.<sup>13</sup> In other words, state officials and practitioners are reduced to simple recipients of orders and lack any form of individual agency (Michel, 2013b, p. 89; Pouliot, 2008, pp. 260). However, despite rather strict hierarchies and a wide-spread (self-)understanding among many state officials and practitioners as representatives of their states, it is important to recognize that the processes and factors that eventually affect the levels of trust in interstate relations, such as the formulation of national identities, interests and state policies, are characterized by a constant process of (re-)negotiation between different actors and policy-makers, which may have different identities, interests and experiences, and who operate under various structural pressures and time constraints

---

<sup>13</sup> This unidirectional view also clashes with some sociological understandings of trust, which argue that “trust cannot be fully understood and studied exclusively on either the psychological level or on the institutional level, because it so thoroughly permeates both” (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 974).

(Pouliot, 2008, p. 261).<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the different levels of trust that constitute the relations between states, does not only require the development of a more comprehensive conceptual understanding of the structural and interpersonal level of trust in international relations, but also of the complex interplay between them, an interplay that I will further on refer to as the *communicating level of trust* in international relations.

In sum, being largely rooted in either a rationalist or constructivist tradition, lacking a sufficient account for the roles of security practices and unarticulated practical knowledge as well as by largely depicting states as a traditional ‘black-box’, previous approaches have largely provided us with an insufficient understanding of trust and distrust in international relations. The next section of this chapter will discuss how a critical realist approach to social sciences allows us to address these issues and to develop a more complex and comprehensive theoretical understanding of trust and distrust in international relations.

## **2.3 A Critical Realist Approach to Trust and Distrust in International Relations**

In this section, I discuss how a critical realist approach to social science allows for the development of a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of trust at the structural, interpersonal, and communicating levels in international relations and for addressing the various conceptual shortcomings discussed in the previous section of this chapter. To this end, I will first outline the ontological and epistemological roots of previous approaches in either a *structuralist* or *methodological individualist* tradition, before laying out the benefits of applying a critical realist epistemology and ontology to the studying of trust and distrust in international relations.

As the preceding section of this chapter has shown, most previous conceptualizations of trust in international relations have not only either followed a rationalist or constructivist approach to IR, but have also been primarily conceptualized in a unidirectional top-down way, by which trust (or its absence) becomes either an inherent feature of the international system (e.g. Mearsheimer, 1990;

---

<sup>14</sup> While this argument could in fact easily be expanded to include also actors beyond the traditional state-centric focus in IR (e.g. media, civil society, civilians etc.), the limitations in time and scope of this doctoral thesis have led me to limit myself here to the intragovernmental dimension in international relations and more specifically in defence and security politics.

Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979) or the outcome of rational calculations of state actors (e.g. Hardin, 2002; Kydd, 2005; Lieberman, 1964; McGillivray & Smith, 2000). As such, rationalist accounts of trust in IR are deeply rooted in what is usually referred to as a *structuralist* approach to social sciences. Structuralist accounts generally assume that structural and material factors are the main determinants for shaping and constraining individual human behaviour ('socialization'). Therefore, most structuralist favour a top-down positivist epistemology in the studying of social phenomena (Baert, 2007, pp. 10; Harvey, 2009, p. 24). In contrast, by pointing at the social construction of the international system and by arguing that states can overcome the state of anarchy by constructing more trustful relations through extensive transactions and the development of a collective identity (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998b; Hoffman, 2002; Mercer, 2005; Wendt, 1995), constructivist scholars have tried to challenge such rationalist accounts and the reduction of trust to the outcome of selfish calculations of rational actors and the structural and material features of the international system. Instead, they have promoted a relativist epistemology of understanding ('verstehen') the intentions and motives of individual actors, an approach also known as *methodological individualism*<sup>15</sup> (Baert, 2007, pp. 37; Harvey, 2009, p. 24; Wendt, 2015). However, with their inherent focus on states and state elites they fall likewise short of providing compelling arguments for how trust might be achieved, permeates and interacts within and between the structural and interpersonal level of international relations (see also Michel, 2013b, p. 98). To address these shortcomings and to bridge these traditional divides, this thesis will apply a 'critical realist' approach to the studying of trust and distrust in international relations.

Suggesting that "man no more 'creates' society than society 'creates' man" (Harvey, 2009, p. 24), critical realists reject both a fully relativist epistemology (Bryman, 2015, pp. 26) as well as what the 'father of critical realism', Roy Bhaskar, has called the "epistemic fallacy" of positivism (as well as empirical realism) which reduces reality exclusively to what is empirically observable (1975/2008, p. 5). Instead, critical realists promote a synthesis between structuralist and methodological individualist accounts of social reality (structure vs. agency) in what has come to be referred to as the 'transformational model of social action' (TMSA) (Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 133):

---

<sup>15</sup> Methodological individualists, such as Karl Popper or Max Weber, emphasize the role of intentionality ('agency') in human action and the capacity of individuals to construct, transform or reproduce the social structures in which they operate in (Baert, 2007, pp. 77).

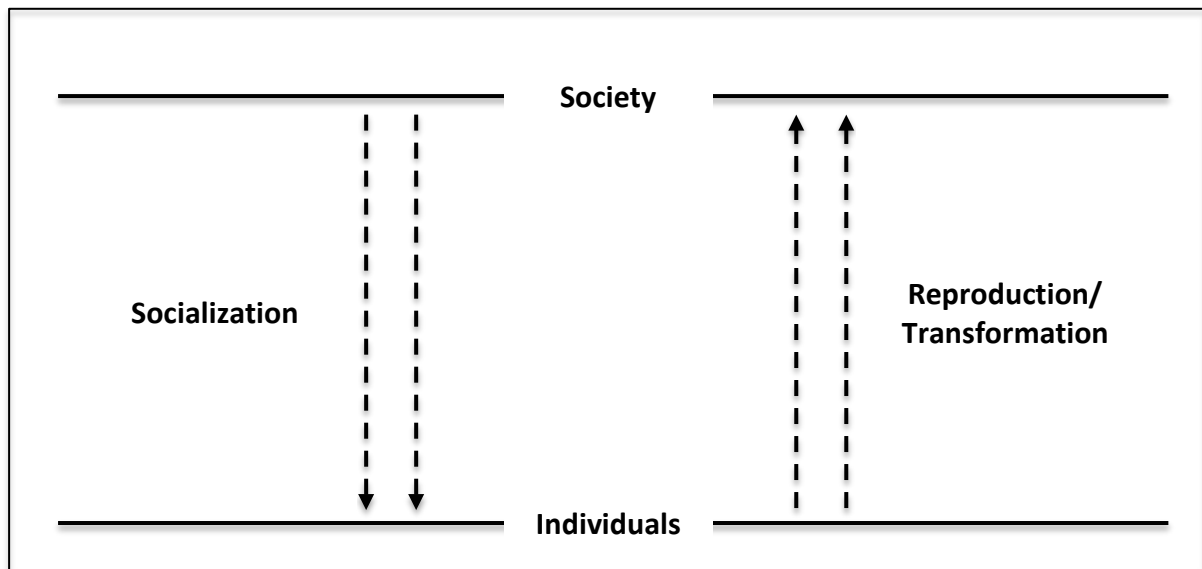


Figure 3. Transformational Model of Social Action (TMSA) based on Harvey (2009, p. 24).

In addition, critical realists acknowledge that what they observe through scientific inquiry might only be a small representation of the complex empirical reality that shapes our world and that this small representation is deeply influenced by our own personal backgrounds, perceptions and beliefs as well as the different theoretical models that we apply (Baert, 2007, p. 87; Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 121; Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen, & Karlsson, 2012, p. 24; López, 2007, p. 78). Therefore, critical realists promote a more nuanced and complex ontology of our world that differentiates between “three overlapping domains of reality [...] the *real*, the *actual* and the *empirical*” (Bhaskar, 1975/2008, p. 46). In their understanding, the *real* constitutes an independent reality that exists outside our own conceptions and contains the core principles and mechanisms that guide our world (Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 121; Danermark et al., 2012, p. 20). While “in principle knowable” (Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 121), they hold that not everything of this reality can actually be perceived, which distinguishes the *real* from the *actual* domain (Baert, 2007, p. 93). Furthermore, they argue that events in the ‘actual’ domain might occur regardless of whether we observe them or not, which distinguishes the *actual* from the *empirical* domain that “in scientific contexts contains our ‘data’ or ‘facts’” (Danermark et al., 2012, pp. 20, but see also Baert, 2007, pp. 92 and Benton & Craib, 2011, pp. 125). Finally, critical realists argue that the *empirical* domain, is constantly shaped and reshaped by our theoretical conceptions and empirical observations (Danermark et al., 2012, p. 21). In other words, individual theories and concepts are only able to offer us a snapshot of what constitutes our actual and observable reality. The layered understanding of critical realists of the complex reality of our world can be summarized by the following figure:



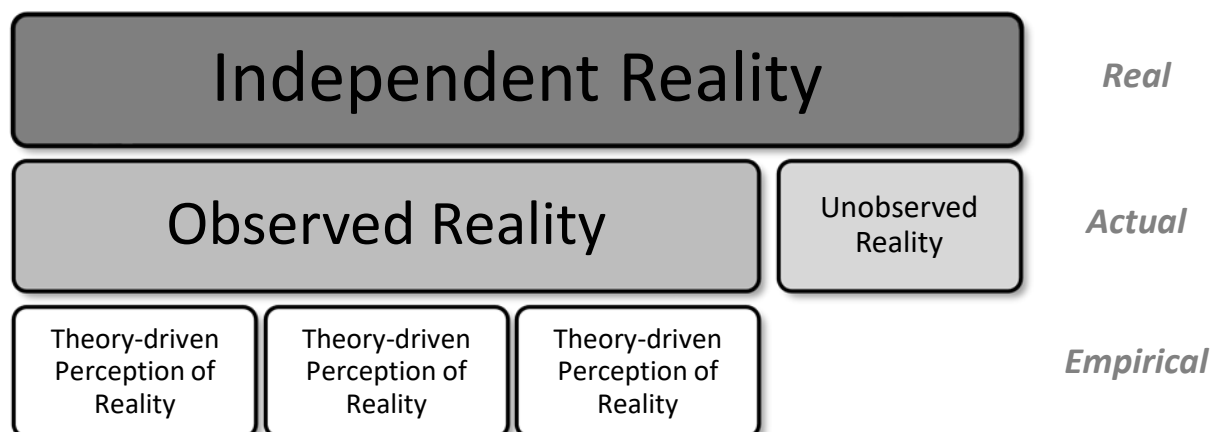


Figure 4. The three domains of Critical Realism. Own illustration based on Bhaskar (1975/2008, p. 46).

As a consequence of this differentiation between the real, actual and empirical domain, critical realists consider theoretical models and empirical findings as approximations, not as accurate depictions of social reality (Baert, 2007, pp. 93; Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 125; Bhaskar, 1993, p. 31; Danermark et al., 2012, p. 25; López, 2007, p. 76). This also explains why critical realists are generally “less concerned about falsifiability [...] than about explanatory power” (Baert, 2007, p. 95) and are also more receptive of combining different concepts from various academic disciplines and levels of analysis into more complex theoretical frameworks that allow them to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the social phenomenon of their inquiry.

Altogether, critical realism has not only made an important contribution to the epistemological and ontological debates in social science, but also holds a distinct advantage in addressing many of the shortcomings of previous conceptualizations of trust in international relations:

First, by taking seriously the interconnectedness between top-down and bottom-up approaches to the study of social phenomena, critical realism allows to research underlying causal mechanisms of social behaviour at and in between different levels of analysis (Baert, 2007, p. 97). In this regard, critical realism enables us to overcome the conceptually flawed ‘black-box’-approach that has dominated

previous conceptualizations of trust in international relations and allows us to focus also on trust at the interpersonal and communicating level.<sup>16</sup>

Secondly, by accepting that the complexity of our world cannot simply be condensed into a single theoretical concept,<sup>17</sup> critical realism helps us to understand different theories of trust in international relations not as mutually exclusive, but to appreciate the different insights and perspectives that they offer and to develop a theoretical framework that helps us to explore and better understand the various factors, processes and dynamics that define the phenomenon of trust and distrust in international relations. In other words, instead of approaching trust from a solely rationalist, constructivist, socio-psychological or practice-theoretical point of view, taking a critical realist approach to trust in international relations enables us to combine the different concepts and to develop a deeper and more comprehensive theoretical understanding of the role of trust and its formation in international relations.

Finally, and closely related to the previous point, taking a critical realist position makes it not only possible to look at different theoretical conceptualizations of trust as existing next to each other, but in fact also allows us to make their potential overlap “a key subject of research in its own right” (Adler & Greve, 2009, p. 60). By exploring variations and overlaps of trust and distrust, we are not only able to further unpack the traditional ‘black-box’ of previous conceptualizations of trust in international relations, but can also develop a better understanding of how differences in identities, interests and practices across regions, policy areas and actors might affect the overall levels of trust and distrust in international relations and help us explain some of the different dynamics in the formation and loss of trust between states. For example, to what extent are common economic interests in one region able to compensate for political tensions in another or what impact can positive relations between practitioners on the ground have on the overall levels of trust in interstate relations?

---

<sup>16</sup> This seems to be also in line with sociologist debates on trust, which have argued that “an adequate sociological theory of trust must offer a conceptualization [...] that bridges the interpersonal and the systemic levels of analysis, rather than dividing them into separate domains with different definitions and empirical methodologies for different social science disciplines” (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 974, but see also Luhmann (2000, pp. 104) and Misztal (2013, p. 15)).

<sup>17</sup> Some IR scholars would probably object to this claim. Others, like Walt, underline that “no single approach can capture all the complexity of contemporary world politics. Therefore, we are better off with a diverse array of competing ideas rather than a single theoretical orthodoxy” (1998, p. 30).

In sum, by bridging the traditional ‘top-down/bottom-up’-divide and by treating different theoretical models as compatible and mutually reinforcing heuristic devices that explore different aspects of the same complex social phenomena, critical realism offers us a strong ontological and epistemological foundation that allows us to develop a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of trust and distrust in international relations. Building upon this foundation, the next chapter of this thesis will develop a theoretical framework that combines rationalist, constructivist, practice-theoretical and socio-psychological approaches and which conceptualizes trust and distrust at the structural, interpersonal, and communicating level in international relations.

### **3 Theoretical Framework – A Multi-Level Approach to Trust and Distrust in International Relations**

This chapter develops the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis. Following a critical realist approach to social sciences, the framework will conceptualize trust at the structural, interpersonal, and communicating level in international relations. At the structural level, the framework combines constructivist, rationalist and practice-oriented approaches into a model that consists of a *moralistic*, *strategic* and *practice*-layer of trust in international relations. Afterwards, the section identifies key indicators that represent each layer at the four different stages of trust and distrust in international relations as defined in the previous chapter of this thesis and defines the main mechanism by which states form or lose trust in their relations. The section concludes by conceptualizing different forms of overlaps and variations between the three different layers and four stages of trust and distrust in international relations. At the interpersonal level, the theoretical framework of this thesis builds upon social contact theory from which it will derive indicators and measurements that allow for assessing the ability of various forms of military cooperation and interaction to contribute to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. Finally, at what I will refer to as the communicating level of trust, I conceptualize the complex interplay between the structural and interpersonal level of trust and distrust in international relations and reflect upon the factors and conditions that either lead to the *reproduction*, *transformation* or *representation* of existing levels of trust in the relations between states. The chapter concludes with a brief summary and overview of the multi-level theoretical framework of trust and distrust in international relations developed for the empirical analysis of this doctoral thesis.

### **3.1 The Structural Level – A Three-Layered Model of Trust in International Relations**

To address some of the shortcomings of previous conceptualizations of trust (see 2.2), this first section combines previous constructivist, rationalist and practice-oriented approaches and introduces trust at the structural level of international relations as a three-layered model, consisting of a *moralistic*, *strategic* and *practice*-layer of trust. While I consider all three layers to be in constant interplay, I do not view them as necessarily causally related or inevitably emerging from each other. In other words, moralistic notions of trust might exist independent of strategic or practical representations of trust and vice versa. In the further course of this section, I will first outline the three different layers of trust, define the main mechanism by which states move from one stage of trust to another and continue by identifying indicators that represent each layer of trust at the four different stages of trust and distrust in international relations introduced in the previous chapter of this thesis. Finally, I conclude this section by conceptualizing temporal, functional, spatial, and relational differences and overlaps in these layers and levels of trust in international relations.

#### **3.1.1 The Moralistic, Strategic and Practice-Layer of Trust**

This section introduces a three-layered model of trust and distrust in international relations. To this end, it will first define the *moralistic*, *strategic* and *practice*-layer of trust, followed by the mechanism by which states might move between the four different stages of trust and distrust introduced in the previous chapter of this thesis (see 2.1). The section concludes by briefly elaborating upon these different stages and by identifying indicators for the moralistic, strategic and practice-layer of trust in each of them.

The first layer is the *moralistic layer of trust* in international relations. It is based on previous constructivist approaches and conceptualizes trust as the outcome of longstanding processes of social learning by which states gradually develop a better understanding of each other's intentions, values, norms and beliefs, eventually coming to form a shared understanding and common identity (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, pp. 39). The second layer is the *strategic layer of trust* in international relations. It is mainly rooted in a rationalist understanding, defining trust as the outcome of careful rational calculations of the different interests, potential gains, and risks involved in the cooperation between different actors. Through repeated exchanges, actors slowly begin to gain a better idea of each other's interests and intentions, and are, therefore, increasingly able to identify issues of common interest and to make better predictions about their future interactions (e.g. Kydd, 2005, pp. 52). The third and final layer in our model is the *practice layer of trust* in international relations. While the moralistic and strategic layer

focus on conscious (self-)reflections of states and state officials about their national identities and interests, the practice layer looks at what states actually do (Michel, 2013b, pp. 93; Pouliot, 2008, pp. 279). Thereby, the practice-layer provides us with one of the most visible and tangible accounts for observing and analysing trust and distrust in international relations, serving us as a powerful indicator for trust in its moralistic or strategic form. However, while different defence and security practices might regularly be informed by conscious reflections about the identities and interests of different actors and derive their meaning largely from the political, material and normative environment in which they are taking place (Adler & Greve, 2009, p. 66; Möller, 2007, p. 35), it is important to keep in mind that some practices might also be the result of unconscious ‘tacit’ or ‘practical knowledge’ (Pouliot, 2008, pp. 260). In other words, while we might be able to assume a strong connection between the moralistic, strategic and practice-layers of trust, observing a certain practice is in itself not sufficient to provide us with credible evidence of different forms of interests and identities being at play. Before identifying indicators that represent each of the three layers at the four different stages of generalized and particularized trust and distrust, let us first briefly turn to the main mechanism by which states come to move from one stage of trust or distrust to another.

In the previous chapter, we have defined trust as holding ‘positive expectations about other actor’s behaviour under risk’, that this expectation can either be informed by identity-, interest- or practice-based processes and considerations (or any combination of thereof) as well as that trust is a constant process of (re-)evaluating other actor’s behaviour in relation to our prior expectations (see 2.1). Based on these basic assumptions, we can conclude that this process of (re-)evaluation is the main mechanism by which actors come to move from one stage of trust or distrust to another (see also Adler & Barnett, 1998a, pp. 44; Hardin, 2002, pp. 145; Michel, 2013b, pp. 99). More specifically, we can argue that this evaluation can lead to three different outcomes. The actual actions or non-actions of other actors can either *fall short of*, *meet* or even *exceed* actors’ prior expectations about each other, each, which I argue, will have a different impact on future levels of trust and distrust in their relationship (see also Michel, 2013b, p. 102). However, this impact will not only depend on the actual behaviour of the other side, but also differ depending on the stage of trust and distrust that initially informed the prior expectations of

actors about each other.<sup>18</sup> In other words, while meeting prior expectations should have a more neutral effect on future levels of trust in the relations between states, the negative effects of falling short of as well as the positive effects of exceeding prior expectations should differ, depending on whether actors currently find themselves in a situation of (particularized or generalized) trust or distrust. For example, if actors already enjoy high levels of trust, falling short of the positive expectations attached to their relations should have a more negative effect than if actors already largely distrust each other anyways.<sup>19</sup> This argument can also be reversed, stating that exceeding another actor’s expectations would have a more positive effect in situations of low levels of trust than it might have in situations in which states already enjoy a considerably higher level of trust in their relations and should consequently have higher expectations about each other.<sup>20</sup> The different impacts of *falling short of*, *meeting*, or *exceeding* other actor’s expectations at different stages of trust and distrust in their relations might be summarized by the following overview:

	<i>Generalized Distrust</i>	<i>Particularized Distrust</i>	<i>Particularized Trust</i>	<i>Generalized Trust</i>
<i>Prior expectations</i>	<i>negative</i>		<i>positive</i>	
<b><i>Falling short of prior expectations (Negative effect)</i></b>	weakest	weak	strong	strongest
<b><i>Meeting prior expectations (Neutral effect)</i></b>	reproduction of <b>negative</b> perceptions		reproduction of <b>positive</b> perceptions	
<b><i>Exceeding prior expectations (Positive Effect)</i></b>	strongest	strong	weak	weakest

Table 2. Different effects on the levels of trust of ‘falling short of’, ‘meeting’, or ‘exceeding’ prior expectations.

---

<sup>18</sup> In one of few conceptual accounts of these differences, Michel discusses the different impacts of ‘disappointment’ and ‘betrayal’ on future relations between actors.

<sup>19</sup> This argument is also in line with Michel’s notion of different consequences of ‘disappointment’ and ‘betrayal’ depending on the respective situation of trust (2013b, p. 102).

<sup>20</sup> To some extent, this dynamic corresponds with the idea of ‘costly signalling’ in game-theoretical approaches to trust through which actors by exposing themselves to high risks (e.g. by providing information about their military capabilities), might be able to overcome a security dilemma (e.g. Kydd, 2005, p. 5; Welch Larson, 1997, pp. 720).

Having introduced our three layers of trust and defined the main mechanisms by which states move from one stage of trust or distrust to another, let us conclude this section by identifying different indicators for our moralistic, strategic and practice-layer at each stage of trust and distrust in the relations between states. Again, I would briefly like to reiterate that the different stages of trust and distrust are not necessarily path-dependent, but that the relations between states and actors can develop in both directions at any given time.

At the stage of *generalized distrust*, which most strongly corresponds with the state of anarchy that realist scholars often depict (e.g. Mearsheimer, 2014; Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979), states lack a sufficient understanding of each other's intentions, interests and beliefs and, therefore, remain highly suspicious of each other's actions. In such a situation, which makes it absolutely inconceivable to cooperate and to arrive at some sort of trust in their relationship, states will try to deter any actions that could potentially threaten their own interests and identities, making *deterrence, opposing identities and interests* our main indicators for the stage of generalized distrust in interstate-relations.<sup>21</sup>

At the stage of *particularized distrust*, states have managed to slowly develop a better understanding of each other's intentions, interests and beliefs (e.g. through regular interaction). However, due to still largely incompatible identities and interests, they continue to remain highly suspicious of each other. Yet – in particular triggered by external factors and events<sup>22</sup> – they might be willing to engage in more pragmatic forms of cooperation (e.g. to address a common security threat) (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, pp. 37; Rathbun, 2009, p. 371). However, while they might develop some limited level of trust, which facilitates such pragmatic forms of cooperation, their relations are still largely characterized by widespread levels of distrust, and they simultaneously have to engage in a number of practices to deconflict their incompatible identities and interests. At the same time, due to the high risk of deception,

---

<sup>21</sup> Realists would probably argue that deterrence also creates some kind of predictability. However, since this predictability is based in negative and opposing views about each other's motives and behaviour, it hardly suffices our minimum definition of trust as holding at least some level of positive expectation of other actor's behaviour (see also Väyrynen, 2000, p. 109).

<sup>22</sup> In their conceptualization of security communities, Adler and Barnett identify a number of so-called 'precipitating conditions' that can initiate the development of security communities. Their non-exhaustive list includes changes in technology, demography, economics or the environment; new interpretations of social reality; or the emergence of an external threat (1998a, pp. 37).

they will also rely on international organizations and mechanisms that allow them to closely verify and monitor each other's compliance and behaviour (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, p. 50; Hoffman, 2002, pp. 388; Krass, 1985, p. 285; Rathbun, 2011, pp. 268). However, since many practices of deconflicting are based in intentionality (e.g. declarations of restraint), meaning they only hold true until proven otherwise, they require a continuous interpretation of the motives and intentions of the other side. As Deborah Welch Larson puts it: "‘Not doing something’ has indefinite timing" (1997, p. 725). This makes it not only much more difficult to monitor and verify such practices than more concrete and visible steps (e.g. the destruction of weapon systems) (Welch Larson, 1997, pp. 724), but the interpretation of each other's motives and intentions will due to the lack of trust, also be much more prone to worst-case-scenario thinking (Krass, 1985, p. 286). Thus, while the pragmatic level of cooperation as well as the practice of deconflicting carry the potential of marking the very first steps in the long and difficult process towards more trustful relations, they hardly allow for exceeding actor's expectations. In other words, the measures states tend to adopt at the early stages in their relations, are much more likely resulting in a mere reproduction of existing levels of distrust or only slowly allow for a fragile level of particularized trust to evolve. In sum, I argue that situations of particularized distrust are indicated by *incompatible identities and interests* as well as practices of *deconflicting*.

This brings us to the stage of *particularized trust*. If both sides continue to honour the small and fragile trust that they might establish in the course of some pragmatic level of cooperation, there is a serious chance that both sides begin to slowly identify more and more compatible interests and develop a growing sense of mutual identification in their relations (e.g. Hardin, 2002, pp. 4; Möller, 2007, pp. 36; Uslaner, 2002, p. 28). While not yet having arrived at a stage in which they unconditionally trust each other, the increasing commonalities and reduced risks of deception should allow them to gradually trust each other in more and more different situations, a process that should also lead to a reduced emphasis on institutional mechanisms for monitoring and oversight (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, p. 54; Hoffman, 2002, pp. 390). Instead, we should be able to observe an increasing amount of more substantial forms of cooperation as well as various practices by which both sides begin to reassure each other of their compatible interests and identities (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, pp. 53; Bjola & Kornprobst, 2007, p. 286). This makes the practice of *reassurance* as well as *compatible identities and interests* the key factors at the stage of particularized trust in international relations.

Finally, if states continue to expand their cooperation and deepen their ties, they might arrive at a stage of *generalized trust*, as they identify more and more issues of collective interest and come to agree on a set of collectively shared values and norms that begin to guide their relations (e.g. Adler & Barnett,



1998a, p. 55; Uslander, 2002, p. 28). At this stage, we should also begin to see how states increasingly reinforce their identities and pursue their interests more collectively. This makes *collective action*, *collective identities*, and *collective interests* the key indicators of generalized trust in international relations. However, since the positive effects of meeting or exceeding each other’s expectations have at this time already begun to decrease, reaching this final stage of trust can be a long and difficult – for some relations maybe even an impossible – stage to reach.

The following figure, once again, summarizes the different forms of identities, interests, and security practices<sup>23</sup> that indicate each layer at the different stages of trust and distrust in international relations<sup>24</sup>:

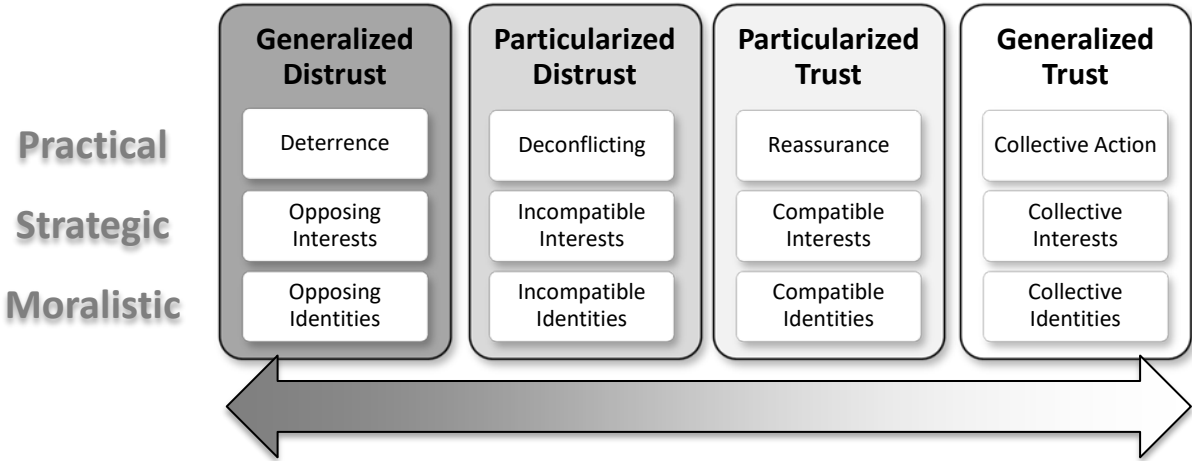


Figure 5. The 'practice', 'strategic' and 'moralistic' layer of trust in international relations.

<sup>23</sup> Other scholars have also suggested to focus on 'before- or after-the-fact oversight mechanisms' (Hoffman, 2002), the presence or absence of 'hedging strategies' (Keating & Ruzicka, 2014) or the 'self-evidence of diplomacy' (Pouliot, 2008) in order to detect and observe trust- or distrustful relationships between states.

<sup>24</sup> While the distinction between the different stages sometimes loosely resonates with the 'nascent', 'ascendant' and 'mature' phases in the development of security communities (see Adler & Barnett, 1998a, pp. 48), I would once again like to underline that in line with a critical realist approach to social sciences, I do not view the different stages as path-dependent nor the different layers as causally related to each other.

### 3.1.2 Temporal, Functional, Spatial and Relational Overlaps of Trust

Having introduced our three layers of trust and defined the main mechanism by which states move from one stage of trust or distrust to another, we can now discuss and conceptualize possible differences and overlaps between them. To this end, I will draw upon Adler and Greve who have suggested to look at different theoretical concepts in IR – in their case ‘balances of power’ and ‘security community’ – as different security practices and to make the overlaps between them a key focus in the studying of international relations (2009). Building upon their ideas, we might be able to differentiate between four different variations and overlaps of trust and distrust in international relations:

The first are *temporal* variations and overlaps, which might be the consequence of the long and slow adaptation process by which previous perceptions about identities, interests and practices are not replaced at once, but only slowly adapted over time (e.g. based on new experiences, observations or a new generation of practitioners) (Adler & Greve, 2009, pp. 73). This view also corresponds, with what Deborah Welch Larson refers to as ‘time lags’ (1997, pp. 724), which she connects to the difficulties in monitoring the actual behaviour of other actors (e.g. their compliance with a certain agreement), the need for repeated observations of cooperative behaviour before arriving at new conclusions about the trustworthiness of another actor (1997, p. 725) as well as to the slow process by which policy-makers are actually able and willing to update their perceptions and beliefs:

Like most people, policy-makers are usually conservative in changing their beliefs in response to discrepant information. It is not that we ignore contradictory information entirely but that we scrutinize it more rigorously than we do information, which fits our beliefs. When faced with evidence that violates well-established beliefs, we discount its validity, code ambiguous data so that it fits our beliefs, or recall belief-consistent information (Welch Larson, 1997, p. 725).

The second are *functional* variations and overlaps of trust, which might result from different compositions of identities, interests and practices between different policy actors (e.g. the ministries of foreign affairs and the ministries of defence), between different policy areas (e.g. environmental, economic or defence and security politics) or even in the context of individual policy issues (e.g. cooperation on search and rescue, but not on border protection) (Adler & Greve, 2009, pp. 75). The third and fourth overlap are *spatial* and *relational* variations and overlaps of trust, which refer to differences in identities, interests and practices in different (sub-)regional settings (e.g. within the Arctic or European security environment) or in different relational contexts (e.g. within a bilateral or multilateral

environment) (Adler & Greve, 2009, pp. 78).<sup>25</sup> The four different variations and overlaps of trust in international relations are summarized by the following table:

temporal	functional	spatial	relational
trust between states might vary over time	trust between states might differ between policy areas, issues and different national actors	trust between states might differ in various regional contexts	trust between states might differ in various political contexts

*Table 3. 'Temporal', 'functional', 'spatial', and 'relational' variations and overlaps of trust. Own illustration, inspired by Adler and Greve (2009, pp. 72).*

### 3.1.3 Summary

In this section, I have introduced the moralistic, strategic and practice-layer of trust in international relations, defined the main mechanism by which states come to form or lose trust in their relations, identified indicators that represent each layer at the four different stages of (particularized and generalized) trust and distrust and elaborated upon variations and overlaps of different levels of trust and distrust across time, different actors, policy areas, regions and political settings. With these elements, we have developed a more complex, but also more comprehensive theoretical model of trust and distrust at the structural level of state-to-state relations. This model will not only serve us as a powerful heuristic device that allows us to more thoroughly and extensively assess the different aspects, elements and mechanisms that characterize trust and distrust in international relations, but will also enable us to explore how differences and overlaps of various forms of trust and distrust might help us gain a better understanding of some of the different dynamics that can frequently be observed with regard to the formation and loss of trust in international relations.

---

<sup>25</sup> An example that both cite is the relationship between Turkey and Greece within and outside the NATO framework (Adler & Greve, 2009, p. 79).

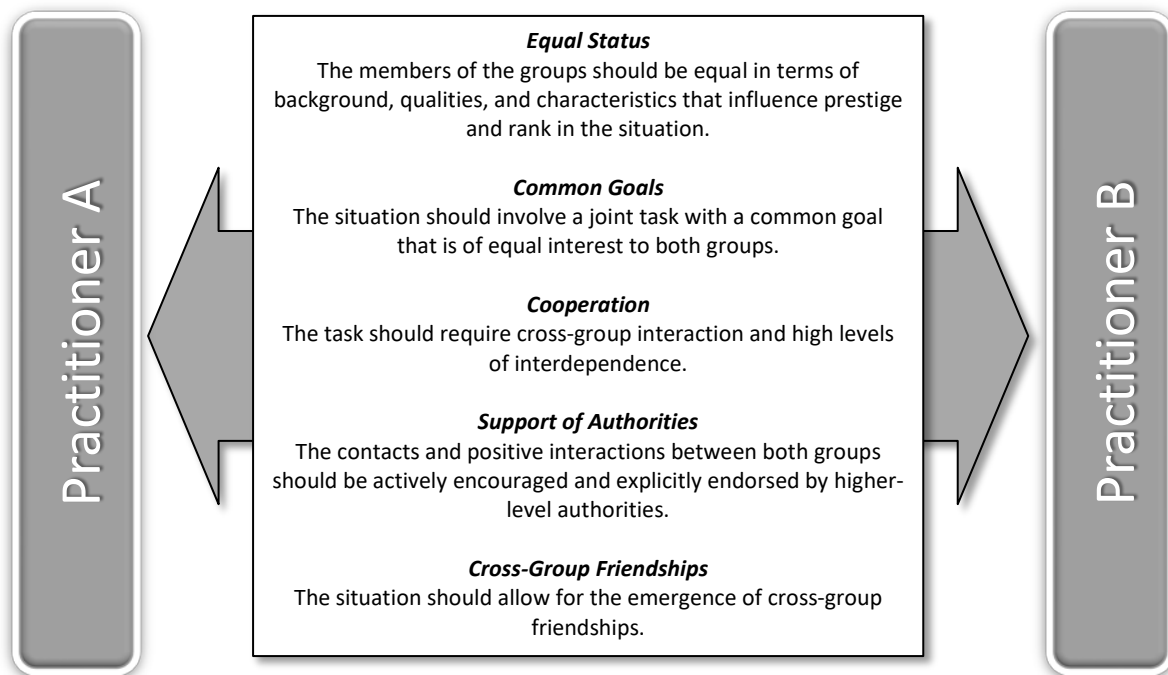
### 3.2 The Interpersonal Level – Building Inter-Group Trust in Defence and Security Politics

This section will conceptualize trust at the interpersonal level in international relations. While increasing interactions and transactions between states have been widely accepted to contribute to more trustful interstate relations (e.g. Adler & Barnett, 1998a, pp. 45; Deutsch et al., 1957, p. 58), a credible qualitative assessment and account for the *human factor* in these interactions has so far been largely absent (Booth & Wheeler, 2010, pp. 232). In this regard, I argue that it would be wrong to assume that all interactions and forms of cooperation are equally capable of contributing to increased levels of trust and understanding among practitioners or state officials. To address this gap, this section links the formation of intergroup trust to Gordon Allport's *contact hypothesis* (1954) and develops his conditions for positive intergroup contacts to qualitatively assess the trust-building effects of different forms of cooperation and interaction at the interpersonal level of defence practitioners and state officials.

Starting out as an initial hypothesis developed with the goal of conceptualizing the conditions under which intergroup contacts might be able to reduce intergroup prejudices (Allport, 1954, p. 281), Allport's ideas have received strong support by an innumerable amount of different empirical studies in social psychology (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011). This support has elevated Allport's initial hypothesis into the stage of a full-fledged theory that defines a number of necessary conditions for positive or constructive intergroup contacts. I argue that exactly such positive intergroup contacts initiate and foster the necessary learning process by which practitioners and state officials start to develop a better understanding of each other's intentions, interests, and beliefs, thereby contributing to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level in international relations. In other words, I argue that Allport's contact theory provides us with a powerful analytical tool for assessing the trust-building effects of various forms of cooperation and interaction at the interpersonal level of trust in interstate relations by allowing us to assess what forms of military cooperation or military-to-military contacts might be more capable of generating positive perceptions between practitioners and state officials from different states than others.

In his original hypothesis, Allport identified four key conditions that constitute such constructive contacts between members of different groups: *equal status*, *common goals*, *cooperation* and *support of authorities* (1954, p. 281, but see also Forsyth, 2014, p. 493; Pettigrew, 1998, pp. 66). Thomas F. Pettigrew, meanwhile complemented these four conditions by a fifth – *cross-group friendships* (1998). Allport's first condition, refers to the need for intergroup contacts to take place in situations of *equal status*, meaning that members of both groups are "equal in terms of background, qualities, and

characteristics that influence prestige and rank in the situation” (Forsyth, 2014, p. 493, but see also Allport, 1954, pp. 264; Pettigrew, 1998, p. 66). In the context of trust in international relations, this would not only correspond with the moralistic layer of trust and the role of collective (or at least compatible) identities between states, but also imply that interactions between practitioners coming from similar regional contexts, policy areas, parts or levels of hierarchy in state bureaucracies would generally be more capable of contributing to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level in state-to-state relations. Secondly, Allport emphasizes that the interaction between different groups should be geared towards a *common goal* that is of equal interest to both sides (1954, pp. 276, but see also Forsyth, 2014, p. 493; Pettigrew, 1998, p. 66), an argument that corresponds with discussions on the strategic layer of trust and the importance of states to identify collective (or compatible) interests in their relations. In this context, it also appears logical to assume that interactions between practitioners coming from similar regional backgrounds, policy areas, parts, or levels of hierarchy in state bureaucracies would find it easier to identify goals of common interest than practitioners that come from a more diverse background. Thirdly, Allport refers to the need of the interaction to entail far-reaching levels of *cooperation* that require cross-group interaction as well as high levels of interdependence (1954, pp. 276, but see also Forsyth, 2014, p. 493; Pettigrew, 1998, p. 67). This condition ties directly into the practice layer of trust and to the ideas of states taking collective action or measures to reassure each other in situations of generalized or particularized levels of trust. Fourthly, Allport points at the need of contacts and positive interactions having the *support of authorities*, in other words, being actively encouraged and explicitly endorsed by policies, laws and higher-level authorities (1954, p. 281, but see also Forsyth, 2014, p. 493; Pettigrew, 1998, p. 67), providing a good link to the strict hierarchies and processes in national foreign and defence policy-making. Finally, Pettigrew adds that intergroup contacts should also allow for the emergence of *cross-group friendships* between members of both groups, a process which, he highlights, requires close interaction and takes considerable time (1998, p. 76). Within the theoretical context of this doctoral thesis, Pettigrew’s argument might provide us with interesting thoughts regarding the role of personal contacts and relations in the context of the communicating level of trust in international relations. The five different conditions of social contact theory are summarized in the following figure:



*Figure 6. Conditions for positive intergroup contacts as defined by Allport (1954) and Pettigrew (1998).  
Own illustration based on Forsyth (2014, p. 493).*

In sum, Gordon Allport's contact theory provides us with a powerful analytical tool for including the *human factor* into our conceptualization of trust and for qualitatively assessing the various forms of cooperation and interaction at the interpersonal level, which are assumed the key driving force behind the formation of trust in international relations. While empirically well-established and offering conceptually convincing linkages to our conceptualization of trust at the structural level, the extent to which certain conditions require further adaptation to the specific context of international relations and defence and security politics will also be one of the key focal points in my empirical analysis of the interpersonal level of trust and distrust in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia (see 6.5).

### **3.3 The Communicating Level – The Reproduction, Transformation or Representation of Trust**

Having developed our theoretical framework at the structural and interpersonal level, this section will conceptualize the complex interplay between the two. More specifically, I will focus on the extent by which interpersonal exchanges between practitioners and state officials are (pre-)determined by the

more abstract structural level of trust in interstate relations as well as on the conditions by which positive interactions at the interpersonal level are actually capable of transforming the structural level of trust in interstate relations. Inspired by a critical realist-approach to social science, this section will discuss three possible outcomes of this interplay, each of which is expected to have a different effect on the overall levels of trust in international relations:

The first outcome is the *top-down reproduction* of identities, interests, and practices in international relations. It assumes that the interpersonal experiences and interactions between state officials and practitioners are either largely (pre-)determined by or due to *political, structural or personal constraints*, unable to affect the current levels of trust and distrust at the structural level of interstate relations. For example, practitioners might be working in less topical policy areas, not hold influential enough positions in their state administrations or lack the experience and networks to influence national decision-making processes more effectively. Based on our previous definitions and conceptualizations of trust, this top-down reproduction of identities, interests and practices should come with an important trade-off regarding the overall levels of trust in the relations between states. On the one hand, it should reduce some of the complexities in the relations between states (e.g. variations and overlaps of identities, interests and practices across different areas, actors, political settings and regions) and thereby make it possible for states to formulate more dependable expectations about each other's behaviour, making it possible to reach deeper and more generalized levels of trust easier and faster.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, as these generalized levels of trust are no longer based on a broad foundation of different identities, interests and forms of cooperation across different national actors, policy areas, political and regional settings, they are also much more vulnerable to disruptions and sudden changes, not least because states lack the ability to cross-check, balance out or more appropriately react to (perceived) changes in their relations with each other. In short, the top-down reproduction of existing identities, interests and practices might lead faster to deeper and more generalized forms of trust in interstate relations, but makes this trust also more vulnerable to disruptions and change.

---

<sup>26</sup> This also corresponds with Luhmann's (1973, pp. 23) argument of trust being a 'reduction of complexity'.

The second outcome of the interplay between the structural and interpersonal level of trust is a *bottom-up transformation* of identities, interests, and practices in international relations. This outcome, which is based in a ‘methodological individualist’-perspective, looks at the agency of state officials and practitioners to affect the current levels of trust and distrust in the relations between states. This agency could be informed by *political, institutional or personal facilitators* that allow state officials and practitioners to have a noticeable effect on national decision-making processes, such as political factors leading to more substantial forms of cooperation (e.g. military alliances), mechanisms that improve national coordination processes (e.g. short lines of communication) or personal factors (e.g. rank, experience or reputation). Again, also this bottom-up transformation of identities, interests, and practices comes with an important trade-off regarding the overall levels of trust in the relations between states. While broadening the foundation and solidifying the levels of trust in interstate relations, the complexities of different identities, interests and practices across different national actors, policy areas, regions and political settings, make reaching deeper levels of trust more difficult and time-consuming. In short, the bottom-up transformation of existing identities, interests, and practices might lead to broader levels of trust that are less vulnerable to disruptions and sudden changes, but complicates the development of trust between states.

Finally, the third outcome combines the previous two and looks at the *credible two-way representation* of identities, interests, and practices at both, the structural and interpersonal level in international relations. This outcome combines the strengths and overcomes the weaknesses of the previous two, focusing on the factors and conditions that enable states to reach stable, but at the same time also deeper levels of trust in their relations. As such, a credible two-way representation of the various identities, interests, and practices that characterize the relations between states across a broad spectrum of different actors, policy areas, regions, and political settings would be the most preferable outcome of the interplay between the structural and interpersonal levels of trust in international relations. As Booth and Wheeler state: “For trust to become embedded between political units, it is necessary for positive relationships between decision-makers to be replicated at the [in their case] intersocietal level, and vice-versa, through a mutual learning process” (2010, p. 230). The factors and conditions that might allow states to reach such an ideal state in their relations, will be one of the focuses in the analytical part of the communicating level of trust, and distrust in defence and security politics (see 7.4).



### 3.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have developed the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis. Following a critical realist approach to social science, this framework has been conceptualized as a multi-level framework extending across the structural, interpersonal, and communicating level of trust and distrust in international relations:

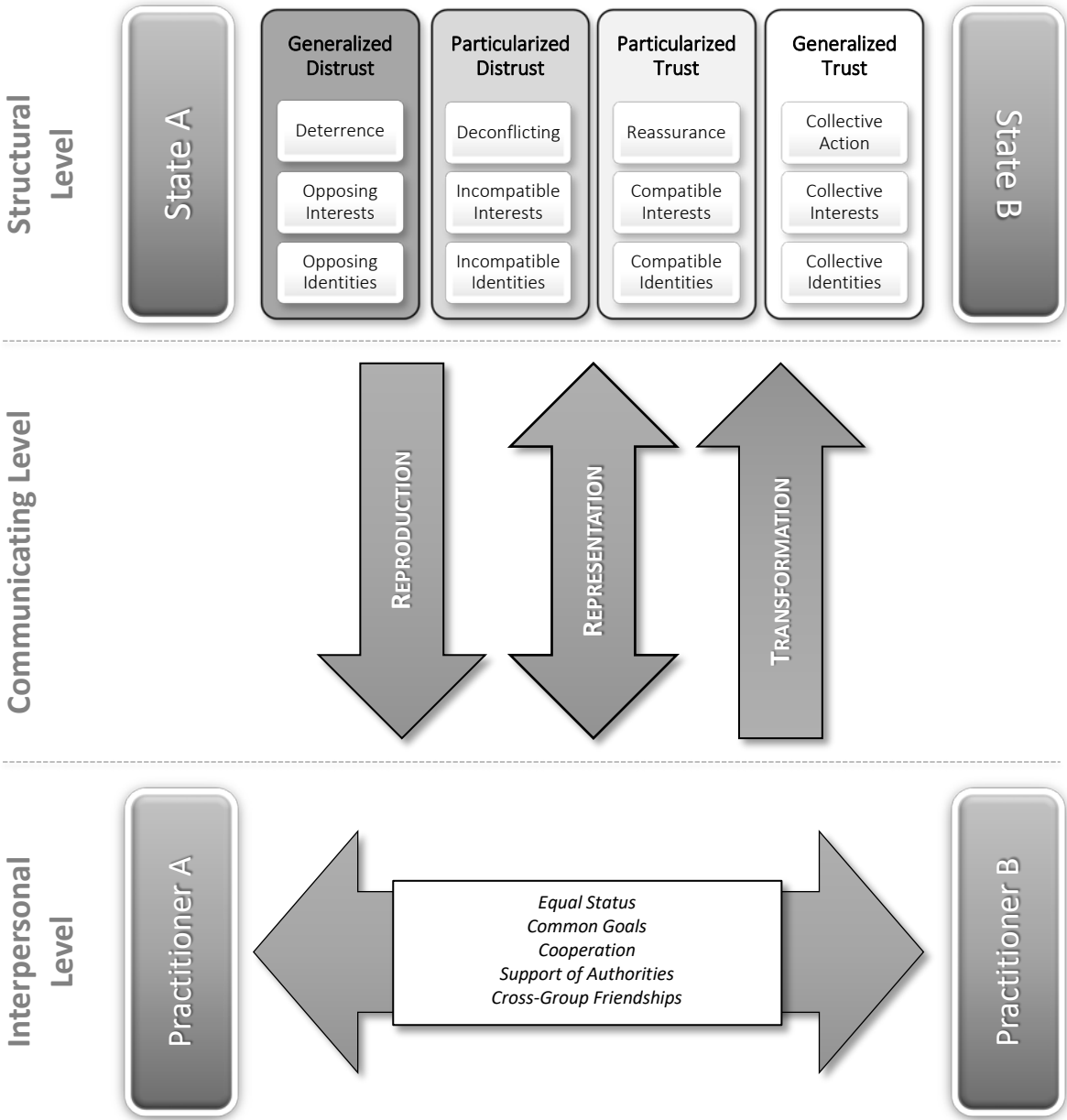


Figure 7. Multi-Level Theoretical Framework of Trust and Distrust in International Relations.

At the structural level, I have introduced trust and distrust in international relations as a three-layered model consisting of a moralistic, strategic and practice-layer of trust, defined the main mechanism behind the formation and loss of trust in interstate relations and reflected upon the potential differences and overlaps in levels of trust and distrust across time, policy actors and areas as well as regional and political settings. Altogether, this model will serve us as a powerful heuristic device for analytically exploring the complexities of trust and distrust at the structural level in international relations. At the interpersonal level, I used social contact theory to develop a framework for qualitatively assessing the often-overlooked *human factor* in the formation of trust and distrust in interstate relations (e.g. contacts between state officials and practitioners). To this end, I largely build upon social contact theory and assess to what extent different forms of military cooperation, military-to-military contacts, and other forms of interactions between states are actually capable of contributing to increased levels of understanding and trust among state officials and practitioners. Finally, at the communicating level, I have focused on three possible outcomes of the complex interplay between the structural and interpersonal level of trust in interstate relations – the reproduction, transformation, or representation of identities, interests and practices – each of which is expected to have a different impact on the depth, breadth, and stability of trust and distrust in international relations.

Before concluding this chapter, I would like to add one final remark. As I have already stated in the previous chapter of this thesis (see 2.3), the goal of a ‘critical realist’-approach to social science is not to reduce complexities or to make absolute claims about our social world – something that critical realists would in fact argue is out of reach – but to develop more complex theoretical models that allow us to shed more light on the different factors, processes and mechanisms that constitute social phenomena and our social world. As such, also this more complex and comprehensive theoretical framework developed in this chapter can and will not claim to be exhaustive or able to provide us with irrefutable assumptions and conclusions about the role of trust and distrust in international relations as the complex relations between states might not always fit neatly into only one theoretical box or lend themselves easily to empirical investigation. Instead, this theoretical framework is meant to serve as a heuristic device through which we might be able to better understand and explore parts of the complex and dynamic phenomenon of trust and distrust in international relations from different theoretical angles, points of departure and levels of analysis.

## **4 Methodological Approach**

In this chapter, I will focus on the methodological approach of this doctoral thesis. To this end, I will provide a comprehensive overview of my research design, including the reasons for my case selection, the operationalization of my theoretical framework as well as the methods used for the gathering and analysis of my empirical data. The chapter concludes with a brief reflection upon positionality and some of the main ethical challenges of this doctoral thesis.

### **4.1 Research Design**

The following section will outline the research design of this doctoral thesis. First, I will provide reasoning for the selection of my cases and the focus on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia. Afterwards, I will present the different methods chosen for the gathering and analysis of my empirical data, operationalize my theoretical framework, and discuss some of the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges in this regard.

#### **4.1.1 Case Selection**

The case selection of this doctoral thesis was motivated by the goal of gaining deep insights into the role and formation of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. To cover an as broad as possible spectrum of different defence and security identities, interests, and practices, as well as to explore trust and distrust across different regional and sub-regional security environments, I decided to focus on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia. This decision was further influenced by practical considerations, in particular with regard to language and access to the field, an element of particular importance when conducting qualitative research on military security. Subsequently, I will briefly reflect upon the specific reasons for the selection of each country.

Norway was selected for being a founding member of NATO, an European Arctic littoral state as well as for its historically good relations with Russia and the former Soviet Union (see Holtsmark, 2015), with which it also shares a common border. Yet, with the renewed tensions between Russia and the West, the government in Oslo has started to re-evaluate its relations with Russia due to what the Norwegian government perceives as an increasingly unpredictable security situation in the High North (Bentzrød, 2018). Beyond NATO-Russia relations, Norway also collaborates with the four other Nordic states on defence-related issues in the context and framework of the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO). Furthermore, being affiliated with a Norwegian university, able to draw from an

existing network of contacts and having sufficient language skills, further motivated my decision as it allowed me more easily to negotiate access to the Norwegian armed forces.

With Sweden, I included another European state, but this time a militarily non-aligned and with closer ties to the European Union. However, not least since the Ukrainian crisis in 2014, Sweden has been developing closer ties with NATO, in particular through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, which is meant to manage the alliance's bilateral relations with non-NATO member states in the Euro-Atlantic area (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2017a). In addition, Sweden's long history and strong cultural ties with Norway allowed me to explore the impact of historical and cultural factors on my empirical findings, while Sweden's status as an Arctic state – yet without direct access to the Arctic Ocean – allowed assessing regional differences in its relations with Norway, Canada, and Russia. In addition, because I could already build upon a small network of contacts and due to the similarity between the Swedish and Norwegian language, I ultimately decided to choose Sweden over Finland, to which many of the above aspects would otherwise also have applied.

To broaden the geographical scope of my thesis and to prevent my analysis from becoming too Euro-centric, I decided also to include a Northern American country. For various reasons, I decided for Canada, which is not only another NATO member state, but also the second largest Arctic state (Le Mière & Mazo, 2013, p. 16) and has always shown a stronger affiliation and interest in the Arctic region (e.g. Griffiths, Huebert, & Lackenbauer, 2011) than the United States. Finally, the decision was further encouraged by the particularly strong support that I received from the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) throughout the entire process of this doctoral thesis, which enabled me to conduct interviews with practitioners from all levels within the military hierarchy (strategic, operational, and tactical level).

As my fourth and last country, I have decided to include Russia into my case selection without which a thorough analysis of trust and distrust in defence and security politics would be incomplete. The inclusion of Russia opens up for interesting comparisons of regional and sub-regional differences in its defence and security relations with Norway, Sweden and Canada, allows for a thorough investigation of the role of historical legacies from the Cold War and with renewed tensions in Western-Russian relations, not least since 2014, also adds an interesting case of rapidly declining trust to my study. In addition, Russia is also the largest Arctic state and has the highest military presence in the region, adding also another important and interesting case to the security dynamics in the Arctic region. Unfortunately, as will also be elaborated upon in more detail in the next section of this chapter, an official research permit by the Russian Ministry of Defence, which would have allowed conducting interviews with

Russian defence and security practitioners could not be obtained in the context of this doctoral thesis. Nevertheless, for the reasons outlined above, I decided to keep Russia as an essential part in my empirical investigations. The strategies for compensating for the lack of access to primary sources will also be presented in more detail in the next section of this doctoral thesis.

In sum, by focusing on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia, I am able to cover a broad spectrum of different security dynamics affecting the level of trust and distrust in defence and security politics and even though, it became quickly evident in the course of this thesis that regional and more general global security dynamics could not be plausibly separated from each other, allows me to draw interesting comparisons of differences in their relations in the European, Arctic, Baltic, and Barents security environment.

#### **4.1.2 Research Methods, Source Material and Operationalization**

As outlined in the introduction, this doctoral thesis is interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the role of trust and distrust in defence and security politics as well as to assess the factors, mechanisms, and conditions that contribute to its formation at the structural, interpersonal, and communicating level. Rooted in a critical realist approach to social sciences, this thesis aims at deriving *explanatory inferences* about the structural, interpersonal, and communicating level of trust in international relations and defence and security politics. Explanatory inferences (often also called ‘abductive inference’ or ‘inference to the best explanation’) differ from hypothetico-deductive inferences in that they do not aim to test the validity of hypotheses that were derived from existing theoretical concepts and to infer generalizations, but to arrive at the most likely explanation for their empirical observations. Hence, also the term ‘inference to the best explanation’ (Godfrey-Smith, 2008, pp. 41). Towards this goal, this doctoral thesis relies on an ‘abductive’<sup>27</sup> research design that combines four different methods for its data collection and analysis: a network analysis, an analysis of central defence and security policy documents, semi-structured interviews as well as a focus group discussion with defence and security

---

<sup>27</sup> Abduction is broadly defined as a research strategy in which “the researcher grounds a theoretical understanding of the contexts and people he or she is studying in the language, meanings, and perspectives that form their worldview. The crucial step in abduction is that, [...] the researcher must come to a social scientific account of the social world as seen from those perspectives [without losing] touch with the world as it is seen by those [who] provided the data” (Bryman, 2015, p. 394).

practitioners.<sup>28</sup> In an attempt to minimize the impact of a sometimes rather fast changing defence and security environment, the period for my analysis was kept as tight as possible, with the majority of my data collection taking place from October 2018 to June 2019. In the further course of this section, each method and analytical stage of my research design will be briefly presented and discussed in more detail:

First, given the critical realists and abductive approach of this doctoral thesis, I have decided to begin my empirical investigation of the structural level of trust with a basic social network analysis of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia. While there exists a large array of different approaches to this method,<sup>29</sup> it will in the context of this thesis be used as a method for visualizing social networks through a so-called ‘sociogram’, in which “nodes are depicted as points, and the ties connecting them are visualized as lines” (Buch-Hansen, 2014, pp. 308). Given the rather strong positivist tradition of social network analysis (Buch-Hansen, 2014, p. 311), its inclusion into a critical realist research design might at first appear counterintuitive. Yet, instead of aiming for generalizable or even predictable models of social relations from the social network graph, “what matters to critical realists when using SNA methods—or any other method—is the extent to which those models can help us make sense of the part of social reality we are trying to explain” (Buch-Hansen, 2014, p. 320). In this regard, critical scholars do not view social network analyses as an end in itself, but can apply it as a means to map and visualize the social ties and structures that underlie their body of investigation. In other words, they do not replace, but ideally supplement other methods of empirical investigation (Buch-Hansen, 2014, p. 320).<sup>30</sup>

Based on this critical realist approach to social network analysis, I specifically decided against the use of directed lines, as it would predetermine if a connection between two actors is symmetric or not, as

---

<sup>28</sup> This strategy of combining different research and data collection methods is also known as ‘triangulation’, defined as “the use of more than one method or source of data in the study of a social phenomenon so that findings may be cross-checked” (Bryman, 2015, p. 697), improving the validity of empirical findings by minimizing potential biases (see also Jupp, 2006, pp. 305).

<sup>29</sup> For a comprehensive overview over the research field of social network analysis see for example Scott and Carrington (2011).

<sup>30</sup> For a comprehensive debate of the compatibility of social network analysis and a critical realist position in social science see also Buch-Hansen (2014).

well as by trying to quantify their importance e.g. by giving each line an individual width (see Krempel, 2011). Instead, the social network analysis was conducted to illustrate the current status quo in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia. Due to the complexity of their relations, I have decided to limit myself to the European and Arctic security environment, as both regions were highlighted as key geographical focal points in their national defence and security policy documents. Within this analysis, each node in the network represents a formal organization or institution. These could be the ministries of defence or different parts of the armed forces as well as intergovernmental forums, security arrangements, alliances or policy regimes. Each line connecting different nodes (also called ‘edges’ or ‘ties’) symbolizes officially facilitated forms of interaction between the various actors and forums (e.g. membership or participation in certain organizations, memoranda of understanding etc.).<sup>31</sup> In other words, these nodes and ties represent the actors and venues through which various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts are assumed to occur. For better overview, separate colours for each national actor were used, while the different forums, venues, and agreements for military cooperation and military-to-military contacts remained grey. Furthermore, to highlight the most important actors and venues in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia, the size of each individual node was adjusted to represent the node’s centrality and connectedness within the network. The most simple and straightforward approach to this would be to calculate a basic ‘degree distribution’, which simply counts the connections of each node individually (see Figure 8, but also

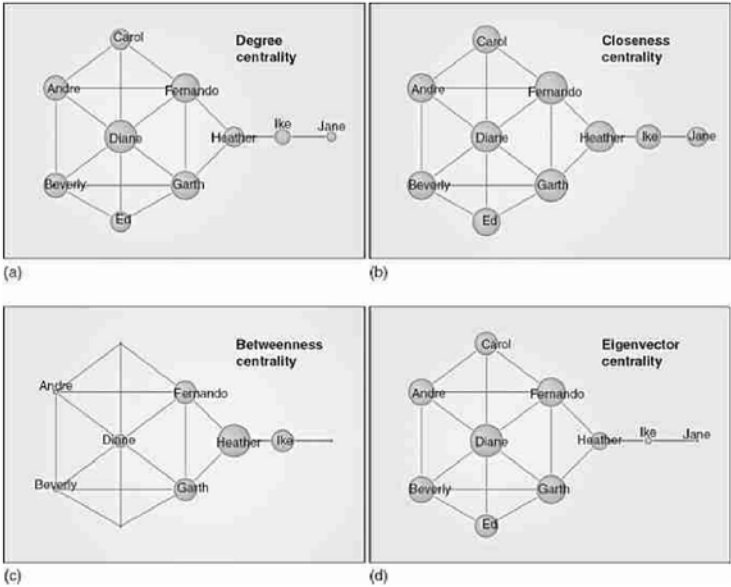


Figure 8. Degree, closeness, betweenness and eigenvector centrality (Krempel, 2011: 566).

participation in certain organizations, memoranda of understanding etc.).<sup>31</sup> In other words, these nodes and ties represent the actors and venues through which various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts are assumed to occur. For better overview, separate colours for each national actor were used, while the different forums, venues, and agreements for military cooperation and military-to-military contacts remained grey. Furthermore, to highlight the most important actors and venues in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia, the size of each individual node was adjusted to represent the node’s centrality and connectedness within the network. The most simple and straightforward approach to this would be to calculate a basic ‘degree distribution’, which simply counts the connections of each node individually (see Figure 8, but also

<sup>31</sup> This specific form of social network analysis is also often referred to as ‘policy network analysis’ (see Knoke, 2011, p. 210).

Borgatti & Halgin, 2011, pp. 425). However, “one actor might be tied to a large number of others, but those others might be relatively disconnected from the network as a whole” (Hanneman & Riddle, 2011, pp. 365). Since this thesis is specifically interested in the question if and under which conditions trust between military practitioners might be able to carry over the interpersonal, to the structural level of trust, I therefore, decided to link the size of each node to the factor of ‘closeness centrality’, which also takes into account a node’s ‘geodesic distance’ – the shortest possible pathway to other nodes in the network (see Figure 8, but also Hanneman & Riddle, 2011, p. 343). This approach allows me to overcome the issue of high interconnectedness of armed forces on a national level (e.g. between the different military branches) and to focus on their international connections, helping me to identify some of the most important venues for military cooperation and military-to-military contacts in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia.

The information for the different nodes and ties in the network was gathered through a combination of different qualitative methods, with the majority being the analysis of different publicly available sources (e.g. organization charts, databases, policy papers, press releases, academic articles etc.). The initial graph and findings were then further refined in the context of my semi-structured interviews as well as during various background talks with defence practitioners and experts. The actual calculation and illustration of the network was carried out through the open-source network analysis and visualization software *Gephi*, using a force-directed projection (‘Force Atlas’) to allow for a better overview of the network, its central nodes and various connections (see also Bastian, Heymann, & Jacomy, 2009). In my analysis, the derived sociogram serves the purpose of providing a comprehensive overview of the complexity and interlinkages in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia, helps identifying the most important actors and venues for military cooperation and military-to-military contacts. Moreover, it helps situating the experiences and reflections of individual practitioners within the wider structure of defence and security politics.

Second, having gained a better overview of the structure of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia, I continue my empirical investigation of the structural level of trust with an in-depth document analysis of their central defence and security policies, policy briefs, official statements, media reports as well as relevant studies in the field of international relations, history, strategic and security studies. While the academic literature on the history, foreign, defence and security policy of all four countries is vast, I have in light of the limitations and the focus of this study, decided to concentrate on some of the most influential factors in shaping the countries’ national



identities<sup>32</sup>, interests and defence practices that determine their current defence and security relations. In accordance with the theoretical framework of this thesis (see 3.4), specific attention was given to:

- indications of the different national *interests* and *identities* and to what extent they are currently perceived as *collective*, *compatible*, *incompatible*, or *opposing*;
- occurrences of the four different constituting practices of trust and distrust in their relations, namely *deterrence*, *deconflicting*, *reassurance* and *collective action*, and
- notable recent events that have positively affected or disrupted their relations.

Wherever possible, the findings of my document analysis were triangulated with information gathered during my interviews with defence and security practitioners from Norway, Sweden, and Canada. To account for a lack of access to Russian practitioners,<sup>33</sup> I also decided to conduct a focus group discussion with Norwegian, Swedish and Canadian defence attachés in Moscow.

Third, after having assessed the structural level of trust as represented in the national interests, identities and practices in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia, I continue my analysis with a focus on how different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts affect the formation of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. To this end, the open and flexible design of semi-structured (or simply qualitative) interviews (see Bryman, 2015, p. 467; Warren, 2001, pp. 86) appeared to be particularly suitable for gaining a better understanding of the personal experiences of practitioners from various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts. More specifically, in line with social contact theory, I was interested in finding out to what extent those forms of military cooperation and military interaction fulfilled the criteria for constructive inter-group contacts of social contact theory, namely

---

<sup>32</sup> While there exist various definitions of 'identity' in IR literature (see Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, & McDermott, 2006), this thesis will, in line with a critical realist approach, refer to identities in their complexity as a combination of 'constitutive norms' – the ruleset that define them, 'social purposes' – the formulation of collective goals, 'relational comparisons' – the definition of an in- and out-group, and 'cognitive frameworks' – shared understandings about the empirical reality (Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, & McDermott, 2006, pp. 697).

<sup>33</sup> I will elaborate upon the problem of not having been able to obtain an official research permit by the Russian Ministry of Defence further below in this section.

*equal status, common goals, cooperation, support of authorities and cross-group friendships* and to distinguish, between whether a condition was *strongest, strong, unsure* or *absent*. Keeping in mind that the contact hypothesis was not developed with evaluating trust or the specific context of interactions between defence and security practitioners in mind, the analysis at the interpersonal level is also meant to contribute to the refinement and adaptation of these conditions and to develop a framework that allows to more generally evaluate the trust-building effects of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts. To reduce the impact of an overly strong ‘representational bias’ (see 2.2) in the responses of my informants, no explicit questions relating to trust or distrust were included.<sup>34</sup>

In the course of this thesis, I conducted eighteen interviews with defence and security practitioners, seven from Norway, four from Sweden, and seven from Canada. Given the size and complexity of the field of national security and defence, the considerable challenges for negotiating access to informants (see also 4.2.2) as well as the temporal and financial limitations of a doctoral research project, I decided against aiming for representativeness, but instead focused on collecting experiences from different hierarchy levels (strategic, operational and tactical) as well as from as many different forms of military cooperation and interaction as possible. As such, the different interviews can be seen as a series of mini case studies that provide valuable insights into the formation of trust at the interpersonal level in the defence and security relations between states. The various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts covered during my interviews included military training, exercises and operations; exercise and operations planning; the implementation of arms control and confidence- and security-building measures as well as various other types of military-to-military contacts, such as attaché programs, military hotlines and incident prevention mechanisms, meetings, workshops, seminars, visits and military exchanges. With the exception of one telephone interview, the majority of these interviews took place face-to-face and were tape-recorded, to allow for a more personal and less formalized interaction with my informants. For ethical and reasons of data protection, all conversations were as quickly as possible transcribed, the audio files permanently deleted and the final transcripts de-identified and cleared by my informants. For the same reasons, I also decided not to attach the transcripts of my interviews in the appendix of this doctoral thesis (see also 4.2.2).

---

<sup>34</sup> The interview guide can be found in the Appendix of this thesis.

The publicly closed and sensitive environment of military security made the drawing of my sample particularly difficult and time-consuming. At the end, most contacts were only possible after extensive negotiations, due to my own networks and contacts from previous professional experiences as well as most importantly the indispensable support by a number of individual persons and institutional gatekeepers. While their support made access to an otherwise hardly accessible field possible in the first place, e.g. by helping establish initial contacts or vouching for my credibility and trustworthiness (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 31), their role also came with a number of important methodological and ethical challenges that needed to be accounted for. Most importantly, as the final decision over informants that might be included in the study no longer rest in the hands of the researcher (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 32), it was, wherever possible important to cross-check and triangulate the collected data with other available sources. In addition, the use of gatekeepers also poses a number of ethical challenges, in particular with regard to issues of informed consent and the anonymity of sources that will also be addressed in more detail in the next section of this chapter (see 4.2).

However, despite this indispensable support, a number of challenges with regard to negotiating access to the field could unfortunately not be resolved in the course of this doctoral thesis. As already highlighted before, despite various attempts, including official requests at the Russian Ministry of Defence, personal conversations with former and current Russian diplomats and military officials as well as Russian think tanks and academics, an official research permit from the Russian Ministry of Defence for interviews with Russian defence and security practitioners could unfortunately not be obtained.<sup>35</sup> For ethical and personal security reasons, I decided not to attempt conducting interviews without such an official research permit, but instead decided to compensate for the absence of Russian experiences and perceptions by a particularly dense and comprehensive analysis of Russian defence and security policy documents, public statements by state officials and numerous academic studies. This information was complemented by the rich data and information gathered in the course of my interviews with defence practitioners and in particular in the context of my focus group discussion with Norwegian,

---

<sup>35</sup> The reasons for this rejection are unknown as the official reply by the Russian Ministry of Defence only states that a talk or meeting about my research project would not be possible. Either way, some might argue that the decision by the Russian Ministry of Defence might represent an interesting finding in itself and illustrates the currently difficult political climate between Russia and the West (e.g. Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010, p. 41).

Swedish, and Canadian defence attachés in Moscow. In addition, my own professional background in defence and security policy-making as well as the participation in a number of policy-related workshops, conferences and research projects that inter alia included Russian government and military officials as well as Russian defence and security experts provided me with useful insights regarding many of the underlying dynamics and the current status quo of Western-Russian defence and security relations. Aside from the inability of obtaining an official research permit by the Russian Ministry of Defence, the difficulties of getting access to the field of military security also became evident with regard to attempts of conducting field observations in the context of multilateral military exercises. Despite extensive negotiations and support by gatekeepers, a participant observation of NATO's large-scale military exercise 'Trident Juncture '18' could not be realized and another observation during Canada's 'Operation NANOOK' needed to be dropped for timing and logistical reasons.

Finally, inspired by a notion of a military officer during one of my preparatory meeting for the fieldwork of this doctoral thesis, I have decided to overcome the frequent division between a purely top-down or bottom-up approach and to complement my abductive research design with an in-depth analysis of the interplay between the structural and interpersonal level of trust in defence and security politics. Based on my semi-structured interviews with defence and security practitioners from Norway, Sweden, and Canada, I have to this end tried to identify some of the political, institutional, and personal facilitators and constraints that affect their role and impact in national decision-making processes as well as their more general coordination and interaction at the national and international level. Some of the factors discussed included the level of inclusion in decision-making processes, national hierarchies, time and resource constraints, national coordination mechanisms and communication channels as well as personal skills and experience. In order to get a good and broad overview, I also tried to make sure that my sample of informants included practitioners from a broad variety of national actors as well as from ideally all the different levels (political, strategic, operational and tactical level) in national decision making. For this reason, I also decided to include an interview with a Swedish diplomat in order to complement my data with reflections and experiences from practitioners in the ministries of foreign affairs.

In sum, this project's abductive research design allows for an in-depth qualitative analysis of the role of trust and distrust in defence and security politics, in order to develop a better understanding of the mechanisms, processes, and conditions operating at the structural, interpersonal, and communicating levels of trust. In addition, the combination of various research methods allows for the careful triangulation of the data gathered through individual sources and provide valuable information for the theoretical, empirical and policy contributions of this doctoral thesis.

## 4.2 Ethical Considerations and Positionality

In the last section, I have presented the abductive research design of this doctoral thesis. Since this thesis is rooted in a critical realist approach to social sciences, it also aims to remain conscious of the social practice that also research represents in itself. It rejects the idea that social research can ever be fully objective or looked upon “insulated from the wider society and from the biography of the researcher” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010, p. 15, but see also King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 126) and therefore raises important questions regarding reflexivity and my own positionality. In addition, conducting research in the usually closed and sensitive environment of military security also raises a number of important ethical challenges to this research project. Both elements will be briefly elaborated upon in more detail in this section.

### 4.2.1 Positionality

As already stated above, critical realist scholars remain conscious of the fact that their own research represents a social practice and therefore generally reject any notions of objectivity, but instead acknowledge that the *positionality* of the researcher, his

stance or positioning [...] in relation to the social and political context of the study—the community, the organization or the participant group [...] affects every phase of the research process, from the way the question or problem is initially constructed, designed and conducted to how others are invited to participate, the ways in which knowledge is constructed and acted on and, finally, the ways in which outcomes are disseminated and published (Rowe, 2014).

This awareness of how a researcher’s own values, norms, background and biases might have shaped the research process is often also referred to as ‘reflexivity’ (Bryman, 2015, p. 388; Duncan & Watson, 2010, p. 51; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010, pp. 14; Kapiszewski, MacLean, & Read, 2015, p. 259; King & Horrocks, 2010, pp. 126), a concept that is much more common among ethnographers than among international relations scholars. Positionality (as reflexivity) can be discussed and approached in many ways.<sup>36</sup> While not denying the possible influence of other factors, I decided to focus on the

---

<sup>36</sup> Carling, Erdal and Ezzati, for example, provide a more thorough account of the insider/outsider debate and also discuss different categories and markers for a researcher’s role in the field (2014).

probably most crucial aspect for this research project, on how my own professional background might have influenced my chances for getting access to the field.<sup>37</sup>

The feasibility of every research plan – at least as long as it involves collecting new empirical data – will ultimately depend on successfully negotiating access to the field (see Bryman, 2015, p. 425; Feldman, Bell, & Berger, 2003, p. 4; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010, p. 41; Shenton & Hayter, 2004, pp. 223). Even though this project – as outlined above – is not concerned with specifically sensitive military information, conducting research and getting access to informants and the sensitive environment of military security is a particularly challenging task that requires constant (re-)negotiation as well as profound level of trust with informants and gatekeepers (Kapiszewski et al., 2015, p. 218; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006, pp. 43; Miller & Bell, 2008, p. 54). Establishing this trust is highly dependent on how informants perceive the researcher's identity (Aberese-Ako, 2017, p. 301) and usually proves to be particularly challenging for researchers that assume an outsider position to their research environment (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 41). For example, being a German national that has never served in the military, made it more challenging to approach my informants in the armed forces of Norway, Sweden, Canada or Russia as I might have been met by some with particular caution or even suspicion regarding my trustworthiness and actual research interests (see Lofland et al., 2006, p. 48). This challenge has certainly only been further amplified by the currently rather tense relations between Russia and the West since the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine.

While the concrete strategies to establish trust differed from case to case, it became, therefore, indispensable to identify, reach out to and build trust with relevant gatekeepers and where possible, to build upon existing networks and personal contacts (see Lofland et al., 2006, p. 42; Shenton & Hayter, 2004, pp. 226). Despite considering myself an outside-researcher, my professional background from having worked for about two years for the German government on issues of military security has certainly supported me in this task. For example, it enabled me to reach out to the different ministries of defence through the respective German embassies, to refer to existing background checks and security clearances and to be able to rely on various insiders to vouch for my credibility and trustworthiness.

---

<sup>37</sup> For example, also Adler and Adler discuss how researchers might simply “take advantage of their own special expertise in selecting their research topics” (2001, p. 527).

Furthermore, it allowed me to communicate more confidently and convincingly that I am aware of the sensitivities in the area of military security (e.g. by not disclosing information that could potentially harm national interests or individual informants) and where requested, how to best protect the identity of my gatekeepers and informants (see Shenton & Hayter, 2004, p. 226). At the same time, there might have also been a flipside to my own background. While I can, in lack of more precise information, only speculate, my professional background certainly helped in establishing necessary trust with the Norwegian, Canadian and Swedish armed forces, but at the same time probably also limited my chances for obtaining an official research permit from the Russian Ministry of Defence. While this proved to be a considerable challenge that could unfortunately not be resolved in the course of this doctoral thesis, my professional background as well as the participation in a number of policy-related workshops, conferences and projects that inter alia included Russian government and military officials as well as Russian defence and security experts provided me with useful insights regarding many of the underlying political dynamics and the current status quo of Western-Russian defence and security relations.

#### 4.2.2 Ethical Considerations<sup>38</sup>

Conducting research in the sensitive environment of military security and getting access to military practitioners poses several important ethical challenges to this research project. As I will not be able to get into all of them in full detail, I have decided to concentrate specifically on the difficult interplay between the institutional gatekeepers and the two principles: *anonymity* and *informed consent*.

As it is the case for most research in so-called ‘closed’ systems<sup>39</sup>, such as institutions, organizations or companies, one of the most difficult challenges for conducting research on and within the armed forces is getting access to informants and the field (Adler & Adler, 2001, pp. 520; Bryman, 2015, p. 425; Kapiszewski et al., 2015, p. 126). Especially in sensitive and highly hierarchical environments such as the military, this access is usually only possible through gatekeepers (Burnham, Gilland, Grant, & Layton-Henry, 2006, p. 259; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010, p. 49; Jupp, 2006, p. 126; Kapiszewski et al., 2015, p. 221; Lofland et al., 2006, pp. 41; Shenton & Hayter, 2004, p. 224). In this research project,

---

<sup>38</sup> This project was registered with the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) in April 2018.

<sup>39</sup> The differentiation between open and closed systems can be linked back to Colin Bell, who referred to openness as the “ease of access for the research worker” (1969, p. 417).

these gatekeepers have mostly been higher-ranking senior officials, sometimes even institutional leaders situated at the respective ministries of defence. They were not only important for my level of access to the field, but as the internal structures and hierarchies of armed forces are usually also quite inaccessible for outsiders, they also helped me identifying and building trust with relevant interview partners and informants.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, without their great support, the conduction of this project would not have been possible in the first place, yet their influence on the research process also posed additional ethical challenges, in particular with regard to the principles of *anonymity* and *informed consent*.

The first challenge arose regarding the principle of *anonymity*. As stipulated in the national ‘Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Theology’, the “publication and dissemination of the research material must normally be anonymized” (The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities, 2016, p. 17), in order to protect individual’s privacy and personal integrity. This concerns in particular (but is not limited to) so-called ‘personal data’, meaning “any information relating to an identified or identifiable person” (Norwegian Centre for Research Data). Such identification might be possible ‘directly’ “through name, social security number or other uniquely personal characteristics” (Norwegian Centre for Research Data) or ‘indirectly’ “if it is possible to recognize the person through background information such as place of residence or institutional affiliation, combined with data on age, gender, occupation, diagnosis, etc.” (Norwegian Centre for Research Data). The process of anonymization usually implies, “removing names and identifying details from confidential data at the earliest possible stage [in the research process]” (Israel & Hay, 2006, p. 82). Yet, what constitutes as identifying detail can vary considerably from case to case and also depends on whether anonymity is to be ensured only to an external or also to an internal audience (e.g. an informant’s immediate family or work environment) (see Kaiser, 2012, pp. 457). For example, since the names, contact details, and sometimes even the exact occupation of military practitioners and other state officials with potential access to sensitive information, are usually not readily available to the public;<sup>41</sup> anonymity towards an external audience can usually be ensured, by

---

<sup>40</sup> The strategy of using gatekeepers to facilitate trust to informants is sometimes also referred to as ‘sponsorship’ (Adler & Adler, 2001, pp. 525).

<sup>41</sup> The names and exact occupation might only be accessible about certain high-ranking officials (e.g. ambassadors, generals etc.).



removing informant's names together with certain background information such as age or gender. However, while this might be enough not to disclose members of a closed system to the outside world, conducting research in smaller professional institutions and with the help of gatekeepers makes it nearly impossible to achieve the same result with regard to an informants' immediate working environment. Even after the process described above, superiors, colleagues and not least the gatekeepers themselves, will probably still be able to identify informants indirectly through their nationality, rank or institutional affiliation (see for example Israel & Hay, 2006, pp. 83 or Lofland et al., 2006, p. 51). Yet, removing this information – in my case for example the nationality or position within the state bureaucracy – would at some point probably have rendered my entire empirical investigation analytically obsolete (see Israel & Hay, 2006, p. 83; King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 120).

As there is no easy workaround to this problem, I have for this project decided to transcribe all interviews in person, to closely coordinate the final transcripts and direct quotes with each individual informant and to leave the final decision regarding the level of individual anonymity to their own discretion (see Kaiser, 2012, pp. 462; King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 120). Thus, in some cases the names and/or actual positions of my interviewees are being withheld by mutual agreement. In other cases, I decided to withhold their names, despite their consent, in order to remain consistent and to protect a certain level of anonymity of other informants in my sample. For the same reasons, I also decided against attaching the full transcripts of my interviews in the appendix of this doctoral thesis. At the same time, it was important for me to communicate openly to my informants – including in my 'informed consent'-sheet – that they even after the de-identification of their data might remain indirectly recognizable by other professionals working in their immediate surroundings. This approach is often also referred to as offering 'limited assurances for confidentiality' (Israel & Hay, 2006, pp. 92). Considering that the anonymity of state officials and military personnel is usually targeted at the general public, to protect these individuals and the institutions they work for from attempts of bribery or intimidation, offering a limited assurance of confidentiality and handling the identifiable data with utmost care, appeared to strike a good balance between the research goals of this dissertation and one of the probably most central ethical principles in social sciences: 'do no harm!' (e.g. Burnham et al., 2006, p. 253; Israel & Hay, 2006, pp. 95; The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities, 2016, p. 19).

This issue of anonymity is also directly linked to the second major ethical challenge that using gatekeepers in highly hierarchical environments might pose: the principle of *informed consent*. Generally, this principle consists of two components, implying that "participants need [...] to

comprehend and [...] agree voluntarily to the nature of their research and their role within it” (Israel & Hay, 2006, p. 61). This implies that “research participants can make an informed decision only if they have substantial understanding and adequate apprehension of all information that, in their view, is material or important to their decision to grant consent” (Israel & Hay, 2006, p. 61). Considering that military practitioners are usually able to confidently differentiate between potentially sensitive and less sensitive information (and hence omit such information from my empirical data), the main challenge actually was the voluntariness of their participation. The problem here is that most gatekeepers in research projects on organizations are situated at the higher levels within an internal hierarchy. This can result in situations in which informants might experience these internal power dynamics in the form of an (indirect) institutional pressure or expectation to participate in a research project, detached from their own decision to do so (Miller & Bell, 2008, p. 62; Tyldum, 2012, pp. 202). For the same reason, informants from hierarchical systems and institutions are usually considered as belonging to ‘vulnerable groups’ – informants for which “there is a good reason to suspect that [they] may have special difficulty giving free and informed consent to being subjects of research” (Solbakk, 2015, but see also Hammersley & Atkinson, 2010, p. 42). While this does not make it impossible to carry out research on larger hierarchical groups per se, it is particularly important to establish strong levels of trust and transparency with not only the institutional gatekeepers, but also with each individual informant as the internal power dynamics and sampling procedures inside the organization remain outside the active observation and control of the researcher. In addition, my ‘informed consent’-sheet, specifically underlined that participation in the project remained voluntary and that participants could withdraw their consent at any given time without needing to provide any reasons for doing so.

## **5 The Structural Level of Trust in Defence and Security Politics**

Trying to develop a more comprehensive understanding of trust and distrust in defence and security politics, the analysis of this doctoral thesis has been divided into three interlinked chapters. In this first chapter, I look at the *structural level of trust* in defence and security politics. In a first step, I will create a network graph that helps revealing the underlying structure of actors, venues, and forums in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia. I then continue by situating their defence and security relations along the four-stage continuum of trust developed in the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis. This is achieved by a qualitative analysis of core defence and security policy documents, policy briefs, and official statements of each country. Where possible,

the findings are triangulated with data from previous defence and security policy studies, media reports, as well as with the answers received during interviews with defence and security practitioners from Norway, Sweden, and Canada. While the academic literature on this subject is vast, I have decided to concentrate on the probably most influential factors in shaping their current defence and security relations as well as each country's position regarding the most central actors, forums, and venues identified in their relations (see 5.1). In line with the theoretical framework of this thesis (see 3.4), specific attention was given to:

- indications of the different national *interests* and *identities* and to what extent they are currently perceived as *compatible*, *incompatible*, *collective* or *opposing*;
- an assessment of which security practices, namely *deterrence*, *deconflicting*, *reassurance* and *collective action*, currently define their bilateral defence and security relations as well as
- notable recent events that have positively affected or disrupted their relations.

In addition, historical studies were included to allow identifying trends in trust and distrust in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia over time. The chapter concludes with a more general discussion regarding the role of national identities, interests, and security practices at the structural level of trust and distrust in defence and security politics.

## **5.1 Mapping the Defence and Security Relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia in Europe and the Arctic Region**

Considering that the possibility for interaction and social transaction is a necessary precondition for trust to emerge between different actors, the following section briefly analyses the underlying structure of a complex system of different actors, venues, and forums that characterize the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia (see Appendix 2). Not neglecting other important forums and connections, the size and complexity of defence and security politics made it necessary to limit this analysis to those actors and venues with a specific geographical focus on Europe and the Arctic region. This selection was motivated by the fact that both regions play a central role in all four countries' national defence and security policy documents. The graph has not only been color-coded, to allow for a better overview and differentiation between multilateral and national actors and venues, but the size and position of each node have been calculated based on how connected and central each node is within the network, it also allows us to draw some preliminary conclusions about the presumably most central and important actors and venues for military-to-military contacts in Europe

and the Arctic region.<sup>42</sup> While unable to discuss the graph in its entirety, I will here focus on some of the most central findings regarding the structural prerequisites for military trust-building between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia:

First, we can see that higher-level authorities, such as the ministries of defence as well the different chiefs of defence and their staff are clearly the most central actors in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia. Not least because of the hierarchical structure of state bureaucracies, they are represented in most forums and venues directly, become key coordinators of their countries positions and are central gatekeepers in the defence and security relations of their countries. Direct contacts and bilateral cooperation at a lower operational or even tactical level, such as the direct line of communication between the commander of the Norwegian Joint Headquarters (FOH) in Bodø and the Russian Northern Fleet in Severomorsk, are the exception.

Secondly, the network graph shows a distinct higher interconnectedness between NATO members Norway and Canada as well as between the Nordic countries Norway and Sweden than with the Russian Federation. While practitioners from NATO member states work on issues related to security and defence on a regular basis and the alliance facilitates military-to-military contacts with non-NATO allies like Sweden, all practical military cooperation with Russia has in response to Russia's role in the Ukrainian crisis, been suspended for the time being. This freeze of cooperation also includes the working groups of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), which continues to meet only at the Ambassadorial level and above (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2019b). Another venue affected by the deteriorating relations between Russia and the West since 2014 is NATO's Partnership-for-Peace (PfP) program. The PfP was established to facilitate closer cooperation between NATO members and non-NATO states offering a wide range of different forms of military-to-military cooperation.<sup>43</sup> While cooperation with

---

<sup>42</sup> The information informing the creation of the graph was gathered through a combination of publicly available sources (e.g. organization charts, databases, policy papers or academic articles, etc.) and formal and informal exchanges with practitioners and experts in the field.

<sup>43</sup> The PfP program includes cooperation on "virtually every field of NATO activity, including defence-related work, defence reform, defence policy and planning, civil-military relations, education and training, military-to-military cooperation and exercises, civil emergency planning and disaster response, and cooperation on science and environmental issues" (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2017a).

Russia has been put on a hold, the framework of the PfP continues to integrate other non-NATO allies, like Sweden and Finland, into a particularly tight net of military-to-military contacts and cooperation. This includes regular participation in NATO exercises, such as most recently in NATO's high-visibility exercise 'Trident Juncture 18' (Forsvaret, 2018) or in NATO's annual maritime BALTOPS exercise (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2019a). Such exercises facilitate direct military contacts and cooperation at the strategic, operational and tactical level during the operational, but also the planning phase (e.g. in the context of planning conferences). Other recent multilateral exercises that brought together participants from Norway, Canada and Sweden were NATO's annual anti-submarine warfare exercise 'Dynamic Mongoose 2019' (without Swedish participation) (Allied Maritime Command, 2019), the biennial Norwegian winter exercise 'Cold Response 2016' (Forsvaret, 2016), the Swedish exercises 'Aurora 17' and 'Northern Wind 2019' (both without Canadian participation) (Swedish Armed Forces, 2017, 2018), the Canadian Arctic exercise series 'Operation NANOOK'<sup>44</sup> (Canadian Armed Forces, 2019) as well as the biennial 'Arctic Challenge Exercise' of the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish air forces (Forsvaret, 2017b).

In addition, Nordic countries also cooperate under the framework of NORDEFECO, which was formed in 2009, after a report by former Norwegian foreign and defence minister Thorvald Stoltenberg who had proposed a tighter foreign and security cooperation among the Nordic countries (Stoltenberg, 2009). NORDEFECO has been specifically set up as a facilitating structure for voluntary defence cooperation between the Nordic countries. It encompasses areas, such as capacity building, the enhancement of interoperability or procurement, but has no mandate in operations or command (see Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland and the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden on Nordic Defence Cooperation, 2009). Examples of NORDEFECO outcomes are the Easy Access Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), aimed at simplifying procedures for entering each other's "air, land and sea territory as well as specific air, land and naval bases in peacetime" (NORDEFECO, 2017, p. 7), the so-

---

<sup>44</sup> Since, Op NANOOK is actually a series of different smaller exercises (e.g. SAR, disaster management, security, defence etc.) that are taking place throughout the entire year in Canada's Northern territories Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut it is considered an operation, not an exercise (Canadian Armed Forces, 2019).

called Alternate Landing Base Concept, which permits the use of other Nordic countries' air bases "as alternate landing bases in flight planning" (NORDEFECO, 2017, p. 7) as well as a cross-border training framework between the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish air force (NORDEFECO, 2018, p. 12). Beyond the framework of NORDEFECO, Nordic countries also cooperate through a number of additional bi- and multilateral security arrangements, visible in regular Swedish and Norwegian contributions to national military exercises (e.g. Cold Response, Aurora 17 or Northern Wind 2019) or in Norway's engagement in the Swedish-led Nordic Battlegroup under the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) framework (European External Action Service, 2017).

Thirdly, the network graph shows that the crisis in and around Ukraine has turned the OSCE into one of the most central venues for facilitating military-to-military contacts between Russia and the West. While official forums, bodies, and formats, such as the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) (OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, 2011) primarily facilitate contacts at a higher political and military level, the different arms control and CSBM regimes under the auspices of the OSCE also facilitate direct military-to-military contacts at a lower practitioner level – mainly between the members of the different national verification centres. These regimes include the Vienna Document 2011 (VDoc 2011) on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, the Treaty on Open Skies (OS), and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) as well as their respective implementation and assessment bodies.<sup>45</sup>

The VDoc 2011 was specifically designed to reduce the risk of conflict by increasing transparency over military forces and their activities as well as by building trust among the armed forces of the 57 OSCE participating States. In this regard, it also serves as a platform for regular military-to-military contacts, which most frequently occur in the context of verification measures<sup>46</sup>, where members of the inspecting team are received and supported by members of the national verification centres of the receiving state.

---

<sup>45</sup> The implementation of the Vienna Document is assessed in the Annual Implementation Assessment Meetings (AIAM) and the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). The implementation of the CFE-Treaty is discussed in the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) and the Open Skies Treaty in the Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC).

<sup>46</sup> The VDoc 2011 knows two main types of verification: so-called evaluation visits – meant to verify the annually exchanged military information under Chapter I (VDoc 2011, para. 107), as well as so-called inspections – investigating a specified geographical area to verify the presence of any notifiable military activities (VDoc 2011, para. 80).

Regularly, the inspecting state also invites members from other armed forces to join the inspection team. Contacts also occur during the observation of larger military exercises<sup>47</sup> or in various additional provisions for military contacts as stipulated in Chapter IV of the document (e.g. visits to air bases and other military facilities, demonstrations of new weapon systems, seminars etc.). Finally, members of the different verification centres also come together during the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM) to discuss practical issues regarding the present and future implementation of the document.

The OS treaty allows its 34 signatory countries<sup>48</sup> to conduct aerial observation flights over the territories of the treaty states. The high number of observation flights per year (see Decision No. 2/18 Distribution of Active Quotas for Observation Flights in the Year 2019, 2018) and their cooperative nature – specialized personnel from the inspecting and receiving state are on board the plane throughout the entire flight and flights are often also shared with other treaty states – make them a particular interesting venue for military-to-military contacts and cooperation. National representatives of the different OS treaty states also meet on a regular basis in the Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC)<sup>49</sup>, where they discuss practical implementation issues as well as the quota allocation for the upcoming year.

The CFE treaty is a conventional disarmament and arms control treaty that reduces and limits the amount of five types of conventional weapon systems in Europe.<sup>50</sup> Within the treaty, most military-to-military contacts take again place in the context of an extensive verification regime. In principle, the intrusive regime, set up to monitor and verify the compliance of all parties with the treaty's provisions has a considerably higher number of inspections per year than the VDoc 2011, while staying below those of the treaty on OS. However, other than the VDoc 2011 – which applies to all OSCE participating States – the CFE treaty is limited as a venue for military-to-military contacts between NATO states (excluding

---

<sup>47</sup> Exercises need to exceed certain thresholds regarding troops and certain military equipment, in order to become subject to a mandatory observation through military observers from all OSCE participating States (VDoc 2011, Chapter VI).

<sup>48</sup> All eight Arctic states are signatories of the treaty that entered into force in 2002.

<sup>49</sup> While not an official body of the OSCE, the OSCC is considered an 'OSCE-related body' and e.g. also meets at the headquarters of the OSCE in Vienna (OSCE Secretariat, 2016).

<sup>50</sup> Specifically, the treaty sets total and regional limits for the holdings and deployments of battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft and combat helicopters (CFE treaty: Article I).

the Baltic States) and members of the former Warsaw Pact. Due to a dispute over the withdrawal of Russian troops from Moldova and Georgia as well as the failed attempt to modernize the treaty in 1999, Russia in 2007 decided to unilaterally suspend the implementation of the CFE treaty, arguing “that the treaty currently in force no longer, reflected Russian security needs” (Federal Foreign Office, 2018). In the further course of this dispute, NATO states also ceased the implementation of the treaty vis-à-vis Russia, before Russia in 2015, also stopped its participation in the regular meetings of the treaty’s implementation body, the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) in Vienna (Federal Foreign Office, 2018). As NATO, allies do not to inspect each other, the importance of the treaty for facilitating military-to-military contacts in the relations between Norway and Canada is low and limited to a number of practical meetings at the JCG or occasional joint inspection teams.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, turning to the Arctic region the network graph shows that there is currently no region-specific Arctic forum, venue, or arrangement that provides for direct military-to-military contacts between military practitioners from all eight Arctic states. Following the Ukrainian crisis, the meetings between the Arctic states’ Chiefs of Defence Staff (CHOD) – originally initiated by Canada – were discontinued, while the annual meetings of the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable (ASFR), established in 2011 to enhance cooperation and discuss issues of military security in the Arctic, are taking place without Russian participation. In addition, several bi- and multilateral regional exercises with Russia, such as the Norwegian-Russian naval exercise ‘Pomor’ or the Norwegian-American-Russian naval exercise ‘Northern Eagle’ have also been suspended (Käpylä & Mikkola, 2015, p. 13). The exception are mechanisms to prevent incidents and misunderstandings when armed forces of different nations operate in the same international airspaces and sea areas (e.g. the hotline between the commanders of FOH in Bodø and the Russian Northern Fleet in Severomorsk or the Russian-Norwegian Incident at Sea [INCSEA] agreement<sup>52</sup>) (Kulesa, Frear, & Raynova, 2016) as well as the cooperation on non-military security issues. The latter includes cooperation on search and rescue (SAR) (e.g. in the context of the

---

<sup>51</sup> Some states follow a less formalized policy of regularly inviting guests from other armed forces into their inspection teams.

<sup>52</sup> These agreements usually contain technical procedures and rules (e.g. about signals or radio frequencies) when members of both armed forces meet each other in international waters. Similar agreements usually also exist for encounters of aircrafts in international airspace.



Arctic Coast Guard Forum [ACGF] or through regular SAR training such as the annual Norwegian-Russian ‘Barents’ exercise) or the regular meetings between the Norwegian border commissioner and the Russian FSB. However, while these forums and forms of cooperation are undoubtedly important at a lower practical level, they only play a rather tangential role in the countries’ overall defence and security politics.<sup>53</sup> Thus, it seem unlikely that they can compensate for a lack of more direct forms of military-to-military contacts in the Arctic region. While Norway and Sweden have more recently also established direct lines of communication with Russia at the strategic level (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2019; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; O’Dwyer, 2017; Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019), their impact could not yet be assessed in the context of this thesis.

In sum, looking at the possibility for direct encounters between the armed forces of Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia – the structural prerequisites for the formation of trust at the interpersonal level – a complex network of actors, venues, and relations evolves. On a national level, the picture shows that the different ministries of defence and CHOD staff are central actors in the defence and security relations of all four countries. Not least since the crisis in and around Ukraine in 2014, has Russia’s role in this network remained peripheral. Whereas Norway, Sweden, and Canada can build upon a comprehensive network of forums, venues and opportunities for direct contacts at the strategic, operational, and tactical level in their defence and security relations, contacts with Russia are much more selective and primarily take place at a higher political and military level. Before continuing with a more in-depth analysis of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia, a few preliminary conclusions about the structure of their defence cooperation and military-to-military contacts can be drawn:

First, not least since the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine have the relations between Russia and the West allowed offered much less opportunities for military trust-building than among Western states. Second, since most contacts either occur between high-ranking officials in the different ministries of defence, between members of the CHOD staff or are taking place in the context of very specific forms

---

<sup>53</sup> Only the Danish, Norwegian and American coast guard are military, the Swedish, Finnish and Canadian are civilian, while the Icelandic and Russian coast guard represent a paramilitary force, which in the case of Russia, just like its border guards, is under the control of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB) (Arctic Coast Guard Forum).

of military cooperation (e.g. the implementation of CSBM and arms control agreements), the possibility for the formation of interpersonal trust appears to be limited to a very small group of subject-matter experts, making the impact of this trust on national decision-making highly dependent on a number of institutional and personal factors (e.g. experience, contacts, rank etc.) that will be discussed at a later stage of this doctoral thesis (see 7). The immediate impact of this network of actors, forums, and cooperation on the structural level of trust in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia will be the focus of the subsequent section of this chapter.

## **5.2 Norwegian Defence and Security Politics**

Norway's NATO membership and transatlantic identity represent the cornerstones of Norwegian defence and security politics. Norway is primarily concerned with the security situation in the European High North, in particular the Barents Sea and its common border with Russia. As one of five Arctic coastal states, Norway's Arctic identity in some instances even takes priority over the country's Nordic identity, which often only plays a minor and somewhat supplementary role in Norwegian defence and security politics.

### **5.2.1 Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends**

Norway's defence and security political interests and identity are deeply rooted in the country's national history. Three historical experiences have been particularly formative in this regard. The first stems from having been in changing unions with Denmark (1397-1814) and Sweden (1814-1905) and much throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, remained a punch bag in most of the wars between both kingdoms (Riste, 2001, pp. 26). It took until the dissolution of the union with Sweden in 1905 that Norway eventually developed its own independent foreign, defence and security policy (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Riste, 2001, pp. 75; Tamnes, 1987, p. 59). With the German invasion of Norway during World War II, the country's foreign policy of neutrality failed dramatically, which had a lasting effect on Norwegian defence and security politics ever since. Given the somewhat limited support by its Nordic partners during the Second World War (Riste, 2001, pp. 178) – the main support came from the United Kingdom, France and Poland (Riste, 2001, p. 152) – the different geostrategic preconditions and completely different lessons that were drawn in the Nordic countries led to a failure of the negotiations for a Nordic defence alliance (Skogrand, 2004, pp. 160). Instead, quickly after the war had ended, Norway began to strengthen its defence and security ties with the United States and the United Kingdom, eventually becoming a founding member of NATO in 1949 (Berg, 2016, pp. 51; Holtmark, 2015, pp. 229; Skogrand, 2004, pp. 33; Tamnes, 1987, pp. 59). Even today, the experiences from World War

It still to some extent affect Norwegian defence and security politics. In light of new tensions between Russia and the West, several practitioners and policy-makers during interviews and informal conversations in the context of this thesis, voiced notable scepticism regarding security guarantees provided by European allies and underlined Norway's indispensable defence ties with the United States. The third historical experience that has shaped the identity of Norway's defence and security politics are its bilateral relations with the Soviet Union. Northern Norway and the Northwest of Russia had long been connected by considerable trade relations (also known as 'Pomor trade') throughout most of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This trade had resulted in notable people-to-people contacts between both countries.<sup>54</sup> In addition, towards the end of World War II, Soviet forces helped liberating Finnmark from German occupation, before withdrawing its forces again completely from Norway after the surrender of Germany in May 1945 (Holtmark, 2015, pp. 258; Riste, 2001, pp. 144). This strongly affected how Norwegian policy-makers looked upon the Soviet Union in the immediate 'after war'-phase (Holtmark, 2015, pp. 280). While this view has remained influential – in particular among Northern Norwegians – ever since, the perception of an increasing Soviet threat grew quickly among Norwegian military authorities (Holtmark, 2015, p. 286; Skogrand, 2004, p. 33). Thus, with the beginning of the Cold War, Norway's political ambition to function as a bridge builder between East and West, coupled with the perception of an increasing Soviet military threat, lead to a somewhat more ambiguous relationship with the Soviet Union. Against the backdrop of rising concerns of a possible Soviet occupation of Northern Norway (Holtmark, 2015, p. 307), Norway became a founding member of NATO and maintained particularly close defence ties with the United States laying the foundation for Norway's strong transatlantic identity in security and defence (Berg, 2016, pp. 93; Holtmark, 2015, pp. 307). On the one hand, with its rugged coastline and geographical proximity to the majority of the Soviet Union's strategic nuclear assets, Norway quickly became a key ally for military intelligence and reconnaissance, such as early warning of Soviet bombers and missile systems heading towards North America or for the tracking and monitoring of Soviet ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) heading towards the North Atlantic (Berg, 2016, p. 95; Børresen, 2011, pp. 98; Posen, 1982, pp. 35; Riste, 2001, pp. 217; Skogrand, 2004, pp. 22; Tamnes, 1987, p. 75). On the other hand, Norway for most of the time during the Cold War pursued a low-tension policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. This policy not only

---

<sup>54</sup> For a detailed reappraisal of Norwegian-Russian relations between 1814 to 1917 see Nielsen (2014).

included numerous diplomatic initiatives and cooperation in areas of common interest (e.g. joint fisheries management in the Barents Sea) (Holtmark, 2015, pp. 481), but also the linking of its NATO commitments to a number of self-imposed constraints to reassure its large neighbour in the east. This double-approach became characterized as ‘deterrence and reassurance’ (‘avskrekking og beroligelse’) (Berg, 2016, p. 95; Børresen, 2011, p. 101; Holtmark, 2015, p. 313; Moen, 1998, p. 77; Tamnes, 1987, p. 61), with Norway’s so-called ‘Self-Imposed Restrictions in the North’ (‘Selvpålagte restriksjoner i nord’) representing a key element of this policy. These restrictions included an assurance towards the Soviet Union to prohibit foreign air force and naval bases in Norway during peacetime (‘Basepolitikken’); a rejection of the stockpiling and the holding ready of delivery systems for nuclear weapons on Norwegian territory, including limitations for port calls of allied ships equipped with nuclear warheads; the so-called ‘Finnmark Restrictions’ (‘Finnmark restriksjoner’) that constrained the presence and activities of NATO forces in Northern Norway,<sup>55</sup> ensuring a certain degree of Norwegian control over surveillance and reconnaissance operations in the High North as well as an opposition to any allied military presence on Svalbard and Jan Mayen (Moen, 1998, pp. 5, but see also Berg, 2016, pp. 95; Børresen, 2011, pp. 101; Brundtland, 1995, pp. 146; Holtmark, 2015, pp. 312; Riste, 2001, pp. 214; Skogrand, 2004, pp. 187; Tamnes, 1987). While never officially revoked, some elements of these self-imposed restrictions have been modified, in parts lifted or were politically softened over time (Børresen, 2011; Holtmark, 2015, pp. 562; Moen, 1998; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019).

Today, Norway’s membership in NATO, strong bilateral ties with the US and geographical and strategic focus on Northern Norway and Russia’s strategic nuclear assets on the Kola Peninsula continue to largely determine Norwegian defence and security politics. For example, the Norwegian defence plan of 2016 defines the High North as “Norway’s most important strategic area of responsibility” (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 29) and Norwegian practitioners reiterate that: “Northern Norway is where we are situated for the most part. It is where we train. It is the most challenging area and it has been like this since the Second World War and it still is” (Former

---

<sup>55</sup> The Finnmark restrictions denied NATO aircrafts and ships to operate in Norwegian airspace and territorial waters east of the 24th latitude, to use Norwegian airbases for and after conducting military operations in international waters further east, to train or exercise in Finnmark during peacetime as well as limits the amount of aircrafts that could be in the air in certain parts of Northern Norway at the same time (Moen, 1998, p. 5).

Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018). Likewise, NATO as well as Norway's transatlantic identity are omnipresent in all central Norwegian defence and security policy documents (see *Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier*, 2008; *Et forsvar for vår tid*, 2012; *Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren*, 2016; *Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk*, 2017) as well as in Norway's Arctic Policy of 2014 (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014, p. 16). For example, the most recent<sup>56</sup> Norwegian defence plan of 2016 highlights that:

The foundation of Norway's security is NATO. A modern defence that is embedded in a strong and credible alliance has a deterring effect and reduces the likelihood that we will be in a situation in which the security of Norway or of allies is challenged and needs to be defended with military force. Our armed forces shall together with our allies be able to prevent that hostile actors are able to obtain a strategic advantage by taking control over Norwegian or allied territory or challenge our sovereignty (*Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren*, 2016, p. 5).

The central role of NATO and in particular the close bilateral defence and security ties with the US were also reiterated during all interviews and background talks with Norwegian defence and security practitioners (e.g. Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

In light of the Russian annexation of Crimea and the conflict in and around Ukraine, Norway's reliance and commitment to NATO and the US only intensified. The most recent Norwegian White Paper, released in 2017, declares that maintaining close transatlantic ties and further developing the long-term security policy cooperation with the US, strengthening NATO's collective defence against both old and new security threats as well as facilitating a greater Allied presence and more frequent Allied exercises in the north, are central goals for "safeguarding Norwegian security in [...] times of change" (*Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk*, 2017, p. 6). Beyond changes in policy documents, the government in Oslo is also actively following up on these goals through numerous practical steps and decisions. Allied and in particular US forces are increasingly participating in national military exercises (e.g. in

---

<sup>56</sup> The new Norwegian defence plan, scheduled to be put forward for approval by the Norwegian parliament in spring 2020, was still in preparation while writing this doctoral thesis.

Joint Viking 2017<sup>57</sup>) (Forsvaret, 2017a) and in 2018, Norway hosted NATO's largest military exercise since the end of the Cold War. During 'Trident Juncture 18', more than 50,000 soldiers and large amounts of military equipment from all 29 NATO member states as well as from NATO partners Sweden and Finland trained together in Norway (Forsvaret, 2018). In 2018, the Norwegian Ministry of Defence announced that the agreement over a rotational presence of US marines for "rotational training and exercises in Norway" would be extended to allow for a rotational presence of up to 700 US Marines that besides their already existing location outside Trondheim would also be stationed at Setermoen in Troms, Northern Norway (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2018b). These examples highlight how Norway currently puts its transatlantic identity and defence and security goals into concrete practice.

The clear prioritisation of NATO within Norwegian defence and security politics can also be observed in Norway's limited engagement with other regional multilateral organizations, such as the EU. For example, even though the Norwegian defence plan from 2016 states that "Norway and the EU to a large extent have coinciding security political interests and challenges" and that "an as tight as possible cooperation with the EU within the framework of the CSDP is desirable" (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 33), it becomes evident that this goal shall primarily be achieved through a tightened defence and security cooperation between the EU and NATO (Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier, 2008, p. 49; Et forsvar for vår tid, 2012, pp. 59; Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 33; Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 6). Norway's somewhat restrained approach towards the EU is not too surprising, considering that the country is not an EU member state<sup>58</sup> and has hence never had a real impact on shaping the EU's CSDP (Græger, 2018, p. 365). Thus, apart from some declaratory statements in central policy documents (see Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier, 2008, p. 35; Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 33), much of Norway's practical defence cooperation vis-à-vis the EU has so far "largely and increasingly relied on informal bilateral ties with selected European states like Britain, Germany and Poland as well as the Nordics"

---

<sup>57</sup> The somewhat critical views and reflections on Joint Viking 2015 as the first large military exercise in Finnmark since 1967 are being discussed at a later stage of this section. (Bentzrød, 2015; Tomassen & Bendixen, 2014).

<sup>58</sup> EU membership was declined in popular referenda in 1972 and 1994 (Riste, 2001, pp. 244, 253).

(Græger, 2018, p. 366). Similarly, in other areas, such as defence procurement and development, Norway's prioritization of NATO and NATO partners over projects with the EU becomes evident. For example, despite being a member of the European Defence Agency (EDA), all recent major Norwegian arms procurement projects were carried out in close cooperation with selected NATO partners and in particular with the US (Græger, 2018, pp. 368). In sum, Norway's approach towards the EU seems to be primarily characterized by compatible rather than collective interests and identities, resulting in occasional smaller signals and practices of reassurance.

Other multilateral security forums and arrangements, such as the OSCE, seem to play an even less central role in Norwegian defence and security policy-making. The different Norwegian defence plans – if at all – mention the OSCE and its related arms control and CSBM agreements only selectively and discuss them in very general terms (mostly in the context of intensified NATO and Nordic cooperation) (see *Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier*, 2008; *Et forsvar for vår tid*, 2012; *Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren*, 2016). While the 2017 Norwegian White Paper noted that “much of the security political dialogue between NATO and Russia is taking place within the OSCE” and made seeking the OSCE chairmanship in 2020 a central goal for Norwegian foreign and security politics<sup>59</sup>(*Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk*, 2017, p. 35), the then new Norwegian Foreign Minister, Ine Marie Eriksen Søreide, in December 2017 suddenly declared that Norway's withdrawal from the chairmanship. Considering that Norway's application was already accepted, this decision caused a lack of understanding among by OSCE participating States in Vienna (Ask, 2017) and provides evidence that the OSCE does currently not play an important role in Norwegian defence and security politics.

In addition to its transatlantic identity, central Norwegian defence and security policy documents also regularly reiterate the importance of an intensified Nordic defence and security cooperation (see *Et forsvar for vår tid*, 2012, p. 28; *Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren*, 2016, p. 33; *Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk*, 2017, p. 7). As the former State Secretary at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tore Hattrem underlined:

---

<sup>59</sup> It had even already defined confidence-building, openness and détente as central goals for its chairmanship program (*Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk*, 2017, p. 35).

The Nordic countries are bound together by history, culture, people-to-people bonds, and, of course, geography. You will be hard put to find a region of sovereign states more closely intertwined. One can speak of a Nordic identity in addition to our national and, increasingly global identity (Hattrem, 2015).

For Norway, its shared Nordic identity provides an important back-channel to EU decision-making – including on security and defence – an important political framework for coordinating bilateral defence and security cooperation with its non-NATO neighbours Sweden and Finland (Græger, 2018, pp. 365). In some instances, Norway’s Nordic identity even serves as a tool of status-seeking in other international environments (Græger, 2018, p. 372), for example by actively promoting Norway as “bridge to [the] Nordic-Baltic community” (LTC Aamoth, 2016) within military circles in NATO. However, despite regular political statements, it can hardly be dismissed that Norway’s practical steps and commitments to Nordic defence and security cooperation have remained somewhat restrained and subordinated to Norway’s NATO ties and commitments (Græger, 2018, p. 372; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Skogrand, 2004, pp. 160). Considering that NORDEFECO, other than NATO, is not a defence alliance, but a body for coordinating the efforts of the Nordic countries in selected areas of security and defence under a common Nordic framework (Græger, 2018, p. 369), this is not too surprising. While some countries, like Sweden, express an interest in tightened cooperation under NORDEFECO (Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, p. 2), Norway takes a more conservative approach. This can also be observed in Norway’s NORDEFECO chairmanship program of 2018, which emphasized rather low-key coordination issues such as strengthening the security dialogue among Nordic countries, creating an information and coordination body for military logistics and developing NORDEFECO as a platform for coordinating Nordic efforts in international operations under the framework of the UN or NATO (NORDEFECO, 2018, pp. 7). As Nina Græger from the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) puts it: “[For Norway,] Nordic cooperation is ‘nice to have’ but not necessary” (2018, p. 372).

### **5.2.2 Norwegian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations**

Norway’s more reluctant position regarding a tighter Nordic defence cooperation also considerably shapes Norway’s bilateral defence and security relations with Sweden. While sharing a collective Nordic identity and having historically engaged in a number of different forms of military cooperation (Skogrand, 2004, pp. 226), their memberships in different political and security organizations has resulted in a number of political and practical constraints for their bilateral defence and security cooperation. Trying to tackle this issue, Norway has intensified its cooperation with the EU CSDP and Sweden with the NATO PfP (see 5.3). However, these steps are no real substitute for a formalized



mutual defence agreement, but should rather be understood as steps of reassuring the solidarity and possible active support of the respective other organization in times of crisis and war. For example, Norway's contribution to the Swedish-led Nordic Battlegroup of the EU is rather modest in size (approx. 50 soldiers, mainly in logistics) (FCdr Larsson, 2014), Norway's procurement projects – despite EDA membership – continue to heavily build on NATO partnerships (Græger, 2018, p. 368) and Norwegian engagement and contribution to EU CSDP operations are put under the caveat that those operations are “expedient and relevant” (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 33). Their collective Nordic identity does not only serve as an important back-channel for Norway and Sweden to EU and NATO information and negotiations<sup>60</sup> (Græger, 2018, pp. 365), but also as a common political framework that allows both countries to coordinate at least some parts of their defence and security relations. Their defence and security cooperation is clearly most developed in areas that are of collective interest, such as the simplification of procedures for collective training and exercises (e.g. the Cross Border Training Agreement between the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish air force), the Nordic Enhanced Cooperation on Air Surveillance (NORECAS) through which the Nordic countries exchange information on air surveillance data during peacetime (NORDEFSCO, 2018, pp. 10) or their occasional cooperation on arms control and CSBM, such as through joint observation flights under the treaty on Open Skies (OS) (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019). However, even though Norway and Sweden's defence and security interests often considerably overlap, their practical cooperation is regularly constrained by a number of political, legal, and practical obstacles. These include constraints for the operation of Norwegian (NATO) forces in Swedish territory and airspace, the lack of legally-binding mutual security guarantees or the lack of channels for the exchange of classified information during military operations (Møller, 2019, pp. 8; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019). As a Swedish officer, supported by his Norwegian colleagues, during a focus group discussion, underlined:

Generally, NORDEFSCO is a perfect example of a disconnect from the political to the practical military level. It is a cooperation that is absolutely wanted and repeatedly emphasized on the highest political level, but its implementation usually already stops

---

<sup>60</sup> While both, EU and NATO, know consultations formats with third countries (e.g. NATO has the 'NATO+2'-format, which includes all NATO countries plus Sweden and Finland) those meetings are usually of a predominantly informational nature.

when the different departments get involved. [...] In other words, improving and deepening NORDEFECO is often easy said, but difficultly done (Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019).

As rather small powers<sup>61</sup> with only limited military capabilities and resources as well as different geographical and strategic interests, Norwegian and Swedish defence and security priorities might often be compatible, but not always collective. For example, while Norway mainly relies on NATO – and in particular the US – and is primarily concerned with the security situation in the Barents Sea and European High North (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018), Sweden mainly focuses on the EU and the security situation in the Baltic Sea region (Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 43). Consequently, a lot of their defence and security cooperation is defined by signals of reassurance, such as the Nordic declaration on solidarity<sup>62</sup>, than by concrete practical steps of cooperation (Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, pp. 3).

In some instances, Norway's clear prioritization of NATO and interpretation of its Nordic identity as backdoor to EU decision making, have even lead to situations of particularized distrust in its defence and security relations with Sweden. This has become most visible in a number of bilateral defence development and procurement projects that Norway – sometimes only with short notice – discontinued in favour of projects with NATO allies (Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, pp. 1). These experiences, which will also be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter (5.3), have negatively affected Swedish trust in Norway's commitment to deepened Nordic defence and security ties (Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, p. 2).

---

<sup>61</sup> Since, what constitutes Small (but also Middle and Great) Powers in IR remains contested (e.g. Keohane, 1969), I have decided to focus on the popular self-perceptions of Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia in defence and security circles.

<sup>62</sup> "The Ministers emphasized a strong community of values between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Efforts to promote democracy, international law including human rights, gender equality, and sustainable development are integral parts of the foreign policy of the Nordic countries. Based on common interest and geographical proximity it is natural for the Nordic countries to cooperate in meeting the challenges in the area of foreign and security policy in a spirit of solidarity. [...] Should a Nordic country be affected, the others will, upon request from that country, assist with relevant means. The intensified Nordic cooperation will be undertaken fully in line with each country's security and defense policy and complement existing European and Euro-Atlantic cooperation" (The Nordic declaration on solidarity, 2011).

Despite some obvious setbacks, the overall trend in Norwegian-Swedish defence and security relations points towards an increasing amount of collective action, a trend that seems to have only been accelerated amid a joint perception of an increasing Russian challenge to regional security and stability (Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, p. 2; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). This perception has not only resulted in a series of practices of reassurance, such as the already mentioned, joint op-ed of the Nordic ministers of defence and the minister of foreign affairs of Iceland that declared Russia’s actions against Ukraine “the biggest challenge to European security” (Søreide, Wammen, Haglund, Sveinsson, & Hultqvist, 2015), but also in renewed political impetus for an intensified Nordic defence cooperation (Søreide et al., 2015). However, other than previously, these political statements of intent are now also being followed up by more concrete practical steps, such as the resumption of the mutual exchange of defence attachés (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019) or an increased focus on joint military exercises. With approx. 2,200 soldiers and large amounts of military equipment from all military branches, Sweden participated substantially in NATO’s ‘Trident Juncture 18’ (Försvarsmakten, 2018) and in March 2019, Norway for the first time ever, send its entire Brigade North (approx. 4,500 soldiers) to Sweden’s army exercise Northern Wind 2019 (Swedish Armed Forces, 2019, p. 6). In sum, while Norway and Sweden share a collective Nordic identity and often have overlapping interests in security and defence, their different strategic priorities and limited resources confine the extent of their practical cooperation to a few selected areas of mutual interest, often with a clear focus on mutual reassurance.

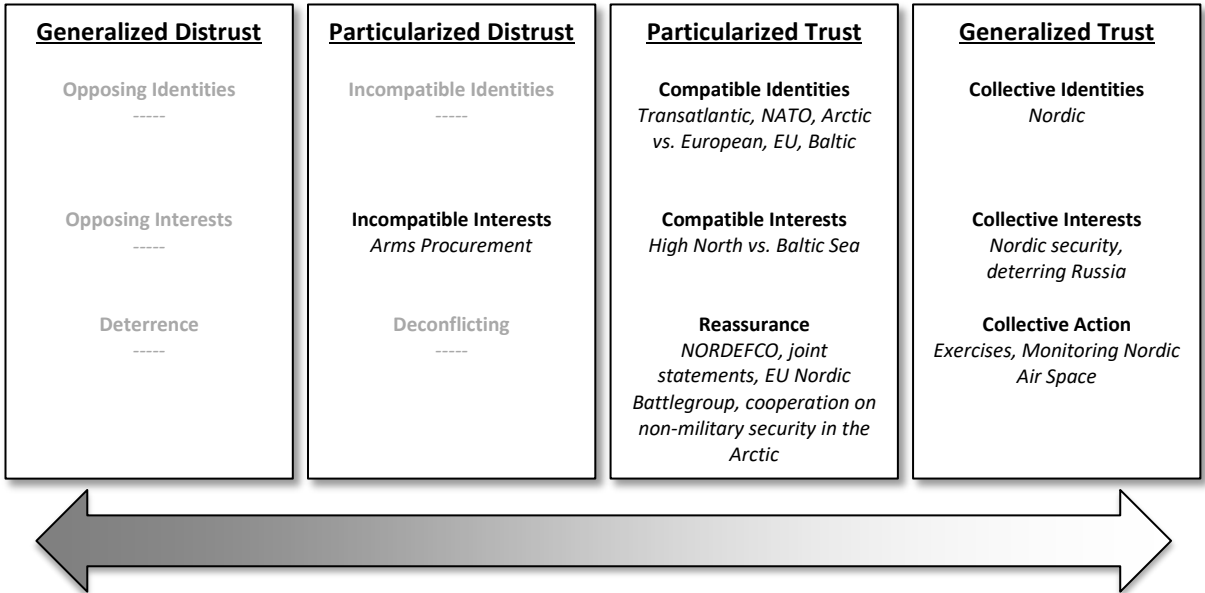


Figure 9. Norwegian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.2.3 Norwegian-Canadian Defence and Security Relations

Norway's bilateral defence and security relations with Canada to some degree resemble its relations with Sweden. Both countries share a strong transatlantic and Arctic identity and during the Cold War, driven by a foreign policy based upon common values and norms, cooperated particularly close within NATO to address overlapping strategic interests in the North Atlantic (Østhagen, Levi Sharp, & Hilde, 2018, pp. 163; Skogrand, 2004, pp. 225). Today, their limited military capabilities together with a slight adjustment of their strategic interests have resulted in a more limited bilateral defence and security cooperation, which still mainly takes place under the wider framework of NATO and serves particularly the goal of mutual reassurance among NATO allies. Norway and Canada have been among the strongest proponents of the new Joint Force Command Norfolk in the US, which is tasked to protect these sea and communication lines of NATO in the North Atlantic amid increasing tensions between Russia and the West (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2019c, p. 40; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019) and also regularly cooperate in various NATO exercises. However, apart from the North Atlantic, Norway and Canada's areas of operations and geostrategic interests, hardly overlap and due to their different geographical locations, the current deterioration in the relations between NATO and Russia are perceived rather differently in Oslo and Ottawa. While Canadian militaries do not perceive Russia as posing any immediate military threat to national defence (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019), Norwegian defence practitioners are very much aware that bordering Russia's most important strategic nuclear assets in the North, means that any military escalation between NATO and Russia, would also have immediate consequences for Norwegian national security (Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 14; Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). However, despite such differences in threat perception, Canada shows considerable understanding and solidarity for its NATO allies and hence, engages actively in various activities to deter Russian military aggression against European NATO allies and partners (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Canadian Diplomat, 2019). Yet, while Canada's participation in Norwegian-led and -hosted exercises (e.g. 'Trident Juncture 18' or 'Cold Response')

has usually been quite substantial (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019), Norway's participation in Canada's Op NANOOK is still at the very early stages and so far remained rather small.<sup>63</sup>

At a certainly much smaller scale, Norway and Canada also cooperate on a regular basis in inspections under the OSCE Vienna Document (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019) and in the conduction of joint observation flights under the treaty on OS (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019). Furthermore, as littoral states to the Arctic Ocean, both countries also share a collective Arctic identity and common regional interests, in particular regarding issues of national sovereignty and non-military security, such as combating illegal fishing, resource extraction or Search and Rescue (SAR) operations (see Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, pp. 50; Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 14; Canada's Northern Strategy - Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future, 2009; Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, 2019; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). These interests have resulted in various smaller steps of practical cooperation, such as in the context of the Arctic Coast Guard Forum. Yet, since both countries' SAR areas are not adjacent (Arctic Portal, 2011), the need for more concrete practical cooperation is reduced.<sup>64</sup> When it comes to more defence-related issues, Norwegian and Canadian interests in the Arctic are less compatible and sometimes even somewhat opposed. While Norway has for a long time advocated a stronger role and presence of NATO in the Arctic region (Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, p. 64), Canada has regularly blocked any mentioning of the Arctic in official NATO documents (Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, p. 45; Haftendorn, 2011, pp. 341; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 174). The source of this disagreement is rooted in different positions of what constitutes the biggest challenge to regional security in the Arctic. While Norway, due to its proximity to Russia, has always been very much concerned with military security issues, for which it as a small military power is heavily dependent on allied support, Canada does not perceive of any direct military threat to its Arctic sovereignty, but instead emphasizes various non-military security challenges to the region, for which it does not see an active role of the alliance (Canadian Diplomat,

---

<sup>63</sup> In 2019, for example, a few Norwegian military divers participated in Operation NANOOK-NUNALIVUT 19 (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

<sup>64</sup> Only the Norwegian Coast Guard is part of the Norwegian armed forces, while the Canadian Coast Guard is civilian and linked to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

2019; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 176). To sum it up, even though Norway and Canada share a strong NATO and Arctic identity and their defence and security interests are often compatible, they do not always overlap. This limits most of their practical defence and security cooperation to the framework of NATO and to various signals of mutual reassurance among allies.

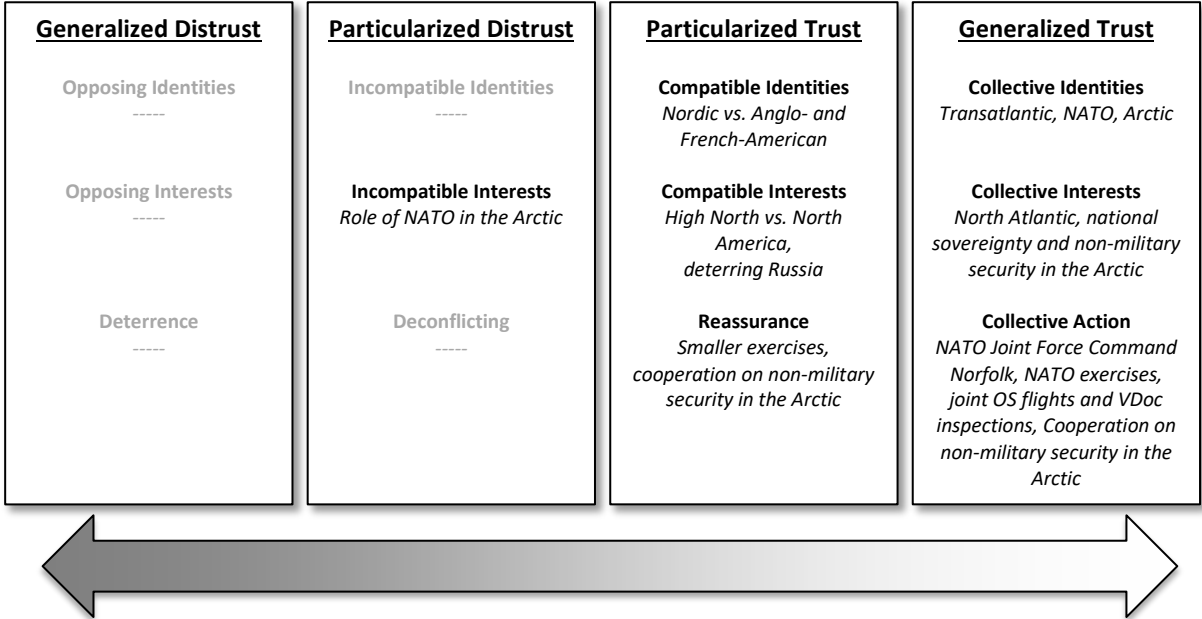


Figure 10. Norwegian-Canadian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.2.4 Norwegian-Russian Defence and Security Relations

The large power-asymmetry between Norway and Russia in the High North, together with a considerable dose of scepticism have always shaped Norway’s defence and security relations with Russia (and previously the Soviet Union). The large force concentration and the majority of the Soviet Union’s strategic nuclear assets being stationed just across the Norwegian-Russian border led policy-makers in Oslo at the end of the Second World War seek for credible security guarantees by Western countries – in particular the US – and made Norway become a founding member of NATO in 1949 (Berg, 2016, pp. 93; Holtsmark, 2015, pp. 307). At the same time, Norwegian policymakers were concerned that this decision could pull Norway into the middle of a potential conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, a concern and dilemma that gave rise to the already mentioned Norwegian Cold War policy of ‘deterrence and reassurance’ (‘avskrekking og beroligelse’). Even though the weighing of both poles over time changed with the overall geopolitical situation and in particular with the status of the relations between NATO and the Soviet Union (and later Russia) (see Tamnes, 1987), this policy has shaped Norwegian defence and security relations with the Soviet Union and later on

Russia, ever since. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia was no longer viewed as a superpower and the more immediate threat perception of Russia somewhat disappeared (Holtmark, 2015, p. 555; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019). The undoubtedly most important step in that regard was the signing of the 'Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation' in 1997. The NATO-Russia Founding Act not only laid the foundation for the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), but also for a number of initiatives and steps towards more practical cooperation between NATO, NATO countries and Russia (see Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, 1997). Even though the central military factors that had shaped Norwegian-Russian defence and security relations throughout the Cold War (e.g. the large asymmetry and Russian nuclear deterrence capabilities on the Kola Peninsula) remained, this general shift in NATO-Russia relations pathed the way for more practical defence and security cooperation between Norway and Russia. This cooperation had its roots already during the Cold War (e.g. on the coast guard level and in the managing of fish stocks in the Barents Sea) (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019) and over the years evolved into a list of about twenty items containing different forms of bilateral military cooperation with Russia (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). Apart from more security-related issues, such as the bilateral cooperation between the Norwegian and Russian coast guards,<sup>65</sup> or the establishment of a direct hotline (a Skype connection) between the Norwegian Joint Headquarters (FOH) in Bodø and the commander of Russian Northern Fleet) to manage situations that require immediate clarification to avoid possible misunderstandings (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019), the list also contained more direct defence cooperation between both countries, such as the Norwegian-Russian naval exercise 'Pomor' (Forsvaret, 2015b) or the former US-Russian naval exercise 'Northern Eagle', in which Norway participated for the first time in 2008 (Forsvaret, 2015a). However, the actual military relevance of these exercises should not be overstated, but rather be understood as a means of both sides' to reassure each other of their interest in developing mutually trustful defence and security relations (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019). This common interest was also expressed in the Norwegian defence plans of 2008 and

---

<sup>65</sup> In 1995, Norway and Russia signed a bilateral cooperation agreement on Search and Rescue (SAR) in the Barents Sea, which laid the foundation for the annual coast guard exercise 'Barents' (Avtale mellom Norge og Russland om samarbeid ved ettersøking av savnede og redning av nødstedte mennesker i Barentshavet, 1995).

2012, which underlined that both countries have a “common interest in maintaining stability and ensure a responsible administration of the resources in the [High North]” (Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier, 2008, p. 30) and that their relationship had, despite ups and downs in NATO-Russia relations, overall developed positively (Et forsvar for vår tid, 2012, pp. 30).

The Russian annexation of Crimea and meddling in the conflict in Eastern Ukraine constituted a significant turning away from this trend. Russia’s actions in Ukraine are perceived by Norway as an increasing Russian military capacity and willingness “to use all the instruments of state power, including military force, to safeguard its interests” (Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 15, but see also Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 29). Even though, Norwegian defence and security policies, politicians and practitioners attach importance to the fact that Russia does currently not constitute a direct military threat to Norway, the widespread understanding is that Norway’s security remains directly linked to the current state of affairs in NATO-



Figure 11: *The Reach of Russia's 'Bastion' Defence Concept* (Olsen, 2017).

Russia relations (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 29; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Søreide, 2016). A central reason for this position is Russia’s ‘Bastion’ defence concept, which implies that Russia would during a military confrontation with NATO attempt to create a military buffer zone around its second-strike capabilities on the Kola Peninsula and the Barents Sea, a buffer zone that would also include parts of Northern Norway (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 30).<sup>66</sup> Thus,

---

<sup>66</sup> The ‘Bastion’ defence concept is not new, but already played a major role in NATO’s maritime strategies and contingency plans for the North Atlantic and the Norwegian Sea since the beginning of the Cold War (see Børresen, 2011).



amid increasing tensions between NATO and Russia, it is also possible to record an increasing number of incompatible identities and interests in Norwegian-Russian defence and security relations. Those include a widespread perception among Russian authorities of NATO posing a direct threat to Russian interests (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, pp. 28; Etterretningstjenesten, 2018, p. 10), Russia's extensive military modernization program as well as an increase in quantity and quality of Russian military activities around Norway, (see Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 29; Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 14; Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019), simulated attacks on Norwegian radar and military installations in Vardø and Bodø (Nilsen, 2018c), as well as live-fire missile drills off the Norwegian coast and accusations of GPS-jamming during NATO's exercise Trident Juncture '18, (Etterretningstjenesten, 2019, p. 27). The current level of distrust in their relations becomes also evident in a speech by former Minister Defence and current Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Eriksen Søreide:

Our greatest concern is Moscow's new strategic capabilities. [...] Russia's introduction of new high-end maritime capabilities poses a particular strategic challenge to NATO. The development and fielding of such assets combined with advanced training and exercises make Russia increasingly capable of conducting Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) operations in the North Atlantic. [...]

It is of vital importance that NATO safeguard the sea lines of communication during a crisis or conflict. Its ability to provide mutual support across the Atlantic and in other regions is fundamental to the Alliance's security architecture. Safeguarding NATO's freedom of movement and operation across the North Atlantic is of importance to all of Europe, not only the northern parts of the Alliance. For NATO to take a passive stance in this development is an unacceptable approach (Søreide, 2016).

This changed threat perception as well as the high levels of uncertainty and particularized distrust regarding Russia's intentions have resulted in a renewed focus on deterrence in Norwegian defence and security politics. While the Norwegian defence plan of 2012 still tried to avoid the term 'deterrence' by defining the main task of Norwegian defence as "posing a war-preventing threshold based on NATO membership" ('Utgjøre en krigsforebyggende terskel med basis i NATO-medlemskapet') (Et forsvar for vår tid, 2012, p. 14), the 2016 defence plan made it clear that the main task is "to ensure a credible deterrence based on NATO's concept of collective defence" ('Sikre troverdig avskrekking med basis i NATOs kollektive forsvar') (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 6). Towards this goal, the Norwegian armed forces have over the last couple of years, significantly stepped

up their exercise activities with NATO allies and Nordic partners and are seeking an overall stronger allied presence in Norway and its surroundings (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018). In 2018, Norway hosted NATO's largest military exercise since the end of the Cold War, 'Trident Juncture '18', which also included significant contributions by its non-NATO neighbours Sweden and Finland (Forsvaret, 2018). In 2015, Norway decided to conduct its annual national military exercise Joint Viking in Finnmark, making it the largest military exercise in proximity to the Norwegian-Russian border since 1967. Despite the somewhat strong reactions by Russia – including an approximately eight times larger and unannounced exercise of the Russian Northern fleet (Bentzrød, 2015; Moe & Andreassen, 2015; Tomassen & Bendixen, 2014) – Joint Viking 2017 was again carried out in Finnmark (Forsvaret, 2017a). However, apart from its geographical location, in particular the fact that Norway had this time also invited troops from the United States and the United Kingdom, which participated with approximately 700 marines (Forsvaret, 2017a), points to a notable shift in Norway's defence and security politics. Norway's clear shift towards a more deterrence-oriented defence approach vis-à-vis Russia is further indicated by the receiving of additional US marines to Norway (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2018b), the lobbying for an increased presence of NATO (and in particular US) naval forces in the maritime areas of Norway and its near surroundings, including port calls of US nuclear submarines just outside Tromsø, (Nilsen, 2019c; Wormdal, 2018), or the already mentioned returned focus on an intensification of the military cooperation among the Nordic states (see Søreide et al., 2015; Swedish Armed Forces, 2019). As also former Norwegian Foreign and Defence Minister and 'father' of the Barents Euro-Arctic region (Berg, 2016, pp. 126; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019), Thorvald Stoltenberg during a speech in front of the Nordic Council in 2014 noted:

We cannot fail to notice what I would call an 'offensive Russian demonstration policy', especially in the airspace approaching the Nordic area. This is not nice. The fierce attention around the submarine search in the Stockholm archipelago did not lighten the atmosphere at all. I note with concern that some individuals are using this difficult situation to revive the rhetoric from the Cold War. It is a mistake when some people bring up hostile images (Stoltenberg, 2014).

However, despite these clear steps away from Norway's low-tension policy of the Cold War, there is still a considerable interest in an overall functioning relationship and a further developing of "cooperation with Russia on the basis of common interests and a consistent and predictable policy" (Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 6). This interest becomes most evident in less defence-related policy areas, such as search and rescue, climate change, the managing of fisheries as well as oil and gas development in the Arctic and Barents region (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, 2014, p. 16; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).<sup>67</sup> However, even though Norwegian politicians, policies and practitioners emphasize that the Arctic is still a region of stability and cooperation, in which Norway and Russia continue to have a number of compatible and even collective interests (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, p. 29; Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 14; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019; Trellevik, 2019), the trends in Norwegian-Russian defence relations have at least added a level of residual doubt regarding the stability and reliability of the current security situation in the North. This scepticism is not only visible in the 2016 Norwegian defence plan, which implies that Russia might in the future use its military capabilities for pursuing its strategic goals in the region (Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren, 2016, pp. 29), but was also expressed during my interviews with Norwegian military practitioners:

It is a saying, you know ‘Russia is a country where nothing changes in a 100 years and everything can change in one day’. There is some truth to that. [...] Russia is a big country and not necessarily very stable or predictable [...]. We cannot say that there will never be a cause for conflict that springs out from our relationship with Russia. That this comes from somewhere else. Things change very fast. How quickly did it change in 2014? (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018)

Up until 2014, the High North was in focus, due to environmental changes and industrial potential. After 2014, the security dimension has reached the top of the agenda. It does not mean that environment and industries are gone, but security aspects have been upgraded heavily and that is a major shift (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

In order to ensure that the particularized level of distrust in Norwegian-Russian defence and security relations does not turn into a more generalized level of distrust that also begins to affect cooperation in other areas of common interest, the difficult balance between ‘deterrence and reassurance’ seems to

---

<sup>67</sup> In 2008, both countries, together with the three other Arctic coastal states, Canada, Denmark and the US, adopted the so-called Ilulissat declaration, committing themselves to the peaceful resolution of any territorial and sovereignty-related disputes in the Arctic (The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation and of the United States of America, 2008) and in 2010 signed a maritime delimitation and cooperation agreement for the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean (Treaty between the Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation concerning Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean, 2010).

have returned to Norwegian defence and security policy-thinking. For example, even though many forms of direct military cooperation have since 2014 been put on hold, cooperation on non-military security, such as between the Norwegian and Russian coast and border guards (not least, because these issues do not fall into the responsibility of the Russian armed forces, but into that of the Russian FSB) has continued and channels that were considered important for deconflicting and preventing potential misunderstandings were kept open (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2014; Forsvaret, 2015a, 2015b; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). The latter, not only include the already mentioned hotline between FOH in Bodø and the Russian Northern Fleet in Severomorsk, but also the Norwegian-Russian INCSEA-agreement, which is reviewed and regularly updated in annual meetings between both sides (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2014; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019). Interestingly, defence practitioners underlined that even though the hotline between FOH and the Russian Northern Fleet is tested on a weekly basis, there has not been a situation between the Norwegian and Russian armed forces over the last couple of years that required its use (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). Most incidents, such as unannounced exercise activities and a few ‘reckless interceptions’ between the Norwegian and Russian air force (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019) were resolved through other – predominately diplomatic – channels (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). Furthermore, to avoid any misunderstandings, Norway in the run-up to Trident Juncture ’18, resumed the previously suspended high-level meetings with the Russian ministry of defence, to brief Russia about the size, scope and purpose of the exercise (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2018a; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). The first bilateral meeting between both countries since 2014 also addressed how to further improve the flow of information about military exercises and activities and discussed the establishment of a new hotline between the Norwegian and Russian CHOD and ministries of defence. Both sides agreed to continue the meetings at the ministerial level (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019). The follow-up meeting took place in March 2019 and even though both sides agreed upon the establishment of a new communication channel to be operational by the end of 2019 (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2019; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019), Norwegian practitioners continue to express their dissatisfaction with the lack of transparency over Russian military exercises and activities. An actual on the ground observation of a Russian military exercise under the OSCE Vienna Document has not taken place since the end of the Cold War (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019), which highlights that the OSCE and its mechanisms of arms control and military confidence-building are hardly able to deconflict the currently still difficult defence and security relations between both countries.

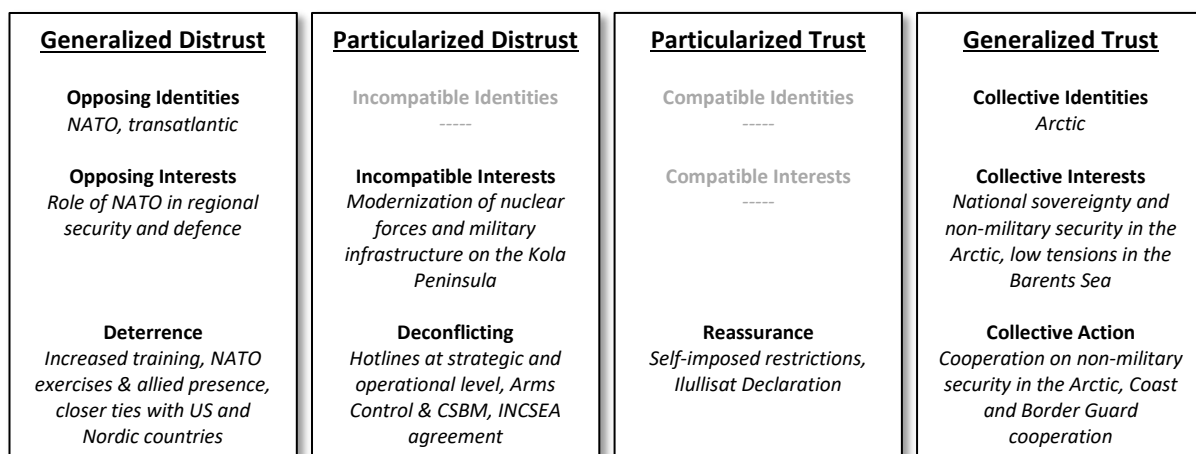


Figure 12. Norwegian-Russian Defence and Security Relations.

## 5.2.5 Summary

In sum, it becomes evident that Norwegian defence and security politics are predominantly defined by Norway's NATO membership and pronounced transatlantic identity. Norway's historical experiences from the Second World War have led to a realisation that the country's geographical location as entry point to the North Atlantic Ocean, is too central and important for global superpowers as that Norway could simply rely on a policy of neutrality and military non-alignment, such as its Nordic neighbours Sweden or Finland. Thus, following the end of the war, Norway decided to seek security guarantees from the United States and Great Britain, becoming a founding member of NATO in 1949. Since Norway and Sweden prioritize different multilateral organizations (NATO vs. EU) and focus on different regional security environments (High North vs. Baltic Sea), their collective Nordic identity, and the framework of NORDEFCO play only a supplementary role in Norwegian-Swedish defence and security relations. This has also not changed, despite an increased focus on joint exercise activities since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. In contrast, Norwegian-Canadian defence and security relations can rely on a strong collective transatlantic, NATO and Arctic identity. However, due to their geographical distance, their defence and security interests – apart from the North Atlantic – hardly overlap, explaining why many of their joint activities beyond the NATO framework are fairly small and mainly serve the purpose of mutual reassurance among NATO allies. In fact, when it comes to NATO's role in the Arctic, they are even somewhat incompatible. Lastly, Norway's defence and security relations with Russia (and previously the Soviet Union) have always been of an ambivalent nature. The large

military asymmetry between both countries as well as Norway's central geostrategic location in relation to Russia's second-strike capabilities are the main reasons for Norway's membership in NATO. At the same time, this has put Norway even more into the spotlight of the Russian armed forces. The difficult balance between credible deterrence and allied military presence, on the one hand, and mitigating overly strong reactions by Russia, on the other hand, gave rise to Norway's long-standing policy of 'deterrence and reassurance' ('avskrekking og beroligelse'). Depending on the trends in the relations between NATO and Russia, both ends of this policy were more or less pronounced. Amid the deterioration in NATO-Russia relations since the beginning of the conflict in and around Ukraine, all practical defence cooperation with Russia (e.g. joint naval exercises) has been put on hold and we can observe a clear shift back to a stronger focus on deterrence in Norwegian-Russian defence and security relations. Nevertheless, both countries still share a number of compatible (partly even collective) interests with regard to non-military security, environmental and economic issues in the Arctic and Barents region. Therefore, Norway engages in various steps to deconflict its currently largely incompatible defence and security relations with Russia, e.g. by upholding direct lines of communication or by providing transparency over its military exercise activities.

## **5.3 Swedish Defence and Security Politics**

Swedish defence and security politics are very much characterized by Sweden's long-lasting history of neutrality and military non-alignment – showing itself inter alia in a particular emphasis on multilateralism – a pronounced European and Nordic(-Baltic) identity as well as a strategic focus on the Baltic Sea region.

### **5.3.1 Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends**

Swedish neutrality has long-standing historical roots, which go all the way back to the Napoleonic Wars. In what became known as 'The Policy of 1812', Sweden joined Russia and the United Kingdom in their fight against Napoleon under the condition that both countries would support Sweden in its claims over Norway and help pressure Denmark to cede Norway to Sweden (Czarny, 2018, p. 22). With the signing of the Treaty of Kiel in 1814, Sweden succeeded in its plan and after a short armed resistance, Norway entered into a union with Sweden. The war of 1814 marks the beginning of Swedish neutrality and represents the countries' last direct engagement in any armed conflict (Czarny, 2018, p. 23). During World War I and World War II, Sweden continued a policy of neutrality (Czarny, 2018, pp. 31), which was replaced by its policy of military non-alignment during the Cold War period (Czarny, 2018, p. 56). Yet, already then, Sweden had entered into a number of secret defence agreements with Western

countries, in case its policy of neutrality should fail (see Dalsjö, 2006). At the latest when Sweden got more and more integrated into the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) of the European Union (EU) and increasingly tightened its security cooperation with NATO and the other Nordic countries, its policy of neutrality eventually came to an end (Czarny, 2018, pp. 133).<sup>68</sup> A clear turning point was the Swedish Declaration of Solidarity in 2009, by which Sweden not only committed itself to the mutual defence clause of the European Union<sup>69</sup>, but also even extended its commitment to the Nordic countries, including the two non-EU members Norway and Iceland:

Membership of the European Union means that Sweden is part of a political alliance and takes its share of responsibility, in the spirit of solidarity, for Europe's security. Sweden will not remain passive if another EU Member State or Nordic country suffers a disaster or an attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is similarly affected (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011, p. 3).

Sweden's policy of neutrality, its European and Nordic-Baltic identity and the strategic focus on the Baltic Sea area continue to shape Swedish defence and security policy-making until today. Together with multilateral institutions, such as the UN, the EU, the OSCE and NATO, these identities feature prominently in central defence and security policy documents (see *Vägval i en globaliserad värld*, 2013; *Försvaret av Sverige - Starkare försvar för en osäker tid*, 2014; *Försvarpolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020*, 2015; *Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025*, 2019; *Nationell säkerhetsstrategi*, 2017) as well as in Sweden's Arctic strategy published in 2011 (see *Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region*, 2011). For example, Sweden's security strategy of 2017 states:

---

<sup>68</sup> A more comprehensive overview and critical assessment of the historic evolution of Swedish neutrality can be found in Czarny (2018).

<sup>69</sup> The full text of the mutual defence clause in the Treaty on the European Union reads "If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States. Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States, which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation (Article 42.7).

Threats to peace and security are best averted collectively and in cooperation with other countries and organizations. Our interest are particularly closely linked with those of our Nordic and Baltic neighbours, the European Union and the rest of Europe (Nationell säkerhetsstrategi, 2017, p. 6).

The strong emphasis on multilateralism, the European Union, and the cooperation with Sweden's Nordic and Baltic neighbours was also confirmed during my interviews with Swedish defence and security practitioners. They not only referred to the EU as the central multilateral forum for Swedish security policy-making (Swedish Diplomat, 2018), but also highlighted the importance of other multilateral forums and in particular the OSCE for discussing issues of European security (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018; Swedish Diplomat, 2018), which they viewed as the most inclusive body for such discussions:

When you talk about European security, it will end up in the OSCE anyways, I am sure. Because, it is not the business between NATO and Russia, it is not the business inside NATO; it is not the business inside the EU. It must be between all [states]. So, I think that you will end up in the OSCE (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

The Ukrainian crisis, which Swedish defence and security policy documents refer to as the "Russian aggression against Ukraine" (Försvaret av Sverige - Starkare försvar för en osäker tid, 2014, p. 14; Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 8; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, p. 69; Nationell säkerhetsstrategi, 2017, p. 10) and which the Swedish government views as a serious challenge to the European security order (Nationell säkerhetsstrategi, 2017, p. 12) as well as to the upholding and respect for a norm- and rule-based international order (Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 20; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, p. 33) has resulted in a considerable loss of trust in Swedish-Russian defence and security relations. As one of my informants put it:

If principles like territorial integrity or the right of each country to make its own sovereign choices when it comes to security policy cannot be respected in some other countries like Ukraine, how can we be sure that they can be respected for Sweden? [...] I mean clearly, we had in Europe a deteriorating security environment and it probably goes back longer than we first understood or thought. We had the Russian-Georgian war in 2008. We also had other incidents and issues before that, but I think the 2014 Russian-Ukrainian war, which is still going on was a big wake-up call and not only because of that, but also for



other reasons we had intensified public discussion on defence and security policy in Sweden over the last five years (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

One outcome of these national discussions in Sweden has been an ever-closer relationship of Sweden with NATO (Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 48; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, p. 308; Nationell säkerhetsstrategi, 2017, p. 12; Swedish Diplomat, 2018). In 2014, the country became one of the first five 'Enhanced Opportunity Partners'<sup>70</sup> and signed an MoU with NATO, allowing for and supporting NATO forces operating within Swedish territory.<sup>71</sup> On a practical level, Sweden is also increasingly taking collective action with NATO and NATO states in the area of security and defence. Sweden has joined NATO states in suspending all practical military cooperation with Russia, is participating regularly in NATO-led exercises and operations, such as most recently during NATO's high-visibility exercise 'Trident Juncture 18' in Norway and has in addition, signed several bilateral security agreements with NATO members (e.g. the United Kingdom, the United States or Poland). Since, there remains some residual doubt regarding the military support Sweden might receive from NATO and NATO states without formal membership (Dalsjö, 2015, p. 12; Møller, 2019, pp. 9) – an issue that remains highly contested in Swedish public and policy debates (Ydén, Berndtsson, & Petersson, 2019) – these steps are not only signs of an increasing extent of collective action, but also serve the goal of reassuring mutual support between Sweden and NATO in defence and security politics.

### 5.3.2 Swedish-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations

Sweden's Nordic, Baltic and European identity also shape the country's bilateral defence and security relations with Norway. As already pointed out in the previous section, Sweden and Norway maintain

---

<sup>70</sup> The 'Partnership Interoperability Initiative' of NATO launched in 2014 is aimed at enhancing cooperation and interoperability between NATO forces and selected partners e.g. by harmonizing standards, doctrines, procedures and equipment as well as through regular contributions to NATO-led exercises and operations (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2017b). The other four enhanced partners are Australia, Finland, Georgia and Jordan.

<sup>71</sup> Its full name is Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Sweden and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation as well as Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe regarding the Provision of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations / Exercises / Similar Military Activity, 2014.

extensive bilateral defence and security relations (see 5.2.2). With the already mentioned Swedish Declaration of Solidarity, Sweden unilaterally committed itself to the defence of its Nordic partners and based on their collective Nordic identity, Sweden and Norway are also taking a number of concrete practical steps to pursue their defence and security interests more collectively, be it within the framework of NORDEFECO, by regularly participating in joint military exercises (e.g. Cold Response, Arctic Challenge Exercise, Aurora 17, Trident Juncture 18, Northern Wind 2019 or BALTOPS 2019; see also 5.1) or by resuming the exchange of defence attachés (Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019).

Nevertheless, despite these positive examples of Norwegian-Swedish defence cooperation, there is also a quite widespread perception within the Swedish defence establishment that their shared Nordic identity in practical terms primarily serves a supplementary function to Norway's transatlantic identity. This perception has two main sources: The first and probably most important factor can be found in both countries' different decisions regarding their (non-)memberships in NATO and the EU, both of which are the dominant drivers of their national defence and security politics. While Sweden continues to pursue its policy of military non-alignment and emphasizes the role of the EU, Norway fully relies on its NATO membership. As one of my informants explained:

We have a lot in common, but we also have different views on how to ground ourselves in the transatlantic link. If you put it that way. Norwegians and Danes in 1949 went to NATO and we did not. We are more Finland-oriented, which goes more than 700 years back. So, Norway and Denmark have been oriented westwards, Atlantic-wise, whereas we have been oriented towards the Baltic (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

The second factor is related to the fact that both countries are only smaller regional powers, which have to focus their limited military capabilities on their near surroundings and areas of particular strategic importance to them. For Sweden, this focus clearly rests on the Baltic Sea area (Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 43; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, p. 119), while Norway's focus has historically always been the European High North and the North Atlantic, more specifically the Barents Sea and the Norwegian-Russian border region. As such, Sweden and Norway's Nordic identity and cooperation frameworks like NORDEFECO serve an important bridging function in their defence and security relations, which, at least to some extent, helps them in pooling and reconciling their different interests and security policy choices. However, NORDEFECO remains only of a supplementary role to both countries' memberships in EU and NATO. Despite reaffirming that Nordic defence cooperation is considered complementary to existing EU and NATO commitments of Nordic states (see

Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 21; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, p. 104), this supplementary role as well as a few more recent negative experiences seem to have created a certain level of scepticism among members of the wider Swedish defence establishment regarding Norway's commitment to Nordic defence cooperation (Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, p. 2). This scepticism was also expressed during a number of informal conversations conducted in the course of this doctoral thesis, during which Swedish experts on several occasions expressed their discontent with various Norwegian defence policy decisions. This discontent was most vividly expressed with regard to a number of joint procurement projects from which Norway allegedly withdrew without prior notice. In addition, Swedish experts complained about Norway's decisions to acquire its new fighter jets from the United States and its new submarines from Germany of which the latter was particularly ill received as the decision was accompanied by a press release of the Norwegian government, stating that they were looking for "an existing submarine design" and a company with "extensive experience", in order to "evade the costs and risks of a large development project" (Forsvarsdepartementet, 2016). This was perceived as direct criticism of the Swedish competitor SAAB and its newly to be developed submarine A26, harming Swedish submarine production more generally (see also Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, p. 2).

Swedish scepticism regarding Norway's commitment to Nordic defence cooperation also seems to have found its way into Swedish defence and security policy documents, which often come with the caveat that Norway's support for an intensified Nordic defence cooperation always has to account for the "limitations that the different security political decisions of the Nordic countries entail" (Vägval i en globaliserad värld, 2013, p. 98, but see also Försvaret av Sverige - Starkare försvar för en osäker tid, 2014, p. 91; Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 21; Nationell säkerhetsstrategi, 2017, p. 17). In light of these limitations, Sweden's most recent defence policy specifically reiterates the NORDEFECO goals of "minimizing the restrictions on the movement of military units and equipment, between and through the Nordic countries; increasing the exchange of situational information in peace, crisis and conflict; as well as a strengthening of NORDEFECO as a platform for consultations in crisis situations" (Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, pp. 303).

The recent negative experiences in procurement and acquisition as well as the perception that their shared Nordic identity is only a supplement, might also explain why Swedish practitioners specifically highlighted their bilateral defence cooperation with Finland (not with Norway) as "the most far

reaching” (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).<sup>72</sup> Other than for Swedish-Norwegian relations, Sweden and Finland not only share a EU, Nordic and Nordic-Baltic identity, but also have a common geographical focus in their national defence policies. Furthermore, both countries are also united by the interest in reconciling their policy of military non-alignment with an increasingly closer defence cooperation with NATO and NATO states,<sup>73</sup> in particular with regard to the Baltic Sea area (Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, p. 24; Nationell säkerhetsstrategi, 2017, p. 12).

In sum, it seems fair to assess that Sweden and Norway look differently upon an intensified Nordic defence cooperation. As a 2017 policy report by NUPI concluded:

In Sweden, there are genuine political ambitions for enhancing the Nordic defence dimension and cooperation with Norway. However, we can also note the relatively broad-based perception in Swedish defence circles of Norway as having lost a significant degree of trust recently (Friis & Garberg Bredesen, 2017, p. 2).

This assessment of only particularized trust in their bilateral as well as Nordic defence cooperation might also explain why the Nordic countries have in light of an increasing threat perception vis-à-vis Russia over the last couple of years engaged in various steps of reassurance, such as joint op-eds after Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 (Søreide et al., 2015) or in connection with NATO’s high-visibility exercise ‘Trident Juncture 18’:

Bound together by geography, history, culture, and values, we share a common responsibility to maintain peace and stability in our neighbourhood. [...] By exercising together – and with NATO – we improve our ability to act together as neighbours, should it ever become necessary. Not instead of NATO, but in addition to. That is why the Nordic contribution to Exercise Trident Juncture is substantial, with over 13.000 soldiers and a

---

<sup>72</sup> The depth of Swedish-Finnish defence cooperation is reflected in the comprehensive areas of cooperation listed in their MoU (see Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Finland and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden on Defence Cooperation, 2018, Sec. 3) as well as in Sweden’s most recent defence policy (Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019).

<sup>73</sup> Finland is also one of five NATO’s ‘Enhanced Opportunity Partners’ and regularly participates in NATO-led exercises, such as most recently in ‘Trident Juncture 18’ (Forsvaret, 2018) or in BALTOPS 2019 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2019a).

great number of civilian personnel. In a fine example of Nordic cooperation, army elements from Finland will operate as part of a Swedish brigade and Danish helicopters will support the Norwegian Brigade. NATO and partner forces from Finland and Sweden will use military bases and airfields in all the Nordic countries [...] (Bakke-Jensen, Frederiksen, Hultqvist, Niinistö, & Thór Thórdarson, 2018).

Their collective engagement in NATO's exercise Trident Juncture '18 as well as the Nordic Defence Cooperation Vision 2025<sup>74</sup> underline how the Nordic countries seem to actively (re-)engage in efforts to narrow the gap deriving from their different memberships in NATO and the EU. This goal is not only pursued by intensifying Nordic defence cooperation, but also by enhancing their cooperation with NATO and the EU (Nordic Defence Cooperation Vision 2025, 2018). The priorities of the Swedish NORDEFSCO chairmanship in 2019 underline that the Swedish government intends to continue this path (Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Sweden, 2019). However, there also exists a quite widespread perception among practitioners that many decisions within the framework of NORDEFSCO are made at the highest political level, but are often somewhat detached from the practical realities and possibilities on the ground (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019).

---

<sup>74</sup> Besides reiterating existing areas of cooperation, the vision also lists numerous new goals to be achieved by 2025, such as an increased focus on joint exercises and training activities, increased cooperation in total defence, military security of supply and civil-military cooperation, the enhancement of transatlantic relations by seeking closer cooperation in areas such as training, exercises and other activities as well as improved cooperation with European partners (Nordic Defence Cooperation Vision 2025, 2018).

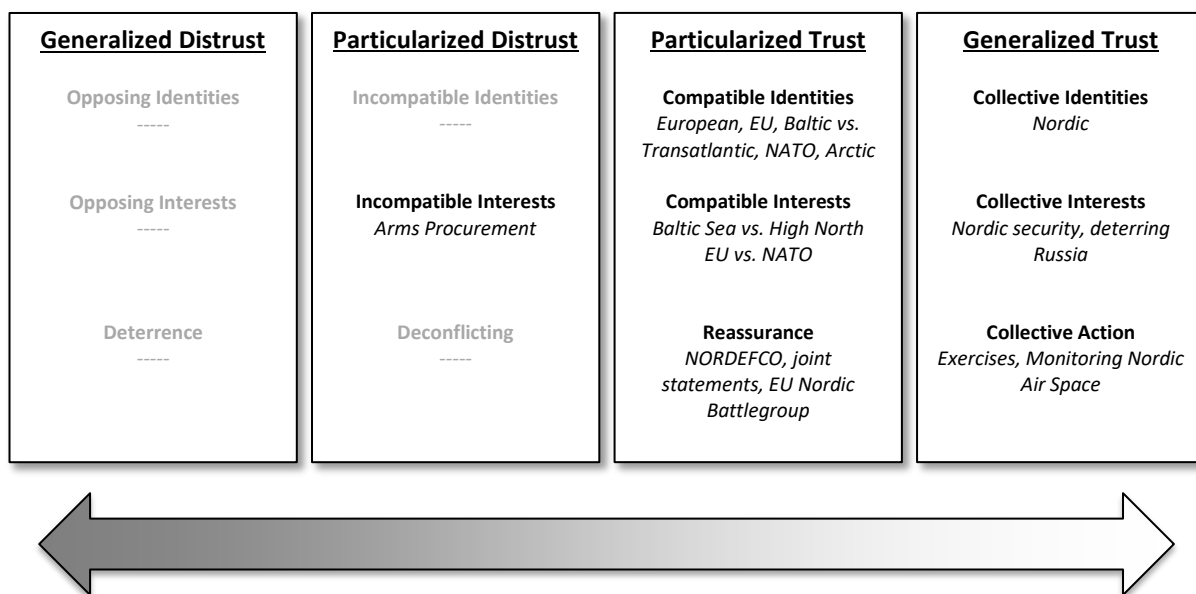


Figure 13. Swedish-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.3.3 Swedish-Canadian Defence and Security Relations

Different geographical focal points, the lack of specific military security arrangements as well as a not particularly pronounced Swedish Arctic identity are the main reasons explaining the low levels of practical Swedish-Canadian defence cooperation. In fact, apart from the annual meetings of the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable and smaller contributions to Canada's Op NANOOK,<sup>75</sup> the vast majority of Swedish-Canadian defence cooperation takes exclusively place in the context of NATO and the OSCE (Canadian Diplomat, 2019, but see also Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, pp. 87). Again, the somewhat limited military capabilities as well as different geographical areas of strategic importance explain much of this lack of a tighter defence cooperation between both countries. While, Sweden's defence, as already mentioned, is primarily concerned with the wider Baltic Sea area, the focus of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is primarily on North America and specifically on the adjoining international air and sea areas of the North Atlantic, the North Pacific and the Arctic Ocean (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017,

---

<sup>75</sup> In 2019, for example, a few Swedish military divers participated in Operation NANOOK-NUNALIVUT 19, but generally Swedish participation in Op NANOOK is still at the very initial stages (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

pp. 60; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019). In other words, while these different areas of interest are certainly compatible, they are not necessarily collective. A similar argument might be made with regard to Sweden and Canada’s threat perception vis-à-vis Russia. Whereas Sweden, due to its geographical proximity, seems much more concerned with Russia’s current military posture and the impact it has on its national security, most Canadian militaries do not see Russia as posing any direct military threat to Canada (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019). Nevertheless, Canadian officials expressed a strong solidarity towards their European partners and allies, acknowledging their different threat perception of Russia (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019). Since Canada – as will be discussed in the next section of this chapter – perceives of itself as a “middle power with a proud history of contributing to global security” (Canadian Military Doctrine, 2009, para. 0401) it – like Sweden – actively engages in various practices to deter any potential Russian aggression against its European allies and partners. In this regard, Swedish-Canadian interests overlap and both countries have been cooperating in a number of joint military activities (e.g. during Trident Juncture ’18, ‘Cold Response’ or the ‘Arctic Challenge Exercise 17’). Yet, other than for Swedish-Norwegian defence cooperation it becomes evident that their defence and security relations lack a strong unifying identity that would compensate for different national areas of interest, making most of their practical military cooperation under the framework of NATO a practice of mutual reassurance, rather than of full collective action.

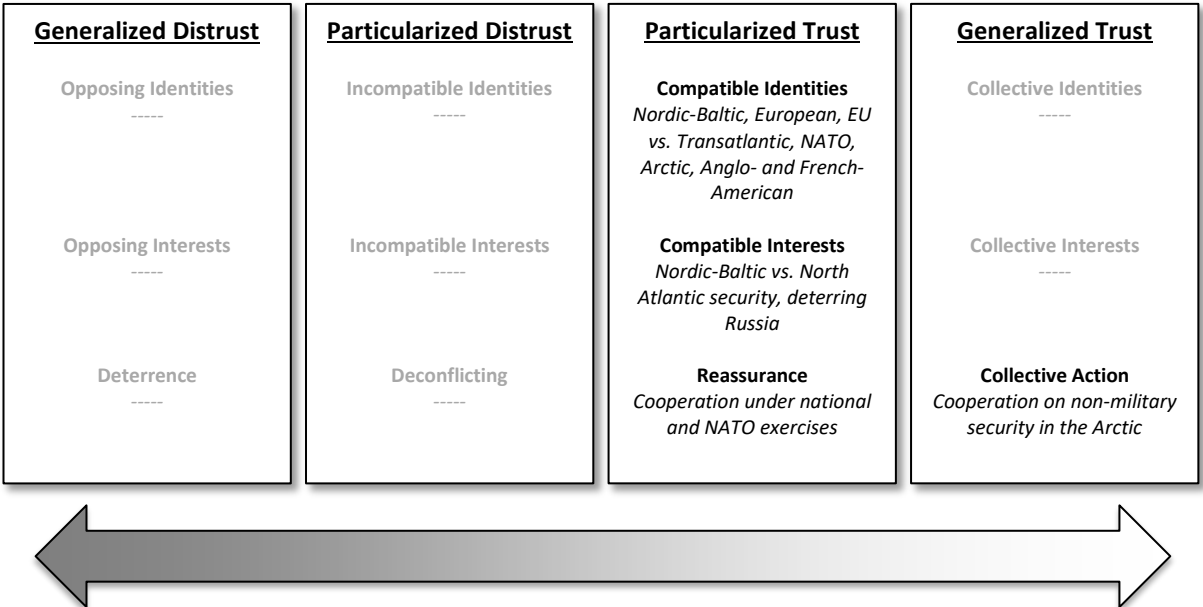


Figure 14. Swedish-Canadian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.3.4 Swedish-Russian Defence and Security Relations

The Ukrainian crisis had a significant impact on Sweden's defence and security politics and in particular on its relations with Russia. The 2014 report by the Swedish Parliamentary Defence Commission states:

The Russian aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea are the biggest challenge to the European security order, since its establishment a quarter of a century ago. Russia's aggressive actions are a violation of international law and bilateral commitments. General principles, such as a state's right to territorial integrity and political independence including the UN Charter were ignored. The Russian leadership has shown itself to be unpredictable. We cannot accept that aggression changes European borders (Försvaret av Sverige - Starkare försvar för en osäker tid, 2014, p. 14).

Russia's current foreign and security policy is viewed as challenging central norms of Swedish foreign and security policy and of its partners in the European Union (Försvaret av Sverige - Starkare försvar för en osäker tid, 2014, p. 10; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, pp. 65). In 2016, a report by the Swedish Foreign Ministry concluded that "Russia has developed an antagonistic approach towards the West. [...] [and that] the line of confrontation between Russia and NATO has moved into the Baltic Sea region" (Utrikesdepartementet, 2016, p. 12). This view and the particularized level of distrust that comes with it, are only reinforced by Russia's ongoing military modernization program and considerable investments into its armed forces (Försvaret av Sverige - Starkare försvar för en osäker tid, 2014, p. 16; Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, pp. 29; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, pp. 73; Swedish Diplomat, 2018). Altogether, old images of 'Russia as the enemy' seem to have resurrected in Swedish defence political thinking.<sup>76</sup> Russia is seen as "the only state in Sweden's neighbourhood that, in the foreseeable future, could conceivably engage in military aggression against its neighbours" (Utrikesdepartementet, 2016, p. 13, but see also Czarny, 2018, p. 174; Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025, 2019, pp. 21, pp. 109).

---

<sup>76</sup> For a comprehensive study of the historical roots of the Russian enemy images in Swedish foreign and security policy see Åselius (1994).



Amid this changed threat perception vis-à-vis Russia, Sweden is taking various steps to deter any possible Russian aggression against Swedish territory. In its defence bill, issued in June 2015, the Swedish government decided to increase its defence budget “for the first time in more than two decades [to a] total defence spending over the next five years [of] 224 billion SEK<sup>77</sup>” (Sweden's Defence Policy 2016 to 2020, 2015, p. 3), to increase its military presence in the Baltic Sea, including the re-establishment of a permanent military presence on the island of Gotland (Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, pp. 10) and to update its concept of ‘total defence’, consisting of an integrated approach of military and civil defence (Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020, 2015, pp. 51). Beyond its military investments, Sweden has over the last couple of years also considerably stepped up its military exercise activities and is also increasingly opening up for more direct military cooperation with NATO and NATO countries. For example, the Swedish exercise ‘Aurora 17’ was with more than 19,000 soldiers not only the country’s largest exercise for more than twenty years, but also included military personnel from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Lithuania, Norway and the United States (Swedish Armed Forces, 2017). The scenario of the exercise focused primarily on the defence of the island of Gotland (Swedish Armed Forces, 2017) as well as on the credible deterrence of any aggression against Sweden:

Deterrence lies at the core of a strong defence, one that rises to all threats and overcomes all challenges. It is designed to deter potential attackers, and force them to carefully consider the risks of attacking our country. For a deterrent to be effective, it needs to be credible and visible. Through frequent and extensive training and exercise, especially with other defence forces, Sweden is strengthening its deterrence effect and makes it more credible (Swedish Armed Forces, 2017).

The focus on enhancing Sweden’s interoperability with key NATO partners, such as Norway, the US and Great Britain, could also be observed during the Swedish army exercise ‘Northern Wind 2019’, in which NATO countries – in particular Norway – had the by far largest foreign troop contribution (Swedish Armed Forces, 2019, p. 6).

---

<sup>77</sup> Approximately 24.6 billion USD.

However, despite these clear and visible steps of deterrence, Swedish practitioners as well as central Swedish defence and security documents continue to attach importance to maintaining a functioning relationship with Russia (Dalsjö, 2015, p. 12; Swedish Diplomat, 2018). This goal is primarily pursued through various practices of reassurance and pragmatic cooperation in policy areas and geographical regions that Sweden perceives to be of compatible, maybe even of collective interest. These include the facilitation of people-to-people contacts (e.g. business, civil society, academia, etc.) (Swedish Diplomat, 2018), search and rescue as well as cooperation in the context of the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Council of the Baltic Sea States (Nationell säkerhetsstrategi, 2017, p. 15). In addition, Sweden is also engaging in a number of steps and initiatives meant to deconflict its military security relations with Russia. In 2017, both countries agreed to establish a direct line of communication between the Swedish Joint Forces Command ('Insatsledningen') and the Russian CHOD, with the goal of preventing potential misunderstandings, for example, in the context of military exercises and activities (O'Dwyer, 2017; Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019). In November 2016, the Swedish government was also one of the founders of a group of 'like-minded states'<sup>78</sup> that expressed its support for a "relaunch of conventional arms control in Europe" (Federal Foreign Office, 2016a). This initiative led to the initiation of the OSCE Structured Dialogue, an informal working group mandated to contribute "towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating conventional arms control and CSBMs in Europe" (From Lisbon to Hamburg: Declaration on the Twentieth Anniversary of the OSCE Framework for Arms Control, 2016). Sweden is not only an active member in both, the group of like-minded states and within the Structured Dialogue (Swedish Diplomat, 2018), but also used the momentum to begin rebuilding its own national arms control and CSBM expertise (Swedish Diplomat, 2018). In a similar vein, a Swedish exercise planner explained that since Sweden's military exercise Aurora '17 took place at the same time and in proximity to the Russian-Belarussian exercise Zapad 2017 and the large Polish exercise Dragon-17, the Swedish government decided to organize a voluntary

---

<sup>78</sup> The group was initiated by former German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier during the German OSCE chairmanship in 2016. The initial group of like-minded states consisted of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland (Federal Foreign Office, 2016b). The initiative led to Declaration on the Twentieth Anniversary of the OSCE Framework for Arms Control, which mandated the creation of the OSCE Structured Dialogue (From Lisbon to Hamburg: Declaration on the Twentieth Anniversary of the OSCE Framework for Arms Control, 2016).

observation program<sup>79</sup> (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018, but also Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019). The fact that Sweden decided to invite specifically observers from other Baltic Sea countries, including from Belarus and Russia, indicates the country's interest in deconflicting its currently incompatible military security interests with Russia in the Baltic Sea region. That Belarus reciprocated Sweden's signal and likewise invited military observers to its part of Zapad 2017 shows how important exceeding each other's behaviour can be in the formation of trust between actors. However, as one of my informants underlined, it is also important not to overstate the effect and signal that comes with the implementation of existing arms control and CSBM agreements: "I think that there is a tendency for everyone to inflate the importance of the area in which you work and [...] I will not do that. There are more important factors governing the strategy of Sweden" (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019). The fact that Russia decided not to reciprocate Sweden's voluntary steps for increased transparency over its part of 'Zapad 2017' seems to underline his more sober view.<sup>80</sup> Thus, while arms control and CSBM might serve as a sufficient practice of deconflicting incompatible interests, in very few cases maybe even as a tool of reassurance (e.g. underlining the defensive nature of an exercise), they should not be looked upon as a practice that serves a common or collective goal. As another informant with experiences from both, multilateral exercises as well as the implementation of CSBM and arms control agreements, explained:

When you are part of an exercise, you are invited as a friend, as someone you should do your business with. If you are observing, it is not necessarily your friends that you are observing or what you call your friends at least [...], but you are observing the exercise because of the Vienna Document mechanism. So, these are two different positions (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

Sweden's currently strained defence and security relations with Russia can seemingly also not be mitigated by a shared Arctic identity. Other than Russia, Sweden is neither an Arctic coastal state, nor

---

<sup>79</sup> According to the current provisions, military activities of OSCE participating States are only subject to observation by other OSCE states whenever the number of troops involved, exceeds 13,000 or at least 300 battle tanks, 500 armoured vehicles or 250 artillery pieces or mortars partake in the same military activity (VDoc 2011, Chapter VI, para. 47.4).

<sup>80</sup> The different possible interpretations of this non-reaction will be discussed at a later stage of this chapter (see 5.5).

seems to have developed a particularly strong Arctic identity or hard security policy interest in the region (Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, p. 65; *Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020*, 2015, pp. 31). While the government in Stockholm in its Arctic strategy of 2011 states that “Sweden’s security has long since been influenced by developments in the Arctic” (Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region, 2011, p. 14), it also concludes that “the overall security policy climate in the Arctic is [nowadays] very much dependent on the relationship between Russia and the United States” (Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region, 2011, p. 14) and that “the current security policy challenges in the Arctic are not of a military nature” (Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region, 2011, p. 14), but primarily connected to climate change and environmental challenges (Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region, 2011, p. 24; Swedish Diplomat, 2018). Since these issues are seen as compatible with Russia’s non-military security interests in the Arctic and currently not looked upon with the same level of urgency than Russia’s military activities in the Baltic Sea region, the Arctic does currently not rank equally high on Sweden’s defence and security political agenda. However, the current constellation of Swedish-Russian interests in the Arctic allows both countries to maintain a functioning level of cooperation on issues of common interest, such as in the context of the newly established Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF). Being subject to the ministry of justice, Sweden’s coast guard is civilian, making it in the current political climate easier to maintain a practice-oriented cooperation with Russia in this area. Yet, at the same time, the fact that the ACGF is not mentioned in any central Swedish defence and security policy document shows that it does not play a central role in Swedish defence and security politics.

In sum, Swedish-Russian defence and security relations have significantly deteriorated since the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine. Russia’s more aggressive force posture in the Baltic Sea region have pushed Sweden so close to NATO that it is despite its official policy of military non-alignment, meanwhile more or less regarded and treated by Russia as a ‘quasi-NATO country’ (Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019). However, despite a clear shift towards increased deterrence, Sweden still undertakes considerable efforts to try deconflicting its bilateral defence and security relations with Russia, be it through efforts in the area of arms control and CSBM, the opening of new communication lines or pragmatic cooperation on non-military security challenges in the Arctic region (e.g. SAR, environmental protection, and climate change).

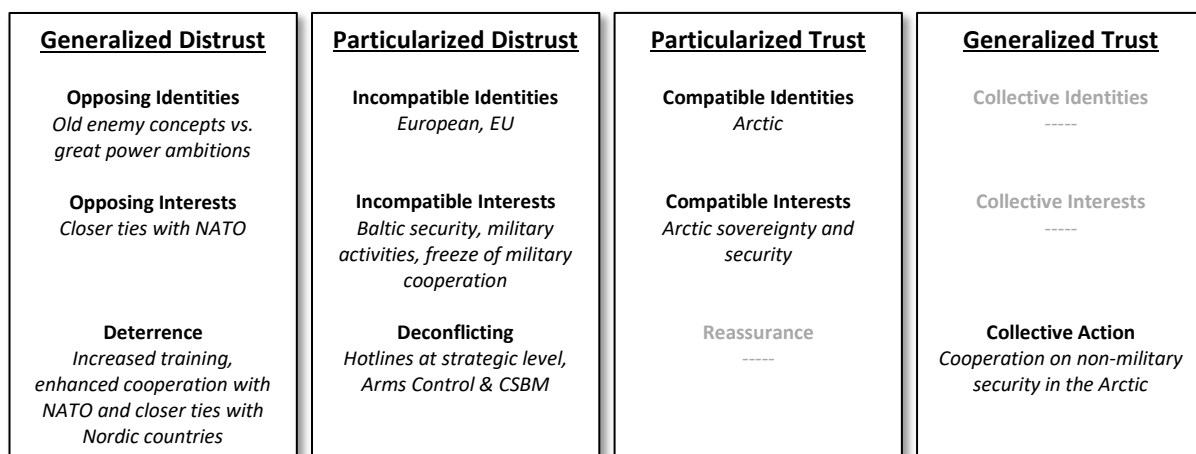


Figure 15. Swedish-Russian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.3.5 Summary

In sum, it can be seen that Sweden's defence and security politics are very much defined by a strong emphasis on multilateral institutions, a long-lasting history of military non-alignment and a pronounced European and Nordic(-Baltic) identity. The latter serves as an important factor in overcoming the different memberships of Nordic countries in the EU and NATO, enabling them to pool their defence and security interests under a commonly shared Nordic identity. The same is true for Sweden's bilateral defence and security cooperation with Norway, which due to different memberships in EU and NATO, limited military capabilities as well as different geostrategic focal points (Baltic Sea vs. European High North) is marked by highly compatible, yet not always collective interests. This makes their 'collective' Nordic identity an important link in their defence and security relations. In light of a shared Russian threat perception, this shared identity has also resulted in a number of collective actions and measures of reassurance. Sweden's perception of a Russia as an increasing threat to European security clearly dominates the current bilateral security relations between both countries. The loss of trust seems most strongly felt in the military security realm and has led to several steps of deterrence (e.g. increase in exercise activities and stronger ties with NATO). At the same time, Sweden aims at maintaining a functioning cooperation with Russia in other policy areas. To this end, Sweden engages in a number of steps to deconflict the incompatible defence identities and interests in its relations with Russia (e.g. cooperation on non-military issues, the establishment of military hotlines or voluntary transparency over exercises). Finally, even though Swedish-Canadian defence and security interests are highly compatible,

both countries lack a connecting common identity that could overcome the different geostrategic interests in national defence, limiting their practical defence cooperation to a few cases of collective action and reassurance in the context of Sweden's cooperation with NATO (e.g. joint exercises).

## **5.4 Canadian Defence and Security Politics**

The absence of an immediate military threat, particularly close defence ties with the United States and a strong Arctic identity are key determinants of Canadian defence and security politics. Bordering the United States to the south and protected by the harsh Arctic environment to the north, Canada has historically enjoyed a stable and predictable national security environment. Being less concerned with its own national defence, Canada – in relation to its limited capabilities – developed a relatively confident foreign, defence and security policy over the years. This policy is grounded in a self-perception of Canada as a global middle power and as an international security provider (rather than receiver). It has resulted in a strong Canadian support for multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations or NATO. In the absence of an immediate military threat, Canada's Arctic security agenda is clearly dominated by questions of national sovereignty and human security, such as providing basic services, food or housing to its remote and poor communities in the north (Bergh, 2012, p. 6), while much of its defence and security policies, aim at increasing the Canadian government's visible presence in the north. As former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a particularly strong proponent of Canadian Arctic sovereignty once put it:

Canada has a choice when it comes to defending our sovereignty over the Arctic. We either use it or lose it. And make no mistake, this Government intends to use it. Because Canada's Arctic is central to our national identity as a northern nation. It is a part of our history. And it represents the tremendous potential of our future (Government of Canada, 2007).

### **5.4.1 Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends**

Historically, Canadian foreign and defence politics have always been characterized by the country's somewhat remote geographical location and close bilateral ties with two of the most important global superpowers of recent times, the United Kingdom and the United States. As Robert Bothwell describes it: "Canada was an island in an English-speaking sea" (2009, p. 20) and as a colony and later on dominion of the British Empire, for many years enjoyed the military protection by, at that time, one of the strongest superpowers in the world (Bothwell, 2009, p. 21). At the same time, Canada could for many years not develop a foreign and defence policy of its own. Instead most decisions were decided for by the British crown (Rioux & Hay, 1999, p. 58; Sarty, 2009, p. 112). Lacking autonomy in foreign

and defence affairs, Canada, among other things, also was pulled into a number of different conflicts of the British Empire that had hardly anything to do with Canadian defence and security concerns. These included the French and Indian War, which led to the secession of the former French territories in North America to the British crown, the American War of Independence, the War of 1812 as well as World War I, to which Canada was drawn into by Britain's formal declaration of war against Germany in 1914 (Nossal, 2015, pp. 45; Sarty, 2009, pp. 112). However, generally

from Confederation in 1867 until the Second World War, Canada was physically remote from the centre of the great power rivalries of Europe. Unlike small European states that were constantly threatened by their powerful neighbours, Canada never faced a serious national security problem (Nossal, 2015, p. 45).

With the Statute of Westminster in 1931, Canada eventually gained its de facto independence from the British Empire and now enjoyed full autonomy over its foreign and security policy (Nossal, 2015, p. 80). However, due to its past, Canada's foreign and security political interests continued to be closely intertwined with Europe and in particular with those of the United Kingdom.<sup>81</sup> When Britain and its allies declared war against Nazi Germany in 1939, Canada followed its former colonial power into World War II after only a few days of consideration (Bothwell, 2009, p. 24; Rioux & Hay, 1999, p. 59; Sarty, 2009, pp. 124) and became one of the major contributors to the war efforts of allied forces in Europe (Nossal, 2015, p. 75; Sarty, 2009, pp. 125). By the end of the war, about 45,000 Canadians had lost their lives, mainly on the main theatres of war in Europe (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2019). As the majority of hostilities took place in Europe and thus, apart from some minor episodes and the submarine warfare in the North Atlantic (see Skogrand, 2004, pp. 71), far away from Canadian homeland (Sarty, 2009, p. 126), this gave rise to Canada's self-perception as a global 'middle power' and as a peace and security provider for its European allies and for other countries in the world. This perception expressed itself in a regular engagement of Canada in various NATO operations and UN peacekeeping missions (Bercuson, 2018; Holland, 2012, p. 63; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019; Nossal, 2015, pp. 75).

---

<sup>81</sup> French Canada and the national question of Québec are also frequently mentioned as important factors in defining Canada's foreign and security policy (e.g. Bothwell, 2009, p. 23; Nossal, 2015, p. 36), but do not seem to have (at least not openly) affected the analysis of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia in this doctoral thesis.

While declining and frequently contested (Nossal, 2015, pp. 78), Canada's perception as a middle power and security provider seems to linger on until today as we will also see at a later stage of this section.

By the end of World War II, the United States had effectively replaced Great Britain as the leading Western superpower (Bothwell, 2009, p. 25; Nossal, 2015, p. 80; Sarty, 2009, p. 128). While this shift in power came with a lot of change for the international system, it represented a considerable degree of continuity for Canada (Nossal, 2015, pp. 35; Sarty, 2009, p. 128). While during British colonial rule having experienced a number of violent episodes in the context of the already mentioned American War of Independence and the War of 1812, Canada and the US quickly developed particularly close political and military ties (Bergh, 2012, p. 2; Bothwell, 2009, pp. 26; Nossal, 2015, p. 45). In other words, with the United States as the new emerging superpower, Canada's national security was once again guaranteed through its alliance with one of the major military powers in the world. However, despite their common European heritage, the tight relations between both neighbours did not simply evolve out of mutual identities or interests, but at least to some degree also out of military and geostrategic necessity (Bothwell, 2009, pp. 28). With the beginning of the Cold War, Canada, which was previously located off the arenas of geopolitical power games between the world's superpowers, was now right at its centre (Lackenbauer, 2011, pp. 220; Nossal, 2015, pp. 48). The Arctic Ocean and in extension Canada, represented (and still represent) the shortest flight distance for strategic bombers and intercontinental missile systems between the United States and the Soviet Union (and today Russia). This turned the region into a major arena for the strategic nuclear deterrence postures of both superpowers and eventually led to the establishment of the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD)<sup>82</sup> in 1957, a three-line early warning radar and air defence system to protect the United States and the southern parts of Canada from long-range bombers and missile systems from the Soviet Union (Bothwell, 2009, p. 31; Exner-Pirot & Huebert, 2020, p. 142; Lackenbauer, 2011, p. 221; North American Aerospace Defense Command, 2013, pp. 4; Nossal, 2015, pp. 49; Sarty, 2009, p. 131). Until today, personnel from the American and Canadian air forces are fully integrated into the command. The other central development for Canadian defence during the Cold War was the foundation of NATO in 1949. Together with the United States, Canada took a leading role in the negotiations that led to the signing of the

---

<sup>82</sup> In 1981, the command changed its name to North American Aerospace Defense Command (NAADC) (Riches & Palmowski, 2016).



Washington Treaty. Canada not only saw NATO as a purely military alliance against an increasing Soviet threat, but also as a means to reassure and manifest the strong historical grown cultural, economic and political ties between North America and Western Europe (Greco & Hlatky, 2018, p. 275; Holland, 2012, p. 52; Nossal, 2015, p. 63; Sarty, 2009, pp. 129). These linkages and the perception of NATO as more than just a military alliance, continue to shape Canada's foreign and defence politics as well as the view of practitioners until today. As Canada's Lead Exercise Planner at the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC) underlined, NATO is more than just a pragmatic military partnership, it is

about commonality of lifestyle, interests, economic ties, view of the world, educational systems, social bonds, commonalities in government, the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-French founding identities and most specifically, respect for a rules-based order in the post Westphalian era, that are strongly reinforced to prevent such war tragedies as experienced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019).

While the immediate threat of 'mutually assured destruction' disappeared with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in 1991, the central themes in Canadian defence and security politics remained: national sovereignty; tight bilateral cooperation with the United States (e.g. through NORAD)<sup>83</sup>; close ties and support for the defence and security interests of European allies and partners through NATO; and a strong support for multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations (Bercuson, 2018; Greco & Hlatky, 2018, pp. 275; Nossal, 2015, pp. 50, pp. 57, pp. 64; Sarty, 2009, pp. 136). They can also be found in Canada's most recent defence policy, outlining Canada's strategic focus as: "Strong at home. Secure in North America. Engaged in the world" (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 59).

Canada's transatlantic identity as well as bi- and multilateral defence and security cooperation through NORAD and NATO continue to be integral parts of Canada's most recent military doctrine and defence policy (see Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017; Canadian Military Doctrine, 2009). Canada's close military alliance with the United States as well as "preserving stability in the Euro-Atlantic region" (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 83) and in particular

---

<sup>83</sup> A comprehensive overview over Canadian-US defence relations can be found at Canadian Armed Forces (2018c).

the defence of the sea lines of communication between North America and Europe in the North Atlantic still represent Canada's main strategic interests and focal points (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, pp. 79). Thus, Canada (together with Norway) has been one of the strongest proponents of the new NATO Joint Force Command Norfolk in the US, which is tasked with the protection of these sea and communication lines amid increasing Russian activities in the region (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019; NATO, 2019c, p. 40). While continuing to view NATO as vital to Canadian national defence, Canada's role and perception within the alliance continue to be largely those of a security provider to European allies and partners (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 83; Canadian Military Doctrine, 2009, para. 0317-0320; Lackenbauer, 2011, p. 222; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019). Responding to Russia's actions in Ukraine, Canada launched Operation REASSURANCE through which it contributes to NATO reassurance measures for Central and Eastern European allies, to deter any potential Russian military aggression against NATO territory. As part of Operation REASSURANCE, Canada has taken the lead of one of four NATO Multinational Battlegroups<sup>84</sup> deployed to the three Baltic States and Poland, contributes through the Standing Naval Forces of NATO to an increased allied naval presence in the Black Sea and actively engages in NATO's enhanced Air Policing (Canadian Armed Forces, 2018b; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019; NATO, 2019c, pp. 18). Canada also regularly contributes significantly to NATO operations, missions and exercises, such as Trident Juncture '18 (Canadian Armed Forces, 2018a) or the annual anti-submarine warfare exercise 'Dynamic Mongoose' (MARCOM, 2019). Generally, Canada's commitments and engagement in NATO are largely seen as an act of support and solidarity with European allies as well as a long-term investment in its own strategic and security interests. As also Canada's 2017, Defence Policy underlines:

Canada remains among the safest and most secure countries in the world. However, the international landscape is shifting under tremendous pressures, and the current security environment presents a variety of threats, many that transcend national borders. Increasingly, instability abroad can have direct manifestation in Canada. Thus, defending Canada and Canadian interests not only demands robust domestic defence but also requires

---

<sup>84</sup> More precisely, Canada is leading the Multinational Battlegroup in Latvia, which currently also includes troop contributions by Albania, the Czech Republic, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2019c, p. 13).

active engagement abroad (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 59).

Apart from NATO, other regional European security organizations, such as the EU or the OSCE, receive no specific mentioning or attention in Canada's defence policy or military doctrine<sup>85</sup> (see Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017; Canadian Military Doctrine, 2009). In fact, Canada's focus and priorities with regard to both organizations are predominately of a non-military nature. Canada's relationship with the EU mainly rests upon the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), which touches upon a variety of different policy areas, but without any sort of practical defence cooperation (Strategic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Canada, of the other part, 2016) as well as on the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), defining Canada's economic relations with the EU and EU countries (see Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part, 2016). Likewise, Canada's approach to the OSCE follows a predominantly non-military security agenda. The country's permanent mission to the OSCE defines Canada's priorities as

providing support to human rights and fundamental freedoms; assisting fragile states and regions; supporting democracy building and the rule of law; pursuing gender and diversity mainstreaming; and strengthening regional capacities in conflict prevention, sustainable development, and good governance (Permanent Mission of Canada to the OSCE, 2019).

The OSCE-related arms control and CSBM regimes in the politico-military security dimension, such as the Vienna Document, the CFE treaty or the treaty on OS, receive no specific mentioning do currently not play a particularly influential role in Canadian defence and security politics. Besides their limited applicability on the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF),<sup>86</sup> a main reason seems to be a notable dissatisfaction with the 'non-functioning' of current arms control and CSBM regimes (Canadian Diplomat, 2019), in particular with regard to Russian attempts of bypassing its commitments to provide transparency over

---

<sup>85</sup> Canada's military doctrine only mentions the EU and OSCE once with regard to their potential roles in carrying our peace operations on behalf of the UN (Canadian Military Doctrine, 2009, para. 0634).

<sup>86</sup> The VDoc and the CFE treaty only apply to Canadian forces stationed or operating in Europe, whereas only the treaty on OS also covers Canadian land territory in North America.

its military activities (e.g. through prior notification or the invitation of military observers) (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019). Overall, even though the overall policy goals of the EU and OSCE are highly compatible with Canada's foreign and security political interests, neither organization plays a particularly important role in Canada's defence and security relations with European allies and partners.

Apart from its strong transatlantic ties, Canada does also have a particularly pronounced Arctic identity. Despite the fact that the vast majority of Canadians lives close to the Canadian-American border in the south, the Arctic has always played an important role for the country's national identity (Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, p. 43; Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 79; Exner-Pirot & Huebert, 2020, p. 141; Nossal, 2015, p. 44; Østhagen et al., 2018, pp. 166). Politically, Canada's Arctic or Northern identity<sup>87</sup> is expressed in Canada's Northern Strategy from 2009 and Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework from 2019. Both documents have a particularly strong domestic focus, emphasizing issues of national sovereignty, safety and non-military security (Canada's Northern Strategy - Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future, 2009; Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, 2019). The emphasis on sovereignty and non-military security challenges also extrapolates to Canada's foreign, defence and security relations (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 51; Canadian Military Doctrine, 2009, para. 0637-0640; Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010). For example, due to the sparse population, lack of infrastructure, harsh environmental and climatic conditions, the CAF do not perceive of the Canadian Arctic as an arena of national defence, but of national sovereignty and non-military security, for which literally every capability and piece of infrastructure are considered of utmost strategic importance. As one of my informants explained:

The infrastructure in the north is so weak that if you have a private industry, a mine that has a huge emergency and environment management system established, helicopters etc., you cannot ignore that. In a civic security framework, you cannot ignore those resources. Since, we, the military, simply do not have enough equipment up there to support everything, they become major players in everything we do (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

---

<sup>87</sup> Since the definition of the Canadian Arctic is contested among different government agencies and even within the Canadian Armed Forces itself, many of my informants preferred talking about the Canadian North and the Northern territories (see Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

As a direct consequence of the particularly difficult operational environment in the Canadian North (e.g. extreme low temperatures, ice floats or thick fog), much of what the CAF do in the Arctic has little to do with defending Canada against a hostile foreign state, but much more with coordinating and supporting other government agencies (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019; Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019) as well as contributing to a small, but visible military and governmental presence in the Canadian North and the Northwest Passage (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 60). This presence is, for example, achieved through the Canadian Ranger Program or the Royal Canadian Navy (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019; Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019; Griffiths et al., 2011, pp. 99; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019). Canada's focus on national sovereignty and non-military security in the Arctic also becomes visible in its Op NANOOK, an all-government operation, consisting of a series of smaller exercises that are carried out in Canada's Northern territories Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Labrador. While planned and coordinated by the CAF, the exercises predominantly focus on improving the cooperation and coordination among various governmental agencies on issues, such as emergency response, disaster management or search and rescue in the remote areas of the Canadian North. Op NANOOK also includes regular smaller army and naval exercises, which predominantly serve as visibility pieces, underlining Canadian sovereignty claims over its Northern territories and the Northwest Passage (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019; Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019; Lackenbauer, 2011, pp. 232; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019). The facilitating and supporting role of the CAF in the Arctic was also emphasized by the responsible military planer of Op NANOOK at the Joint Task Force (North):

The reality is that the military in the north has no special role. We are a player as much as everybody else is. It is not our Arctic. We do not control it. We do not dictate anything and our influence is and remains limited. We are a military organization and unless there is a defence or hard security issue, we have no role in the Arctic. Period. That means that when I do planning meetings on operations that aim at creating cohesion between the various levels of government in the north, there are about 120 people in the room and we are just one of them and in most cases, we will likely be responsive to their needs. This is our role (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

His views were echoed by other planners of Op NANOOK (Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019), other practitioners (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans,

JTFN, 2019; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019) and are also expressed in central Canadian Arctic policy, defence and security documents (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, pp. 50; Canadian Military Doctrine, 2009, para. 0637-0640; Canada's Northern Strategy - Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future, 2009; Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010; Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, 2019).

As already stated, Canada's particular domestic focus and emphasis on national sovereignty and non-military security also extrapolates to Canada's Arctic foreign policy (see Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010). Together with Finland, Canada was a key driving force behind the process that eventually led to the founding of the Arctic Council in Ottawa in 1996 (Huebert, 2014, pp. 3). Ever since, Canada has been a major proponent of the Arctic as a region of stability and particularly close cooperation among the eight Arctic states (see Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010). While Canada acknowledges smaller territorial disputes regarding overlapping claims with Denmark (over Hans Island and the North Pole), Russia (over the North Pole) and the United States (delimitation of the sea boundary in the Beaufort Sea and contestations of the status of the Northwest Passage as territorial or international waters), Canada regards the risk of a serious military escalation around any of these disputes as particularly low, but looks upon them as issues that will eventually be resolved through negotiations and international law (Bergh, 2012, pp. 3; Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, pp. 7; Griffiths et al., 2011, pp. 20; Lackenbauer, 2011, pp. 236).<sup>88</sup> Canada's position becomes understandable, considering that Denmark and the US are all close military allies through NATO and NORAD, whereas Russia is a somewhat 'involuntary partner' in the Arctic. Both countries share rather similar positions regarding the status of the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route, and are both particularly sceptical towards the admittance of new permanent observers to the Arctic Council (see Bergh, 2012, pp. 16; Charron, Plouffe, & Roussel, 2012, p. 47; Huebert & Exner-Pirot, 2016; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 168). Having been particularly vocal and determined to keep 'non-Arctic' states and actors out of the region and not looking upon the Arctic through a military lens, Canada has regularly opposed initiatives

---

<sup>88</sup> This position echoes the commitment of all five Arctic littoral states made in the 2008 Ilulissat Declaration The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation and of the United States of America (2008).

for a stronger role and presence of NATO in the region, amid the still largely cooperative relations and low tensions in the region (Bergh, 2012, p. 17; Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, p. 45; Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Haftendorn, 2011, pp. 341; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 166). Instead, Canada prefers to handle security- and defence-related issues in the region either bilaterally, such as through NORAD (Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 174) or its cooperation with the Danish Joint Arctic Command on Greenland (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019), or at least almost exclusively among the eight Arctic states. As such, Canada has support initiatives, such as the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable (ASFR) or initiated the meanwhile discontinued annual meetings of the Arctic Chiefs of Defence Staff (CHOD) (Bergh, 2012, p. 8; Canadian Armed Forces, 2013). Despite considerable political upheavals with Russia since the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine and increased efforts to increase international contributions by Arctic allies and partners to Op NANOOK (CAF, 2019; Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019), there are currently no indications of an overall shift in Canada's defence and security approach to the Arctic region. For now, it seems that Canada's strong national interests continue to prevail over its transatlantic defence and security ties.

#### **5.4.2 Canadian-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations**

As founding members of NATO and Arctic littoral states, Canada and Norway share a strong collective transatlantic as well as Arctic identity. In addition, both countries have overlapping strategic interests in the North Atlantic, explaining why both countries, despite their geographical distance and limited military capabilities, have developed notable defence and security relations. However, these relations are mainly channelled through their common commitments under the NATO framework. Due to similar political positions and common strategic interests in the North Atlantic, Canada and Norway developed and maintained particularly close defence relations during the Cold War. Both countries worked closely together within NATO bodies and committees; a Canadian brigade – the Canadian Air-Sea Transportable Brigade Group, supported by two fighter squadrons – was on hold to assist in case of an attack of the Soviet Union on Northern Norway; they cooperated closely in the monitoring of and the defence of the North Atlantic against Soviet naval vessels and submarines; and Canadian forces were represented at the former Allied Forces Northern Europe Command in Kolsås, outside Oslo. (Børresen, 2011, pp. 98; Canby & Smith, 1987, pp. 452; Østhagen et al., 2018, pp. 172; Skogrand, 2004, pp. 185, pp. 225). Since the immediate threat to European allies with the collapse of the Soviet Union had largely disappeared, NATO began to readjust its strategic focus. With both countries' facing large cuts to their defence budgets, a more limited defence and security cooperation between Canada and Norway evolved.

This only changed after Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014, which led to renewed focus of NATO on territorial defence. Since, then Canadian-Norwegian defence and security cooperation has once again gained in traction. Both countries actively lobbied for NATO’s new Joint Force Command Norfolk, which focuses on NATO’s transatlantic sea communication lines (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019; NATO, 2019c, p. 40) and in NATO’s Trident Juncture ’18, Canada was with approx. 2,000 soldiers the fourth largest troop contributor (CAF, 2018a; Fisher, 2018, p. 3). However, despite new NATO-Russia tensions, Canadian defence and security practitioners continue to emphasize that Canada’s own threat perception regarding Russia has hardly changed (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019; Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019), but expressed their understanding that this might look different for European allies and partners, in particular those situated in the immediate neighbourhood to Russia. As one illustrated:

Nobody thinks the Russians are going to come over the North Pole. My god, trying to operate over that they will kill more people than they will get over to Canada, to be honest. But, I think, the threat is a little more real or tangible to those countries closer to Russia (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019, but see also Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019).

As such, most of Canada’s more recent steps within NATO (e.g. strong participation in exercises) should be understood as reassuring European NATO allies. In comparison, Norway’s engagement in Canadian exercises has so far been modest. During Op NANOOK 2019, Norway only send a couple of military divers as well as a small delegation to explore possibilities of a future stronger engagement. Yet, whether their bilateral defence cooperation in the Arctic will actually increase in the future, remains to be seen.

An area of regular disagreement are Norway and Canada’s different positions regarding security and defence in the Arctic region. While both, bilaterally as well as together with other Arctic states, cooperate on a broad variety of regional non-military issues and security challenges (see Canada's Northern Strategy - Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future, 2009, p. 35; Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, p. 25; Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, 2019; Norwegian

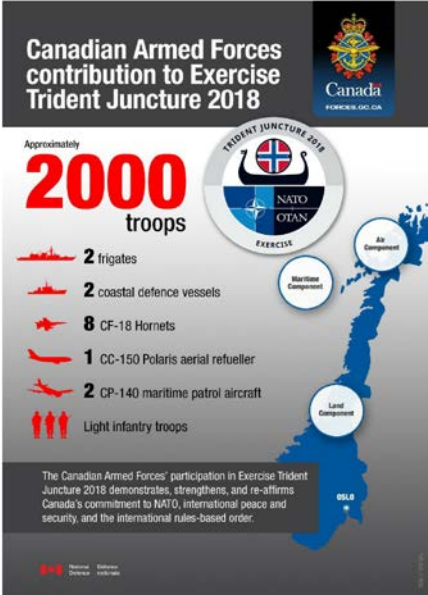


Figure 16. Canada’s participation in Trident Juncture ’18 (Canadian Armed Forces, 2018a).



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014), their national positions on hard security, in particular regarding the role of NATO in the Arctic, diverge notably. While Norway has always been a strong proponent of a larger NATO role and presence in the Arctic, Canada has always been one of the strongest opponents (Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 164). At the Strasbourg-Kehl NATO summit in 2009, Canada retracted from a consensus-text of allies referring to NATO's role in the Arctic (Charron, 2017, p. 1; Haftendorn, 2011, p. 341) and ever since "blocked any text on the Arctic in NATO documents and any NATO Arctic initiatives" (Haftendorn, 2011, pp. 341; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 174). The main reason for these diverging positions is to be found in the considerable differences regarding both countries' Arctic territories (e.g. climate, infrastructure, population density, proximity to Russia) and the different security challenges that these entail (e.g. Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 172). While the Canadian Arctic is only scarcely populated, lacks a notable infrastructure, and is defined by a harsh and cold climate, Norway's Arctic is fairly populated, has a notable infrastructure, and is defined by a relatively moderate climate due to the Gulf Stream. At the same time, being fairly small, and facing the majority of Russia's strategic nuclear assets just across its border, Norway has traditionally relied on allied military presence and NATO support in its national defence. In contrast, apart from being at most 'in the way' between the United States and Russia, for which it primarily relies on its bilateral defence cooperation with the US and NORAD, Canada has never really perceived a real military threat to its Arctic territories (e.g. Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, 2019; Østhagen et al., 2018, pp. 172). In other words, for Canada, a stronger NATO presence in the Arctic would only provide limited added-value, while at the same time shedding light on unresolved territorial disputes with NATO allies Denmark and the US as well as risking a deterioration of the cooperation on non-military security issues in the Arctic with Russia (Haftendorn, 2011, p. 341; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 174). While some observers have suggested that the opening of Op NANOOK to military contributions by NATO allies and partners in Canada's new defence policy 'Strong, Secure, Engaged' might indicate a softening of Canada's opposition to a stronger NATO role in the region (Charron, 2017; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 166), my interviews with various Canadian defence and security practitioners indicate that it is rather unlikely that Canada's opposition will change anytime soon (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019; Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019). Thus, as long as the military security environment in the Arctic remains stable and the territorial disputes with Denmark and the US unresolved, it appears unlikely that this incompatibility in Canadian-Norwegian defence relations will disappear anytime soon.

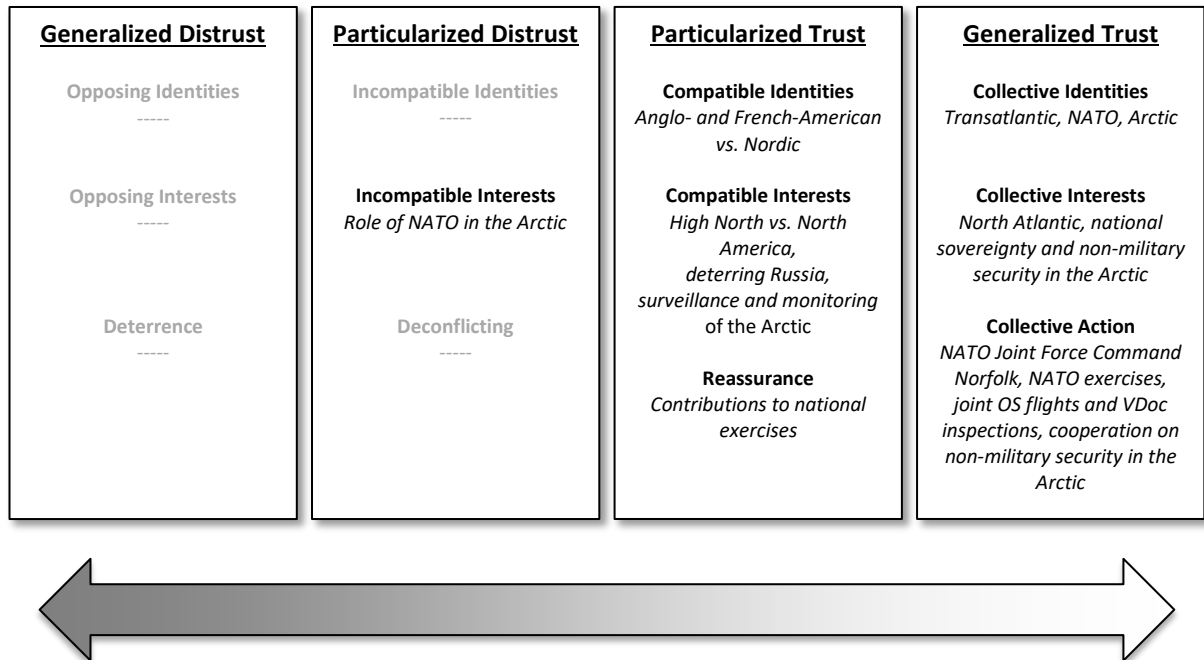


Figure 17. Canadian-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.4.3 Canadian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations

Canada's defence and security relations with Sweden are at a very general level and usually take place in multilateral contexts, such as NATO's Partnership-for-Peace program, the OSCE and its body of related arms control and CSBM regimes (Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019), the annual meetings of the ASFR, or during various multilateral military exercises. In fact, apart from a smaller contribution of Swedish military divers to Canada's Op NANOOK 2019 (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019), so far, no substantial bilateral defence cooperation between both countries has evolved. This has little to do with any incompatibilities in Canadian-Swedish defence and security relations, but largely with both countries focusing on areas of higher strategic importance and political relevance to them. These differences in interests and focal points became evident in the following example by a Canadian naval officer:

For Sweden and Finland, it is not so much that we have different views, but it is more the fact that there has not really been a lot of opportunities to establish a closer relationship, to be honest. Unless it is a NATO exercise, we do not tend to go into the Baltic Sea, just for the sake of going into the Baltic Sea. We might do so with the Standing NATO Naval Force, but generally, Sweden or Finland's area of interest is not really an area in which we would typically operate. So, historically, we never build the same kind of relationship that we did with other partners (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

In other words, despite sharing largely compatible security interests and maintaining positive bilateral relations, Canada and Sweden clearly lack a unifying collective identity or security interest that would encourage them to develop more substantial bilateral defence and security relations. Nevertheless, since the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine, opportunities and venues for more direct military cooperation between both countries – in particular under the framework of NATO’s PfP – have increased. For example, Canadian and Swedish troops worked closely together during NATO’s Trident Juncture ’18 (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019), Norway’s biennial winter exercise ‘Cold Response 2016’ or the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish air force ‘Arctic Challenge Exercise 17’. These increased opportunities for cooperation are the result of NATO’s renewed strategic focus on the collective defence of Europe, Canada’s interest in reassuring European allies and partners as well as Sweden’s focus on developing closer ties with NATO. At the same time, the differences in perceptions and interactions between NATO and non-NATO partners remain as another example from the Canadian navy illustrates:

If we go into the Baltic Sea and we get close to Swedish territorial waters, they will assert their sovereignty, call us, and ask what we are doing there. Whereas, the Brits, the Dutch or the Germans would not really care about a Canadian warship going up and down the English Channel. They probably already know where we are going anyway. In fact, it is even very likely that we are on our way to a port visit in one of these countries (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

Beyond differences in interests and perceptions, it is also important to keep in mind that despite NATO’s ‘Partnership Interoperability Initiative’, which aims at enhancing the interoperability between NATO and non-NATO forces (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2017b), there still exist a number of practical challenges that limit and constrain the interoperability of Swedish and NATO forces (e.g. intelligence sharing or secure communication lines) (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019; Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019). Some Canadian defence practitioners even pondered about Sweden’s continued hesitance to join the alliance. However, since it appears unlikely that this historically grown position will change anytime soon, the defence and security cooperation between both countries remains limited.

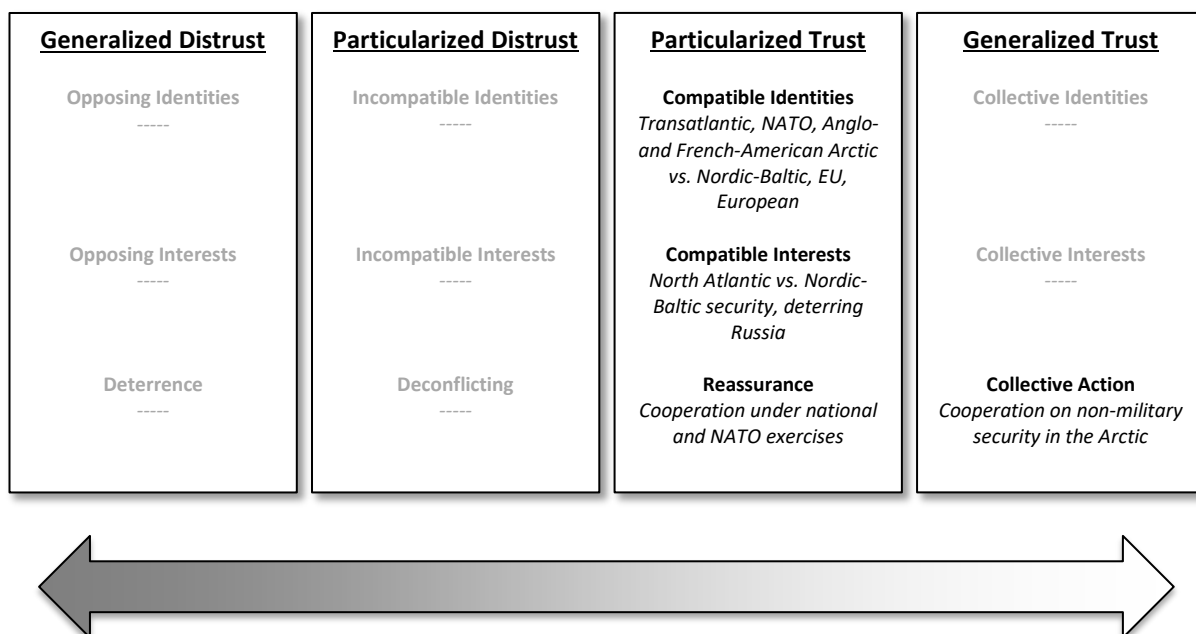


Figure 18. Canadian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations.

#### 5.4.4 Canadian-Russian Defence and Security Relations

Canada's defence and security relations with Russia have always been largely defined by Canada's close ties with the United States. As strategic buffer zone between the United States and the Soviet Union, Canada and in particular NORAD's early warning radar and air defence systems in the Canadian North became an important arena in the nuclear power struggles between the two superpowers (Bothwell, 2009, p. 31; North American Aerospace Defense Command, 2013, pp. 4; Nossal, 2015, pp. 48; Sarty, 2009, p. 131). With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the ubiquitous Soviet threat against North America and Europe disappeared and the need for collective defence of Western allies and partners significantly diminished (North American Aerospace Defense Command, 2013, pp. 7). NATO and consequently also Canada were now no longer focused on the territorial defence of European allies, but began to increasingly look outwards towards the protection of global norms, democratic values and human rights in the world as well as to the fight against international terrorism (Greco & Hlatky, 2018, p. 276; Holland, 2012, p. 55; Nossal, 2015, pp. 64). At the same time, with the signing of the NATO-Russia Founding Act in 1997, more cooperative defence and security relations between NATO and Russia evolved, which also led to limited and pragmatic defence and security relations between Canada and Russia. However, already from their outset, these relations never formed bilaterally, but evolved from and within the context of various multilateral institutions (e.g. the NATO-Russia framework, the UN or the OSCE) (Canadian Diplomat, 2019). As a direct consequence of their

largely different (not necessarily incompatible or opposing) identities and interests, the depth of cooperation between both countries, largely followed the overall trend in NATO-Russia relations.

Following the resurgence of tensions between NATO and Russia since 2014, Canada has reverted to a particularly strong policy of political and military deterrence vis-à-vis Russia. This position was only hardened by a large number of approx. 1.36 million Ukrainian Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2016), including former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland. Canada's current defence policy sees in the Ukrainian crisis Russia's "willingness to test the international security environment" and the return of "a degree of major power competition [...] to the international system" (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 50). "In the face of ongoing Russian military aggression and illegal occupation" (Global Affairs Canada, 2016), the Canadian government imposed a number of political and economic sanctions against Russia (Global Affairs Canada, 2016; Nossal, 2015, pp. 89, pp. 162) that also led to a complete hold in the already limited Canadian-Russian defence and security relations (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019). In addition, Canada has also taken concrete military steps, to support the Ukrainian government in its fight against Russian-backed separatists in Eastern Ukraine and to deter Russian military aggression against NATO allies in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region. To this end, Canada is engaged in a multinational training mission of Ukrainian security forces (Canadian Armed Forces, 2015), has taken the lead in NATO's Multinational Battlegroup in Latvia and contributes continuously to NATO's increased naval presence in the Black Sea (CAF, 2018b; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019; NATO, 2019c, pp. 18). In particular, in the Black Sea, Canadian militaries take note of strong signals of discontent with NATO's military presence: "If we are entering the Black Sea, the Russians will fly their jets and send some ships to us. They are not exercising with us. They shadow us and look at what we are doing, but they usually also leave it at those type of activities" (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019). Beyond contributing to an increased NATO presence in Eastern Europe, Canada also participates with considerable contingents in other NATO operations and exercises by NATO allies and partners, which primarily serve the purpose of reassuring European allies and partners exposed to a more immediate military threat by Russia. The Canadian government states that: "Until Russia clearly demonstrates its respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Canada will continue to work with its allies and like-minded countries to apply pressure that will further isolate Russia economically and politically" (Global Affairs Canada, 2016). Altogether, as long as Russia continues to perceive the US and NATO military presence and activities in its surroundings as main threat to its national security and geopolitical interests (The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2014, para. 12, a), Canada's strong NATO engagement, transatlantic identity and close defence and security ties with the US will clearly remain as opposing identities and interests in Canadian-Russian defence and security relations.

At the same time, while Canada's steps to deter Russian aggression against European allies exemplify a more generalized level of distrust, possibilities for deconflicting their defence and security relations are largely limited to the existing arms control and CSBM architecture of the OSCE. However, following Russia's unilateral suspension of the CFE treaty in 2007 (Federal Foreign Office, 2018) and due to regular disputes over compliance (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Canadian Diplomat, 2019), arms control and CSBM are not only hardly capable of overcoming the incompatibilities in Canadian-Russian defence and security relations, but have even become another source of contestation.

Despite largely opposing and incompatible identities and interests that clearly dominate Canadian-Russian defence and security relations, it is important to take note of Canada and Russia's considerable overlaps and largely even collective identities and security interests in the Arctic region. For both countries, the Arctic plays a central role in their national identities and being the two largest Arctic countries (Huebert & Exner-Pirot, 2016; Lackenbauer, 2010, p. 880), both share a particular focus on protecting their national sovereignty and economic interests in the region. Both countries regularly highlight their shared interests in the region, for example, in exercising national sovereignty over potentially lucrative future shipping routes – Canada in the Northwest Passage and Russia over the Northern Sea Route (Bergh, 2012, p. 18; Charron et al., 2012, p. 47; Huebert & Exner-Pirot, 2016; Lackenbauer, 2010, pp. 882; Laruelle, 2014, pp. 169). In addition, Canada and Russia underline the importance of cooperating on developing their Arctic economic potentials, search and rescue, preventing maritime pollution control, and even on the mapping of their respective continental shelves (Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Canada's Northern Strategy - Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future, 2009, pp. 12, p. 34; Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, p. 25; Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, 2019; Lackenbauer, 2010, p. 887). This is particularly noteworthy considering that most critical observers point at overlapping territorial claims of Arctic littoral states as source for a potential future conflict in the region. However, so far, Russia has been one of the most active states in the collection and submission of data to UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) as well as in the negotiations of overlapping territorial claims with other Arctic states (Charron et al., 2012, p. 44). This seems to underpin Russia's commitment to the 2008 Ilullisat declaration, in which all five Arctic littoral states committed themselves “to the orderly settlement of any possible overlapping claims” (The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation and of the United States of America, 2008). Canada and Russia's emphasis on national sovereignty has also resulted in a more surprising collective interest of keeping other actors and stakeholders out of the region. For example, for many years, Canada prevented the EU from gaining observer status in the Arctic Council – mainly due to a dispute over the EU's ban on seal products (Bergh, 2012, p. 16) – and also the fact

that Canada regularly blocks NATO documents aiming at a stronger role of NATO in the Arctic (Bergh, 2012, p. 17; Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, p. 45; Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Haftendorn, 2011, pp. 341; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 166) makes Canada and Russia somewhat involuntary partners in the region.

Despite the fact that Canada took ‘a principle stance’ on Russia’s actions in Ukraine, Canadian-Russian defence and security relations in the Arctic remained rather stable. While Russian military aircrafts occasionally ‘buzz’ Canadian airspace (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exner-Pirot & Huebert, 2020, p. 144; Huebert & Exner-Pirot, 2016; Østhagen et al., 2018, p. 175), it is interesting to note that the number of interceptions are actually way below those in other regions in the world (Lasserre & Têtu, 2016, pp. 315). In addition, for Canadian militaries, the same issues that challenge Canada on the non-military security dimension (e.g. harsh climate, lack of infrastructure, remoteness), also make any Russian military aggression against Canada unfeasible (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019; Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019) as a few of them also vividly depicted:

Our weaknesses, which make the security situation in the north so problematic, also makes a defence scenario unrealistic. The Russians will never invade (laughing). They would not be able to support themselves, because there is just absolutely nothing. Even if they would come in into a community like Cambridge Bay, they would die (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

Nobody thinks the Russians are going to come over the Northern Pole that, my god, trying to operate over that they will kill more people than they will get over to Canada, to be honest (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

The Canadian Arctic is a nasty area. It is not as developed as in other countries such as in Norway or Finland. The resources are limited and it is a long way from where all the rescue assets can be. You do not want to be stranded in an ice berg or an ice flow and roaming polar bears around you for a long period of time (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

Thus, it might not be too surprising that Canadian officials and politicians, despite their tough rhetoric, were quick to return to a pragmatic level of cooperation with Russia on non-military security issues in the Arctic (Exner-Pirot & Huebert, 2020, p. 144; Huebert & Exner-Pirot, 2016), be it within the framework of the Arctic Council, the Arctic Coast Guard Forum or through regular joint coast guard

exercises (e.g. Arctic Coast Guard Forum, 2019).<sup>89</sup> Thus, as long as Canadian defence and security practitioners and central defence and security policies continue to view Russia's role and activities in the Arctic as compatible with Canadian interests and belief in the continuation of the Arctic as an area of regional cooperation (Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy, 2017, p. 50; Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019), there is little reason to expect any drastic changes in the Canadian-Russian defence and security relations in the Arctic, anytime soon.

In sum, Canadian-Russian defence and security relations have amid new NATO-Russia tensions developed somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, the Canadian government reacted strongly to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and support for separatist groups in Eastern Ukraine. For example, it has been quite actively involved in a number of measures of reassurance European allies and partners against potential Russian military aggression. On the other hand, the actual level of military tensions between both countries has remained rather low. In fact, the Canadian government under Justin Trudeau has meanwhile entered into a policy of active re-engagement with Russia (Exner-Pirot & Huebert, 2020, p. 144; Huebert & Exner-Pirot, 2016). Much of the easing of tensions in Canadian-Russian relations can be traced back to both countries' collective identity and interests in the Arctic region. Being the two largest Arctic states, Canada and Russia are united in their emphasis on protecting national sovereignty over their Arctic territories, waterways and prospective exclusive economic zones. This is, inter alia, pursued through an increased military presence in the Canadian and Russian North as well as by keeping non-Arctic actors as much as possible out of the region (Charron et al., 2012, p. 47; Lackenbauer, 2010, p. 894). Not perceiving of Russia as posing a direct military threat, Canada's main interest is in a continued pragmatic cooperation with Russia, which allows to focus and address a number of non-military security challenges, such as SAR, environmental protection, climate change as well as the provision of human security to its remote and underdeveloped communities in the north (Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

---

<sup>89</sup> At this point, it shall be once again mentioned that both the Canadian and the Russian coast guard are civilian and their practical cooperation remains limited as both countries, other than e.g. Canada and Denmark, do not share a SAR delimitation line (Arctic Portal, 2011).



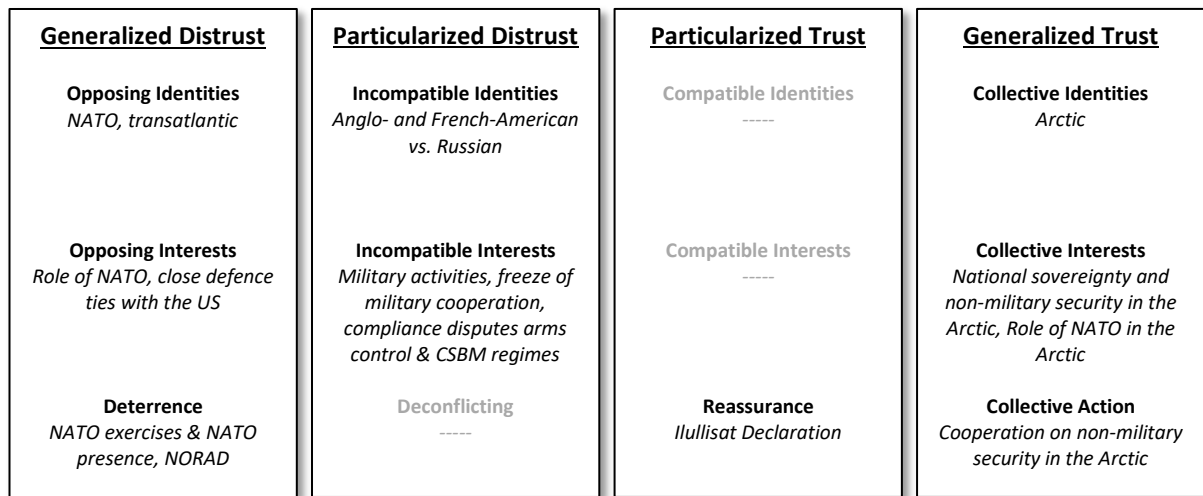


Figure 19. Canadian-Russian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.4.5 Summary

To sum it up, Canada’s defence and security politics are largely defined by strong historical transatlantic and European ties as well as by its particular close bilateral defence cooperation with the United States. Together with its geographic location – bordering the United States to the south and surrounded by oceans east, west and north – Canadian defence and security politics could for most time in history, develop without an immediate threat to its national security. Within NATO, Canada’s self-perception has largely been that of a security provider to European allies and partners, an aspect that not only shows itself in regularly large contributions to NATO exercises or in a strong commitment to reassurance measures for Eastern European allies since 2014, but also in Canada’s bilateral defence and security relations with Norway and Sweden. However, even though Canada and Norway share a strong NATO and Arctic identity and their defence and security interests – except for the Arctic – are mostly compatible, the level of actual defence cooperation is often limited to a number of steps of mutual reassurance within the wider NATO framework. The same is true for Canada’s defence and security relations with Sweden, which in the absence of a collective NATO and transatlantic identity, are even more limited in scope and frequency. While keen on reassuring European allies and partners in light of Russia’s actions in Ukraine, Canada’s collective Arctic identity and interests with Russia – most notably on protecting national sovereignty and economic development – have resulted in the continuation of a pragmatic level of cooperation with Russia on non-military security issues in the region.

## 5.5 Russian Defence and Security Politics

Russian defence and security politics continue to be shaped largely by the country's struggle to counter its declining global and regional influence since the end of the Cold War. Despite various steps that were taken to create more cooperative and trustful defence and security relations between Russia and the West, many of the incompatible defence and security interests for Russia, such as NATO's expansion to the east and the construction of ballistic missile defence systems in Eastern Europe, could not be overcome and gave rise to a dominant perception among Russian defence and security officials as having been deceived by Western states and institutions (e.g. NATO and the EU). Following the Russian-Georgian war in 2008, and certainly even more so after Russia's annexation of Crimea and support for separatist groups in Eastern Ukraine, increasingly distrustful, and at times even hostile, defence and security relations with the West emerged. These renewed tensions surface in particular in geographic areas that are of particular military and strategic importance to Russia, namely the Barents, Baltic, and Black Sea region. While deterrence postures and military activities in these regions have intensified over the last couple of years, the favourable power balance, strategic and economic interests in the Arctic, have resulted in the continuation of historically more cooperative Russian behaviour in the region.

### 5.5.1 Historical Roots, Main Interests, Identities and Trends

Russia's current foreign, defence and security politics are deeply rooted in its past and a strive to return to its historic role as a great power in world politics. As Jeffrey Mankoff captures it in his widely acclaimed book on Russian Foreign Policy:

While it is possible to overstate the influence of this history on the foreign policy of today's Russian Federation, Russia's security and global influence have always been linked to the state's ability to defend itself from attack and to overcome its geographic and economic isolation. Expansion, militarization, and search for secure frontiers have been hallmarks of Russian foreign policy for centuries, as Russian leaders have pursued their quest for international power and influence [...] and these traditions continue to color strategic thinking—for instance in Russia's sensitivity about NATO military assets near its borders and its reluctance to seek integration with Western-dominated institutions (2012, p. 13).

Despite Russia's declining influence in the world since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, this historically grown self-perception and understanding as a great global power continues to shape and drive Russian foreign, defence and security policymaking today (see Ciolan, 2016; Loftus & Kanet, 2017, p. 14; Mankoff, 2012, pp. 13, pp. 16; Oldberg, 2007). For example, Russia's National Security

Strategy in 2015 declares “consolidating the Russian Federation's status as a leading world power, whose actions are aimed at maintaining strategic stability and mutually beneficial partnerships in a polycentric world” (Russian National Security Strategy, 2015, para. 30) as one of its long-term national strategic interests, a goal that is also reiterated in Russia’s Foreign Policy Concept of 2016 (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 3, c).

While its historical roots go all the way back to the Great Northern War and the beginning and rise of the Russian Empire under Peter the Great (Bassin, 2006, pp. 45; Hughes, 2009, p. 169; Rich, 2009, p. 277), Russia’s role as a superpower did not manifest itself before the end of World War II and the allied victory over Nazi Germany in 1945. While arguably having already been an influential regional power (Bassin, 2006, p. 46), the defeat of Sweden in the Great Northern War in 1721 turned Russia into the dominant power in North-Eastern Europe (Bushkovitch, 2006, pp. 496; Hughes, 2009, pp. 168). Since then, Russia’s regional influence in Europe, in particular under the rule of Catherine the Great, continuously increased and eventually elevated Russia into the group of the great European powers (Bushkovitch, 2006, p. 501; Ragsdale, 2006, p. 529; Rich, 2009, pp. 277).<sup>90</sup> Yet, despite its increasing influence, with its diverse demographic composition and vast territory stretching over two continents (until the selling of Alaska to the United States in 1867 even over three), Russia always remained geographically, strategically and intellectually on the fringes of Europe (Graham, 2010, pp. 56; Lieven, 2006a; Rich, 2009, pp. 278; Weeks, 2006). As a result, Russia never truly developed a European identity. Instead, Russia’s identity can be described as somewhat ambiguous, as “not fully European though not exactly ‘Asiatic’ either” (Rich, 2009, p. 281, but see also Bassin, 2006, pp. 50).

Nevertheless, the country’s political, strategic, demographic, and economic centres of gravity continued to be located in the European parts of Russia, explaining why Russia remained deeply involved in developments in the European political landscape, such as in the victory over France during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) (Mankoff, 2012, pp. 12; Rich, 2009, p. 280). Russia’s military defeats in

---

<sup>90</sup> For a more extensive historical overview of Russian foreign politics between 1689 to 1917 see Lieven (2006b).

World War I (Fuller, 2006, pp. 551; Stockdale, 2009, pp. 314) and the end of the Russian Empire<sup>91</sup> led to a considerable decline in Russian regional power and influence in Europe (see Hagen, 2009; Lohr, 2006; Rich, 2009, p. 286). Until the beginning of World War II, in which the Soviet Union joined the side of the United States and the United Kingdom after the German invasion of Russia in 1941, the new regime struggled to restore its previous regional power status and influence in Europe (Rich, 2009, p. 286). During the ‘Great Patriotic War’ (as the Second World War is often referred to in many parts of the former Soviet Union), the Soviet Union fought Nazi Germany on the Eastern Front and contributed significantly to the victory of the Allied forces (Lomagin, 2009, p. 409). The remembrance of the Soviet Union’s immense sacrifices in the defeat of Nazi-Germany still plays a central role in the constitution of Russia’s ‘great power’-identity today (Lomagin, 2007, p. 47; Oldberg, 2007, pp. 14; Rutland & Kazantsev, 2016, p. 399).<sup>92</sup>

By the end of World War II, Germany and its allies were defeated, the power of France and the United Kingdom had been depleted, and the Soviet Union, and the United States, emerged as the two remaining superpowers in the world (Lomagin, 2009, p. 386; Mankoff, 2012, p. 13). While both continued to extend their influence ideologically and militarily through the forging of new alliances (NATO and the Warsaw Pact), the increasingly opposing ideologies, identities, and strategic interests of the two blocs, resulted in an unequivocal peak in distrust between both sides: the Cold War. During the Cold War, the highly distrustful defence and security relations between East and West were marked by an escalating spiral of offensive nuclear and conventional deterrence postures, a number of proxy wars, as well as a nuclear and conventional arms race of an unimaginable extent (Engerman, 2009; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1984). During the 1970s, both sides slowly began to reconcile their differences in a period of détente that eventually led to the signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975 (Engerman, 2009, p. 425). Among other things, the accords included the first set of military confidence-building measures, through which both sides agreed on the prior notification and voluntary invitation of military observers to larger military exercises and committed themselves to serious steps of disarmament (Conference on Security

---

<sup>91</sup> After the Russian revolution in 1917 and the Russian Civil War (1917-1922), the Russian Empire was replaced by the socialist Soviet regime.

<sup>92</sup> For example, the surrender of Nazi-Germany in 1945 is commemorated and celebrated every year with a large military parade in Moscow on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May.

and Co-operation in Europe Final Act, 1975, pp. 10). However, while the period of *détente* also continued under the political leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the dangerous military standoff that had characterized the relationship between East and West for so many years, was only resolved with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in 1991. This collapse also marked the end of the Soviet Union's and now Russia's status as a global superpower. The end of the Cold War was followed by a period of rapprochement that among other things, led to the formation and adoption of a number of central venues, documents and treaties of the post-Cold War European security architecture, each meant to help bridge the divide and overcome the distrust that had separated East and West for so many years. Probably some of the most important agreements were the NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997, which was later on followed by the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC); the Paris Charter of 1990, which marked the beginning of the formal institutionalization of the CSCE into the OSCE (Charter of Paris for a New Europe, 1990), as well as the adoption of a series of central arms control and CSBM agreements, among them, the already mentioned Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, the Treaty on Open Skies (OS) and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), which led to increased transparency and confidence in the military security sphere as well as to the destruction of approx. 60,000 heavy weapons systems in Europe (Federal Foreign Office, 2018).

Yet, despite such important achievements and various steps towards more trustful defence and security relations between East and West, the underlying differences in strategic interests, in particular between Russia and NATO, prevailed. For Russian officials, the alliance, which was initially founded to “keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down” as NATO's first Secretary General Lord Ismay once famously put it, represented a relic of the Cold War order that had outlived its purpose and was ideally to be replaced by a new ‘all-European’ security organization, such as the OSCE (Russian Foreign Minister, Evgenii Primakov, 1996). In Russia's view the OSCE would not only be more inclusive, but through its consensus-principle, also grant Russia a ‘veto’ on European defence and security decisions (Mankoff, 2012, pp. 134; Oldberg, 2007, p. 19). Instead, the relations between Russia and NATO set off onto a different path. While Russia joined NATO's PfP in 1994, both sides signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act in 1997 and established the NRC in 2002, fierce criticism of NATO's eastward expansion through the steady admission of former members of the Warsaw Pact, plans for the establishment of ballistic missile defence systems in Eastern Europe and NATO's military interventions, such as in Kosovo, still mark major contentious issues in central Russian defence and security policy documents (see The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2010, para. 8, a; The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2014, para. 12, a; Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2015, Para.

51-52; Russian National Security Strategy, 2015, para. 106; The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 61, 70). Indeed, Russian officials perceive these issues as zero-sum advancements of Western interests that directly ignore central Russian security interests and concerns (Berryman, 2017, pp. 167; Loftus & Kanet, 2017, p. 15; Mankoff, 2012, pp. 153; Oldberg, 2007, p. 21; Rukavishnikov, 2007, pp. 64). In an often referred to speech in front of the German Bundestag in 2001, Russian president, Vladimir Putin, underlined that:

[East and West] have so far failed to recognize the changes that have happened in our world [...] and continue to live in the old system of values: we are talking about partnership, but in reality, we have not yet learned to trust each other. In spite of a plethora of sweet words, we are still surreptitiously opposed to each other. Now we demand loyalty to NATO, now argue about the rationale behind its enlargement. And we are still unable to agree on the problems of a missile defence system. [...] We seem to be missing the fact that the world is no longer divided into two hostile camps (President Vladimir Putin, 2001).<sup>93</sup>

However, despite Russia's longstanding opposition and criticism, with Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, the year 2004 saw the admission of seven members of the former Eastern bloc joining NATO, a step that only reinforced the perception among political and military elites in Moscow that Russian defence and security interests continued to be largely ignored by the West (Berryman, 2017, pp. 170; Loftus & Kanet, 2017, p. 15; Mankoff, 2012, pp. 25; Oldberg, 2007, p. 21). Clearly affected by NATO's expansion to the East as well as US and NATO interventions in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq, Putin heavily criticized the 'hegemonic dominance' and 'unilateral actions' of the US in world affairs, and expressed his disappointment with the lack of progress in the area of conventional disarmament and arms control in Europe,<sup>94</sup> while once again fiercely reiterating Russia's critical stance on NATO's expansion to the East:

---

<sup>93</sup> As parts of the original speech were given in German, the official transcript and English translation provided by the Kremlin was used. For the German original visit the website of the German Bundestag: [https://www.bundestag.de/parlament/geschichte/gastredner/putin/putin\\_wort-244966](https://www.bundestag.de/parlament/geschichte/gastredner/putin/putin_wort-244966)

<sup>94</sup> In particular, he criticized the failure of the ratification of the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (ACFE), which was supposed to overcome the bloc-to-bloc approach of the original CFE treaty. NATO states had put their ratification of the ACFE treaty on hold, until Russia would fully withdraw its remaining forces from Georgia and Moldova (Federal Foreign Office, 2018). Until today, the linkage between the ratification of the ACFE and the so-called 'Istanbul Agreements'

I think it is obvious that NATO expansion does not have any relation with the modernisation of the Alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended? And what happened to the assurances our western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No one even remembers them (President Vladimir Putin, 2007).

In the subsequent years, NATO-Russia relations continued to deteriorate even further. In 2007, Russia unilaterally withdrew from the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (President of the Russian Federation, 2007). Following the NATO summit in Bucharest in 2008, in which Georgia and Ukraine were given prospects for future NATO Membership Action Plans,<sup>95</sup> tensions between Russia and NATO further increased as a result of Russia's military intervention in Georgia, which resulted in the 2008 Russo-Georgian War (Berryman, 2017, p. 171; Loftus & Kanet, 2017, p. 19; Mankoff, 2012, pp. 152; Nygren, 2019, pp. 382; Rutland & Kazantsev, 2016, pp. 406). When Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and began to back pro-Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine, NATO-Russia relations reached a new historic low. In a direct response to Russia's actions, Western states imposed a set of political and economic sanctions and suspended all direct military cooperation with Russia (Loftus & Kanet, 2017, p. 20). Since then, NATO-Russia relations have been largely characterized by more and more openly assertive force postures and numerous steps of mutual deterrence. For example, over the last couple of years, both sides have significantly increased their defence spending and the increased quality, readiness, sophistication, determination and unpredictability of Russia's armed forces has become a growing concern for Western military experts (Heier & Kjølberg, 2015, pp. 14). The deep levels of distrust and heavy reliance on deterrence also show themselves in the increased military presence and activities in Europe (Berryman, 2017, pp. 173; Jankovski, 2017,

---

represent a highly controversial and contested issue between Russia and NATO (see Mankoff, 2012, pp. 135; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2018; President of the Russian Federation, 2007).

<sup>95</sup> While the actual decision to offer Georgia and Ukraine NATO Membership Action Plans was blocked by France and Germany (Rutland & Kazantsev, 2016, p. 407); Mankoff (2012, p. 145), the final summit declaration still contained a paragraph, stating that NATO states welcomed "Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO" and stated that NATO members "agreed [...] that these countries will become members of NATO" in the future (see Bucharest Summit Declaration, 2008, para. 23).

pp. 138), and by a more aggressive force posture, such as Russian fighter jets that regularly ‘buzz’<sup>96</sup> NATO ships and aircrafts, in particular in the Baltic and Black Sea (Jankovski, 2017, p. 139; Lasserre & Têtu, 2016, pp. 311; Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019; Priego, 2019, p. 262). Some observers have also pointed at changes in central Russian defence and security policy documents. Meanwhile, some of them openly declare the expansion of NATO and NATO military infrastructure as one of the ‘main external military risks’ (The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2014, para. 12, a) or as a ‘threat’ to the security of the Russian Federation (Russian National Security Strategy, 2015, para. 15). However, this sharpening and change in tone had actually already taken place in 2010 (Priego, 2019, p. 261), as also a look into the Russian Military Doctrine of the time shows (The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2010, para. 8, a). Similar arguments might also be made with regard to the increase in Russia’s exercise activities and defence spending, which also seem to represent a more long-term trend in Russian defence and security politics (Lasserre & Têtu, 2016; Zysk, 2011). However, the Ukrainian crisis has made many of these developments even more immediately challenging for Western countries than they had already been before (Defence Attachés in Moscow, 2019). Thus, even though Russia and NATO continue to engage in a number of practices, such as deconflicting their defence and security relations by resuming meetings in the framework of the NRC in 2016 (NATO, 2019b) and between the top generals from both sides (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, 2018, 2019), it seems fair to conclude that NATO and Russia have, over the last couple of years, developed increasingly opposing defence and security identities, interests and practices that indicate a deep level of mutual distrust.

While observers of Russian foreign, defence and security politics assign Moscow a preference for bilateral engagements (Light, 2009, pp. 87; Mankoff, 2012, pp. 133) as well as a more general “reluctance to seek integration with Western-dominated institutions” (Mankoff, 2012, p. 13), Russia’s threat perception and defence and security relation vis-à-vis the EU appear considerably less negative than towards NATO. This is not only caused by the large economic interdependence between Russia and the EU (see Light, 2009, pp. 84; Mankoff, 2012, p. 139), but, as some observers note, also by the decreasing relevance of the EU in Russian strategic thinking. A major factor in this regard are the long-standing internal struggles (Facon, 2017, p. 19) and a lack of consensus among EU members on an

---

<sup>96</sup> ‘Buzzing’ describes a practice by which military aircrafts fly at low altitude over an opposing vessel, aircraft, building, or troop formation, often even simulating an attack on the opponent.



adequate response to Russia's annexation of Crimea and military support of pro-Russian rebel groups in Eastern Ukraine. While the EU and its members imposed a set of political and economic sanctions, there are still largely different national perceptions on the extent to which Russia poses a military threat as well as on the appropriate level of dialogue and engagement with Russia (Facon, 2017, pp. 22). Nevertheless, even though Russia does not currently seem to perceive of the EU as an opposing military force, it is important to note that Moscow still perceives the EU as a challenge to its regional interests as well as the extended political and mainly economic arm of the transatlantic community (Facon, 2017, p. 21; Mankoff, 2012, p. 174). As such, central Russian defence and security documents have – as is also the case for NATO – openly criticized the EU's expansion to the east (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 61) as well as its alleged support “for the anti-constitutional coup d'état in Ukraine” (Russian National Security Strategy, 2015, para. 17). Nevertheless, both sides are seemingly interested in deconflicting their currently largely incompatible defence and security relations (see also Facon, 2017, pp. 24) and are seeking reassurance through cooperation on issues of overlapping interest. The EU's strategic document ‘Shared Vision, Common Action’ declares its readiness to “engage Russia to discuss disagreements and cooperate if and when our interests overlap” (Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe, 2016, p. 33). The Russian Foreign Policy Concept of 2016 likewise reassures that “the EU remains an important trade and economic and foreign policy partner” and that “the Russian Federation is interested in constructive, stable and predictable cooperation with EU countries based on the principles of equality and respect for each other's interests” (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 63). Russia is also “committed to maintaining intensive and mutually beneficial dialogue with the EU on key items on the foreign policy agenda, as well as further promoting practical cooperation on foreign policy, military and political issues” (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 64, but see also Russian National Security Strategy, 2015, para. 97).

The history of the role of the OSCE in Russian defence and security politics is mainly one of unfulfilled hopes and expectations. Initially, Russia hoped that the OSCE, as a comprehensive and inclusive all-European security organization, could eventually replace the unfavourable post-Cold War European security order. This is particularly true with regard to the dominant role of NATO, which Russia, despite numerous forums and formats of cooperation (e.g. the NATO-Russia Council or the NATO PfP program), continued to perceive as an organization, in which it had no real voice and influence (if not to say a ‘veto’) on the decisions that were made on the future of European security (Russian Foreign Minister, Evgenii Primakov, 1996, but see also Berryman, 2017, pp. 178; Godzimirski, 2009, p. 123; Lynch, 2000, pp. 103; Mankoff, 2012, p. 135; Oldberg, 2007, p. 19). However, Russia's initial hopes

were quickly disappointed. For many years, the OSCE continued to play only a marginal role in the European security landscape. Russian proposals for strengthening the OSCE's institutional framework or for replacing the OSCE with a new 'European Security Treaty' were quickly dismissed as immature and mainly targeted at undermining NATO's role in the European security order (Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to NATO, Alexander Grushko, 2017, but see also Berryman, 2017, pp. 178; Godzimirski, 2009, p. 139; Kühn, 2010; Mankoff, 2012, p. 135). Unable to pursue its strategic interests and political goals, Russia developed increasing numbers of grievances towards the OSCE. Over time, Russian officials began to view the organization as largely inefficient and more and more as yet another venue in which Western states could criticize Russia's military presence in Moldova and Georgia, extend their democratic and normative influence in the post-Soviet space and reinforce the unfavourable post-Cold War security order (Godzimirski, 2009; Lynch, 2000; Mankoff, 2012, p. 277; Oldberg, 2007, p. 19). As Putin put it in his 2007 speech at the Munich Security Conference:

It is impossible not to mention the activities of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). As is well-known, this organisation was created to examine all – I shall emphasise this – all aspects of security: military, political, economic, humanitarian and, especially, the relations between these spheres. What do we see happening today? We see that this balance is clearly destroyed. People are trying to transform the OSCE into a vulgar instrument designed to promote the foreign policy interests of one or a group of countries. And this task is also being accomplished by the OSCE's bureaucratic apparatus [...] and the involvement of so-called non-governmental organisations [which] are formally independent but [...] purposefully financed and therefore under control. According to the founding documents, in the humanitarian sphere the OSCE is designed to assist country members in observing international human rights norms at their request. [...] But this does not mean interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, and especially not imposing a regime that determines how these states should live and develop (President Vladimir Putin, 2007).

Russia's frustration with the OSCE has largely carried over to the OSCE-related conventional arms control and CSBM regimes. While NATO had not only preserved but also even expanded its dominant position in European security through the accession of new members, Russian officials began to criticize fiercely what they perceived as an increasing imbalance in existing arms control and CSBM regulations, most evidently within the CFE Treaty. From Moscow's perspective, the accession of the three Baltic States to NATO was perceived as the creation of a regional grey zone in which NATO forces faced no limitations or restrictions, leading to a highly disadvantageous military situation for the Russian armed

forces.<sup>97</sup> While the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (ACFE) was meant to overcome this problem by replacing the treaty's traditional bloc-to-bloc approach with a complex system of different regional ceilings and limitations as well as by extending the group of treaty states, NATO states linked their ratification of the ACFE to the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia and Moldova ('Istanbul Agreements') (see Koivula, 2017, p. 120; Mankoff, 2012, pp. 130; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2018). This led to political deadlock on the future of conventional arms control that remains unresolved to this day. Expressing his frustration over the failure of the ratification of the ACFE and the "pitiable condition of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe" (President Vladimir Putin, 2007), Putin signed a presidential decree by which Russia unilaterally suspended its implementation of the CFE Treaty (President of the Russian Federation, 2007). As the problems surrounding the ratification of the ACFE could not be resolved, Russia took the next step in 2015 deciding to withdraw from the treaty's Joint Consultative Group (JCG), declaring

its further participation in meetings of the joint consultative group, which as a rule are reduced to reading out the agenda, as pointless from both political and practical points of view and as excessively costly from the financial and economic point of view (Anton Mazur, Head of the Russian Delegation to Vienna Talks on Military Security and Arms Control, quoted in TASS, 2015).

Apart from the already mentioned issues surrounding the CFE Treaty and the future of conventional arms control in Europe, the deterioration in NATO-Russia relations following the crisis in and around Ukraine has also significantly affected the implementation of the Vienna Document 2011 (VDoc 2011) and the Treaty on Open Skies (OS). Over the last couple of years, Russia has been increasingly accused of bypassing its obligations under the VDoc 2011, to provide transparency and predictability over its

---

<sup>97</sup> As former parts of the Soviet Union, the territories of the three Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were initially counted to the regional ceilings and limitations on the side of the Warsaw Pact. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the three states never joined the CFE treaty, also not after their accession to NATO in 2004 (President of the Russian Federation, 2007). However, many Western states see Russian concerns already addressed in the 2007 NATO-Russia Founding Act, in which NATO members reiterate "that in the current and foreseeable security environment, the Alliance will carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces" (Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, 1997, p. 14). For more information on the issue, see also Schmidt (2004).

military exercises and activities in Europe. For example, obligations for prior announcement and observation are avoided by dividing its activities into smaller components, which fall under the document's notification and observation requirements or by increasingly relying on large-scale unannounced 'snap exercises'. The latter is a particularly sensitive issue for Western states as Russia in 2014 used the cover of such an exercise to conceal its troop deployments prior to the annexation of Crimea (Canadian Diplomat, 2019; Defence Attachés in Moscow, 2019; Koivula, 2017, p. 123; NATO, 2019c, pp. 27). In 2016, Russia also blocked the modernization and reissuance of the document (Koivula, 2017, p. 123), stating that

the anchoring in NATO documents of a policy of military containment of Russia and the Alliance's concrete steps in the military sphere rule out the possibility of reaching agreements on confidence-building measures [and that Russia] can envisage prospects for the modernization of the Vienna Document 2011 only if the North Atlantic Alliance abandons its policy of containment of Russia, recognizes and respects Russian interests, and restores normal relations with the Russian Federation, including in the military sphere (Forum for Security Co-operation, 2016, Annex 3).

While the treaty on OS has also faced some political setbacks (mainly regarding implementation issues) even leading to a complete standstill in observation flights in 2018, the treaty remains the only conventional arms control treaty that also includes the land territories of the United States and Canada (Bell & Wier, 2019; Koivula, 2017, p. 122; Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019). Flying some of the most advanced observation aircrafts and sensors seems to underline Russia's considerable interest in the treaty on OS, probably more so, than it is currently the case for the VDoc 2011 or the CFE treaty. However, considering Russia's current frustration with the structure and role of the OSCE as well as with its related arms control and CSBM architecture, it is unlikely that the OSCE, the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), or the various arms control and CSBM instruments, will in their current state play a large role in Western-Russian defence and security relations.

Apart from Europe, the Arctic has also played a central role in Russia's national identity as well as in its political and strategic thinking throughout its history. The Russian Arctic, more specifically the Kola Peninsula, is home to the Northern Fleet, Russia's most important naval force that provides Russia with access to the Arctic and Atlantic Ocean and which hosts the majority of Russia's strategic nuclear submarines (SSBN), a central pillar in Russia's 'second-strike'-capability (Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2015, para. 59-61, but see also Åtland, 2011, pp. 269; Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, p. 49; Hilde, 2014, p. 154; Laruelle, 2014, p. 113; Le Mière & Mazo, 2013, pp. 82; Wezeman, 2016,

pp. 15; Zysk, 2011, pp. 91, 2015, pp. 72). As the country with the largest Arctic land territory and coastline, the region is also of immense significance for Russia's economy. Russia's Arctic policy of 2008, declared the region "a strategic resource base of the Russian Federation" (The Foundations of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Arctic until 2020 and Beyond, 2008, para. 4, a) and together with the 'The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and National Security Efforts for the Period up to 2020', set out an ambitious plan for the socio-economic development of the region. Most notably through extensive plans for the extraction of natural resources and the development of the Northern Sea Route (NSR) into a major transpolar shipping lane under Russian jurisdiction (see The Foundations of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Arctic until 2020 and Beyond, 2008; The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and National Security Efforts for the Period up to 2020, 2013). In the anticipation of increased economic activity and ship traffic, the region is also increasingly posing a number of sovereignty and security-related challenges for Russia, such as in the area of search and rescue or in exercising sovereignty and protecting its extensive territorial waters, exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and coastline. Hence, the deterioration in Western-Russian relations is not the only cause of Russia's increasing military infrastructure, capabilities and presence in the Arctic (The Foundations of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Arctic until 2020 and Beyond, 2008; The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and National Security Efforts for the Period up to 2020, 2013; Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2015, para. 59-61, but see also Baev, 2015; Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, pp. 54; Laruelle, 2014, pp. 123; Zysk, 2011, pp. 94, 2015, pp. 81).<sup>98</sup> While some observers have viewed these increases as a significant militarization, meant to reinforce Russian territorial claims in the Arctic that undermine regional peace and stability (e.g. Conley & Rohloff, 2015; Etzold & Steinicke, 2015; Romaniuk, 2011), others have highlighted the exceptional level of regional cooperation and stability that have prevailed, including the commitment and adherence, to a peaceful settlement of disputes and overlapping territorial claims (e.g. Bergman Rosamond, 2011, pp. 40; Ebinger & Zambetakis, 2009, pp. 1228; Olesen, 2014). Regardless of which position one holds, there are few that question Russia's strong interest in the Arctic. Given its size, military infrastructure and capabilities,

---

<sup>98</sup> Also, Russia's 2014 Military Doctrine defines "to protect national interests of the Russian Federation in the Arctic region" (The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2014, para. 32, s) as one of the main tasks of the Russian armed forces in peacetime.

some observers even go so far, as to assign Russia the role of a regional hegemon (see Charron et al., 2012) or at least of a regional superpower (Baev, 2015; Roi, 2010). Yet, while many experts view Russia's Arctic dominance – explicitly or implicitly – as a challenge or source for concern for other Arctic states, an argument can also be made that it is especially Russia's role and self-understanding as a central Arctic power that has led to a more cooperative and conciliatory foreign policy approach in the region. In other words, while Russia has always been highly critical of the global and European post-Cold War order – challenging Western dominance ever since – Russia has seemingly been much more content with its position in the post-Cold War Arctic security order. With the largest uncontested submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) Russia will gain the biggest share of undiscovered resources (Blunden, 2012, p. 122; Henderson & Loe, 2014, p. 55), and just by 'playing by the rules', will be one of the biggest economic beneficiaries of increasing resource extraction and economic activity in the region. In addition, with the world's largest fleet of nuclear-powered icebreakers and the (re-)establishment of military infrastructure along its Arctic coast, Russia will probably also remain the leading military force in the Arctic region (see Baev, 2015; Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, pp. 48; Charron et al., 2012; Laruelle, 2014; Roi, 2010; Wezeman, 2016, pp. 13; Zysk, 2015). Given this positive outlook, it is not too surprising that Russia shows a pronounced interest in contributing to regional cooperation and in preserving this advantageous status quo. For example, the Russian Foreign Policy Concept of 2016 states that "Russia pursues a policy aimed at preserving peace, stability and constructive international cooperation in the Arctic [and] will be firm in countering any attempts to introduce elements of political or military confrontation in the Arctic" (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 76). The same document also emphasizes the goal of "enhanced cooperation in the Arctic Council, the coastal Arctic Five and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council" (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 76). Similar goals and commitments can be found in Russia's National Security Strategy (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 99) as well as in Russia's Arctic policy and strategy, which both highlight the importance of international cooperation and the "maintenance of the Arctic as a zone of peace" (The Foundations of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Arctic until 2020 and Beyond, 2008, para. 4, b, but see also The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and National Security Efforts for the Period up to 2020, 2013). The goal of the Arctic as a 'zone of peace' goes all the way back to Mikhail Gorbachev's famous speech in October 1987 in

Murmansk<sup>99</sup> and has remained a central theme in Russian Arctic politics ever since. Beyond mere rhetoric, Russia has so far largely pursued a low-tension policy in the region. It has primarily taken a cooperative approach in pursuing its Arctic interests as well as in addressing some of the most pressing challenges to regional security (e.g. SAR or environmental protection). Russia is also actively committed to resolving its overlapping territorial claims with other Arctic states through negotiations, as inter alia exemplified in the signing of its maritime delimitation and cooperation agreement with Norway in 2010 (*Avtale mellom Norge og Russland om samarbeid ved ettersøking av savnede og redning av nødstedte mennesker i Barentshavet*, 1995). Furthermore, Russia has taken a constructive stance in a number of different regional forums, such as the Arctic Council (AC), the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) or the Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF) (see Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, pp. 55; Klimenko, 2016, pp. 34; Laruelle, 2014, p. 199; Roberts, 2015; Wilson Rowe, 2009). Even Russian fighter jets and strategic bombers seem to show a much less aggressive flight pattern than, for example, in the Baltic or in the Black Sea region (Lasserre & Têtu, 2016). Still, it is important to note that the majority of cooperation – not least due to the mandate and setup of most regional venues and forums as well as a result of the current freeze in Western-Russian military cooperation – takes place exclusively in the field of non-military security. At the same time, Russia’s strong emphasis on its military assets in the Arctic is, not least since the crisis in Ukraine, looked upon with increasing suspicion by Western states (Baev, 2018; Klimenko, 2016, pp. 35; Zysk, 2015, p. 84). In an attempt to address this issue, the Russian Foreign Ministry has more recently, also tried to (re-)engage Western states on defence-related issues in the Arctic. To this end, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, during the opening of the ministerial session of the 5th International Arctic Forum in St. Petersburg, proposed to reopen “a full-scale military and political dialogue between the Arctic states as a way to promote confidence and mutual understanding and prevent any type of escalation” (Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, 2019a) as well as to resume the currently suspended meetings of the Arctic CHOD (Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, 2019a). Yet, amid the current freeze in bilateral military cooperation, it is unlikely that these initiatives will be positively considered by the other Arctic states.

---

<sup>99</sup> More information and an overview of Gorbachev’s Murmansk initiative that among other things, proposed the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ), a regime for naval arms control and a set of military confidence-building measures in the Arctic region, can be found in Åtland (2008).

The suspicion and fragility of the Arctic security environment were not least exemplified in May 2019, when U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, ahead of the Arctic Council Ministerial, heavily criticized Russian claims over the Northern Sea Route as “illegal” and accused Russia of taking “provocative actions”, declaring that Russia’s military activities, including the reopening of Cold War military bases as well as the deployment of “sophisticated new air defense systems and anti-ship missiles” in the Arctic were “part of a pattern of aggressive Russian behaviour [that is] already leaving snow prints in the form of army boots” (Secretary of State, Michael R. Pompeo, 2019). Acknowledging, also, that other countries, like Canada, make “illegitimate claims”, he continued to declare that

Russia is unique. Its actions deserve special attention, special attention of this Council, in part because of their sheer scale. But also because we know Russian territorial ambitions can turn violent. 13,000 people have been killed due to Russia’s ongoing aggressive action in Ukraine. And just because the Arctic is a place of wilderness does not mean it should become a place of lawlessness. It need not be the case. And we stand ready to ensure that it does not become so (Secretary of State, Michael R. Pompeo, 2019).

While the impact of his speech and the deterioration in Western-Russian relations on the future of Russia’s Arctic policies and the development of the Arctic security environment, continue to remain unclear at this stage, it is, in conclusion, important to record Russia’s strong regional interests, the large role the Arctic plays for Russia’s national identity, and its positive record in approaching and managing its relations with other states in the region thus far.

### **5.5.2 Russian-Norwegian Defence and Security Politics**

Due to Norway’s membership in NATO, Russian-Norwegian defence and security relations have never been truly bilateral in nature. Instead, they have largely always – with some nuances – mirrored Russia’s (and formerly the Soviet Union’s) relationship with NATO in the north. As a former commander in the Norwegian military underlined:

We are not only a neighbouring country or simply Norwegians for the Russians. We are NATO. Norwegian forces are NATO forces and this is important for understanding Norwegian-Russian relations (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018).

When Norway became a founding member of NATO in 1949, this posed major military challenges to the Soviet Union as its common border with Norway had now turned into a direct border with NATO. Its Northern fleet and strategic nuclear submarines on the Kola Peninsula, the backbone of the Soviet Union’s sea-based nuclear deterrence, were now within range of the artillery fire of a NATO member



state.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, Norway's rugged coastline and proximity to the Soviet Union, including the shallow waters of the Barents Sea, made Norway a perfect location for NATO and the United States' signals intelligence (SIGINT), allowing the alliance to keep a close eye on Soviet military installations, missile bases and capabilities in the north as well as to monitor nuclear submarines and naval forces leaving their homeports on the Kola Peninsula (Skogrand, 2004, pp. 216), which in times of crisis could be denied access into the North Atlantic Ocean. These scenarios and the struggle for protection of its strategic nuclear submarines ('Bastion defence') have dominated strategic thinking of military planners on both sides and turned the Barents Sea, as well as the Norwegian-Russian border, into a central theatre during the Cold War (see Lindsey, 1989). In attempting to minimize tensions and the risks emanating from their asymmetric relations, Norway's 'self-imposed restrictions' (see 5.2.1), as well as a number of political initiatives and forms of non-military cooperation, have done a great deal in deconflicting the rather strained security situation in the North. In addition, various policy initiatives in the time of rapprochement at the end of the Cold War – most notably Gorbachev's Murmansk initiative as well as the establishment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) and the formation of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)<sup>101</sup> – as well as the drastic decline in Russian military spending, capabilities and activities after the collapse of the Soviet Union helped to stabilize and overcome much of the mutual suspicion and distrust that had dominated Russian-Norwegian defence and security relations for many years (Holtmark, 2015, p. 556; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). At the same time, Russia and Norway began to develop their bilateral cooperation on defence- and security-related issues. Following the formalisation of cooperation between the Russian and Norwegian coast and border guards, both also slowly engaged in a number of more direct forms of military-to-military contacts and cooperation (e.g. joint naval exercises and a direct line of communication between FOH and the Russian Northern fleet) (Holtmark, 2015, pp. 557; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

---

<sup>100</sup> See also the statement made by former head of the Norwegian Intelligence Service, Lieutenant General Kjell Grandhagen at the Army Summit 2018 in Oslo (Staalesen, 2018).

<sup>101</sup> For an overview of the various forms of bilateral non-military cooperation that developed between Russia and Norway during this period see for example Hønneland (2009), Bones (2012) or Holtmark (2015, pp. 615).

However, despite an overall positive trend, the main sources of mutual distrust and suspicion in Russian-Norwegian defence and security relations lingered on. In particular, Russia's forces and strategic nuclear submarines on the Kola Peninsula continued to be a factor of central concern, both militarily and environmentally, as many of the older submarines were no longer maintained and posed an inherent risk of nuclear contamination (Holtsmark, 2015, p. 556). In addition, due to the decline of Russia's conventional forces as well as due to its reduced access to the Baltic and Black Sea – as former parts of the Soviet Union had gained independence (e.g. the Baltic States or Ukraine) – Russia's remaining nuclear submarines on the Kola Peninsula increased in strategic importance (Holtsmark, 2015, p. 560; Zysk, 2011, p. 91). For this reason, Russia continued to react particularly sensitively to any increase in Norwegian and – even more so – NATO military infrastructure, activity, and presence in the wider Russian-Norwegian border area. This became visible, for example, when the highly advanced military intelligence radar system 'Globus II' was constructed as part of Norwegian-American intelligence cooperation in the small town of Vardø. Situated just about 50 km across the Barents Sea of some of Russia's most important strategic nuclear submarine bases, Russian officials and experts fiercely criticized the 'Globus II'-radar, claiming that the radar would be a part of the United States' ballistic missile defence program and declaring it a target for Russian nuclear missiles (Higgins, 2000, 2017; Laugen, 2001, p. 91; Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova, 2019c; Zysk, 2015, p. 80).<sup>102</sup> Disputes also arose, when Norway began in 1995 to phase out parts of its self-imposed restrictions that had previously limited NATO activities and operations in Northern Norway and which now saw an increase in allied military training and exercises, including the launch of Norway's winter exercise series 'Cold Response' in 2006 (Holtsmark, 2015, pp. 562).

---

<sup>102</sup> While the Norwegian Intelligence Service on its website only very broadly describes the 'Globus'-radar's mission to be the surveillance, tracking, and categorization of space objects; the surveillance in Norway's national area of interests and the collection of data for national research and development (Forsvaret, n.d.), there exists – due to the classification level – no secure information about the radar's actual purpose, cost sharing or other details about the Norwegian-American intelligence cooperation. Still, journalists attempted to address some of the questions surrounding the 'Globus II'-radar installation, suggesting that the radar is operated in cooperation with the US Space Command and might indeed be part of the US ballistic missile defence program, serving, inter alia, the purpose of gathering intelligence and providing early warning about Russian missile tests and launches in the Barents Sea (see Higgins, 2000, 2017; Wormdal, 2011).

Though strained by the Russo-Georgian war of 2008, the overall positive trend in Russian-Norwegian defence and security relations after the end of the Cold War was drastically reversed with the beginning of the conflict in and around Ukraine in 2014. While Norway is not explicitly mentioned in Russia's central defence and security documents, there are numerous signs of increasingly incompatible, and partially even opposing, identities and interests in security and defence (see 5.2.1). In particular, the increase in military activities and presence of NATO forces, which Russia sees as threatening its ability to project its force into the Arctic Ocean and the North Atlantic and to uphold a credible 'second-strike'-capability vis-à-vis NATO (Etterretningstjenesten, 2018, p. 19), have repeatedly been met with harsh criticism by Russian officials. This could be observed, for example, when Norway decided to extend and even increase the deployment of US Marines within its territory, a decision that the Russian Embassy in Oslo called "clearly unfriendly" and which "will not be without consequences" (as quoted in Nilsen, 2018b). Russian officials, also denounced NATO's large-scale exercise Trident Juncture '18, as being clearly of an "anti-Russian nature" (Aftenposten, 2018). In response, the Russian armed forces carried out a strong show of force by sending several naval vessels and strategic bombers into the Norwegian Sea, as well as conducting two live-fire missile exercises in international waters, about 40 kilometres off the Norwegian coast (Nilsen, 2018d). Further to this, Norwegian authorities have accused Russia of jamming GPS signals over large parts of Northern Norway, Sweden and Finland during the exercise, which had affected military and civilian aviation in the area (Etterretningstjenesten, 2019, p. 27; Nilsen, 2019d). Russian officials have repeatedly denied any involvement in the outage of GPS signals over Northern Norway, rebutting Norwegian arguments as "absurd histories" (Nilsen, 2019d) and declaring that "it is impossible to investigate fantasies that are not backed by facts" (Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, 2019b). Another dispute between both countries arose around the modernization of the Norwegian-American Globus-radar system at Vardø. In February 2018, the radar allegedly became the target of a mock attack by the Russian air force (Nilsen, 2019b), something that can certainly be seen as an expression of discontent with Norway's decision to modernize the current radar system, as Kristian Åtland from the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment concludes in a newspaper article of the Barents Observer (Nilsen, 2019b). Further, in May 2019, the spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared that "there is every reason to believe that the [new] radar will watch the Russian Federation's territory as part of the US antimissile system" and that "military preparations near Russian or any other borders cannot be disregarded by Russia or any other country. We proceed from the assumption that we will retaliate to provide for our own security" (Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova, 2019c). Over the last couple of years, even before the Ukrainian crisis in 2014, Russia began to modernize its military infrastructure and fleet

of strategic nuclear submarines (e.g. Nilsen, 2017a, 2017b, 2018e; Staalesen, 2015), stepped up its military activities (e.g. Bentzrød, 2015; Nilsen, 2018a, 2019a) and deployed advanced air defence systems and other so-called Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) capabilities in the Arctic region (e.g. Staalesen, 2017, but see also Baev, 2018; Bergh & Klimenko, 2016, pp. 52; Etterretningstjenesten, 2018, p. 21, 2019, pp. 20; Klimenko, 2016, pp. 18; Wezeman, 2016, pp. 13; Zysk, 2015). A final example, of how current disagreements between Russia and NATO have begun to carry over into the bilateral defence and security relations between Russia and Norway, are disputes about the lack of transparency over Russian military exercises and manoeuvres as well as the rising number of large unannounced alarm drills by the Russian armed forces. In its inferior power balance with NATO, Russia seemingly sees it as one of its strengths to cloak its military activities as much as possible and to remain a constant factor of military unpredictability. This practice has led Norway and other Western countries to accuse Russia of actively avoiding an official observation of its exercises under the provisions of the VDoc 2011 (for example by splitting its exercises into smaller components) and instead to only inform other countries through press releases and short briefings to defence attachés in Moscow that do not allow for a credible verification of the information provided (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019). Together with various statements by Russian officials (e.g. FSC, 2016, Annex 3; TASS, 2016a, 2016b), and considering that the issue could not be resolved during multilateral and bilateral meetings between their ministries of defence (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019), it seems that Russia does not currently have a particular interest in reducing the deterrent effect generated through such unpredictability and opacity of its military activities. This might also explain why measures to increase transparency and predictability, such as arms control and CSBM, do not currently play a large role in Russia's defence and security relations with Norway or other Western states. In fact, disputes over their compliance and modernization just add another set of incompatible interests to their relations.

Despite the overall deterioration in NATO-Russia relations, the sharpened tone, as well as considerable increases in military activities and reliance on practices of deterrence, it is important to underline that Norway and Russia are still showing an interest in maintaining regional stability and in deconflicting their rather strained defence and security relations. This becomes most evident in the upholding of direct lines of communication at the operational level (between the Norwegian Joint Headquarters (FOH) in Bodø and the commander of the Russian Northern fleet) (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019; Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019), negotiations on an update of the Norwegian-Russian INCSEA-agreement, the resuming of regular high-level meetings between the Russian and Norwegian Ministries of Defence – which were previously suspended since 2014 (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, 2018a, 2019; Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019) – and the Russian proposal for creating an additional

communication line between the Norwegian and Russian CHOD and ministries of defence (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019). Further to this, Norway and Russia continue to engage in various practices of reassuring their collective Arctic and Barents identities, and even take collective action in pursuing compatible and collective interests on economic, environmental, and non-military security issues in both regions. These include the close cooperation between the Russian and Norwegian border and coast guards (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019), the regular conduction of joint SAR exercises in the Barents Sea (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019), and the maintenance of constructive cooperation in the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk, 2017, p. 30; The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 76). At this point, it remains to be seen to what extent common interests, and pressing security challenges to the Arctic region, can help both countries in overcoming and deconflicting their generally more strained bilateral defence and security relations. Norwegian prime minister Erna Solberg’s participation in Russia’s fifth International Arctic Forum in April 2019, under which she also had a bilateral meeting with Russian president Vladimir Putin, was the first trip of a Norwegian head of state to Russia since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine in 2014, and provides at least some room for a limited level of careful optimism (President of the Russian Federation, 2019a; Statsministerens kontor, 2019).

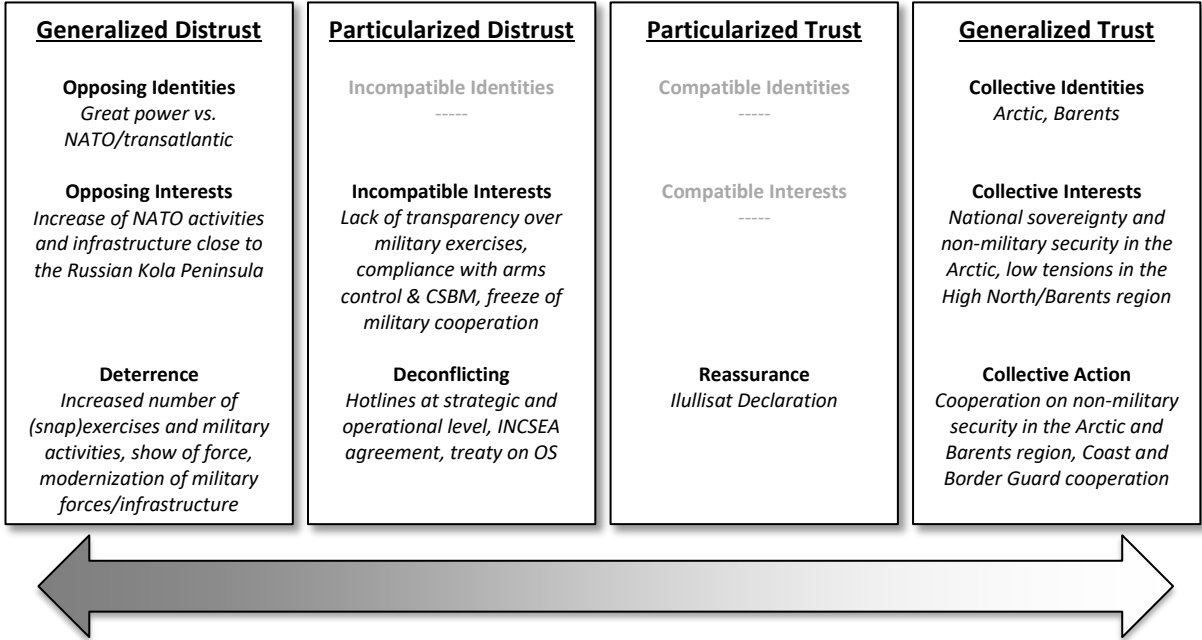


Figure 20. Russian-Norwegian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.5.3 Russian-Swedish Defence and Security Politics

Despite their historical legacies deriving from the former power struggles between the Kingdom of Sweden and the Russian Empire, Sweden generally takes up a less central role in Russian defence and security politics. Both countries never developed particularly far-reaching bilateral defence and security ties and most contacts continue to take place largely in the context of multilateral frameworks, such as the United Nations or the OSCE (see Appendix 2). Because of the large power asymmetry between the Russian and Swedish armed forces, it is obvious that Sweden is not perceived as a threat or as a military power that is able to constrain the ability of the Russian armed forces to project their power into Europe and the Baltic Sea region. Unquestionably, the central theme and goal in Russia's defence and security policy approach vis-à-vis Sweden has always been to maintain this favourable status quo and in particular, to prevent any Swedish rapprochement towards NATO and NATO membership (Baev, 2018, pp. 414; Swedish Defence Attaché, 2019).

More recently, this concern has once again become the central theme in the defence and security relations between both countries. Following the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine, Sweden has not only joined Western countries in their political, economic and military sanctions and become one of the most vocal critics of Russia's foreign and defence policy, but is also seeking closer ties and cooperation with NATO and NATO countries. To enhance its interoperability with NATO forces, Sweden has, over the last couple of years, considerably stepped up its participation in NATO-led exercises, is increasingly inviting key NATO partners (e.g. Norway, the US and Great Britain) to its national exercises, became one of the first five NATO 'Enhanced Opportunity Partners' in 2014 and signed an MoU that makes it possible for NATO forces to operate and receive support on Swedish territory. In short, Sweden has developed the greatest possible level of integration into the alliance short of full NATO membership<sup>103</sup> (see 5.3). Russian officials have been carefully monitoring these developments, and repeatedly emphasized that any steps by Sweden (or Finland) towards NATO membership, would have drastic consequences for their bilateral defence and security relations with both countries. For example, during a press conference in June 2017, Russian president, Vladimir Putin,

---

<sup>103</sup> Despite a short increase in support following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, full NATO membership remains a contested issue in Swedish public and policy debates (see Ydén, Berndtsson, & Petersson, 2019).

reiterated that “if Sweden joins NATO, [...] we will consider this as an additional threat for Russia and will search for ways to eliminate it” (President Vladimir Putin quoted in TASS, 2017). Following the signing of a trilateral Statement of Intent to enhance defence cooperation between the United States, Sweden and Finland in May 2018, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu emphasized that “that these kind of steps by our western colleagues lead to the destruction of the current security system, increase mistrust and force us to take counter-measures” (Russian Minister of Defence, Sergei Shoigu quoted in YLE News, 2019). However, at the same time, statements by Russian officials underline that Russian concerns have little to do with Sweden, but are rather part of the bigger picture of deteriorating levels of trust in NATO-Russia relations, as well as Russia’s critical stance towards NATO enlargement and NATO forces in the area:

It does not mean that we will be swept up in hysteria and point our nuclear missiles at Sweden [,but if Sweden joins NATO] it will mean that NATO facilities will be set up in Sweden so we will have to think about the best ways to respond to this additional threat (President Vladimir Putin quoted in TASS, 2017).

Regrettably, the military and political situation in Europe is constantly deteriorating against the backdrop of NATO’s relentless attempts to strengthen its military potential on the ‘Eastern flank.’ The militarisation of the Baltic space, primarily Baltic countries and Poland, is the most apparent example. [...]

The region that used to be quite calm in military terms has rapidly turned into a ‘frontline area’ where local residents are persuaded to fear the far-fetched ‘Moscow threat.’ We have taken note of the fact that Sweden and Finland, which are not members of any military alliances, are being involved in the implementation of the US-NATO containment policy (Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova, 2018).

In addition to a notably sharpened tone since 2014, Sweden and Russia have also considerably stepped up their own military activities in the Baltic Sea region. Both countries have conducted and participated in several large-scale military exercises, most notably the already mentioned Swedish exercise Aurora 17 and the Russian-Belarussian exercise Zapad 2017. Furthermore, Sweden has taken several additional steps to deter potential Russian military aggression against Sweden (see 5.3), not least due to an increased Russian military activity in its near surroundings. These also include alleged violations of Swedish airspace and territorial waters, as well as what some Swedish officials have come to describe as ‘irresponsible interceptions’ of Swedish military aircrafts over the Baltic Sea (Kulesa et al., 2016, pp. 43). Accusing Sweden of being specialized “in phobias of aggressive Russian intentions”, Russian

officials have, so far, rebutted any accusations of violations of Swedish airspace by the Russian air force, pointing out that Swedish reports suggest that the majority of these violations were indeed conducted by NATO forces (Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova, 2019a, 2019b).

Despite sharpened rhetoric and a considerable increase in distrust, both countries continue to show their interest in preventing potentially dangerous misunderstandings, and are to this end currently engaged in a number of activities to deconflict their strained bilateral defence relations. On the initiative of the Swedish Armed Forces, Sweden and Russia agreed to establish a hotline between the Swedish Joint Operation Center and the Russian CHOD for the period of their large military exercises Aurora and Zapad in 2017. Afterwards, both sides agreed to keep the channel in place as a direct line of communication at the strategic level, and as a means to deconflict their currently incompatible security interests in the Baltic Sea region. At the same time, another Swedish initiative in the context of Aurora and Zapad was not reciprocated. Since both exercises (also together with the Polish exercise Dragon) partly overlapped in time and took place in the Baltic Sea area, Sweden decided to voluntarily invite military observers from all Baltic Sea states (including Russia), despite the fact that the exercise was below official thresholds that would have triggered a mandatory observation under the provisions of the Vienna Document. The idea was that this would help prevent misunderstandings and contribute to deconflicting the rather tense security environment in the Baltic Sea region (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018). Nevertheless, while the Russian Ministry of Defence, on its official website, reports about the observation of Zapad 2017 by fourteen military observers from seven OSCE participating states, including Norway and Sweden (Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, 2017a), the invitation actually came from Belarus and was limited to the exercise area on Belarussian territory (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018). Russia, for its part, maintained its position that the exercise was below the thresholds for a mandatory observation under the OSCE Vienna Document, argued that it had provided extensive information about Zapad 2017 through an official notification, as well as several briefings at the OSCE, at NATO, and those of defence attachés in Moscow. Instead, Russia accused NATO and NATO states of instrumentalizing the exercise for justifying their increased military presence in Eastern Europe (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2017). Russia's lack of transparency is widely criticized among Western practitioners for undermining existing provisions of the Vienna Document and for largely obfuscating activities by the Russian armed forces (Defence Attachés in Moscow, 2019). Altogether, the Russian decision, not to reciprocate Sweden's voluntary invitation of military observers, points to a more general negative Russian position regarding arms control and CSBM at present, to which Moscow currently does not seem to attach a great deal of importance.



While Russia and Norway have a considerable overlap of regional interests and share a collective Arctic identity that eases defence and security relations, the same is not true for Russia and Sweden. The main reason is that the Arctic plays a less significant role in Swedish defence and security politics than it does for Russia or Norway (see 5.3). Thus, while Russia and Sweden are collectively addressing non-military threats to Arctic security, for example, in the area of SAR or environmental protection, and maintain a level of pragmatic cooperation in the context of the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, as well as the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, it is unlikely that this cooperation will have an overly strong positive effect on the current incompatibilities and tensions in the Baltic security environment. This scepticism seems to be supported by the outcome of a bilateral meeting between Russian president Vladimir Putin and Swedish prime minister Stefan Löfven during the fifth International Arctic Forum in April 2019 – the first meeting between a Swedish prime minister and a Russian president since 2011 – in which both sides, despite a common interest in enhancing economic relations and their cooperation on environmental and climate issues, also reiterated their opposing views on harder security issues, such as military activities in the Baltic Sea region as well as on the conflict in and around Ukraine (Bengtsson, 2019; President of the Russian Federation, 2019b; Regeringskansliet, 2019).

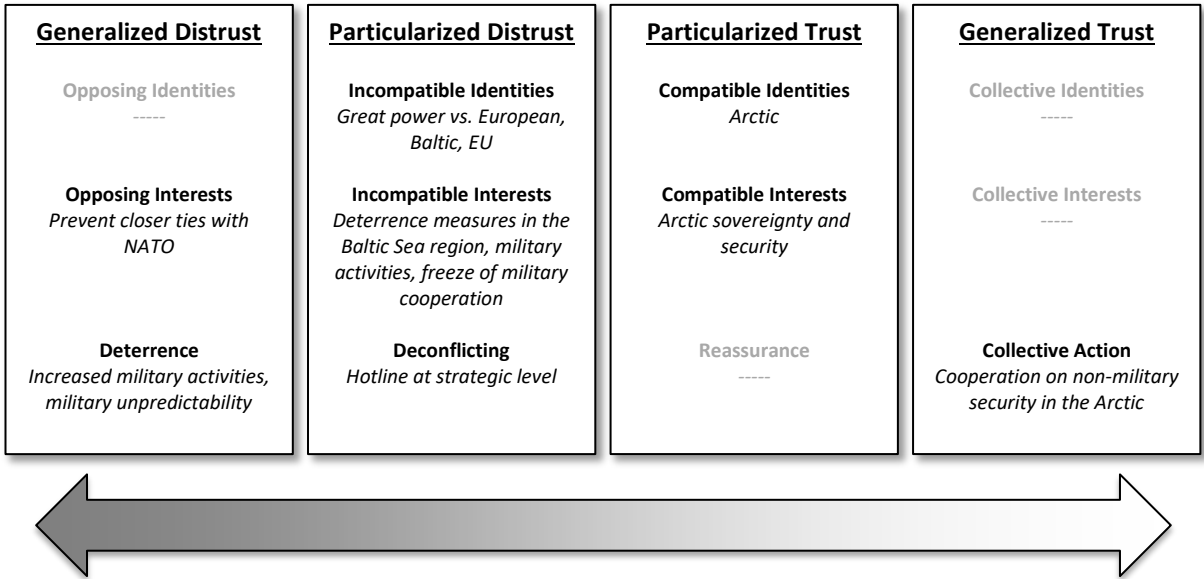


Figure 21. Russian-Swedish Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.5.4 Russian-Canadian Defence and Security Politics

Russia and Canada have never developed a notable level of bilateral defence cooperation. If direct military-to-military contacts take place at all, they usually occur within multilateral frameworks, such

as the United Nations, the OSCE, its related arms control, and CSBM regimes, as well as within the framework of NATO's PfP. Overall, it is difficult to assess Russian-Canadian defence and security relations detached from Russia's relations with NATO or the United States. For Russia, Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have always been linked to NATO, the United States, and their bilateral defence and security relations mirror most of the developments, interests, and practices that characterize Russia's relations with both actors. Amid the conflict in and around Ukraine, Canada and Russia adopted a set of political and economic sanctions against the other, and their already limited military cooperation was put completely on hold. In addition, some of the few remaining venues for deconflicting their defence and security relations, first and foremost the arms control and CSBM architecture of the OSCE, have, due to compliance issues, become an additional source of discontent (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Canadian Diplomat, 2019). Furthermore, Canada is providing military assistance to the government in Kiev, and is one of the most active NATO members in allied reassurance and deterrence measures against Russia in Europe (see 5.5). Following Canada's most recent extension of its sanctions against Russia, the Russian Foreign Ministry attested that Canada suffers "from a pathological 'sanctions addiction'" (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2019), while Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko accused NATO states of "undermining regional stability" in the Black Sea region through their increased military activities (TASS, 2019b). Russia, from its point of view, has responded in kind, by imposing counter-sanctions against Western states and by increasing its own military activities in Europe, including in the Black Sea region. Sometimes, Russian exercises are even conducted simultaneously with NATO exercises, using NATO forces as simulated counterparts (TASS, 2019a). These examples illustrate how much the bilateral defence and security relations between Russia and Canada are affected by the relations between Russia and NATO and by Russia's critical stance on NATO infrastructure and activities in what Moscow regards as its own sphere of influence. Amid differing assessments of who is to blame for the current deterioration of the European security environment, Russia and Canada are increasingly relying on a practice of mutual deterrence to address these incompatible – partly even opposing – identities and interests, which become most evident concerning the role of NATO in the European security architecture.

While Russia perceives Canada's significant participation in NATO reassurance and deterrence measures in Europe as part of a wider containment policy adopted against Russia "by the United States and its allies, who are seeking to retain their dominance in world affairs" (Russian National Security Strategy, 2015, para. 12, but see also The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 61), the relations between Canada and Russia in the Arctic are looked upon in a more compatible and cooperative light. Canada is the only Arctic state, which is regularly mentioned in Russian Foreign

Policy concepts, as a partner with which Russia seeks to develop and maintain particular cooperative relations in the High North (The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2008; The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2013, para. 72; The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016, para. 75). This might not be too surprising, considering that Russia and Canada are, in many respects, ‘brothers in spirit’ in the Arctic. For both countries, the Arctic does not only play a central role for their national identities (Lackenbauer, 2010, p. 880; Laruelle, 2014, pp. 24; Roberts, 2015, pp. 122), but also plays an important economic role, which will likely increase even more so in the future, as their respective Arctic territories are expected to hold vast amounts of natural resources and both aim at developing and promoting lucrative shipping routes along their long Arctic coastlines (Charron et al., 2012, p. 43; Klimenko, 2016, pp. 6; Lackenbauer, 2010, p. 894; Laruelle, 2014, pp. 135; Roi, 2010, pp. 561). Yet, Russia and Canada are not only united by common interests. Due to the harsh Arctic climate and a lack of infrastructure, both are also confronted with many similar security challenges to their Northern territories. Not neglecting the strategic dimension of the nuclear deterrence postures between the United States and Russia, in which Canada is involved through its cooperation under NORAD, issues of national sovereignty and other non-military security challenges usually top both countries’ national security agendas. As the two largest Arctic states, Russia and Canada are particularly concerned with challenges to their national sovereignty, such as disputes with the United States over the legal status of the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route as either territorial or international waters (Charron et al., 2012, p. 47; Laruelle, 2014, pp. 169), or with regard to non-military security threats, such as trafficking, illegal fishing, illicit border crossings, environmental protection, and in holding ready sufficient SAR capabilities that ensure maritime safety in the region.<sup>104</sup> For addressing these issues, both countries heavily rely on an increase in their military presence, capabilities and infrastructure in the North (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019; Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019; Hilde, 2014, pp. 149; Klimenko, 2016, pp. 13; Laruelle, 2014, p. 128; Wezeman, 2016). Internationally, Russia and Canada prefer to address these non-military security issues ideally exclusively among the eight Arctic states (sometimes even only among the five coastal states) and have developed a considerable level of cooperation in regional frameworks, such as the Arctic Council or the

---

<sup>104</sup> Together, Russia and Canada are responsible for roughly two thirds of the total Search and Rescue area in the Arctic Ocean (see Arctic Portal, 2011).

Arctic Coast Guard Forum. Their mutual emphasis on national sovereignty even goes so far as to make them occasional allies in keeping other actors, including the EU and NATO, out of the region (see 5.4).

However, when Canada responded with wide-ranging sanctions and a policy of non-engagement to Russia’s annexation of Crimea, this also affected both countries’ bilateral relations in the Arctic. The meetings of the Arctic CHOD were discontinued, and, while a pragmatic level of cooperation was maintained, contacts between both sides were reduced to an absolute minimum. This only changed in 2015, when the newly elected Canadian government declared its interest in reengaging Russia in the Arctic (Exner-Pirot & Huebert, 2020, p. 144; Huebert & Exner-Pirot, 2016), an intention that resonated well with Russia’s own policy goals of maintaining constructive and institutionalized ties with its Arctic neighbours (Baev, 2018, p. 409). To underpin their interest in normalizing their relations in the Arctic, both countries since engaged in a number of steps to reassure each other of their collective and compatible interests in the region. In 2017, they, together with their Arctic partners, held the first ever live exercise of the ACGF and have repeated this in April 2019 (ACGF, 2019). Further, Russia and Canada, together with Denmark, started negotiations over their overlapping claims of the extension of their continental shelves in the region (TASS, 2019d), and recently resumed Arctic cooperation between Russian and Canadian universities (TASS, 2019c). In other words, while Russian-Canadian defence and security relations over the conflict in Ukraine and NATO-Russia relations remain strained, both countries have seemingly managed to return to more cooperative relations in the Arctic region.

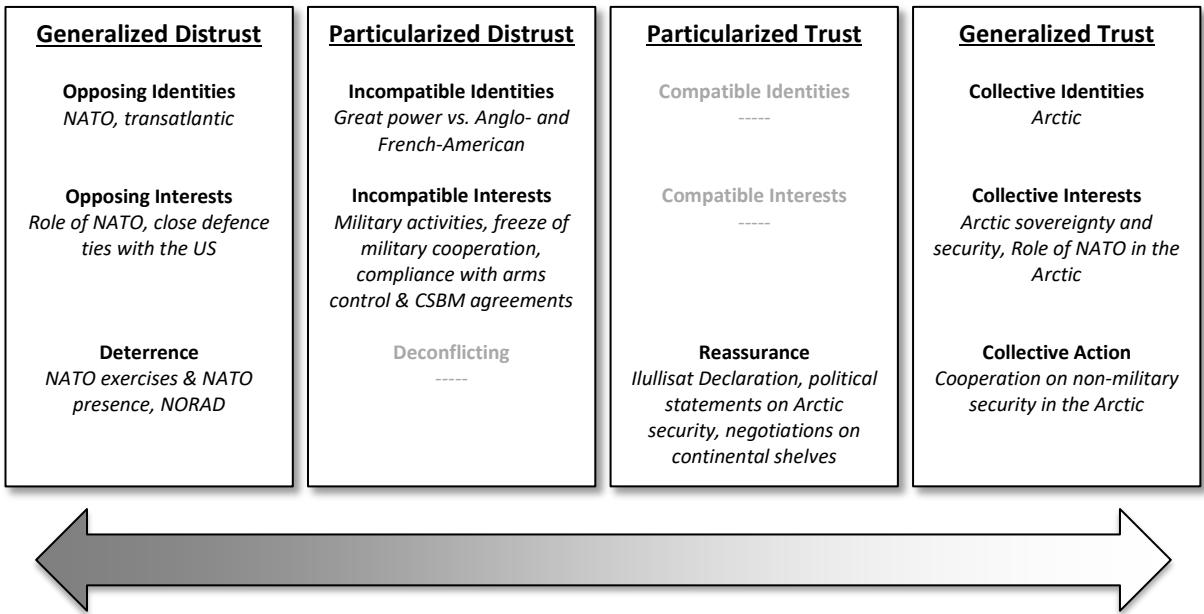


Figure 22. Russian-Canadian Defence and Security Relations.

### 5.5.5 Summary

In sum, Russia's defence, and security relations with Norway, Sweden and Canada are largely driven by Russia's ambition to re-establish its role as a great power, if not in the world than at least in regions, which Moscow continues to perceive as areas within the Russian sphere of influence. These regions, *inter alia*, include Europe, the Arctic as well as the Baltic and Black Sea regions. To pursue this goal, Russia is actively pushing back against the expansion of Western institutions to the East and what Moscow perceives as an encirclement by NATO forces and infrastructure. In addition, Russia seems ready to challenge the dominant position of the United States and its allies by actively undermining Western-dominated institutions, which it views as representing and reproducing an unfavourable Post-Cold War security order (see also Loftus & Kanet, 2017, p. 14). At the same time, Russia's actual role and influence in the world have been in sharp decline over the last years. A fact that the government in Moscow tries to overcome by an increased emphasis on its military to achieve foreign policy goals. This approach clashes with central security interests of many Western states and has, not least since Russia's annexation of Crimea, resulted in a deep level of generalized distrust in Western-Russian relations, a situation in which both sides have returned to their Cold War strategies of mutual deterrence. In discontent over the lack of progress, Russia has largely walked away from arms control and views increased transparency over its military forces and activities as counterproductive to its strategy of compensating for its relative conventional weakness by an increased level of uncertainty and unpredictability. Therefore, Russia merely relies on a number of hotlines and agreements meant to prevent military incidents in the air and at sea, to deconflict its rather tense defence and security relations with Western states. The present level of generalized distrust was also illustrated by the fact that no current or former official from the Russian armed forces, the Russian ministry of defence, or the Russian ministry of foreign affairs was ready to meet with me in the context of this thesis. Amid these deep levels of generalized distrust, the Arctic represents a remarkable exception. Being the largest Arctic state and due to strong overlapping interests, especially with regard to the economic development as well as in addressing non-military security challenges to the region (e.g. climate change, SAR, environmental protection), Russia's regional defence and security relations with other Arctic states have been of a more nuanced and conciliatory nature. This is despite the geostrategic dimensions of their relations in the nuclear deterrence postures between Russia and the United States, particularly true with regard to Russia's defence and security relations with Canada, with which Russia shares many common positions and interests in the region. Similar observations can also be made with regard to Russia's relations with Norway, with which it not only shares a common border, but also a long history of cooperation, reassurance, and practices to deconflict their bilateral defence and security relations.

## 5.6 Conclusion

Having elaborated upon the structural preconditions as well as the role and impact of national identities, interests and different security practices on the levels of trust and distrust in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia, this section concludes by discussing how the findings of this chapter contribute to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the formation of trust and distrust at the structural level in defence and security politics.

Generally, while the analysis of the structural level of trust in this chapter seems to confirm many standard conclusions of traditional IR theories, we have seen that the combination of different theoretical underpinnings already provides a much more complex and nuanced picture in the levels of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. In fact, we have seen that identities and interests are equally important factors in determining the levels of trust and distrust and that the security practices countries adopt often – but not always – serve us as useful indicators for the current level of trust in their relations with other states. We have also seen that the transitions between different stages and layers of trust are fluent, tend to overlap, and sometimes substantially differ between policy areas and issues (e.g. non-military security vs. defence cooperation) as well as different regional (e.g. Arctic vs. European security environment) and political settings (e.g. Arctic Council vs. the OSCE). In other words, the current state of trust and distrust in the relations between states is often difficult to pin down unequivocally, but in fact a constant process of overlapping and diverging identities, interests, and security practices. As the example of Sweden, Norway, and Canada's cooperation with Russia on non-military security issues in the Arctic (e.g. SAR, Coast Guard cooperation) has shown, such differences and overlaps are sometimes even actively tapped into as a strategy to balance far-reaching levels of distrust in other policy areas or regions. At the same time, we have seen that such issue-related and geographical differences often also lead to different perceptions and practices at the various hierarchy levels (tactical, operational, strategic and political), which – as we will get back to at a later stage – require a much more careful multi-level analysis of trust and distrust in the defence and security relations between states. For the structural level, the analysis of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia suggests that history, geography as well as the relative importance of the respective policy area, region or political environment for a country's national security and defence play an important role in the determining the eventual effect of functional, spatial and relational overlaps of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. This becomes evident in the rather strained relations between Sweden and Russia, which can be traced back to a historically-rooted deep level of distrust over their incompatible and opposing identities and interests in the Baltic Sea region, but also with regard to Norwegian-Swedish defence cooperation,

which prior to the Ukrainian crisis was largely neglected, due to both countries' different priorities for either NATO or the EU.

Furthermore, the analysis of this chapter has shown that trustful relations that form around the moralistic, strategic, and practice layer of trust are far more resilient and stable than those, which only form around one of the three, as not least also the recent deterioration in NATO-Russia relations, which lacked a sufficient grounding in a commonly shared identity, has shown. However, at the same time, this chapter has shown that there exist a number of qualitative differences between these three layers of trust. First, collective interests seem to have a distinct advantage over collective identities, as they lead more often to – what states consider – ‘meaningful’ collective action. This becomes particularly evident, when comparing Norwegian-Swedish defence cooperation before and after the beginning of the conflict in and around Ukraine in 2014. Despite their collective Nordic identity, both countries, for a long time, struggled to identify areas of common interest. In fact, their unqualified preference for other defence and security arrangements (NATO or the EU) sometimes even became a source of contestation (e.g. in procurement). Only more recently, amid the deteriorating security situation in Europe since 2014 has the maintaining of the existing European security order and the deterrence of any potential Russian military aggression against the Nordic countries turned into a more central unifying collective interest in their relations, resulting in more substantial forms of bilateral defence cooperation (e.g. joint exercises, increasing interoperability of forces). Similar observations can be made for Norway's defence cooperation with Canada, which despite their collective transatlantic identity and common NATO membership, prior to 2014, lacked a unifying collective interest. This interest has meanwhile returned, in the face of a renewed refocus on the protection and defence of NATO's communication and transportation lines in the North Atlantic. Secondly, the analysis of this chapter has shown that once successfully constructed, identities appear considerably more durable than interests, which tend to shift more rapidly and sometimes even drastically. This became, not least, evident in the rapid deterioration in NATO-Russia relations since 2014. This makes trust that is formed around common interests, somewhat less stable and reliable than trustful relations that form around a common identity. Finally, while states can engage in a series of measures to reassure each other of the continued relevance of a diminishing identity, it appears considerably more difficult to do so in the decline of common interests, making it hard to identify and take practical steps that are not merely symbolic in nature. This problem has become evident in the struggles of the NATO-Russia Council or of arms control and military confidence-building in deconflicting and upholding a more predictable and trustful security environment between NATO and Russia since 2014.

The discussion so far has not only shown that identities, interests and security practices are important factors in the formation of trust and distrust in defence and security politics, but also that the three are inherently interconnected. Thus, since collective interests tend to lead to deeper levels of trust, while collective identities generally appear less prone to drastic changes, it appears that states (consciously or unconsciously) try to make use of this interconnection, by attempting to consolidate their collective interests in defence and security politics through collective actions as well as through the construction of or the appealing to a collective identity. An obvious example is the case of NATO, in which the transatlantic identity consolidates and reinforces the collective security interests of NATO member states. The consolidation of collective identities can also be observed in the context of various formal and informal groupings through which states often closely coordinate and pursue their defence and security interests within larger multilateral contexts and environments, such as EU or NATO member states in the context of the OSCE or the Nordics within the EU or NATO. However, as the analysis in this chapter has shown, sometimes, the construction or invoking of a common identity can also miss the mark, in particular if the identity is constructed around states that do not share at least a minimum level of collective interests. In these situations, the involved states often struggle to identify areas for collective action and, thus, regularly have to revert to more symbolic gestures of reassurance, making their invoked identity a rather empty shell. In other words, common identities receive meaning through meaningful collective practice and such practice might only be meaningful, if it serves a common interest to both sides. This will also be discussed in more detail in the analysis of the interpersonal level of trust in the next chapter of this thesis. As we have seen, beyond merely failing to establish sustainable levels of trust, unsuccessful identity constructions can sometimes even result in considerable frustration and in the worst case even lead to serious disruptions in the defence and security relations between states. This seems particularly true, if the states involved have different opinions regarding the importance of the invoked identity or forms and forums of cooperation. Nowhere else has this probably become more evident than in the relations between NATO and Russia, since the end of the Cold War and in particular in Russia's disappointed hopes in the OSCE as an eventual replacement of NATO as the central security organization in Europe. However, even in a less drastic way, unfulfilled hopes and different perceptions can also cause notable disruptions in otherwise positive and functioning defence and security relations, as also the already mentioned Norwegian-Swedish quarrels over defence procurement and the role of NORDEFECO in their defence politics have shown. While NORDEFECO has, due to a number of practical constraints and limitations, so far remained fairly limited in scope, the Nordic identity and a deepening of the defence cooperate of Nordic states are, nevertheless, frequently invoked at the highest political level. Yet, this regularly causes problems and difficulties at the



implementation level, as will be discussed in more detail in the later course of this thesis. Finally, even if an identity is constructed around a common interest, there is no guarantee that the cooperation resulting from it remains immune to negative spillover effects from developments in other regions and policy areas. This particularly true if these regions and policy areas are considered of higher political and strategic importance, as could be observed in the Arctic security context. While the cooperation on non-military security between Arctic states, despite increased tensions in the relations between Russia and the West, remained largely functional, a number of smaller setbacks, such as the suspension of meetings, a toughened rhetoric, or new residual doubts about the actions and intentions of other actors in the region can be observed.

The impact of the Ukrainian crisis on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia has also shown how highly disruptive events, such as the breach of common principles and norms, can have a strong and lasting impact on the overall levels of trust in interstate relations. This chapter has shown that such perceived betrayals of trust lead to periods of high uncertainty, during which states carefully re-evaluate their defence and security relations with the deviating actor (in this case Russia). In addition, they are reviewing their defence and security relations with other actors, where necessary seek reassurance and try to identify, if a collective response to the new situation is of common interest. This process of re-evaluation often shows itself in the adoption of new defence and security policy documents that specifically address the new security situation, as it has also been the case for Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia after 2014. However, while perceived betrayals usually require an immediate response, the process of this careful re-evaluation of security interests and identities is much more time-consuming. Therefore, states facing a drastic challenge to their security order try to reduce the risk of misperception, assuming a worst-case scenario, in which they predominantly attempt to deter any further challenge to their defence and security interests. This process is not least illustrated by the increased emphasis on mutual deterrence in Western-Russian relations, since 2014. Lastly, the analysis in this chapter has shown that perceived betrayals of trust even put previously compatible and collective interests and identities into question. This can result in tensions and sometimes even in the termination of measures of collective action, reassurance, and of deconflicting in other regions and policy areas. For example, this could be observed in the suspension of practically all defence cooperation with Russia, the drastic reduction in bilateral meetings or in disputes over (non-)compliance with arms control and CSBM regimes. Only over time, as states begin to gain a better understanding of the new security situation and become more confident in their assessments about each other's identities and interests are they again more likely to (re-)engage each other. This (re-)engagement could include deconflicting incompatible or carefully reassuring compatible

identities and interests in their relations. This slow shift towards a more nuanced approach, could for instance be observed in the gradual increase of initiatives to deconflict Norway's and Sweden's defence and security relations with Russia over the last couple of years, such as the resuming of high-level bilateral meetings or the opening of new direct lines of communication at the strategic level.

Finally, the analysis in this chapter has also shown that historical and geographical factors, more specifically proximity and distance, have a significant effect on the formation of national identities and state interests, and as such also on the level of trust in defence and security politics. In particular, smaller states with limited military capabilities have to be much more selective in where and how they utilize and deploy their armed forces. Hence, they usually prioritize areas for cooperation that are of particular strategic interest and importance to them. As a direct consequence, smaller states will even despite potentially strong collective identities often only engage in smaller signals of reassurance than in more substantial forms of defence and security cooperation. In other words, only if a region or issue is of considerable interest to both sides, we will also see more substantial forms of cooperation. For example, this has been the case for the Barents region, in which both Norway and Russia have a historically grown interest in maintaining low tensions and have developed a comprehensive level of cooperation on various issues and policy areas. In contrast, if a region is not of equally high interest to both sides, even practices of collective action, merely become a less efficacious practice of reassurance, as for example, the rather small contributions of Norway and Sweden in Canada's Arctic exercise Op NANOOK or the less substantial defence and security cooperation between Sweden and Norway prior to the conflict in and around Ukraine indicate. Beyond geographical factors, the two examples also show the impact of historical experiences on the formation of trust in defence and security politics. They can help states to develop a more comprehensive understanding and to more easily identify issues of common interest as well as to construct a common identity around their existing defence and security cooperation. Yet, we have also seen that negative historical experiences can likewise have a long-lasting impeding effect on the levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. This has not least become evident in the return of historically justified enemy images and threat perceptions in Western-Russian defence and security relations.

To sum it up, the empirical investigation of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia, has shown that unidimensional traditional IR theories provide us with an insufficient and incomplete picture of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. Already the combination of different approaches into a more comprehensive theoretical framework has shown that trust and distrust in international relations requires us to take a much more complex and nuanced theoretical approach.

Both, identities and interests, are key facilitating and constraining factors in the development of far-reaching levels of trust in defence and security politics and are both significantly shaped by states' previous historical experiences with each other as well as by geographical factors (e.g. proximity and distance). They also explain why defence and security practices between states can differ quite substantially between policy areas, issues or regions, a circumstance that is sometimes even actively used by states to manage and balance their defence and security relations with each other. Furthermore, while identities and interests are both key determinants in the formation of trust between states, interests tend to result in more substantial cooperation, while identities appear to be considerably more resilient, as they are – once successfully constructed – less likely subject to radical changes. As such, the most resilient and substantial forms of trust in the defence and security relations between states are built around all three layers of trust – moralistic, strategic and practice. This also explains why many states engage in initiatives aimed at consolidating their compatible and collective interests through the construction of a common identity and by pursuing their interests collectively. However, the success of such initiatives remains dependent on at least a minimum level of compatible, ideally even collective interests that allow for more substantial forms of cooperation. Otherwise, states are trapped in a less reliable cycle of constant reassurance.

## **6 The Interpersonal Level of Trust in Defence and Security Politics**

Already the analysis of the structural level of trust in the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia has highlighted the importance of a more nuanced and complex understanding of trust and distrust in international relations. One of the most neglected factors in traditional IR theories is the absence of a more thorough understanding of the 'human factor' in international relations. In other words, how defence and security cooperation are actually carried out by practitioners on the ground, how they affect the formation of trust and distrust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. To address this problem, this chapter will focus on the *interpersonal level of trust* in defence and security politics. More specifically, this chapter explores the effects of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts on the formation of interpersonal trust between defence and security practitioners. To this end, this chapter evaluates various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts amid Gordon Allport's contact hypothesis (1954) and the five conditions it sets out for constructive intergroup contacts, namely *equal status, common goals, cooperation, support of authorities* and *cross-group friendships*.

The basis for this analysis are the personal experiences of eighteen defence and security practitioners from Norway, Sweden, and Canada<sup>105</sup> that were collected during interviews in the context of this doctoral thesis. Keeping in mind that Allport's contact hypothesis was not developed and defined for measuring the interaction between defence and security practitioners, the subsequent analysis serves the purpose of adapting the original conditions to the specific needs and requirements of analysing the trust-building effects of various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts. To this end, this chapter will first discuss each form of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts individually, before concluding with a more general overview and analysis of the interpersonal level of trust in defence and security politics. The forms and types of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts discussed in this chapter are international interactions and contacts in the context of:

- military training, exercises and operations;
- exercise and operations planning;
- arms control and confidence- and security-building measures;
- other types of military-to-military contacts (e.g. attaché programs, military hotlines, incident prevention mechanisms, meetings, workshops, seminars, visits and military exchanges).

## 6.1 Military Training, Exercises and Operations

Drawing from the personal experiences of my interview partners, this section analyses the trust-building effects of joint military training, exercises, and operations against the backdrop of Gordon Allport's contact hypothesis. Seemingly fulfilling many of the conditions for positive inter-group contacts, this section will elaborate upon why training, exercising, and operating together might potentially be one of the strongest ways of developing interpersonal trust between military practitioners.

The first condition for constructive inter-group contacts is that participants should be of *equal status*, meaning that they should share some common "background, qualities, and characteristics that influence prestige and rank in the situation" (Forsyth, 2014, p. 493). In this regard, joint training, exercises and

---

<sup>105</sup> As highlighted in the research design, these included interviews with seven defence and security practitioners from Norway, four from Sweden, and seven from Canada. Russian officials could unfortunately not be included into the sample of this study (see also 4.1.2).

operations benefit from the fact that all participants not only come from a more general military background, but tend to also often be from similar operational environments (e.g. joint operations, Arctic etc.), the same level of command (tactical, operational, strategic) as well as the same military branches (army, air force, navy). For example, an operation or exercise might consist of a 'Live Exercise'-component, bringing together army soldiers training and operating together at the tactical level, while at the same time having a 'Command Post Exercise' that trains the coordination and communication between commanders and headquarters at the operational level. In other words, during joint training, exercises, and operations, participants normally interact with other militaries whose working cultures, daily routines, challenges, and tasks have more in common than just a more general military identity. This makes it easier for practitioners to relate to each other and helps fostering a common situational understanding, which was highlighted by all informants as the probably most important factor for constructive military cooperation and interaction. Together with the importance of high levels of interoperability<sup>106</sup> (e.g. by common standards for operation or communication), it is not too surprising that practitioners particularly valued cooperation with nations with already far-reaching defence and security ties, while the cooperation with units from non-allied countries was described as much more general and basic. This became particularly evident, in listening to comparisons of operating with NATO and non-NATO countries:

It is easy to plan exercises with the US, because the US is a partner in the Arctic. It is the same for Norway, even Iceland and Denmark, for example, because we are all within NATO. We already have means to communicate, to exchange E-Mail and everything. [...]  
If we do something with other Partnership-for-Peace countries, it tends to be a little bit more basic, for example, as simple as manoeuvring together to make sure that we understand how we manoeuvre (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

Even in the cooperation with nations that are already well integrated into NATO and for which all sides can rely on previous experiences of working together, such as Sweden or Finland, their status as non-

---

<sup>106</sup> Within NATO 'interoperability' is broadly defined "as the ability for [...] forces, units and/or systems to operate together and [to allow] them to share common doctrine and procedures, each other's' infrastructure and bases, and to be able to communicate" (NATO, 2017a).

allied countries sometimes still affects the actual interaction during exercises or operations on the ground (e.g. when members from both countries have to leave meetings declared as ‘NATO-only’).

Alliances and other forms of close defence ties are not only the sign of particularly close political and military relations, but also add an additional layer of mutual identity, background, and culture:

You may have national cultures in Norway, Germany, Spain, and so on, but there is also a NATO culture, which we are a part of, that sort of, flows on top of the national culture. I think what makes some conversations and some discussions easier than others is whether we share basically the same kind of situational understanding. That helps, to a large extent, in the conversation (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

This additional layer can also provide useful guidance for practitioners, in particular during the initial stages of a cooperation, not least, because both sides can rely on a common set of norms, standards or an already existing communication network: “When we are doing NATO operations, we have procedures and we have plans for different problems. When you deal with security, [...] it is a bigger jigsaw-puzzle to manage (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019)”. Since military alliances like NATO, also provide regular opportunities for direct encounters between members of different armed forces, they also help facilitating a common situational understanding, an issue that all my informants identified as being less an issue of common identity than of repeated wide-ranging cooperation. This was also illustrated by the following example of a Canadian maritime planner, comparing his experiences of cooperating with different NATO allies:

Let me give you an example. Albania is not a nation that we worked a lot with, but with the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Norway, France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with these nations we can build upon years of experience of working together. We understand our naval forces and we have been engaged in joint NATO exercises. That does not exist with the other nations. When Poland came into NATO, we did not really know them at all. I remember when they joined NATO, I did ask them: ‘You guys are now in NATO, but you have Russian equipment and you have a Russian military tactic base. If you exercise with us, are you going to do these old tactics or are you trying to learn these new tactics?’ It was interesting, because they were brand new and said: ‘Well, first of all, we have to learn how to operate with NATO, because this is brand new for us. We have to learn how to operate with you guys, because we do not know how you do it.’ I agreed and said: ‘Yeah, that is the problem.’ So, it starts with an initial partnership and eventually the cooperation evolves (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

Joint military training, exercises and operations, usually also allow participating units to pursue operational goals and training objectives, which are of common interest. Such *common goals* and objectives can be as simple as exchanging experiences of how to tackle certain tasks and challenges, but also be more specific and complex, such as jointly training anti-submarine warfare. Overall, practitioners agreed that under the pressure of limited time and financial resources, sharing a common identity and pursuing common goals are factors that drastically increase the positive and trust-building effects that a joint training, exercise, or operation can have on the interaction between cooperating units. As a former Norwegian brigade commander explained:

For Brigade Nord, we have more than we can manage. In 2017, I think we had, I am not sure about the number, I think visits from or participated in exercises or did operations with eleven or fourteen different countries. It is a small army in Norway. We have one brigade and we are participating in a lot of places. Most of them are minor units, elements doing this, but that is part of the bonding, because ultimately we have to fight together. It is more about the humans than it is about the equipment. It helps having interoperability between our information systems or weaponry or vehicle parts or whatever, but the most important thing is that we have a kind of basic trust that we are in the same team. If I have not worked together with that particular officer from the Netherlands, but I have worked with another one that knows him or whatever and you have some common friends or common colleagues, so to speak. That is helpful (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018).

As he continues to explain, if a shared identity and common goals are missing, the *cooperation* between different military units risks of becoming more superficial and basic:

For instance, when foreign units come and visit us we want them to be integrated with us, so that we work together, train together. This is most interesting for our troops. We learn from them. They learn from us. We think that is the best overall. Having troops from other nations just coming to Norway, doing their own things, going skiing and shooting a little bit and then leave again, does not give us much. They get some practice operating in snow and in the cold, but it does not give anything to us. [...] Thus, we want to be and train together with them (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018)

To this end, joint training, exercises, and operations benefit again from the common military background, identity and a shared situational understanding of participating forces, which ensures a greater interest in pursuing joint training objectives, allowing for more in-depth levels of cooperation and an even more rewarding opportunity for exchanging experiences:

The key is to work with other nation partners. Learning where they have succeeded and where they have stumbling blocks. Exchanges of ideas and learning from our cooperation. The more we exchange, the more we learn from each other and the better we are going to get. Every situation will be slightly different, but in every case there will always be some common themes that we can share amongst each other (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

As already mentioned, due to the extent and depth in cooperation, most joint trainings, exercises, and operations are predominantly conducted by states that already maintain strong political and military ties (e.g. between NATO countries):

I think there is a barrier that exists and that with some of the countries we have not really worked together as often, for example, if you talk more about Finland and Sweden. [...]. On the other side, it does not matter whether you are Canadian, German, Norwegian or British. We know their policy, their military policy, what they are doing and where they are operating. From a military-to-military point of view, it is different, not so much that there is a different view, but it is more the fact that there have not really been, in my area, a lot of opportunities to establish that relationship, to be honest. If you take Sweden and Finland, we do not go there very often ourselves. Unless it is a NATO exercise, we do not tend to go into the Baltics, just for the sake of going into the Baltics. We might go with the Standing NATO Naval Force, but what I am trying to say is, that their area of interest is not really an area of interest where we would typically operate. Historically, we never build that relationship that much as with other partners (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

This example also highlights that while allies might consider the opportunity of training and operating together as a chance for showing cohesion, increasing interoperability and reducing operational barriers, the cooperation between non-allied countries is much more dependent on the *support of higher-level authorities*, political approval mechanisms as well as on the already mentioned identification of common training objectives and operational goals. Due to the extent and depth of cooperation, joint training, exercises, and operations usually have to undergo a particularly thorough and lengthy political and military approval process. Firstly, joint training, exercises, and operations are evaluated against the backdrop of national policy goals and the current state of affairs in the relations between states. A continuous process that always takes precedence over the military evaluation of any potential value-added. For example, as a Canadian military explained, even though much could potentially be learned from a military cooperation with Russia in the Arctic, Russia's annexation of Crimea and role in the conflict in and around Ukraine, makes such a cooperation currently politically infeasible:



It is not me to decide. I will be permitted or not permitted to work with somebody. I am pretty sure, nobody would allow me to go over to Russia and say: 'Hey, what are you guys doing in the Arctic?' Even though, [...] I think a lot could be learned from them, but politically it is not palatable, it is not something that I would be permitted to do. I am still an instrument of the federal government. I would argue that the Canadian government is very supportive of interactions with NATO allies and partners, [...] but if there are distinctive *No-Nos*, I will be told: 'No, do not interact with them' and that is why I socialize it through the chain of command (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

In addition, a Norwegian military described the negative impact of the Ukrainian crisis on the considerable levels of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts that existed between Norway and Russia prior to 2014:

[Before 2014,] I have been given briefs to the commander of the Northern Fleet, when he was in this headquarters. I do not think he would be let in to this headquarters today. That is a major shift. As I see it, up to 2014, the High North was in focus, due to environmental changes and industrial potential. After 2014, the security dimension has reached the top of the agenda. It does not mean that environment and industry is gone, but the security aspect has been upgraded heavily. That is a major shift [and] of course, you have a lot of practical consequences at a lower level. We do not have any cooperation or exercises with the Northern Fleet any longer. We do not have military-to-military cooperation. What is left, is the cooperation between the border guards (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

Since, the process of receiving political approval can be rather lengthy and cumbersome, an important way of increasing the flexibility and reducing the amount of bureaucracy is the political approval of activities through so-called 'framework documents'. Once passed, these documents grant military authorities the autonomy for deciding for themselves, if they would like to engage in certain activities with a politically carefully selected and restricted number of national partners or not. For example, for a country like Sweden, such a framework approval might cover exercises that are taking place on the territory of EU states, NATO nations or in Switzerland, but only if also the participants of the exercise are 'from the same club'. Otherwise, the Swedish armed forces need to seek again governmental approval to participate in the respective exercise:

This is how it works for us [...]. We choose which exercises are of interest to the armed forces and after that we see if we have approval or not, if [the exercise] follows the criteria in the governmental decision or [if not,] we make a request for a new governmental

approval for taking part in that [specific] exercise (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

This statement shows that even after a military activity has received political approval, it is at least equally important that the proposed activity also allows for the pursuance of common goals and provides some added value (e.g. leads to a gradual increase in interoperability). Otherwise, the interaction will hardly be able to maintain the necessary support by the political and military-strategic level. Since most interactions and activities get either initiated or authorized by higher level authorities that often do not directly take part in the actual activity themselves, it is particularly important that the goals and objectives for each activity get communicated in a way that matches the operational realities of the units involved. In addition, these goals and objectives need to allow for enough flexibility, should certain objectives not be met due to unforeseen events. If this is not the case and practitioners lack a clear enough understanding of what is requested from them, there is the risk of what one of my informants referred to as a *game of telephone*, through which bits and pieces of information and eventually also the intended goals and outcomes get lost. To ensure a better communication between different levels in the military hierarchy, coming from the same military background and being able to build upon an existing network of contacts was again highlighted as particularly useful towards this end. In addition, practitioners felt that officers needed to feel comfortable to ask questions of clarification and to communicate with all different levels in the military hierarchy (strategic, operational, tactical).

Interestingly, even though political considerations usually take precedence over military considerations, the responses by most of my informants seem to suggest that it is in fact the military assessment that ultimately determines, whether a training, exercise or operation is viewed as practically useful by the implementing units and hence capable of facilitating trust at the interpersonal level of military practitioners. For example, being asked about their personal experiences, many informants underlined that the most successful forms of cooperation were in fact those, which they considered to be of a primarily military, rather than of a political nature. As they explained, such activities allow them to focus on cooperative tasks and issues of common interests, while being able to leave aside more difficult and sometimes more controversial political debates. For example, this was underlined by a Norwegian military reflecting on his experiences of cooperating with members of the Russian armed forces, before and after the beginning of the conflict in and around Ukraine:

At the time that we met, we met on a military-to-military basis and we dealt with military issues, as officers and soldiers can do. We were not dealing directly with political issues at all, but what you might say is that the fact that these [Norwegian and Russian] forces meet

and deal with military issues is in itself a political expression. [...] That the military cooperation in itself expresses a certain political situation. Yet, I do not have any feelings from that time that the Northern Fleet in Murmansk was on a political mission or something like that. It was more as sailors meet sailors and general meets general. The cooperation that we have with the FSB today continues in the same spirit. I think one of the reasons why this cooperation still exists, is that it is not an arena for dealing with purely political issues. If it was a political body, a purely political body, it would probably have been put on hold in 2014 (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

My interviews also suggest that any potential disconnect between the political and military support for joint training, exercises and cooperation can lead to notable frustration and lack of understanding at the military level and as such not only hamper, but in the worst case even reverse the positive effects at the interpersonal level of trust between practitioners. An example of such a disconnect is the already mentioned regular push for an increased Nordic defence cooperation, despite the various practical challenges the membership and non-memberships of Nordic states in NATO and the EU imply (e.g. interoperability, exchange of classified information etc.).

Finally, as one of my informants reflected upon his own experiences as a young military officer, joint training, exercises, and operations also appear particularly suited for the development of *cross-group friendships* between members of different armed forces. This does not least seem to be the case because they bring together practitioners from similar backgrounds, but also due to the other factors discussed in this section:

Some of my best friendships have been established through the pressure cooker of going through naval officer training, through exercises. You meet foreign military (alliance members, etc.), and through sharing a commonality of purpose in activities like challenging exercises, great friendships bonds occur. These are the type of things that create the glue and trust of the alliance (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019).

However, while all informants agreed that joint training, exercises and operations generally help facilitating the formation of friendships between members of different armed forces, most also underlined that they would describe these relationships as professional rather than as personal friendships, an issue that we will also get back to in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

To conclude, following the criteria of Gordon Allport's contact hypothesis – equal status, common goals, cooperation, support of authorities and cross-group friendships – joint training, exercises, and operations seem particularly suited for the facilitation of constructive inter-group contacts and as such

for the development of far-reaching levels of interpersonal trust between militaries from different armed forces. At the same time, many of the trust-building effects of training, operating and exercising together are often either taken for granted or simply overlooked, in particular at the higher political and strategic levels. Other than most forms of military cooperation, they do not only bring together military units from largely similar military backgrounds and operational environments, but during exercises and operations usually also foster particular far-reaching forms of cooperation and cross-group interdependence in the pursuance of common (or at least compatible) training objectives and exercise goals. Joint training, exercises and operations are therefore, particularly dependent on the political and military approval of higher-level authorities. On the one hand, this confines them as a practice that is predominantly conducted by states with already far-developed political and military ties (e.g. between NATO countries). On the other hand, it provides practitioners with the certainty of exercising and operating in line with national security interests and policy goals. At the same time, practitioners at lower levels in the national hierarchy highlighted that these more political and strategic background conditions hardly affect the quality of their own interaction on the ground. Those they rather saw determined by the value added in tackling their own tasks, challenges and working routines through these interactions, e.g. by exchanging experiences in how to address common issues and problems. In other words, one could argue that as long as all other conditions for constructive military-to-military contacts and cooperation are fulfilled, the necessary political approval of their interaction is mostly perceived as a constraining, rather than a facilitating factor. This argument is also supported by the fact that informants unanimously agreed that the probably most constructive forms of military cooperation were those in which difficult political debates could be left aside and during which participants could focus on purely military tasks and training objectives. Finally, due to the largely similar military backgrounds and high levels of interdependence in achieving challenging operational goals and training objectives, joint training, exercises and operations were also understood as particular constructive in the facilitation of professional friendships between members of different armed forces.

## **6.2 Exercise and Operations Planning**

This second section assesses and compares the trust-building effects of the cooperation and interaction taking place during the planning process of military exercises and operations. Similar to joint training, exercises, and operations, also the planning of exercises and operations carries a lot of potential for the facilitation of high levels of interpersonal trust between military practitioners.

Sharing a more general military background and being situated at the same levels of command (usually at the operational or strategic level), the planning of exercises and operations allows practitioners from different countries to interact at eye level with each other. Many times, their very issue-specific interaction also helps bridging any potential differences in experience and identity that might originate from different military backgrounds (e.g. army, air force, navy), differences that are also mitigated when officers have worked within a joint operational or multilateral environment for a longer time as the following statement by a member of the Canadian Joint Task Force (North) describes:

[These different backgrounds] create frictions. However, when we talk as a joint headquarter [...] with another headquarter, I think it is relatively simple, because we understand each other. Especially when we are talking with other headquarters that are based or deal with Arctic issues (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

In other words, being from the same level of command and coming from a similar operational environment are generally viewed as more important than coming from the same military branch. Otherwise, the situational understanding, previous experiences, goals, and perspectives of practitioners might be too far apart, making it particularly difficult to connect and to identify common operational goals and training objectives.

Just as in the case of joint training, exercises, and operations, being able to build upon existing defence relations and military alliances is another important factor in the interaction of military planners. It provides them with an additional common identity and they can build upon experiences from previous cooperation, a network of pre-existing contacts and communication channels, as well as common operational and technical standards, which makes it easier to identify and define common training goals and objectives:

You know NATO has been around since 1949. We have a long history of working together and know each other well. That means that there is a lot of commonality and that influences planning, like how ships, aircraft, etc. operate and so on. You know, we are always working together. It is very rare that a nation operates on its own. In the present and future, I see that it will most always be in coalition or alliance format versus unilateral actions(s) [...] NATO is always working together (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019).

Military alliances and other forms of far-reaching defence relations do not only initiate and facilitate contacts or help fostering a common situational understanding, but exercising and training together with allies and partners can sometimes even become a training objective or operational goal of its own. However, military alliances can sometimes also have a constraining effect on the interaction between

practitioners, in particular in situations that undermine individual member's perceptions of working among equal partners. Probably in no other debate has this become more evident than in the recurring discussions about NATO 'burden sharing' (e.g. Cordesman, 2018), a debate that, as some of my informants noted, not only focuses on unequal shares of defence budgets and military spending, but also on financial and logistical burdens in the planning process of NATO exercises and operations.

In some situations, the determination of common training objectives and exercise goals might not be immediately apparent or sometimes not necessarily easy or possible to achieve. This is especially the case for larger exercises and operations, such as Canada's all-government exercise Op NANOOK, with many different actors and interests involved. In such situations, practitioners underlined the importance of clearly stating the goals and intentions of a respective exercise or operation. In particular, practitioners with long-standing experience in the planning of exercises and operations emphasized that such clear and open communication makes it easier to find compromises and to balance different interests and goals. Such compromises could include the offering to adjust future exercises more to the goals and needs of the other side or the combination of several smaller exercise components and training objectives into one larger military exercise or operation:

Usually, in a big operational exercise, you build a program to ensure that everybody who joins the exercise achieves his training objectives. For example, last year [...] we did some of the stuff that was pertinent to Canada and a couple of other countries and then we moved from that phase into a free play in which one of our ships stayed with the other country's navy to accomplish some other type of exercise. In the free play scenario, we made sure that it was challenging for them, providing an opposing vessel for them to search and find and afterwards our ship returned to Canadian waters. You have to think about these kind of things. This was an exercise in the Arctic and it started after a port visit all the way in Iceland (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

When interacting with practitioners coming from more diverse backgrounds and with a different situational understanding, recognizing this need for cooperation and the readiness to strike compromises were described as much more difficult. For instance, this was indicated by the following example from the civil-military Canadian exercise Op NANOOK:

It is kind of in bits and pieces at this point. [...] I mean to be honest, what is Arctic security, to begin with? Is that clear? Arctic security for the military is not the same as Arctic security is for the Yukon government or for the Nunavut government or the US government. We are not talking the same language. So, what is for us *the Arctic*? Really good question. The second is what Arctic security is and I do not think that anybody agrees on that concept

either. [...] We have not come up with a general understanding of what the problem might be [...] and what it is that we need to do together. That is one of the big issues, I think [and] we have to plough through it [...] to reach a common understanding. At some point, somebody is going to have to say: 'Ok, well, let us find out what is Arctic. Let us find out what is Arctic security.' Once we achieve that, then potentially we can polarize the discussions better. At this point, it is all over the place [...]. [...] I think there is a good understanding of the problems, but not necessarily a good understanding of the entire thing. Everybody has its own base of concept (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

Because of this different situational understanding, Op NANOOK also shows that sometimes the only way forward is to reduce the extent and depth of the cooperation and where possible, to draw clear lines of responsibility between the diverse actors involved:

[It] is difficult, but the only way to do it, is by recognizing that whatever their respective objectives and concerns are, they are theirs. They are not mine and I am not going to tell them what to do. I cannot provide them with solutions, the most I can do is to provide them with a forum to discuss it or an activity to exercise something that they want to practice or train. [...] In May/June, we will have an exercise in Yukon, Op NANOOK TATIGIIT, with forty-five different partners participating in it. From the federal level that are not military, to the First Nation self-government organizations, private sector, you name it. Forty-five different organizations. I do not control any of their objectives. I log them. I know what they want to do and I facilitate this, but it is not my game. Once they understood that we go well together. [...] They are all self-sustained organizations and they have their own structures, processes and so on. My role is to listen to them and to say 'In order to meet your objective, this is what I am going to put in place. Do you like it? Yes? You want to change something?' [...] Realizing this fact, allows us to work with them (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

However, even if actors retain ownership of their own training objectives and goals, in the absence of clear hierarchies and situations of overlapping responsibilities, there are still enough situations, in which the lack of a common identity and background as well as strong individual personalities can lead to irreconcilable disputes over competences and status as an exercise planner of Op NANOOK illustrated:

When [their dispute] is [about] an issue, it is easy. When it is the personality and that happens, there is nothing that I can do. I close the discussion and I say 'Let us talk about that on the side line during the break.' Then it is gone, but it is not fixed, I know. It is between them and I do not care. As long as I know, what they want to do and they have their objectives stated to me that is as far as I am going to go. It is not without challenge,

but as I said, we are just another voice. I just cannot tell them to do this or that. It is not ok. To give you an example, Public Safety Canada is the civilian entity that drives safety in the north and the community that we go to. The territorial emergency management officer is the equivalent to Public Safety Canada and many aspects and this is where most of the time the conflict is. Because, this guy does not want that guy to tell him what to do and vice versa. There is some big ego at that level. Not so much with the smaller players, but these are the two major players, with a couple of others and these are the guys that usually fight a lot. There is nothing you can do. It is the way it is. It is [when mandates overlap] and one takes over from the other at some point. So, when the territorial organization is overflowed, Public Safety Canada jumps in and says 'Sit, I got it!' (laughing) and that is where it does not go well (laughing) (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

While admittedly not free from such disputes or from strong personalities, my interviews with military practitioners suggest that the experience and habit of working under a strict hierarchy and chain of command in the armed forces make it generally easier to overcome similar disputes and difficulties in the interaction between military practitioners:

You know, militaries are all different, but I think we all should sort of share a cultural background of a *can-do*-attitude. When I say to somebody else that my commanders told me that I should do this, there is more of this 'I am going to support you in what it is your commanders are trying to achieve.' While with some civilian agencies, when you [...] support them in their capacity building, they do not understand [that] [...] as much as I am helping them achieve their goals, they need to help me achieve my goals. Sometimes, that gets lost. I do not think it gets lost so much with a different military. We understand that our commanders have spoken and they want us to work together and achieve something, which is collaborative in nature. Yet, at times, [working with] a civilian agency [...] you have to explain them that if I help and support them to achieve their goal, it sometimes takes away my ability to achieve what I am getting told to achieve (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

While the clear hierarchies and chain of command of armed forces do not necessarily prevent, but at least mitigate the impact of similar disputes between militaries, individual skills and personalities become much more important in creating a constructive and collaborative working environment for civil-military interaction:

If you get people who are too military, rather than working in a collaborative way, they work more in a directive way and they do not understand the nuances of when you have a direct chain of command and when you are looking for collaboration with other



organizations that do not have to say *yes* or *no* to you. They can just walk away and do what they want. It can be an uphill battle for some people and some people definitely excel on it, really through maturity and their personal background (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

When it comes to the support of exercise and operation planning by higher-level authorities, their approval not only follows the same evaluation criteria, but also carries many of the same limits, challenges, and problems as the actual conduction and implementation of joint training, exercises, and operations. Approval processes can be slow and time-consuming or the interaction mainly takes place between practitioners from states that already maintain considerable defence ties and that take the trust between them for granted. In other words, many of the trust-building effects, not only in the conduction, but also in the planning of exercises and operations, are overlooked. However, comparing the interaction of those conducting with those planning a certain exercise or operation, the probably biggest difference is that most planners sit in positions much closer to the political and strategical level, the level in which the decisions for approval or dismissal are being made (e.g. at their country's national headquarters or at the Chief of Defence Staff). As various statements suggest, this seems to make them much more self-reflective and aware of the political ramifications and wider strategic implications of their work:

I am employed by the government and if they put a defence policy, I will stay within the boundaries of that policy. As long as the policy is telling me to invite partners, I will provide and consider all the partners that we have (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

When it comes to exercises, in general, we interact on a national level [to determine] what we want. What are the training objectives? What do we want to achieve? What kind of StratCom message is appropriate? With what forces and with whom should we train? [...] The political level, of course, needs to approve it. We have in Sweden a two-year governmental decision covering exercises abroad and we need to have a governmental approval for exercises on Swedish territory with foreign participation. Otherwise, we can nationally do what we would like. When it comes to the coordination, interaction with others, it depends on if we are invited to take part in an exercise by Finland, Germany or Norway, where we will then come to the planning conferences or if its NATO, where it would be the NATO planning conferences or whoever is organizing the exercise (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

When it comes to international engagement, participation or observation of our operations [...] [it is important that we] make sure that our invitees are relevant to what we are trying

to achieve and that the engagement falls under the Arctic Campaign Plan, more engagement within our own Arctic with international audiences and hopefully in perspective moving into participation on operations as well (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

While still dependent on political approval, being themselves part of a higher level in the military chain of command, planners usually enjoy considerably more authority, freedom and flexibility, in particular on the military aspects of their work:

When we do the exercise planning and discuss how we exercise that is up to us. There is no micromanagement from the political level in that part. [...] We keep them informed [as] we do not want to surprise each other [...]. I think it works quite well that way. If we take, for example, Trident Juncture, we of course also met at the political level, but all the practical stuff was done at the military level. We are going to the planning conferences. We discuss what they can and cannot do and [...] then we bring it to the political level to make sure that they have a coherent message that we agree upon (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

However, despite the higher flexibility and freedom for military planners, be it due to their position within the military chain of command or reached through political framework documents, there still exist a number of considerable obstacles during exercise and operations planning. These can be considerable time constraints, the complexities of interacting and cooperating with practitioners coming from various backgrounds, or operating under different planning cycles and representing diverse national interests and policy goals (see 7.1). To address these challenges and better understand the internal processes and structures of other actors, all planners highlighted the importance of liaison officers, military attachés, and of establishing as well as maintaining personal contacts and relations. The latter they saw particularly facilitated by the more social and less formalized venues and events before and during planning conferences:

Relationships create trust, and trust determines the success and assurance of our “alliance”. For the alliance to plan, work and achieve commonality of purpose, its members rely on these relationships to achieve and resolve the challenges presented. To be able sit down informally with an alliance formed colleague and say: 'Ok, let us work this problem out.' This is how humans naturally resolve things and the alliance too. So, relationships matter, immensely for the alliance to operate successfully. For example, some members are highly experienced familiar faces and subject matter experts, so sometimes I get asked by fellow European colleagues: 'Hey, what is our approach to this? Is this correct?' (Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC, 2019).

To more actively facilitate contacts and personal relations, many planning conferences are accompanied by various social events and other opportunities for socializing and more personal interaction between planners, for example in the context of common lunches, dinners or evening meetings at a local bar. As a Canadian exercise planner explained:

It is not like that we are going out and (laughing) are destroying the town. Probably, we just have a couple of beers. Often, you would also go and have lunch and then go back to work. Usually you break into small groups and you go nearby where the conference is or you go on the base to the officers' mess and you sit with seven eight people at a table and of course you also do not have to sit with the same people every day that is one of the advantages (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

However, since exercises and operations are usually planned between nations whose practitioners already share a common situational understanding or can already rely on an existing network of contacts and communication channels, one could argue that the planning and conduction of exercises represents a somewhat missed opportunity for the development of more trustful defence relations with other states:

I think in exercise planning it is also possible [to build professional friendships and relations]. It is very possible, because you are sitting together during a long process. If you take Trident Juncture as an example, we have been sitting with the same guys every second month. [...] Everyone knows you. [...] The big difference is that you do not exercise with everyone. Usually, the ones you exercise with are not necessarily the ones you need to have more relations with, because you already have the relation (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

In sum, despite lacking some of the formative experiences of collaboratively pursuing demanding training objectives and difficult operational goals, also the planning of military exercises and operations shows many of the same features for the development of interpersonal trust between members of different armed forces. Planning conferences usually bring together subject matter experts from similar levels in the military chain of command, let them work collaboratively towards achieving a very specific task of mutual interest and provide many opportunities for building more personal and social relations between practitioners from different armed forces. At the same time, being part of the same political and military approval processes, also the trust-building experiences from planning exercises and operations tend to be limited to practitioners from countries that already enjoy considerable levels of trust in their defence and security relations. In addition, situated at the higher levels in the military chain of command, most military planners seem already more constrained by the potential political and strategic implications of their work. In other words, just as for the actual engagement on the ground,

also the participation in the planning of exercises and operations should rather be understood as an expression of existing trustful defence and security relations, while their potential for developing more trustful defence relations is often overlooked.

### **6.3 Arms Control & Confidence and Security-Building Measures**

By analysing and comparing the personal experiences of arms control officers involved in the implementation of the Vienna Document 2011 (VDoc 2011), the treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE Treaty), and the treaty on Open Skies (OS), this third section assesses the trust-building potential of different forms of arms control and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM). While some measures even carry the term ‘confidence-building’ in their name, the section concludes that these tools appear in some aspects more, in other aspects less effective in facilitating constructive inter-group contacts and trust between practitioners.

In many respects, most of the interaction in the context of arms control and CSBM is taking place between officers that do not only share a more general military background, identity and culture, but that also perceive of themselves as being part of a wider ‘arms control community’. In this regard, the treaty on OS was highlighted in particular, as its focus on collective observation flights adds another layer of common identity to the interaction of practitioners:

[For the treaty on Open Skies] there is also the flying element to it. It is perhaps sort of the same thing, when it comes to naval exchanges. If you are a sailor, you are sailor. Not only representing your country militarily, but you are also a sailor. If you are an airman, you are both also flying. So, it takes it one step further, I suppose. [...] They have a common ground, but whether it is more confidence building, because of that that is debatable (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

In addition, despite occasional differences in personalities, all arms control officers emphasized that the specific emphasis on personal interaction and military-to-military contacts, tends to attract in particular officers that are already of a more social and outgoing nature:

I also think that because people tend to gravitate towards *Aufgaben* (tasks) that suit their nature (laughing), you can perhaps say that an overrepresentation of the more social officers would come to the arms control community. At least, you learn to be social when you are there (laughing) (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

Together with their collective identity and shared military backgrounds, these particularly personalities were seen as making it easier for arms control officers to interact, connect and relate with each other. Another important factor in determining the status and as such to some extent also the quality of the interaction on the ground is the share understanding of the purpose and the way in which the different documents and treaties are supposed to be implemented. While both teams occasionally disagree on the interpretation of certain provisions, they can usually rely on a considerable experience of having worked together already over many years. Another important difference, compared to joint training, exercises or operations is the fact that the main goal of arms control and CSBM regimes has never been to reinforce existing defence and security ties, but to mitigate the risk of surprise attacks and to reduce tensions between non-aligned and opposing states. This aim is primarily pursued through strict verification regimes that monitor the compliance of other states with existing rules and obligations (e.g. certain regional limits on troops and/or military equipment). As such, verification in arms control and CSBM, which receives by far the most attention at a higher political and military level, has never really been a sign of trust, but rather of residual doubts, suspicion, and (particularized) distrust in the defence relations with other states. This is reiterated by the fact that NATO states have reached an agreement not to inspect each other. In fact, together with their close coordination of verification measures in the context of the so-called Verification Coordinating Committee (VCC)<sup>107</sup>, it only underlines the collective identity, interests, and far-reaching levels of mutual trust in the defence and security relations between NATO member states.

The apparent differences in status, purpose, and nature of arms control and CSBM make it also harder to argue that inspecting and inspected team are always pursuing common goals of mutual interest. On the one hand, the inspecting team usually arrives with the goal of verifying the compliance of the inspected state. The host team, on the other hand, is primarily interested in striking the difficult balance of following at least the minimum requirements for the inspection or observation, while at the same time carefully managing and where necessary, limiting the inspecting team's access to potentially sensitive military information. For the inspecting and host team, the differences in status and goals seem to be at least partly mitigated by two factors. On the one hand, both teams know that after the inspection or observation, respective reports will be submitted to higher-level authorities as well as to other state

---

<sup>107</sup> For more information on the VCC see North Atlantic Treaty Organization (2011).

parties to the treaty. On the other hand, both sides are also aware that the host team of today will be the inspecting or observing team in the future. This tends to ensure a considerable level of interdependence between both sides and as such helps understanding the overall friendly, professional, and constructive atmosphere between the inspecting and the host team:

I mean, [...] we, on the other hand, we will come and visit them. So, if we treat them bad when they are coming to Norway, we probably know that you know [...], if we go and execute the job, we [probably only] see the things that we are supposed to see. To be friendly is just a very important part of being an inspector and an escort team, just because you get further by being nice than to just demand: 'I want to have this' [...] (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

As already mentioned, this reconciliation of interests over time is leading to a considerable level of interdependence between the inspecting and the host team, making both sides see an apparent value in cooperating and working constructively together to reach their respective individual goals:

I feel that it is a friendly atmosphere, because they know that you are going to be the guest in this country for two or two-and-a-half days and you also want to have a good experience. You want to demand some things and you know that this is kind of a *Spiel* between the two teams. We try to show you what you are supposed to [see] and maybe a little bit more and they say: 'We are coming here with this expectation. We have studied it. We know what we want to see and maybe we will ask for a little bit more and hope that we are getting it.' Most of the times, we would meet half way and then both are happy and we write the report (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

While arms control and CSBM regimes are often primarily implemented on a bilateral basis, it should also be mentioned that the commonalities in status, goal, and cooperation and as such the trust-building effects in their implementation seem to be even stronger in the context of multinational verification teams. These either occur in the context of measures that are already from their outset multinational in nature (e.g. the observation of military exercises under the provisions of the Vienna Document) or through the explicit invitation of guest inspectors to national inspection and evaluation teams. Other than in the case of purely national teams, members of multinational verification teams, not only share a common status as inspector or observer in another country, but since guest inspectors are usually selected on the basis of existing cooperation and common interests, the trust-building effects of their interaction with other members of the verification team are stronger than for those with the host team. In addition, since members of the inspection or observation team pursue goals of even more common interest (e.g. the inspection or observation of another country's activities), they also tend to cooperate

more extensively, as also illustrated by the following example from the coordination of a multinational CFE inspection:

We normally gather on a Saturday [before the inspection], very informal, for a dinner, to get to know each other. Then we are starting to work, prepare for the mission on Sunday. Looking into, where we are going, what we are going to ask the nation or that unit and what is particularly interesting and so on? We are going through all the details, actually, not only for the declared site, but also for that nation. [...] What is the political situation? What is the political climate in that particular area? (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019)

Regardless of national or multinational verification teams, all practitioners unanimously agreed that they felt, the strongest trust-building effect was less achieved by the actual verification, but mostly through the personal interaction within and between members of the different arms control teams. Nevertheless, they highlighted that it is important that this personal interaction is taking place around a clearly formulated common task, be it in the context of cooperative observation flights or the verification of certain military equipment or activities. As a Norwegian arms control officer explained:

You should be able to count. Not, because the counting necessarily is important, but you must come together, to work on something. Just to discuss and agree or at least, in worst case, you agree on disagreeing. That is also something. [...] It is important actually, [...] that we need to cooperate (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

Since most states have an interest to be (at least perceived) in compliance with international norms and treaties, the endorsement and support (or lack thereof) for the implementation of arms control and CSBM by the political and strategic level is usually not an issue. However, national policy goals and strategic military considerations can still have a considerable effect on the geographical focus and scope of their implementation. For example, arms control units often try to adjust or cooperate closely with other countries (e.g. within NATO) to meet strategic interests and national policy goals:

You kind of pick countries that are close to you politically and that you have a good cooperation with and want to continue that cooperation. We have an annual Nordic-Baltic meeting. [We] have a close cooperation with those, we know each other by name, and we see each other all the time, both in NATO or in Vienna. Then there are also some connections that we do have in Open Skies, the CFE treaty and so on. So, you know a few countries better than you know the other ones. Those are the countries that, as I said, also from a political view are the ones that we have close security policy relations with. Nations that are close to us, allied with, are training with in Norway or through NATO. I have an

as direct line to the Nordic-Baltics as I have to the US, the UK or Germany (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

Throughout the years, arms control and CSBM regimes have also been severely affected by disputes at the political and strategic level, be it in the context of the already mentioned disagreements over the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia and Moldova ('Istanbul Agreements'), which lead to the non-ratification of the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (ACFE) and subsequently the unilateral suspension of the CFE treaty by Russia in 2007 (see 5.5.1) or various alleged cases of non-compliance. For example, not least since the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine in 2014, Western countries have been complaining about Russia's increasing use of *snap* or *alarm exercises* and other ways to avoid any mandatory observation of its military activities by other countries (e.g. splitting its exercises into several smaller components). In 2017, a political dispute between Russia and Georgia even led to the cease of all observation flights under the treaty of OS in 2018. As a Norwegian arms control officer explained:

We did not fly in 2018 and that was due to a high-level political disagreement that we cannot resolve with the Open Skies treaty. We as implementers, we thought we could fix it quickly, but whatever we said to our politicians, they always said: 'No, this is a political issue and we just stay with it and do not fly'. Thus, in the end we did not fly (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Interestingly, while political tensions were seen as most prevalent in the more political and formalized forums, committees and bodies of the OSCE, the general atmosphere during evaluations, inspections, and observations was usually described as 'relaxed, 'friendly' and 'professional'. As again a Norwegian arms control officer highlighted:

I would say that it is actually more friendly when you get down to the working-level, down to the implementing-level in countries, so to speak. When we get back to Vienna, now it is more political and again some nations will be very restrictive on how much and what they want to talk about (...) So, the way around it, is not to talk about the issue at hand [laughing], because some of them, they will not do that. They will do the official *over the table* and that is kind of all. The really, kind of inhibiting factor in openness and transparency is that people get too formal in some of these settings in Vienna and other places (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

This difference in atmosphere and susceptibility to political tensions between formalized meetings in Vienna and the practical cooperation on the ground was also supported by the reflections of other arms



control officers. This became particularly evident in reflections about the impact of the Ukrainian crisis and the deterioration in Western-Russian relations on their work:

My experience is that I do not feel much of a change on the tactical or military level. I think those officers that we are dealing with, those are the same officers we have been visiting, well before 2014. Therefore, [...] I cannot see a major change or difference among the Russians. I think on the military level, on the executing level of Vienna Document inspections or evaluations it is more or less the same and we cooperate very well, but on the political level, of course, there is a huge change. There is no move. Listening to the FSC statements from, especially when Ukraine are giving their statements and of course Russia is replying to it, that has become much worse. It is not easy to see when there will be a change, when there will be [...] talks that could move these agreements forward [...], but as I said on the military level, we still cooperate very well. [...] We just keep professional to what our job is. I think all officers know that making a hostile environment during an inspection does not benefit anyone (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

To begin with, we always trust the incoming team, because they are arms controllers like we are. We know the politics. We are down here and politics is above us. Let us just do our job. What the document is saying about what their rights are and what we have to do and then let us just go beyond (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

At least, in our interaction, [the] Swedish interaction with others there is little to no difference. [...] I mean there is another political situation and we make a point of not discussing that, because it is confidence building. That is our real profession [and we keep that political debate aside], at least in [our] interaction with foreigners. [...] When it comes to the cooperation on the ground, there is only slight differences really. We all make a point, irrespective of who comes, of being professional in the daytime and when we sit down, then we can be informal and that works with everyone (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

As their responses show, the impact of disputes and disagreements between states is more immediately felt at the political and strategic level, while arms control officers, like their colleagues at the operational level in training, exercises and operations (see 6.1) often make a point of being able to put difficult political discussions aside and to focus instead on the military-technical aspects of their jobs. The regular differences between the perceptions and interaction at the practitioners and the political level also became evident in the experiences of the Norwegian arms control unit with the military observation

program during NATO's Trident Juncture 2018. While the Norwegian host team under the provisions of the Vienna Document tried to be as open and transparent as possible and reported that also the Russian observers on the ground were satisfied with the observation, they were surprised to receive suddenly a number of complaints during a subsequent formal meeting at the OSCE in Vienna:

We got a lot of positive feedback and then we discussed some of the identified lessons and even Russia said: 'Everything was according to the book'. Then it became a *Spiel* about: 'But you did this, and this was not so good....' [...] During the observation [there was a] spokesperson [of the observers] and [the] two [Russian] officers could talk to the spokesperson every day about how they wanted us to change the observation and if there was something that they were unhappy with, but that did not happen (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

[We learned that the Russian observers] were telling their views and most of the time they were very satisfied with the observation. Then, when we met [in Vienna, where] [...] we, as Norway, represented our initial findings and experience with the exercise. [There] the Russians [...] told us that: 'Well, we did not get an overview actually of the exercise or just of different units. We could not actually see the larger picture.' However, then they concluded: 'But, it was according to the Vienna Document. We cannot say that it was not in accordance with the Vienna Document.' [So,] we could see that on our level it is functioning, but here it was also politicians going into the process and you could feel that this was politically important for Russia to state that everything was not as good as it should have been (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

At the same time, while all arms control officers underlined that the biggest disruptions of the political relations and climate usually occur at the political level, they also acknowledged a more immediate impact of political and military tensions on the implementation-level. This effect, they explained, usually expresses itself in a more restricted level of transparency and a reduced level of cooperation: "If there are some other higher political issues, they might say: 'No, you will follow the text only. You are not going to give them anything extra'" (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

My informants also suggested that their own experiences with their Russian counterparts might also differ from those of colleagues from other countries, such as from Ukraine or the Baltic States:

Now, I am talking about the experience that I have from those evaluations [...]. [Sometimes] there are small things, but I feel that those decisions are not made on the level of the officers that we are meeting. It is on a higher level. What to prioritize (...), but there

is always a friendly atmosphere. Of course, I have heard of Ukrainian inspections at the Russian-Ukrainian border in the east, where the atmosphere is not very friendly, but of course, I think under these circumstances you cannot expect it to be, so... (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

I know from one of my Baltic colleagues that their experience for when they are having incoming Russian visits are different from ours. Therefore, I have actually said that I will go and be an escort team member on their team, when Russia comes next time. Just for me, because I think I am just such a gullible person that thinks so well about Russians, so I will see. I will see how that is, but when the Russians are here, they are very friendly. It could not be better (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

The main reason for the different experiences of Norwegian and Baltic arms control officers with their Russian counterparts was understood to be found in the different political relations between the countries or as many of my interviewees simply put it, in *politics*. In addition, a Norwegian officer added a short historical comparison, highlighting the positive effects of other forms of cooperation between Russia and Norway:

I have heard stories from the 90s that there was no trust at all. The commanders were just giving the information that they were supposed to give and if they were asked questions more on a freely basis, they would be very restrictive. Today, I think the commanders know what they are supposed to tell and what they cannot tell, so they are speaking quite freely. I think that also has not only to do with the Vienna Document and the CFE treaty, it also has to do with the fact that we in Norway [...] had common exercises with the Russians, both out in the sea and on the ground. Not lately, but in the 90s the beginning of the 2000s there were some exercises. That makes it also easier to understand that there are friendly persons also on the other side and I think that is also something that has made it easier for us (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

While it was in the context of this thesis not possible to assess those national differences in more detail, such an assessment would certainly offer an interesting angle for future research. Yet, when it comes to the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia, it can be concluded that despite occasional disruptions, the atmosphere at the operational level of implementers of arms control and CSBM regimes has remained largely unaffected by the more recent deterioration in Western-Russian relations. In fact, disputes at the political and strategic level regularly contrast with the experiences and perceptions of practitioners on the ground.

The different experiences and perceptions at the political-strategic and the implementation level also express themselves in a different understanding of what elements in arms control and CSBM are seen as particularly important for the formation of trust. While the focus at the political-strategic level is on verifying compliance of other states with existing rules and obligations, most arms control officers primarily emphasize the importance of personal encounters with members from other armed forces:

For instance, if you do an evaluation visit, you are looking at equipment, and you see that, yeah they should have ten CV90s and ten tanks. Ok, very good. We see ten tanks. We see that they have ten CV90s. We see that they have troops [...]. However, if you actually are on a quite open inspection or evaluation you will see that of course there is no large-scale activity going on. It is not often you see an inspection report that says: 'Yes, this was as we suspected. There are more than 9,000 [soldiers] there.' No, it is not often [like] that. You will actually have time together. You sit [together] as the escort team and the inspection or evaluation team and you will discuss definitely more than the Annual Exchange of Military Information, definitely more than the notification. You will discuss also how they are thinking. What are their troubles? What is their joy in life and what are the main issues for them? This will increase the understanding of the others. Because, you never know, one day they are friends or enemies [and then] the enemies are friends, you never know. However, I think it is important that they understand [each other], because if you understand each other, you would probably make a much better assessment of what is actually important or not important [in a certain situation] (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

The CFE was much about counting. About being sure that, a particular nation kept to its obligations [...]. Nowadays, I would say, it is more important to meet officers in nations that we used to look upon as our enemies. I do not feel that we do that anymore. [...] That personal relationship and the possibility to talk, that has also become more important also for the CFE treaty. The counting is not so interesting anymore, actually. That is my personal view on it (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

If I am looking at the Open Skies guys, [for example]. During the years [...] they build relationships and confidence and that is why for us Open Skies is more, since we have other means if you want pictures of 10 cm ground resolution. I am sure you can find this in other ways and you do not need this Open Skies aircraft, but actually, the relation they build, it means that they can sit together and talk and they can discuss anything, of course within the limits of what is possible [...]. That they discuss the differences and their

understandings and that interaction in itself means that next time it goes more easily and if I am looking at my Open Skies guys, after some years of doing this, they understand better how the Russians think, how the Americans think, how the Norwegians think or the Germans. [...] You actually understand each other better, [...] because you interact with [each other]. For example, I think that] if the Open Skies guys are flying UAVs, they would not understand one single thing more of the Americans or the Germans or the Russians. We had that discussion, but it is a tricky one. It is a tricky one, because everything goes back to [the question] why are we doing this? I would say, I do not dismiss the idea, but if the reason is to build trust, I think it is not the best way to sit in a bunker and fly with joysticks, because it is also the impression about the countries and how they are and what they do and how it smells and what you eat and what you do together. [...] So, that is why I think of the Open Skies as a CSBM rather than as a tool to only look at pictures where they move or do not move nuclear weapons or whatever (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

These different approaches and understandings of what constitutes the main purpose and as such the trust-building effect in arms control and CSBM, also relate to the possibilities of being able to develop personal relations and professional cross-group friendships. These were seen as to develop from professional conduct as well as from the social interaction during the implementation:

I mean, [...] confidence building, at least in this area, comes very much down to personal interaction. The confidence building comes both, from the social interaction, but also from being professional. If you know your stuff and know your document and everything is by the book. That is a confidence building measure in itself. How you conduct yourself professionally. I could not really weigh. I think both are very important. The professional conduct, the professional knowledge of the document, the professional execution of or the hosting of the inspection, but also the social interaction. They are all vital. If one of these elements is taken away than it is not confidence building. Many people, to my mind, argue that if we are just open and transparent, then we are doing confidence building. No! If you are open and transparent in a professional way [...], then that is confidence building (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

Besides the numerous professional interactions in arms control and CSBM, the manifold and regular meetings of arms control officers throughout the year (e.g. verification measures, visits to military bases, information exchanges, review conferences etc.) usually also provide possibilities for more social encounters. Here, practitioners mentioned joint dinners, receptions or even the talks during jeep rides to the area of verification. In addition, the facts that the international arms control community is rather

small and manageable and arms control officers tend to stay much longer in their respective positions, were also highlighted as making it much easier to build personal contacts and to establish increasingly trustful relations over time, such as the following example from the treaty on Open Skies highlight:

Open Skies is of course [an] extremely specific [example]. They are more or less the same people all the time and they fly over the same countries every year. So, they would build more relations, but [those relations are] still professional. You can have a respectful and professional relation and even be friendly, without inviting each other to holidays or things like that (*laughing*). That would not happen, but having a good relation makes it much easier to just call them and say that: ‘Oh, you want to fly over [our country], but there is a problem. Can you move the flight by one day or to next week or something’? I think that is possible (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

Yet, while the rather small arms control community and the longer times by which arms control officers stay in their position was viewed as useful for the establishment of personal networks and relations, many informants also highlighted that this also notably constrains a wider and stronger impact of arms control and CSBM on the more general defence and security relations between states. This problem will also be discussed in more detail in one of the next sections of this thesis (see 7.1.2). Out of necessity, but also in response to this dilemma, in particular smaller countries like Norway or Sweden, include non-arms control officers into host and inspection teams and rely on a system of ‘part-timers’ – officers that are not primarily tasked with the implementation of arms control and CSBM. This they saw as also contributing to a wider dissemination of the experience and knowledge about arms control and CSBM. However, at the same time, experiences from other parts of the armed forces, for example, from commanders of inspected units, seem to suggest that most of the positive and trust-building effects remain largely confined to the members of the different national arms control units. For example, while unit commanders are generally aware about the purpose and procedures of an evaluation, inspection or observation, their interaction with the inspection team is usually limited to the provision of briefings, while their main interest is in complying with the goals, norms and standards set out by higher-level authorities. As such, their experiences can differ quite substantially from those of the inspecting and the host team. This became evident by the following reflections of a former brigade commander, who during his career had received numerous host and inspection teams:

[These inspections] run very smoothly. However, for us they are not very..., those inspections are not facilitating closer cooperation or anything, because they are so formal. There is almost nothing social there, there is no bonding for us. This is what we do, we finish it, and then off they go. At the higher level, I guess this is important, [...], but for us

[at the unit level] this is... Ok, we have to do it. [...] For us, it is important not to do any mistakes, so to speak. We have to give them what they want [and] [...] the few things we have to hide, we hide. [...] [Nothing that] violates the treaty or the agreement in any way. [For us it is] like you get an inspection from the ministry of defence or whatever, [where] they come up and look into all the books, to see how we have done with our budget. They come in, do their stuff and then off they go. There is nothing more with it. It does not build any trust between us. [...] At the higher level, I guess they say it is good we have had an inspection here from country A, B or C and they were happy and ok. You know, there is nothing wrong with it; it is just that for us it is not any bonding in that respect. [...] Those who are doing this are trusted agents from the top. It is not something that we have come up with: 'Oh, you know, let us do this' and we can work together and all these things, no. This is a political thing (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018).

In sum, the implementation of arms control and CSBM seems generally capable of facilitating the formation of interpersonal trust between arms control officers from different countries. They bring together officers from similar military backgrounds that cooperate on a generally common task and over time generate an increasingly shared understanding of how to implement the provisions of different treaties and documents at hand. This largely common understanding on implementation seems to take up a similar role as the shared situational understanding during exercises and operations. In many aspects, the trust-building effects of the treaty on Open Skies received specific mentioning, not least, because it adds the practical component of collaborative observation flights to the conducive elements from other arms control and CSBM regimes. At the same time, it is important to highlight that the trust-building effects arms control and CSBM hardly extend beyond the rather small community of arms control officers and that many factors for positive inter-group contacts appear less pronounced than for other forms of military-to-military contacts and cooperation (e.g. joint operations or exercises). For example, even though sharing a common background as arms control officers and usually being posted in their positions for a longer period than many of their colleagues, the interaction during an evaluation, inspection, or observation is often taking place under a different status and with different goals for the inspection and the host team. As both sides will continuously switch roles between host and inspecting team, these differences might be somewhat mitigated over time. However, occasionally they also have a constraining effect on their level of cooperation on the ground. Because arms control and CSBM – other than, for example, joint training, exercises and operations – are usually not conducted between states with already far developed trustful defence and security relations, they also tend to be more strongly affected by the political relations between states. Yet, the experiences of practitioners suggest that potential negative spillover effects from political tensions are less immediately felt at the

implementation level, but rather express themselves in the acceptance and credibility of their experiences and findings within higher-level decision-making processes. This problem is further reinforced by often widely different understandings at the political-strategic and the implementation level of what constitutes the core elements of military confidence-building and arms control. While most arms control officers emphasize the importance of personal contacts and social interaction, decision-makers at the higher political or military level, except for the highly formalized meetings at the OSCE, usually lack these personal interactions. Instead, they tend to focus much more on the verification of other state's compliance with existing rules and obligations. The close coordination of verification measures among NATO allies as well as the selection criteria for guest inspectors in multinational verification teams also once again highlight the considerable impact of national interest and goals as well as existing defence and security ties. Lastly, while the implementation of arms control and CSBM seems generally capable of facilitating more trustful relations between different arms control units, they seem so far less capable of also contributing to more trustful relations at the higher political and strategic level in defence and security politics.

## **6.4 Other Types of Military Contacts**

This final section summarizes and analyses the experiences from a number of different forms of military-to-military contacts and cooperation that came up during my interviews. More specifically, I will briefly reflect upon military-to-military contacts in the context of military attaché programs, the operating, and reviewing of military hotlines and incident prevention mechanisms as well as during meetings, workshops, seminars, visits, and military exchanges.

The first analysis addresses the cooperation and military-to-military contacts in the context of military attaché programs. In this context, two sets of different contacts should be distinguished: contacts between attachés and members of the armed forces of the host country and contacts from within the local attaché community. For both, it becomes evident that there is no guarantee that military attachés necessarily share more than a general military background and identity in the interaction with each other. In fact, clearly the main factor in facilitating or constraining their interaction is the current state of affairs in the political relations between both countries. For example, because of the political tensions following Russia's annexation of Crimea, Western military attachés in Moscow reported that their contacts and interactions were reduced to an absolute minimum and that they were excluded from certain activities and events. At the same time, a more constructive political environment and far-reaching defence relations between countries can facilitate particularly strong contacts and interaction between attachés



and their host state (e.g. Nordic attachés in Nordic countries), but also within the local attaché community (e.g. regular coordination meetings of NATO attachés). National priorities and the relations between states do not only affect which attachés get to meet on a more regular basis or which interaction receives more support by higher-level authorities, but also has a considerable impact on the status, common goals and level of cooperation on the ground. However, while Western defence attachés in Moscow explained that attachés from NATO countries conduct regular meetings, they also highlighted that similar meetings of EU or NORDEFSCO attachés did not exist. Instead, they referred to a number of regional sub-groups (e.g. Nordic-Baltic), meetings of attachés from the same military branches (e.g. of air force or navy officers) as well as the importance of speaking certain languages or personal relations through their families and spouses. For example, while speaking a certain language might enable one to be invited to meetings of certain informal groupings (e.g. the German-speaking defence attachés), their families and spouses might also have developed personal relations with other members of the diplomatic or attaché community (e.g. in the context of receptions, cultural events or the local international school) that open up possibilities for contacts with attachés from less traditional allies and partners. As a Swedish diplomat explained:

I would actually also say it is not only the professional part of the conversation that is important, but [...] maybe [you go] to lunches [or] dinners together, maybe your families have socialised and so forth and you build this sort of personal relationship, which is partly professional, but also goes beyond the professional. I think that is also, why we have these diplomatic tools of representation, of dinners, lunches, breakfasts [...]. On the one hand, you always represent your country [...], but on the other hand, you are cultivating these personal contacts and it can be that you just realize that you have common personal interests or whatever [...]. That also helps you in the professional relationship. I think it is very intertwined and like in every other part of human interaction, personalities matter. Of course, speaking the same language and having a cultural understanding is also extremely important for reaching out to others and is often underestimated (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

However, even though such factors help facilitate less traditional contacts and relations, they remain very situational, and since most attachés operate with limited time and resources, they explained that they still usually fall back to traditional partners and alliances. In sum, while military attaché programs might provide another venue for military-to-military contacts, they hardly represent a credible venue for the formation of trust, beyond reinforcing existing defence and security relations between states.

The second analysis addresses military-to-military contacts during the implementation and review of military hotlines and incident prevention mechanisms. While generally fulfilling the criterion of *equal*

*status, common goal*, cooperation, and presumably receiving support by higher-level authorities, three important qualifications regarding the trust-building effects of military hotlines and other incident prevention mechanisms need to be made. First, negotiating and operating mechanisms to prevent military incidents and to deconflict the defence relations between states, already point to the fact that the current status quo in their relations makes it necessary to implement such measures in the first place, suggesting larger incompatibilities of identities and interests at a higher political and strategic level. The already less trustful starting situation of many military hotlines and incident prevention mechanisms is further underlined by the fact that such mechanisms are not needed for the communication between allied countries for which communication is more generally approved and as such less strictly regulated by higher level authorities. In other words, incident prevention mechanisms are not a credible means for building trust between states as they hardly contribute to anything more than merely deconflicting strained defence and security relations. Furthermore, even the rather pragmatic goal of preventing military incidents requires that both sides look upon the risk of military incidents as a common problem and perceive of each other in having a genuine interest in preventing such incidents from occurring. While not explicitly articulated or problematized in the context of my own interviews, amid a number of simulated attacks on NATO ships and other dangerous encounters in the air and at sea, some militaries and members of different defence communities on various occasions expressed their scepticism regarding the sincerity of this interest by the Russian armed forces. In addition, while military hotlines and other incident prevention mechanisms might facilitate cooperation in the pursuance of a common goal, only their review and negotiation facilitates direct face-to-face encounters, an aspect that was repeatedly highlighted as a central element for the formation of trust between practitioners. Finally, it needs to be mentioned that the implementation of incident prevention mechanisms does also not facilitate professional *cross-group friendships*, another important factor in the fostering of interpersonal trust between members of different armed forces. In conclusion, while military hotlines and incident prevention mechanisms play an important role in deconflicting distrustful defence and security relations, their capacity to contribute to the formation of interpersonal trust between practitioners should not be overstated. In other words, they might serve as important groundwork, but are not an end to the formation of trust in themselves.

Finally, military-to-military contacts are also taking place in the context of bilateral and multilateral meetings (e.g. within NATO or the OSCE), workshops, seminars, or military exchanges including visits to military bases and headquarters. While these contacts appear generally capable of contributing to the formation of trust, it is important to highlight that these contacts are again limited to a small group and are primarily taking place between practitioners from countries that already cooperate quite substantially

in the area of security and defence. Their interaction does usually not only enjoy considerable support by higher-level authorities, but is also based on a common situational understanding, allowing for more in-depth levels of cooperation towards goals, which are of mutual interests. This can be observed in regular visits from allied countries and NATO headquarters to the Norwegian Joint Headquarters (FOH), exchanges between the Canadian Joint Task Force (North) and the Danish Joint Arctic Command in Greenland or NATO expert meetings on anti-submarine warfare:

[As NATO militaries] we know that we are going to have common topics, probably some level of common expertise. For example, in a meeting that is focused on anti-submarine warfare, you know that they are all people working in that specialty. That means, you have some form of affinity or experience and you know that the guy who is coming in, is going to have some experience in that type of thing. That means there is already that association by profession and subject matter expertise that exists (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

In contrast, the status, goals and higher-level support for interactions in a broader and more general political environment are often much more diverse and the trust-building effects appear to be often much more limited. In other words, again the most substantial interactions in the context of joint meetings, workshops, seminars, military exchanges including visits to military bases and headquarters are taking place between practitioners from countries that already enjoy close and trustful defence and security ties. As one practitioner explained, in situations in which the relations between states, so far, only exist at the higher political or strategic level, such smaller forms of military interaction are regularly used to explore possibilities for more substantial forms of cooperation at the operational and tactical level:

It can be an initiative by one of the brigade commanders, but it can also come from the army chief from one of those countries, saying to his or her own brigade commander: 'Well, maybe you should have a seminar together with similar kind of troops from other countries, have a conference or look what you can do within cooperation' [...] (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018).

In sum, smaller forms of military-to-military contacts and cooperation, such as meetings, workshops, seminars, military exchanges including visits to military bases and headquarters, appear generally capable to contributing to the formation of interpersonal trust between military practitioners. However, just like joint trainings, exercises, and operations, they do not represent a conscious and deliberate attempt of trust-building between armed forces, but are rather an expression of already existing close defence and security ties.

## 6.5 Conclusion

Based on the personal experiences and reflections of eighteen defence and security practitioners from Norway, Sweden, and Canada, this chapter assessed the ability of various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts to contribute to the formation of interpersonal trust between practitioners from different armed forces. Following Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis, the analysis focused on the five enabling conditions for constructive inter-group contacts, namely *equal status*, *common goals*, *cooperation*, *support of authorities*, as well as *cross-group friendships*. The findings from my interviews might be loosely summarized by the following table<sup>108</sup>:

---

<sup>108</sup> The distinction between *strongest*, *strong*, *absent*, and *unclear* is loosely based on a qualitative assessment of the answers received during my interview with defence and security practitioners.

	Equal Status	Common Goals	Cooperation	Support of Authorities	Cross-Group Friendships
<b>Training, Exercises and Operations</b>					
- with allies	●	●	●	●	●
- with non-allies	◐	◐	◐	○	●
<b>Exercise and Operations Planning</b>					
- with allies	●	●	●	●	◐
- with non-allies	◐	◐	◐	○	◐
- with civilian agencies	◐	○	◐	○	◐
<b>Arms Control &amp; CSBM</b>					
- between arms control units	◐	-	◐	○	◐
- within multinational verification teams	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
- with inspected unit	-	-	◐	◐	-
<b>Military Attaché Programs</b>					
- with allies	◐	◐	●	●	○
- with non-allies	-	○	○	◐	○
<b>Incident Prevention Mechanisms</b>					
- implementation level	◐	◐	○	◐	-
- political/strategic level	◐	◐	○	◐	-
<b>Meetings, Workshops, Seminars, Visits and Exchanges</b>					
- with allies	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
- with non-allies	◐	◐	◐	○	◐

● strongest    ◐ strong    ○ unsure    - absent

Table 4. The trust-building effects of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts.

The goal of the following section is to use the findings of this chapter to develop a more general analytical framework for the analyses of the trust-building effects of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts. To this end, this section is structured around the five conditions for constructive inter-group contacts and discusses their role, importance, and form within the context of defence and security politics.

First of all, while the analysis of the different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts has generally confirmed the role of *equal status* in the facilitation of constructive interaction and trust between practitioners, it has also shown that its original definition of members from both groups being “equal in terms of background, qualities and characteristics that influence prestige and rank” (Forsyth, 2014, p. 493), appears to be only of limited use for the analysis of military-to-military contacts and cooperation. This is particularly true, as such contacts already by default bring together practitioners who share a more general common military background, mentality, and culture. These practitioners tend to be subject-matter experts on the issue in question and, beyond their national identities, are accustomed to similar systems of clear hierarchies, ranks, and command structures, making it altogether easier to relate to each other. Therefore, as the numerous examples from different forms of military cooperation (e.g. the treaty Open Skies, joint trainings and exercises or the direct collaboration between different regional Arctic headquarters) suggest, it appears more useful to look at whether military practitioners are equal in terms of sharing a similar situational understanding and, to this end, assess whether those involved come from the same military branches (army, air force, navy), the same level of command (tactical, operational or strategic), a similar regional or operational environment (e.g. Arctic) or whether their countries are in a formal defence alliance. Together, these factors add an additional layer of commonality, are important points of reference, and can serve as useful guidance, in particular during initial encounters with practitioners from other countries, as also the following two examples highlight:

[There are] cultural differences between countries, but there are also cultural differences between the air force, the army, and the navy. Again, it helps that you have kind of the same background. That you have a lot of the same experiences [...] and then the other person can relate directly (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

When I did a visit to the Joint Arctic Command of Denmark, I was for the most part interacting with the army folks there. It were two commanders that I dealt with and they very much saw eye-to-eye on a lot of things. [...] I think when we talk as a joint headquarter [...] with another joint headquarter; I think it is relatively simple, because I think we

understand each other. Especially when we are talking with other headquarters that are based or deal with Arctic issues (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

Secondly, whether practitioners share a joint situational understanding or not has also important ramifications for the identification and formulation of *common goals*, leading us directly to the second factor arguing that constructive inter-group contacts “should involve a joint task with a common goal that is of equal interest to both groups” (Forsyth, 2014, p. 493). Such common goals can be the pursuance of common defence and security interests (e.g. the monitoring of an airspace or maritime zone), joint training objectives or exercise goals (including during planning conferences), or meetings, seminars, workshops and exchanges to sound out possibilities for future defence cooperation. In addition, the analysis has shown that the identification and formulation of common goals proved to be much easier for countries with already substantial and trustful defence and security relations (e.g. members of military alliances). More generally, it was emphasized that the most successful and constructive forms of cooperation were those whose goals were formulated around a clear and limited practical military task that avoided an overly strong emphasis on difficult political questions to be addressed. This became particularly evident in comparing more substantial forms of cooperation (e.g. joint training or exercises), with those forms of military-to-military contacts and cooperation, which are primarily conducted with the aim of building trust and to deconflict incompatible defence and security interests between states (e.g. arms control, CSBM or different incident prevention mechanisms). In this context, it is also important to underline that the understanding of what represents a relevant common goal can also differ quite substantially between the political, strategic, and the implementation level. For example, while higher-level authorities would maybe like to increase the defence cooperation with another country more generally, headquarters and units at the operational and tactical level might sometimes struggle to identify common training objectives and operational goals of mutual interest. Therefore, it is important that common goals and objectives for certain interactions are not simply decided upon at a higher political or military level, but that they actually take into account how to translate their goals into practically relevant objectives for practitioners and units on the ground. Otherwise, the interaction risks of being more superficial, which would not only considerably reduce its trust-building effects, but most likely also weaken the intended effects, goals, and objectives of the higher political or strategic level. In the worst case, this can even create notable frictions between different actors and levels at the national level, a problem that I will get back to in the context of my analysis of the communicating level of trust in defence and security politics.

Thirdly, also the level of *cooperation*, defined as the extend of “cross-group interaction and high levels of interdependence” (Forsyth, 2014, p. 493), can differ quite substantially between the different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts. Generally speaking, my analysis has shown that practitioners who share a common situational understanding, are not only having an easier time identifying and formulating common goals of mutual interest, but that they are for the same reasons also more capable of engaging in more substantive forms of cooperation that require much higher levels of interdependence and cross-group interaction. This can be the case, because they come from the same military branches, level of command, are operating in the same or at least a similar regional or operational environment, or are members of the same military alliance. While such deep levels of cooperation are often supported by political and strategic goals to deepen and intensify existing defence and security relations, there are also a number of operational and technical issues that affect the level and depth of various forms of military cooperation. As previously mentioned, a key indicator in this regard is the interoperability of forces. For example, even though frequently promoted at the political and strategic level, the technical and operational challenges with regard to the interoperability of their forces (e.g. different standards for communication or the exchange of classified information), regularly constrains more substantial forms of cooperation between the Nordic countries, while the interaction among NATO allies was described as much more far-reaching. However, even though military alliances seem to facilitate tighter forms of military cooperation, examples such as the treaty on Open Skies underline that also other factors can contribute to high levels of interdependence and cooperation in the pursuance of common goals of mutual interest. Likewise, also the less frequent and extensive cooperation between NATO allies with different regional focal points somewhat qualifies the sufficiency of military alliances and existing defence ties for guaranteeing far-reaching levels of military cooperation as the following example by a Norwegian officer illustrates:

If you are from the south of Italy, you are not very concerned about Russia. You are probably much more concerned about unrest in the Middle East and the flow of refugees from the north of Africa. In that context, it could be some more difficult discussions, because your focus is so different (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

Fourthly, as the previous discussions already indicate, the *support of authorities* (or lack thereof) can have a strong impact on the facilitation or constraint of constructive inter-group contacts between practitioners and as such on the trust-building effects of different forms of military-to-military contacts and cooperation. However, as the experiences of practitioners suggest, strategic and political considerations do not impede directly on the actual interaction of military personnel on the ground, but instead seem to affect primarily the type of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts that



receive approval by higher-level authorities. For example, while substantial cooperation with NATO allies and partners (e.g. to increase interoperability or reassure them) is usually actively endorsed by the political and strategic leadership of Western countries, similar forms of practical cooperation with Russia was suspended in response to the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine. This brings us back to the issue that some of the most substantial forms of military cooperation, such as joint trainings, operations and exercises, tend to take place primarily between states that already maintain considerable defence and security ties. Thus, since such more substantial forms of military cooperation (e.g. joint trainings or exercises) are often more an indication and expression of already existing trustful defence and security relations, their trust-building effects are often overlooked at the higher political and strategic level. At the same time, many of the measures with the concrete goal of reducing tensions and contributing to the formation of trust (e.g. arms control or CSBM regimes) regularly struggle to achieve their intended trust-building effect, at least at the level that they would be most needed. More precisely, while most political and military tensions occur at the political and strategic level in interstate relations, many of the actual trust-building effects of arms control and CSBM are achieved within only a very small arms control community at the implementation level. This becomes evident by the fact that practitioners highlighted that many incident prevention mechanisms as well as arms control and CSBM regimes, despite the current tensions between Russia and the West, continue to be implemented in a largely positive and constructive environment, in particular if they serve a clear operational goal of mutual interest to both sides (e.g. incident prevention or military hotlines). This was also illustrated by the following statement of a former Norwegian commander:

We have no issues with the commanders of the units on the other side of the border, but this is not about them. This is about Moscow and Oslo. Although they talk about Search and Rescue in the Barents Sea and so on, about practical matters, this is a political thing. If you start getting commanders involved, if you let them start talking, they have to regulate that very closely. There has to be a specific issue that they talk about. Not just a call on a regular basis, to start chatting: 'Oh nice to hear from you' and 'We are doing this and that' (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018).

In other words, as another officer explained, at the tactical or operational level there is more often an interest of making certain things work, while the cooperation at a higher political or strategic level is more immediately affected by political and military tensions between states. However, despite their positive encounters at the implementation level, some practitioners also presented a more sceptical view, making it clear that as long as higher political and strategic discrepancies remain unresolved, arms control and CSBM will hardly ever have a noticeable impact on the lowering of tensions between states:

Because, [...] there is a true security problem, more true security problems in Europe and the arms control is perhaps necessary, but it is not sufficient and will never be. The problem is not really the lack of confidence. It is threats to the norms-based order, [...], which means that we can tinker as much as we want with documents and the texts, but from a Swedish perspective, small countries should not be pressured or invaded by other countries. That is the hard view on it (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

Finally, sharing a common military background and similar career paths, most forms of military cooperation and interaction create already from the outset a particularly fruitful environment for the development of *cross-group friendships* between practitioners from different armed forces:

It is always easier when you have a common ground. If you root for the same football team or if your students are meeting other students as opposed to students meeting a factory worker. I mean, military people have, perhaps in more aspects than most, a common ground. [...] We know that we all started as a private and then we graduated through platoon leader and so on. I mean, you can relate (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

As the examples, from military exercises, exercise planning conferences, or the treaty on the Open Skies show, this conducive environment becomes even stronger as soon as practitioners share an even more specific military background (e.g. coming from the same military branch or level of command) or are confronted with particularly challenging tasks and high levels of cross-group interdependence that require especially strong levels of cooperation (e.g. during military operations or exercises). In addition, opportunities for more social forms of interaction be it in the context of working lunches, receptions, ice-breaker events or simply the possibility to grab a drink after a long working day, also play an important role in facilitating relations and cross-group friendships between military practitioners:

I think as military people we are akin to quickly talk to each other over a beer. In fact, you find having a beer in the evening at the beginning of a conference, makes people more comfortable, because once we abandon the uniform you have the different types of personality. [...] You meet the first day. You go to the icebreaker and I know that you are German and you are Dutch, you are from Italy and then we may find a common point of interest. You are going to always pick the Canadians and the Americans, because they are the guys who talk about hockey in the corner (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

In addition, practitioners underlined the conducive and facilitating role of languages and an increasing cultural understanding in the interaction with practitioners from other countries. Where this could not

be achieved through their own language skills, they even more so stressed the important role of interpreters as an important central link between both sides:

I am not a linguist, so it is very hard and difficult for me to pick up new languages. For example, I do not speak any Russian, but I do pick up a word or two, just to try being friendly. [Over time,] I think you get more familiar with the culture. You know kind of what to do and what not do. Of course, we get help from our own colleagues. Our own interpreters are very good in having cultural understanding. They are the language for us and they give us a lot of a heads-up (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Altogether, through a combination of professional and personal interaction, military practitioners over time build and maintain a network of contacts and relations that reduce suspicion, prejudices and contribute to a more constructive environment during future professional interactions as also the following two examples from the Vienna Document and the treaty on Open Skies exemplify:

Of course, any inspection [...] will make you understand each other better. I think, many people have only heard about the other side, but they never actually met. Many people never met the Russians, Belarussians, Swedes, Norwegians, Germans or whomever. Still, they have very strong opinions about how it works in those countries. I think, today people are much more open-minded. They have been travelling a lot [and had] more interaction in operations, exercises or exchanges within the Vienna Document [...], but still we need more (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

Compared to the beginning, [...] back in the early days of the treaty so to speak, it was very formal and no one really wanted to talk to each other. It is a lot easier these days to sit down around the dinner table or to relax outside in the sun and to talk together. Even if you sometimes have to do that through an interpreter. So, fortunately people are not scared of their own system that they are not to be penalized internally and they do open themselves up a little bit more and the same goes for us. You get more and more acquainted and used to people (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

However, even though cross-group friendships – in particular over time – can play an important role in the formation of interpersonal trust, practitioners underlined that these relations, apart from a few exceptions, usually remained purely professional in nature. Thus, as indicator in our framework for assessing the trust-building effects of different forms of military-to-military contacts and cooperation, it appears most useful to speak more specifically about the possibility for *professional cross-group friendships and relations* to evolve. In addition, it is important to keep in mind that the overall positive

effects of such professional friendships (e.g. serving as an important point of contact) are also subject to a number of structural constraints (e.g. regular rotation of military personnel), something that we will also get back to in the next chapter of this thesis.

To summarize, my interviews with military practitioners from Norway, Sweden, and Canada have shown that after minor adaptations, the conditions for constructive inter-group contacts of social contact theory can also serve as a useful analytical tool for the analysis of the trust-building effects of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts. To this end, *equal status* should be understood as whether practitioners share a similar situational understanding, come from the same military branches (army, air force, navy), the same level of command (tactical, operational or strategic), a similar regional or operational environment (e.g. Arctic) or whether their countries are in a formal defence alliance, while *cross-group friendships* should be understood in a primarily *professional nature*. Based on this analytical framework, the analysis has shown that most forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts are generally capable of facilitating trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. However, while some of the most substantial forms of cooperation (e.g. military exercises, training, and operations) generally also carry the strongest trust-building potential, they are usually not looked upon in this regard. Instead, they are rather seen as a way to consolidate and strengthen already far-reaching and trustful defence and security ties between states. At the same time, most measures meant to mitigate military tensions and to build trust between states (e.g. arms control or CSBM) only manage to build trust among a small group of experts at the implementation level, while their impact on the overall defence relations between states remains limited. At least, as long as the overarching political and strategic sources of tensions remain unresolved. In other words, trust-building efforts between opposing states are not necessarily ineffective, but they too often address the wrong issues or levels in the decision-making hierarchies in defence and security politics. While this mismatch appears to be often overlooked or sometimes even actively thrust aside by scholars and policy-makers alike, it is in these differences and nuances between the structural and the interpersonal level in which the key to a more thorough understanding of trust and its formation in defence and security politics is to be found. How the interaction between the structural and the interpersonal level affects the overall levels of trust and distrust in the relations between states and how states might manage to reach deeper, but also more reliable levels of trust in their relations will be the key focus of my subsequent discussions of the communicating level of trust in defence and security politics.

## 7 The Communicating Level of Trust in Defence and Security Politics

In the previous two chapters, I analysed the structural and interpersonal levels of trust in defence and security politics. At the structural level (see 5), I have shown how different compositions of compatible and incompatible, opposing or collective national identities and interests, provide us with a more nuanced understanding of trust in defence and security politics and how states apply different practices (deterrence, deconflicting, reassurance, or collective action) to stabilize their trustful or distrustful defence and security relations. At the interpersonal level (see 6), I have highlighted the importance of including a more thorough understanding of how trust and distrust affect the interaction of defence and security practitioners at the implementation level and assessed the extent to which various types of military cooperation, interaction, and contacts facilitate increased levels of trust among practitioners on the ground. Having shown that the levels of trust and distrust at the structural level are not necessarily always equally noticeable at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners, a careful analysis of the interpersonal level provides us with a much more multifaceted, complete, and nuanced picture of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. To link my two previous analyses, this third and final analytical chapter focuses on the *communicating level of trust*, analysing the complex interplay between the structural and interpersonal levels of trust in defence and security politics. More specifically, it discusses three possible outcomes of this interplay:

- First, a dependable, although less adaptable *top-down reproduction* of identities, interests, and practices in defence and security politics;
- Second, a more adaptable, yet also less dependable *bottom-up transformation* of identities, interests, and practices in defence and security politics or
- Third, a *credible two-way representation* of identities, interests, and practices at the structural and interpersonal level in defence and security politics.

After having discussed each outcome individually, the chapter concludes with a short comparative discussion of the communicating level of trust in defence and security politics. Identities, interests, and practices, serve again as indicators of the current levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states, while the political, institutional, and personal factors that either constrain or facilitate the transfer of trust between the structural and interpersonal level are again based on my interviews with defence and security practitioners from the Norwegian, Swedish, and Canadian armed forces.

## 7.1 The Reproduction of Defence and Security Politics

In this first section, I approach the interplay between the structural and interpersonal levels of trust by identifying the factors that constrain the actions of individual defence and security practitioners and lead to a dependable, yet also less adaptable *top-down reproduction* of existing identities, interests, and practices in defence and security politics. Based on my interviews, three groups of such constraining factors could be identified. The first group consists of political constraints, which are most immediately linked to the national identities, interests, and practices of states. The second group are institutional constraints, such as national structures and hierarchies, time pressure or limited resources that often constrain practitioners to have a stronger impact on national decision-making processes. The third group consists of personal constraints, such as limited professional experience or certain personality types that limit a practitioner's ability to affect the structural level in defence and security politics. Each of these three groups will subsequently be discussed in more detail.

### 7.1.1 Political Constraints

As we have already learned in the previous chapters of this thesis, political constraints, most notably in the form of compatible or incompatible national identities and interests are probably among the strongest factors in constraining the interactions of practitioners in defence and security politics. As the analysis of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia has shown, these factors are not static and their formulation can be driven by long-term political and strategic goals (e.g. formal defence ties and memberships in different multilateral organizations), an adaptation to more recent developments and current political events (e.g. Russia's annexation of Crimea) or be influenced by historical legacies that still carry on to affect the relations and perceptions of states. This is also indicated by the following statement by a Canadian military officer on Canadian-Russian defence and security relations:

I do not think that we have a history of working together [with Russia]. It comes from the Cold War era, I guess. It is not about whether a person is Russian. It does not matter. It is not a problem. It is more the political situation that drives us as opposed to being a partner (Maritime Planner, CAF, 2019).

Deriving from the analyses of the previous two chapters and my interviews with defence and security practitioners, these constraining effects that lead to a persistent top-down reproduction of existing levels of trust in the form of identities, interests, and practices in defence and security politics, operate mainly in three ways:

First, they largely decide upon the amount, type, and frequency of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts that practitioners are able, willing, and allowed to engage in. This is a direct consequence of the often strictly hierarchical national approval processes in state bureaucracies and a widespread (self-)understanding of the military as ‘a tool of the government’. Through different processes and mechanisms, the political and military leadership tries to ensure that the different forms of cooperation and contacts support and not contradict the political and strategic identities and interests of the state. For example, while countries that perceive of their identities and interests as compatible or collective are usually inclined to deepen their defence cooperation and attempt to pursue their interests more collectively (e.g. through joint exercises, operations or regular coordination meetings), political and military opponents are more likely to reduce the level of direct contacts and interaction to a bare minimum. These tendencies are only reinforced by drastic events and perceived betrayals of trust, such as Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014, which often lead to a nearly complete breakdown in relations and contacts. However, while political and military tensions might lead to a complete freeze of cooperation in certain policy areas, practitioners, at the same time, repeatedly underlined the importance to maintain contacts and open lines of communication in other policy areas. Generally, this influence of higher political and military levels on the practical work of practitioners is either exercised more directly, e.g. through national approval processes, or more indirectly, e.g. through the issuing of national defence policies and strategies that guide the work of practitioners and underline a government’s intention to deepen its cooperation with political and strategic partners:

I mean of course your capital will always be interested in certain countries positions and some countries more than others and, you know, certain dynamics and some countries are more important to us than others (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

Another effect of this direct and indirect transmission of national identities and interests to the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners are certain groupings of states within larger multilateral environments (e.g. in the OSCE or in military attaché programs). These can either represent more formalized multilateral organizations (e.g. EU or NATO member states), but also more informal groups of states (e.g. Nordic or Nordic-Baltic countries) as also the following example from the implementation of the treaty on Open Skies highlights:

The Open Skies treaty is a country-to-country treaty, but of course, we are member of an alliance, so we do benefit from the experience that other [...] NATO countries have. We of course try to gather all of the good explanations, suggestions that we do have as an alliance and put them forward on the table [...] (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Furthermore, practitioners also highlighted that their ability to affect the interests, discourse and goals within such multilateral groups – besides a number of personal factors (e.g. rank, experience etc.) that will be discussed in one of the next sections of this chapter – primarily rests upon their country’s power and influence in international affairs: “I think for small countries like Norway, it is to wait for the great powers to do something and then [we] follow their lead” (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

Secondly, as the analysis of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts in the previous chapter has shown (see 6.5), national identities, interest and the current political climate and relations between states do not only constrain the amount, frequency, and types of contacts, but also affect the quality of the interaction on the ground. In other words, they affect the ability of various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts to contribute to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. For example, while allied countries often share a similar situational understanding that makes it easier to formulate common goals and to engage in more substantial forms of cooperation (e.g. joint training, exercises or operations), political and military opponents often not only engage in quantitatively fewer, but also in less substantial forms of defence and security cooperation (e.g. incident prevention and arms control). In addition, even though practitioners highlighted that tensions between states are usually more immediately felt at the higher political and strategic level, they also underlined that these tensions can still have a considerable effect on the atmosphere during the implementation of the remaining forms of interaction with opposing states. In the context of this thesis, such negative spillover effects became particularly evident in the political disputes surrounding the modernization and implementation of existing arms control and CSBM regimes in Europe, such as in the case of the treaty on Open Skies:

I think the Open Skies treaty is a well-functioning treaty. It has been well functioning all the time, but there are some issues that we cannot solve with the Open Skies treaty. For example, in 2018, we did not fly any observation flights at all and this was due to political differences that you could not use the Open Skies treaty to solve. This was an issue between two state parties, Russia and Georgia. It was on such a high political level that it was nothing that you could solve with the treaty (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Finally, political factors do not only define the quantity and quality of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts, but the policy priorities of states also largely determine the impact that experiences from these interactions have on the national decision-making process in defence and security politics. Depending on the current status quo in the relations between states, this can either stabilize existing levels of trust and help overcome minor disputes and incompatibilities of interests, such as in the case



of arguments over military procurement between Norway and Sweden, or suppress the trust-building effects of certain forms of military cooperation and thereby contribute to a mere reproduction of existing levels of distrust in the relations between states. This could, for example be observed in the positive experiences of arms control officers interacting with their Russian counterparts, an experience that they often saw nullified by the current tensions and disagreements at a higher political and military level:

Because, of the hard facts of life [these positive experiences at the implementation level do not really have a strong impact at the higher strategic and political level]. There is a true security problem, more true security problems in Europe and the arms control is perhaps necessary, but it is not sufficient and will never be. The problem is not really the lack of confidence. It is threats to the norms-based order, [...], which means that we can tinker as much as we want with the documents and the texts, but from a Swedish perspective, small countries should not be pressured or invaded by other countries. That is the hard view on it (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

As this statement by a Swedish arms control officer illustrates, compartmentalizing the defence and security relations with other states, helps states in avoiding that certain policy areas and forms of cooperation compromise vital defence and security policy interests (e.g. the inviolability of national borders). At the same time, it often also reproduces existing levels of distrust in the defence and security relations between states as also illustrated by a Norwegian arms control officer:

If you look at our ministry of defence, then you see in the discussions that dialogue, more military activities, open channels between the West and Russia are [seen as] important. The Vienna Document is full of those possibilities, so pick one of those activities and make it happen. My experience is that there has been a lot of talk about it, but less will to actually do something about it (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

This dilemma raises the difficult question of how states might escape this vicious circle of reproducing levels of distrust and manage to form more trustful defence and security relations, a question that will be addressed in the further course of this chapter.

In sum, the national identities and interests of states affect the interpersonal level of trust in several ways. They largely determine the types of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts that defence practitioners are able to engage in, affect many of the framework conditions for the formation of trust during various forms of cooperation and interaction and also determine and limit the impact that experiences in certain areas might have on the overall defence and security relations between states.

### 7.1.2 Institutional Constraints

Besides political considerations, there are also a number of institutional factors that lead to a more regular top-down reproduction of existing levels of trust, identities, interests, and practices in defence and security politics. Based on my interviews, several of such highly interlinked institutional constraints could be identified.

The first and certainly most central constraint relates to the complex, rigid, and highly hierarchical structure of state bureaucracies. These affect the interaction between the structural and interpersonal level of trust in various ways. Assuming that decisions at a higher political and military level would always be reached under situations of perfect information and after the careful consideration of the concerns and interest of all relevant actors in defence and security politics, the division of competences and strict hierarchies in national decision-making processes would not pose a problem in itself. However, for various reasons, these optimum conditions are rarely being met. One of the most central and important factors is the sheer size and complexity of the state apparatus and the amount of information that practitioners and policy-makers are regularly exposed to. The considerable information overload of decision-makers is only further exacerbated by the significant time and human resource constraints under which many decisions in defence and security politics are being reached. This struggle of decision-makers becomes blatantly obvious in remarks of overflowing E-Mail inboxes. Higher-level authorities have put up various coping mechanisms to deal with these considerable information, time, and human resource constraints. For instance, most inputs by practitioners into national policy-making occur on demand by higher-level authorities and are usually limited to urgent and strictly policy-relevant aspects in their work. Most of the more practical implementation issues are usually left to deal with at the lower implementation level. To ensure this separation of competences, most state bureaucracies rely on a very hierarchical filtering process by which gatekeepers at different levels in state bureaucracies (e.g. unit commanders or the responsible officers at the Chief of Defence Staff) evaluate the inputs by lower level practitioners in light of different selection and evaluation criteria. Especially if practitioners are working on currently less topical policy issues, this can considerably reduce their chances for being heard at a higher political or military level, as the following example of a Norwegian arms control officer illustrates:

You have to have a political intent, a desire to walk in some direction and then you can get people at the working-level to come up with proposals on how to solve and to do it at the implementation level. But, now, [...] [since] the direction is there and it is just about maintaining and keeping it going, they do not come up with new ideas [...] [and] if there

is not the political will, then you are not going to be listened to, so it does not help how much you try to recommend [certain things] (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Besides political evaluation criteria, which largely determine the urgency and policy-relevance of certain issues, there are also a number of structural factors, such as the rank and position of actors within the overall governmental structure of state bureaucracies that sometimes decide whether an input is taken into consideration or not. The importance of this position and ‘closeness’ with regard to the political and strategic decision-making level was also illustrated by the reflections of one practitioner about the changing role of the Joint Task Force (North) in Canadian Arctic policy-making:

Our role has absolutely changed over the last five years. [...] [JTF(N)] used to [...] provide injects directly to our higher level policy department in the CAF and as we have grown, we have turned more into that [...] execution type of role, [being at] arm’s length for providing injects, because [...] it is more holistic now as all aspects of the CAF touch upon the Arctic, touch upon Canada’s north (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

However, while the attempt to separate the policy- and implementation-side might generally reduce some of the information overload at a higher political and military level and helps harmonizing the interests of different actors into one consistent and reliable national defence and security policy, it also considerably reduces the amount of practical information and expertise that policy-makers are able to base their decisions on. This can cause problems in the issuing of solid and practically relevant national defence policies and strategies, not least when the political and military assessment of priorities and interests diverge. As a former Norwegian military argued:

I do not think the impact [of the military] is as big as it should be. Personally, I think, there is too much power in the civilian bureaucracy of the ministry of defence, which has no military experience or much education in military matters. There are many clever people and you know, they have different views also within the ministry of defence, but when it comes to the white paper, I do not think the impact from the military side is very big. Even in the last white paper, the Chief of Defence had a remark in the end, which is unusual, where he said that his advice was not followed when it comes to having a balanced defence. He said the government had assessed this otherwise and had put more focus on, I think he said, strategic assets, and the maritime strategy. So, his advice was not followed. That does not necessarily mean that he did not have any impact on it, but I think in my view, it would be wise to have more debate with the military experts when issuing and working on white papers (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018).

His experiences and views were also echoed by many other practitioners, some of which also shared their own examples of vague political guidelines and instructions that in their view were not properly translated into the practical operational language of practitioners on the ground:

Our most recent defence policy came out a couple of years ago and a lot of it was focused around the Rangers, Ranger growth, increasing training and effectiveness and we were left to figure out what does that actually mean. [...] The growth of the training and effectiveness that was a large push by our policy guys, [but] [...] well, what do you mean by growth? Do you want me to have more patrols? Well, I already have a Ranger Patrol in pretty much every community, so what does growth look like? (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

Another problem of the strict, often impermeable, and complex structures of state bureaucracies is the lack of a clear and transparent flow of information between the higher political or military level and practitioners on the ground. Several of them highlighted that they regularly lacked a clear enough understanding about who else needed to be informed, how certain policy-decisions had been reached and what role their inputs had played in the decision-making process: “We often provide input as required, but what they do with our input is most of the time not so visible to us” (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019). Again, this becomes particularly problematic when guidelines and policies leave considerable room for interpretation by practitioners that might lack a clear enough understanding of the intended outcomes of a certain policy decision:

We are an instrument of the federal government, right? There are political motivations and [...] in the end in the military, it does not matter if I understand them or not. If I am being tasked to do something, to have an interaction. Right, what is the aim of the interaction? What is the outcome that you are looking for? My job is, to make it happen. That means I will follow that instruction. If there is ambiguity to that. If there is confusion and I do not understand what the aim is, I throw that back up the chain of command and ask: 'What are we trying to get at here? Because, I will not achieve your effect at the tactical level that has an implication politically that you want to achieve, if you do not have me understand what it is that you are trying to do within the broader picture and I think we are ok with them' (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

However, as I will discuss in the next section of this chapter, due to the hierarchical structure of state bureaucracies, how possible and successful such bottom-up requests for clarification of practitioners are, depends to a large extent on various institutional and personal factors that facilitate a more inclusive and permeable national decision-making process (e.g. institutional culture, experience etc.).

In addition, my interviews with practitioners have shown that also the ability of practitioners to provide credible input into national decision-making is often likewise reduced by considerable information, time, and human resource constraints. As a military officer at the Canadian Joint Task Force (North) explains:

I think we are right on the frontline to impact and influence policy on many, many, many aspects. The problem that we are having, we all have, is a lack of personnel. We are short of men. I got three people working for me and we are overbooked. I think I still have 200 E-Mails to read and I could not open a single one today. We are just swamped. Meaning, we do not really have the resources to address it all, but we do have huge impact on anything, because of our privileged situation. We have an impact on equipment in the north, processes, doctrines... Name it! The full spectrum. We are just too booked to do it all well, but we are right in the middle of it (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

The information, time, and human resource constraints are further amplified by the regular rotation of military personnel. While this rotation was generally seen as contributing to an overall broadening of the experiences and knowledge from various subject areas, it was also identified as a major institutional constraint for practitioners to influence effectively the structural level in defence and security politics:

I find that within the military, the worst thing is that we do not know what we do not know. Nobody is an expert in everything and the nature is that we generally jump jobs every two to three years [...] and nobody is seeing and being exposed to everything. [...] So, again we are victims of our own experience in those regards. [...] We are expected to be legal experts, medical experts, supply experts, pay experts and nobody can develop that degree of expertise to any depth, but the exposure to it all and understanding that you need to ask the specialist about that is absolutely key (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

The constant rotation of personnel does not only require a continuous reconnecting with changing points of contacts at the national level, but can also lead to demanding and lengthy processes of induction with new and complex thematic issues. As the following example from a Canadian military at the Joint Task Force (North) illustrates, this does not only affect the interaction with practitioners as they could be at the start or the end of their position, but also reduces the ability of practitioners to provide credible inputs into national decision-making:

Here at Joint Task Force (North), [...] every year, a third of us transitions out typically and then the new people have to learn the role of Joint Task Force (North) as they come in, while they are of course later on also getting again ready for that move out. So, our capacities to do a lot in Joint Task Force (North) has been hampered by that expectation

and the need for people to adjust to their job, when they first arrive. It creates difficulties and creates capacity issues (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

The regular rotation of personnel also impedes on policy-makers' own level of knowledge and their ability to base their decisions on a careful evaluation of all relevant aspects and interests involved. For example, this problem became evident in the reflections of a Norwegian arms control officer working on the complex and technically heavy treaty on Open Skies:

I have an impression that politicians need to get actually more into the text of the document and understand a little bit more, smaller details of the things that implementers have to deal with. It is difficult sometimes to take thousand pages and to put it down on a pinpoint, what is the issue and what is the problem seen from the implementers and how can we fix it on the political level? But, it feels like a little deeper knowledge into the actual document text on the high-level politicians [is needed] (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

This problem becomes particularly evident in policy areas that currently do not receive a lot of political attention, but which, nevertheless, are affected by tensions and disagreements at a higher political or military level, such as discussions surrounding the implementation and modernization of arms control and CSBM in Europe. As some of informants suggested, this problem might only be further reinforced by the fact that arms control officers – due to their specific subject-matter expertise – stay often much longer in their respective positions. While this, on the one hand, helps them to better understand “the political, kind of swamps and pitfalls that you have to learn about” (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019), it, on the other hand, considerably limits the dissemination of the knowledge and trust-building effects of arms control and military confidence-building at the national level:

People tend to stay a long time in these positions and of course, it is confidence building in the micro-sense, in that micro-cosmos. On the other hand, it is perhaps not so good then for, when it comes to spreading the word over the extent of the armed forces. I am not sure that it is a good thing that people have these sort of positions as their life-careers (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

As not least the complex network of defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia has shown (see Appendix 2), the strict hierarchies, complex structures, and regular rotation of personnel have also a considerable impact on the ability of practitioners to communicate and coordinate with actors outside their own national systems. Practitioners highlight that initial contacts are usually initiated and fostered at a higher political and military level, while the amount of actors and interests often limits and complicates the coordination and communication at the implementation level.

For example, their direct counterparts could be unknown, responsibilities could be unclear or overlap, or both sides might operate on different planning cycles. In this context, the communication with defence attachés and liaison officers was highlighted as particularly important (e.g. to refine addresses or get an overview of planning cycles etc.). While military structures usually address these issues through a strict chain of command, problems surface in particular when interacting with other armed forces or with non-military governmental organizations, as illustrated by the coordination of security- and safety-related policy issues in the Canadian North:

Where I think we are perhaps not as good as we could be nationally is those cross-mixes between the departments that deal with certain things. If you looked at areas of responsibility structures, the department of defence's areas of responsibility is organized differently than that of Public Safety, for example. That means I deal with three different Public Safety guys as opposed to only one. [...] These are the things that perhaps are not as readily apparent and every federal department chops that all up differently. [...] It exponentially increases the amount of communication and dealings that I have with people, because I have got so many different people and different agencies responsible in different ways (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

In overcoming these challenges, practitioners repeatedly underlined the importance of establishing and maintaining a functioning network of points of contacts and liaison officers in other governmental organizations or armed forces.<sup>109</sup> Once again, also at the international level, the regular rotation of personnel was named as one of the biggest challenges in this regard.

The coordination and cooperation at the international level is further complicated by a number of additional institutional constraints. Since, some of them have already been discussed in previous parts of this thesis, they shall only be mentioned briefly. One of these constraints relates to the already stated limitations in time and personnel, which also steer and influence the professional focus of practitioners in their interaction at the international level. As a Canadian Defence Attaché explained:

While we do engage socially and professionally with attachés from different countries, some countries, like ourselves, have only limited manpower. Thus, we ultimately fall back

---

<sup>109</sup> The importance of these contacts will also be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter (see 7.2.2).

to our traditional partners, in particular from NATO+2 (NATO including Sweden and Finland) and the EU (Canadian Defence Attaché, 2019).

Other constraints derive from the size of a country's armed forces, including the infrastructure and capabilities that practitioners have at their disposal. Another factor are differences in planning cycles that can further constrain the possibilities for cooperation and communication with other nations. This not only relates back to the question of what types of cooperation is practically feasible to engage in, but also refers to the availability of communication channels and systems (e.g. allowing to exchange classified information).

In sum, there exist a variety of institutional constraints that reduce the ability of practitioners to reshape the identities, interests, practices, and levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. While many of these constraints are initiated to assist higher-level authorities in harmonizing the diverse interests of actors at the national level into consistent and dependable defence and security policies, these constraints also pose a significant challenge for practitioners to provide credible inputs into national decision-making. This regularly leads to a less balanced and less informed national decision-making process. As an experienced Norwegian military put it during one of my interviews:

The problem is that many bureaucracies and institutions have a *systemic failure* that is built inherently into their structure. The hierarchical structures in these systems make it often difficult to communicate and to be heard by those higher up. There are simply a lot of firewalls or glass ceilings that prevent you from floating ideas (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019).

As a direct consequence of these firewalls and glass ceilings as well as due to considerable time and human resource constraints, decisions at a higher political and military level are regularly reached in situations of incomplete information and without a sufficient inclusion of relevant military expertise. The result of this dilemma are often less consistent, ambiguous, and sometimes even impractical national defence policies, strategies, and political guidelines that impede on the ability of practitioners of implementing them in line with their intended outcomes. This leads to a less adaptable reproduction of existing levels of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. How states might manage to address those issues shall be discussed in the final analytical section of this chapter (see 7.3).

### **7.1.3 Personal Constraints**

Apart from political and institutional factors, there exist also a number of personal constraints that can result in a mere top-down reproduction of existing levels of trust in defence and security politics. Since,



most of these factors are more or less directly linked to a lack of experience and the absence of certain personal skills and characteristics that practitioners identified as particularly important for affecting national decision-making (e.g. certain language skills, experience and internal network of contacts) – which will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this thesis (see 7.2.3) – I will limit myself at this point to a few particularly important and illustrative factors.

The first are the political, cultural, institutional, and military backgrounds that inform the convictions of practitioners. As already elaborated upon in the previous chapter, practitioners are not only affected by the different national identities and political systems of their states, but have also been socialized into the very specific military mind-sets and cultures of their respective military branches. Therefore, in particular when younger, less experienced officers are exposed to practitioners from other political or military backgrounds for the first time (e.g. when being posted to a joint headquarter), these difference can create notable irritations as also one of my informants reflected upon his own first steps within the Canadian Joint Task Force (North):

Especially if people are newly posted in the Joint Task Force (North), if they have a navy, air force or army background, you get some significant frictions at times until people learn to sort of not look at things through that one lens. Because, I mean for us as junior officers, the navy is everything, the army is everything. The army does it best. The navy does it best. Then they come here and are interacting with people from other backgrounds for the first time, so what rules, what regulations do we follow? That can create frictions and I will fully admit my first six months here, I am sure I have upset a lot of people saying: 'This is how the army does it'. I was forced to get back into the books and say this is what we need to do, because this is what that policy says and that is what we need to do over here to act upon that policy (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

Secondly, practitioners underlined the diversity of personalities that can affect the interaction at the national and international level. At the national level, practitioners, for example, underlined the importance of not only being 'institutionally' enabled to, but also feeling comfortable to ask questions and to raise relevant issues in the exchange with higher-level authorities. While practitioners iterated that even though "people tend to gravitate towards 'Aufgaben' (tasks) that suit their nature" (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019), also the interaction at the international level often comes down to individual personalities of the people involved. As a Norwegian arms control officer explained:

I think it is fair to say that we the teams, [...] we are working better and better together. [...] Some might say: 'But he or she is just impossible to work with'. Well, then you have

lost in the first place (laughing), [because] [...] again, it is just [about] culture and interpersonal relationships (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

My interviews also suggest that the ability of practitioners to influence national decision-making and to reshape the defence and security policies of their states might also be constrained by their *age* and *gender*. Their *age* seems to be somewhat loosely linked to their rank and experience, which creates and reinforces existing hierarchies and power structures within state bureaucracies. Not least, because only one of my eighteen informants was a woman, the question of *gender* (e.g. different types of masculinities) and the differences between military masculinities and femininities in a primarily masculine professional environment could unfortunately not be investigated in more detail. However, interestingly, at least one arms control officers pointed at the increasing number of women in arms control and the positive impact that he thought they had on the general atmosphere between both teams:

The team interaction the team understanding, the respect between the teams, I think, has improved quite a lot from the old days. It is now a lot more about who is the most knowledgeable. The tall, kind of forward-leaning person will get his way that was kind of how it was in the beginning. [Today] we see that there is a lot more female representation on all teams, [which is also] noticeable [...] on the Russian side [...]. Again, we have noticed over time, that the cultural differences [with Russia] have changed quite a lot (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

In sum, many of the personal factors constraining the ability of practitioners to affect effectively national decision-making processes and to reshape the levels of trust in the relations between states are individually based and more or less directly linked to the personalities, characteristics and skill sets of individual practitioners. While some of those constraints might eventually be overcome by the individual (e.g. by gaining further experience) other factors, such as the role of masculinities and sex, would instead require changes at the structural and institutional level (e.g. reducing gender stereotypes and prejudices). However, given the limited number of informants, more research on different personal factors constraining the ability of practitioners to affect national decision-making would be needed, before being able to arrive at more general conclusions.

#### **7.1.4 Summary**

In sum, practitioners and policy-makers alike are operating under a considerable number of political, institutional and personal constraints that lead to a dependable, yet also less adaptable top-down

reproduction of existing levels of trust, identities, interests, and practices in the defence and security relations between states. These constraints are summarized in the following figure:

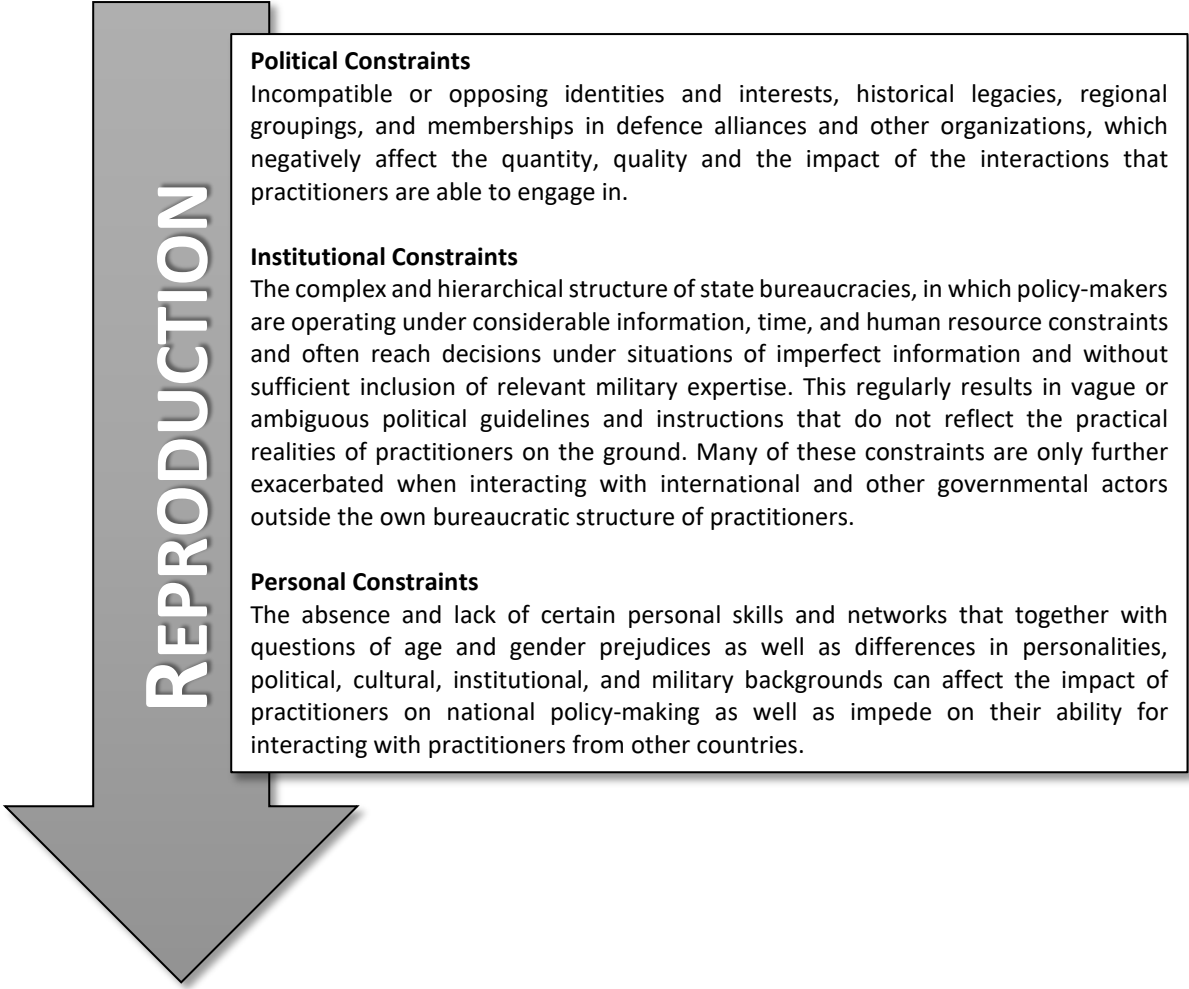


Figure 23. Political, institutional, and personal constraints in defence and security politics.

## 7.2 The Transformation of Defence and Security Politics

Having discussed the factors that lead to a regular reproduction of existing levels of trust in defence and security politics, this second section focuses on the political, institutional and personal facilitators that lead to a more adaptable, yet sometimes also less dependable bottom-up transformation of identities, interests, and practices in defence and security politics. The first group of political facilitators is again directly linked to the structural level of trust in state-to-state relations (see 5). The second group consists of institutional facilitators (e.g. short lines of communication or a permeable institutional culture that includes practitioners into national decision-making processes). The third group are personal facilitators

(e.g. experience, skill sets, or personal networks) that allow practitioners to effectively impact on national decision-making and the levels of trust in interstate relations. Each of these groups will subsequently be discussed in more detail.

### 7.2.1 Political Facilitators

As we have already learned in the previous section of this chapter, political factors can have a considerable impact on the interactions between defence and security practitioners. While having already discussed the constraining effects of incompatible identities and interests on the quantity, quality and impact that experiences in different policy areas might have on the overall defence and security relations between states (see 7.1.1), this section focuses on the facilitating side of compatible as well as collective identities or interests.

First, as the analysis on the structural level of trust has shown (see 5.6), political factors can have both, a negative, but also a positive effect on the amount, frequency, and types of military cooperation and interaction that practitioners are able, willing, but also allowed to engage in. As such, countries that share compatible or even collective identities or interests in security and defence have a higher tendency of pursuing their interests collectively. This allows practitioners to engage in more substantial forms of cooperation that are particularly conducive for the formation of trust at the interpersonal level. This push towards collective action is only further reinforced by notable shifts in background conditions that require a collective response or signals of reassurance by countries sharing common identities or interests. This became evident in the increased focus on joint exercises and collective defence among NATO states amid the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014:

What we see is that there is a bigger interest from our allies in training for a conventional fight. They want to come up and train together with us. There is also an increased focus on that within the Norwegian armed forces. There is a renewed discussion and planning regarding the use of the *Total Defence* concept, for example. So, the security situation, impacts planning, preparations, allies coming here [...]. I think it is fair to say that we have during many years and I am not talking about Norway, but about NATO in general – apart from the Americans maybe – we have slept a bit in the classroom for a few years, because it has been eternal peace and nice weather for so long and when everyone discovered that there might be rain coming, they started to say: ‘Oh, we have to look into our planning and how we do things and what we focus on’. In 2010, for instance it was a saying in NATO that NATO had three priorities: Afghanistan, Afghanistan and Afghanistan. [...] Four, five

years later, it all changed. Now, it was not about Afghanistan. Now, it was about collective defence (Former Norwegian Brigade Commander, 2018).

Secondly, as the analysis of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts in the previous chapter has shown (see 6.5) political factors can also positively contribute to the qualitative dimension in the formation of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. Countries which perceive of their defence and security identities and interests as either compatible or even collective, are not only generally more willing to cooperate on quantitatively more occasions, but practitioners usually also enjoy a considerable level of political support for engaging in more substantial forms of cooperation (e.g. joint exercises and trainings). These positive effects are further reinforced by a shared situational understanding, be it through common memberships in military alliances and organizations (e.g. NATO or the EU) or through a shared regional identity (e.g. Nordic or European). More generally, practitioners underlined the positive effects of working and operating in a multilateral environment:

[In a multilateral environment] you will automatically have more contacts, because you meet in the meeting rooms. There are a lot of, you know, working lunches and breakfasts and so on. So, normally when you work in a multilateral arena you spend much more time in that arena or meeting other people than in your office. Which may not be the case when you work bilaterally (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

Since the perceptions and understandings of the key strategic interests are not only fluent, but can sometimes also considerably differ between the political and military side in defence and security policy-making, practitioners also underlined the value of purely practical forms of cooperation that sort of operate below the threshold of political attention and allow them to focus on the practical aspects in their work and to put difficult political issues aside.

Finally, national identities and priorities of states also determine the impact that experiences, inputs, and notions of interpersonal trust might have on the more general decision-making process in defence and security politics. In this regard, timing as well as working on topical political issues were highlighted as important factors to be heard at a higher political and military level. In addition, practitioners highlighted that being recognized as an actor with long experience and highly specialized subject-matter expertise can play an equally important role. This was illustrated by various examples, such as the influential roles of the Norwegian Joint Headquarters, the Canadian Joint Task Force (North), or the Canadian Rangers with their expertise and experience of operating in the Canadian and Norwegian North:

Well, interesting enough, for the Rangers, I get asked a lot regarding policy as opposed to having to impose myself into a policy decision. Because, I think they recognize the expertise that Joint Task Force (North) and the Rangers have with operating in the north, so when they are talking about northern policy or policy that impacts to the north, they ask. They are very proactive in asking that sort of thing (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

Apart from topicality and subject-matter expertise, urgent problems that cannot be resolved at the implementation level can also sometimes generate considerable attention by higher political and military authorities. In some instances, this attention even carries on beyond the actual problem or situation in question. This was illustrated by a Norwegian arms control officer with regard to certain CFE-treaty regulations in the planning phase of Trident Juncture '18:

It gave a lot of attention also on the political level. This [issue] was very much in the interest of both the MOD and the MFA. Because, as in most countries, I think the MFA *owns* the treaties. It was very very important to keep to CFE treaty. No one, I think no nation that has signed a treaty, [...] would like to come into a position in which they could be told that: 'You did not stick to the treaty.' I think this was the main reason for why it was of interest. We never broke the treaty. [...] The process actually was very good, [because now] [...] the focus was there from everyone. From up through the chain to the top level, they actually were informed (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

In sum, national identities and interests of states do not necessarily always constrain, but can also considerably facilitate the types of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts that defence practitioners are able, willing, and allowed to engage in. As such, they do not only have a positive effect on some of the framework conditions and trust-building effects at the interpersonal level, but can also have a considerable impact on the political attention and ability of practitioners to affect with their experiences the defence and security political agendas of their states as well as the levels of trust in defence and security relations.

### **7.2.2 Institutional Facilitators**

This section turns to the institutional factors that enable practitioners to contribute with their individual experiences and expertise to adapting and reshaping the defence and security political identities, interests, and practices of their states, and as such, the levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. Deriving from my interviews, three sets of institutional facilitators could be identified.

The first set of facilitators are mechanisms, structures and procedures that improve the top-down and bottom-up flow of information and experiences of trust in state bureaucracies, contributing to a more informed decision-making process, enabling practitioners to bring certain issues, problems and challenges, but also interpersonal notions of trust in defence and security politics to the attention of decision-makers at a higher political and military level. Central venues in this regard are various national coordination meetings and working groups. While these are often limited to a very specific subject-area, they allow for a more regular and direct exchange between the implementation and the decision-making level. However, their frequency, scope as well as the extent to which practitioners during my interviews felt to have actually an impact on the overall decision-making process, differed rather considerably from country to country and from subject to subject. For example, some practitioners reported about quarterly coordination meetings with the respective desk officers at the ministries of foreign affairs and defence, while others reported about monthly meetings that also included members of the country's delegations at relevant multilateral organizations (e.g. the OSCE) as well as from the national defence research agency. In particular, in subject areas that require a very detailed level of knowledge, policy-makers seem to rely much more heavily on the extensive experience provided by subject-matter experts, who often stay much longer in their respective positions than policy-makers at a higher political or military level, as also the following example from a Norwegian arms control officer indicates:

People in the ministry of defense and the ministry of foreign affairs, they switch seats often [...], so the level of information and the knowledge about arms control has decreased. That means that those who work with arms control on a daily basis are listened to, because we are the so-called experts. When we come with suggestions [...], [our] views on certain issues our speaking points go straight in. We are very much thought of as experts and the ones providing the implementation view on the different treaties and our views are very much adhered to (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2, 2019).

Another important factor is the rank and position of practitioners within the internal structures and hierarchies of state bureaucracies. A higher rank and position not only increases their freedom of making their own decisions and to be more directly involved in national decision-making, but also provides them with more regular exchanges and shorter lines of communication with higher-level decision.

Furthermore, the ability of practitioners to provide input and affect decision-making at a higher political or military level is also influenced by the respective military and institutional culture of a country. Even though militaries usually fall under a rather strict chain of command, some countries seem to practice a

more open and dialogue-oriented culture that allows practitioners to ask critical questions and to provide credible inputs into national decision-making. As a Norwegian defence attaché explained:

There needs to be a sufficient level of trust from the capital into their attachés. Certainly not all countries or institutions have such systemic trust and facilitate a culture in which individuals can ask critical questions and provide input to national policy making. I think such a culture is very much part of our Nordic, for sure the Norwegian culture. You can see that all the way down to young conscripts that act as independent-minded people within our armed forces (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019).

Another factor highlighted as facilitating a better inclusion of practitioners into national decision-making and providing a smoother flow of information and notions of trust across different hierarchy levels was the role of shorter and less bureaucratic lines of communication. In this context, in particular practitioners from smaller countries like Sweden and Norway underlined how the size of their government apparatus reduced hierarchical barriers and facilitated a more personal and inclusive decision-making processes:

Norway is a quite small country. So, we have very short communication lines between us in the arms control office, [...] [the] ministry of defence and [the] ministry of foreign affairs. We do have the luxury of calling them individually or sending E-Mails to the main [desk officers] in the MFA or MOD (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Besides differences in military cultures and short and simple communication lines, practitioners also emphasized the important role of policy advisors (e.g. seconded from the political and strategic level), helping them, adapt and improve their inputs into national decision-making processes.

The second set of institutional facilitators focuses on the procedures, mechanisms, and structures that improve the horizontal flow of information and experiences of trust as well as the coordination between different actors at the national level. Due to the complexity and size of state bureaucracies, practitioners once again underlined the importance of an unambiguous allocation of responsibilities, a clear and sufficient flow of information as well as regular opportunities for coordination and exchange of views between different actors at the national level. This horizontal dissemination of experiences and information was not only seen as essential for a better coordination at the national level, but also for a more coherent representation of a country's defence and security policy at the international level, as also an experienced Swedish diplomat underlined:

At the end of the day, preferably your country's policy should be coherent. So, what you say in Vienna should be the same as what you say in New York or in Brussels or wherever



it may be. Thus, I think one always has [...] to make sure that you have good relationships to your horizontal colleagues at other places. That is sometimes not understood by everyone. Many tend to think that you are one satellite and you report to the headquarters, but this horizontal vector is also very important (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

In this context, the regular rotation of practitioners was seen as one of the most important elements in the broadening of the understanding and sharing of positive and negative experiences from various policy areas with other actors at the national level. At the same time, state bureaucracies try to address the numerous downsides that come with such a more regular rotation of experts and personnel.<sup>110</sup> For example, practitioners underlined the crucial role of good handovers from their predecessors, which considerably reduce the impact of tedious familiarization processes and the time needed for reconnecting with different and constantly changing points of contacts at the national and international level. In other cases, in which the benefits of highly specialized subject-matter experts outweighs the benefits of a more regular rotation of personnel, state bureaucracies try to reduce the risk of creating rather *closed* expert communities and through regular briefings, seminars or by including officers from other units and policy areas in their working routines. While this certainly reduces some of the considerable knowledge gaps about certain areas in defence and security politics, arms control officers argued that the use of part-timers from various units also helps in disseminating some of the trust-building effects of their work at the national level:

It is a risk that there are always the same inspectors traveling around, meeting themselves. [Therefore,] for example if we visit an air base, we always try to put in one inspector, but also one air force guy. [...] This is what we try, because otherwise it is a club that is just flying around in the world looking at each other. So, I think [it is important to also include] normal officers, non-commissioned officer or whoever [...] to [also] have contacts with other militaries (Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces, 2018).

The increasing number of joint headquarters also seems to support a broader socialization process of practitioners beyond their respective military branches. However, in absence of more comparable data, their impact could unfortunately not be investigated in more detail.

---

<sup>110</sup> These have already been discussed in more detail in the previous section of this chapter (see 7.1.2).

The third and last set of institutional facilitators concerns the various mechanisms, factors, and procedures that improve the communication, coordination, and interaction of practitioners at the international level. Since, higher-level authorities play a key gatekeeping-role in the defence and security relations between states (see Appendix 2), they are also one of the most important factors in the establishment and facilitation of initial contacts that are crucial for the development of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners:

The first form of interaction is generally on the strategic level. [...] That is how most of the links get initiated and then they will hand it off to the subordinated commanders, which will then trickle down to us [at the level of headquarters or units]. For example, last year we did an exchange between JTF(N) and the Arctic Command in Greenland. We sent somebody there for a month and we brought somebody over for a month to understand how we are structured and how we are organized [...]. Now, we can start tapping into that and begin developing the contacts [...] (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

Closely linked to this gatekeeping-function is the importance of a certain level of *institutional trust* of higher-level authorities into practitioners at the implementation level. This was nicely captured by an arms control officer reflecting upon the changed atmosphere in the implementation and interaction with his Russian counterparts:

Compared to the beginning, we see that they are not afraid to talk to us. In the beginning, back in the early days of the treaty so to speak, it was very formal and no one really wanted to talk to each other. It is a lot easier these days to sit down around the dinner table or to relax outside in the sun and to talk together, even if you sometimes have to do that through an interpreter. So, fortunately people are not scared of their own system that they are not to be penalized internally and they do open themselves up a little bit more and more. The same for us. You get more and more acquainted, used to people (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Other important institutional facilitators are the already discussed possibility to rely on an existing network of contacts as well as already established lines and common standards for communication, which, for example, allow for classified phone calls or E-Mail exchanges. In addition, practitioners also underlined the important role of military attachés and liaison officers, which they saw as crucial in understanding and navigating the complex and often opaque internal structures and hierarchies of other national and international actors.

Generally, this need was seen as less pressing in smaller expert communities (e.g. arms control). Practitioners also underlined the useful role of framework agreements that more generally approve various forms of military cooperation with a carefully selected number of particularly important international partners. Such agreements considerably shorten tedious bureaucratic national approval processes and provide practitioners with more freedom and flexibility to engage in military activities that they consider practically useful. Finally, regardless of whether cooperating or coordinating with allied or non-allied countries, practitioners once again stressed the importance of face-to-face encounters as well as less formalized meetings. These were not only seen as making it easier to build interpersonal trust, but also foster the building up of a network of useful points of contacts:

[It] is often a very long way from initial talks to a more tangible cooperation and you need quite a lot of resources to follow-up. [...] Things take time. That is part of the challenge. But of course, in addition to these formal meetings and briefings, which we give, there are very often social events related to a visit, where we go dining or we go do something else. [Those social events] often produce good results, because, then you have the real discussions and you lay the foundation for further talks and cooperation. [...]. It is a way of broadening the perspective, letting other people know you and you getting to know other people and by that, the professional conversation flows much easier. This is not only related to allies, [we also have] regular meetings with the Russian border guards, the FSB and of course in that context, we also see that people, who enjoy each other's company as people, work much easier together as professionals (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

To sum it up, there exist a number of institutional factors, which enable practitioners to contribute actively with their experiences to a transformation of the levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. These factors mainly represent different mechanisms, structures and procedures, which improve the coordination and communication at the national and international level, help practitioners in overcoming bureaucratic hurdles and barriers and enable them to provide credible inputs into national decision-making.

### **7.2.3 Personal Facilitators**

Lastly, there are also a number of personal factors and conditions that facilitate the ability of practitioners to influence and transform the levels of trust, identities, interests, and practices in the defence and security relations between states. More specifically, this section will discuss specific skill sets, the role of personal networks and certain personality traits, which allow practitioners to better

understand and manoeuvre the political pitfalls, institutional entanglements and bureaucratic complexities of defence and security policy-making.

The first group are a number of different factors and skill sets that practitioners underlined as particularly conducive for actively influencing the defence and security identities, interests, and practices of their states. The undoubtedly most important factor was *experience*. While not directly a skill in itself, experience functions as a kind of enabling condition in the development of a wide array of other skills as well as for gaining a better understanding of the different political and institutional facilitators and constraint discussed so far. In particular, practitioners underlined how being experienced allowed them to be more recognized and able to actively influence and shape decision-making at a higher political and military level. As a Norwegian military officer put it: “If you want to be listened to, you have to be recognized as one who has worked with [a certain issue] over time” (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019). His view was also echoed by a Norwegian arms control officer arguing:

Because I have been doing this for a long time, they do appreciate [my inputs]. It is very difficult if a new person comes in, because then it takes some time for them to realize [...] that you have the experience, that you are a lot more experienced sometimes than they are [...]. I have noticed that [...] they do listen and they will think about it before they just plainly say something totally opposite, because they will appreciate the input you have and the experience that you can bring to the table (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Likewise, at the international level, the experience that practitioners gather over the years was seen as an important knowledge base from which they could draw from for addressing a variety of different challenges and situations. Regardless of whether practitioners saw experience as having developed a very specific subject-matter expertise or as having gained a broader understanding of defence and security politics, they all agreed that being experienced allowed them to better understand and manoeuvre bureaucratic processes, structures, and hierarchies:

I think [the impact one has on policy-making] varies from time to time, from person to person and the political leadership you have within the ministry. However, [...] an important role of an ambassador is to be, if not directly in the policymaking but in the policy-shaping and I think that is part of the job to contribute with analysis and arguments and facts that would point in certain directions or not. I think inevitably some would be more skilled than others in that (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

One of the most important tools for actively engaging in and shaping national policy-making that practitioners mentioned was *reporting*. As they underlined, good reporting not only requires having a

good insight into institutional processes, people and dynamics at the national and international level, but also requires a solid understanding of currently topical and operational issues at a higher political and military level. In addition, practitioners emphasized timing, being concise and of knowing whom to address, in order to affect and shape policy-making at the national level:

I would say that reporting and knowing how to report are key. Do not just send your reports to general E-Mail addresses, but also make sure to cc people that you know could or should be interested in what you have to say. [...] In addition, many people higher up do not have a lot of time to read, so it is important to be concise and to always think about what added-value you can provide (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019).

Another important skill at the international level emphasized by practitioners was “to be social and fluent in at least one, ideally several, foreign languages [...] [which] enables one to have a broader understanding of foreign, security and defence politics (Norwegian Defence Attaché, 2019). Some even highlighted how speaking certain languages can be an enabler for more thoroughly connecting and engaging with practitioners from other countries:

I have not been working with Norwegians and Danes. I worked a lot though, with the Austrians, the Swiss and the Germans (laughing) and also with the Benelux, [...] mainly because I was that German-speaking guy, the go-to guys when it comes to German and I still am (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

Being experienced was also seen as central for the development of versed leadership skills. It allows practitioners to build upon a large network of professional contacts, to draw from a broad array of previous experiences and to develop proficient communication skills that make it possible to communicate efficiently with superiors and subordinates and to more swiftly identify and react to a large variety of different challenges and situations.

Experience and certain skill sets were also seen as important for developing and maintaining a credible and comprehensive network of national and international contacts, which can play an important facilitating role in the formation and maintaining of existing levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. For example, being well networked at the national level can make it easier to actively shape and influence decision-making at a higher political and military level and significantly simplifies communication and interaction within complex bureaucratic structures:

Personal linkages do always help, no matter what it is that you do. [...] I find it is easier when you know somebody within the organization, because that is a: 'Hey, I am not really sure who to talk to about this. Do you know who deals with this kind of portfolio?' and then

they say: 'Oh yeah, that is so and so' or 'Oh yeah, that is me'. It kind of facilitates the passage of information, the communication or at least the establishment of initial links when we talk about addressing an issue of any type (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

Professional contacts and networks also provide for new perspectives and insights, play an important role in interacting and communicating at the international level, and regularly help resolving smaller issues and disputes before they ever even reach higher-level decision makers. In short, personal contacts contribute to maintaining constructive and trustful relations between states; an important factor that many practitioners feel to be often underestimated and overlooked in academic and political debates:

I think when people look at this from a more academic point of view they always want to find structures and they downplay rather this importance of personal contacts, trust, and so forth, but I would say personalities matter a lot. You know where people are coming from. You know whom you can trust or not and what kind of background and experience they have. That makes a conversation much much easier. I have been almost 25 years now in diplomatic service and paths definitely cross. I served in Moscow at the end of the 90s and now these people reappear [...] and I meet them in new capacities. That is very very helpful. Apart from the sort of hierarchies and structures you work in, these personal contacts – you know whom to call, whom you can sort of contact much easier than others – I think they are invaluable and play a big role and I think, sometimes this is probably underestimated (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

Yet, it does not only take time to establish and develop personal contacts, but they also require a constant engagement and reconnecting, an intensive process that a Canadian officer compared to an artistic balancing act:

You need to maintain a relationship in order for it to stay strong. It is like one of these, have you ever seen that circus act where they put plates on top of sticks, they spin them, and you have to keep going around? Well that is a relationship. That is the reality of relationships. In order to keep all the plates spinning you have to keep interacting with them and if you neglect one, it is going to fall or it is going to slow down and potentially break (Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC, 2019).

Since robust and dependable professional contacts usually develop from positive experiences during previous personal encounters, it is hardly possible to transfer them from one practitioner to another. Thus, practitioners highlighted that it is in light of the regular rotation of diplomatic and military personnel, particularly important that practitioners can draw from a broad skill set that allows them to quickly reach out to and connect with new contacts in various positions. This makes some practitioners

even attach greater importance to personal skills and personality than to long-lasting networks of personal contacts and relations.

Lastly, practitioners also reflected on different characteristics and personality types that they viewed as particularly conducive in understanding and affecting national and international decision-making as well as for interacting with practitioners from other countries. In that regard, exercise and operations planners underlined the importance “of being open-minded, to respect other peoples' opinion and being able to adapt to different situations” (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019) as well as “the ability to listen and not to talk and interrupt people” (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019), while arms control officers were often described as particularly amiable and social (see 6.3). In particular, practitioners working in a multinational or civil-military environment underlined the importance of having a more flexible and collaborative mindset and felt that personalities were actually much more important than their professional backgrounds and careers. This was particularly illustratively described by an officer at the Canadian Joint Task Force (North):

[Last turn,] we had a maritime engineer come up and [...] that person showed a great aptitude for developing relationships with people and regardless of his [professional] background, it was his own personality that allowed him to excel in that area. Regardless of his professional background, his interpersonal skills allowed him to reach out to the civilians that he had to deal with and he is now transitioned into our [exercise and operations planning] because of his ability of really soft leadership in a crowd of ununiformed people like civilians and what not. So, it is really the personality of the people that allows them to excel, not so much their professional background (Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN, 2019).

In sum, practitioners can build upon their personal experience, skills and contacts that occasionally allow them to overcome some of the various political and institutional constraints of state bureaucracies, to interact more easily with practitioners at the national and international level, and to affect national decision-making with their own professional experiences and notions of interpersonal trust in their work. As one of my informants put it: “At the end of the day it is the ministry which is responsible for policy-making, but you can be part of that conversation. You can provide the arguments, facts and the knowledge that that conversation should be built on” (Swedish Diplomat, 2018).

### 7.2.4 Summary

In sum, the ability of practitioners to actively influence and (re-)shape national and international decision-making as well as the levels of trust in defence and security politics can be facilitated by a large variety of different political, institutional, and personal factors. These lead to a more adaptable, yet sometimes also less dependable bottom-up transformation of the identities, interests, practices, and levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. These facilitators are once again summarized in the following figure:

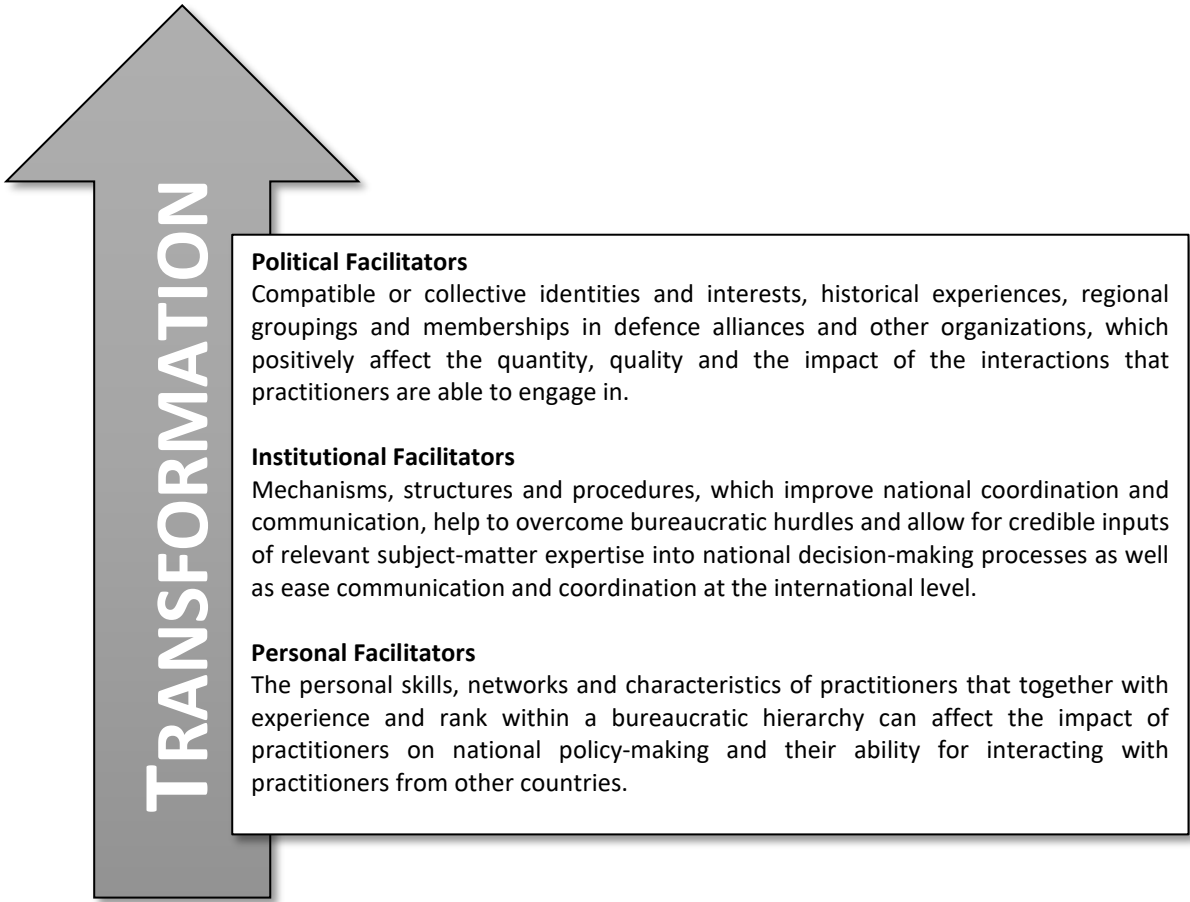


Figure 24. Political, institutional, and personal facilitators in defence and security politics.

### 7.3 The Representation of Defence and Security Politics

In the previous two sections, I discussed the political, institutional, and personal factors that facilitate or constrain the interplay between the interpersonal and structural level of trust and either lead to more dependable or more adaptable level of trust in the defence and security relations between states. In this third section, I complement these discussions by reflecting upon the factors and conditions that strike



the difficult balance between the two and contribute to a *credible two-way representation* of the defence and security identities, interests, and practices at the structural and interpersonal level of trust in defence and security politics. With regard to the structural level, I will discuss how a more balanced and informed national decision-making process helps in a better transmission of interpersonal notions of trust to the structural level of interstate relations and contributes to more adaptable defence and security policy. At the interpersonal level, I will look at the conditions under which practitioners fully identify with the defence and security political identities and interests of their states, leading to a more reliable representation of the current level of trust in the defence and security relations between states.

### 7.3.1 Representation at the Structural Level

The analysis of the previous sections and chapters of this thesis has shown that the defence and security relations between states benefit largely from a better recognition and inclusion of the trust that is built at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners. Therefore, this section discusses how a careful compartmentalization of identities, interests, and practices as well as a more regular exchange between policy-makers and practitioners at the implementation level supports a more balanced and informed national decision-making process and contributes to a more credible representation of these decisions at the structural level in defence and security politics. This process is further supported by shorter and more unbureaucratic lines of communication as well as by an institutional culture that empowers practitioners to provide credible inputs into national decision-making.

As we have already learned in the previous sections, due to the scope and complexity of international relations and defence and security policy-making, decision-makers at a higher political and military level often operate under considerable information, time, and resource constraints. Addressing this problem, governments usually rely on strict hierarchies as well as a clear delineation between, what most of my informants described as the *political* and *military* side in defence and security policy-making. While most practitioners saw their impact on the military side as quite immediate, their inputs into the political side were described as being channelled through various gatekeepers at the different levels in the military chain of command. Those gatekeepers do not only filter their inputs in accordance with the guidelines they receive from the political level, but since many of them are also located at a higher level in the military command (often at the CHOD staff), a lot of the eventual military inputs into political decision-making are of a primarily strategic than operational or even technical nature. This dilemma is only further amplified by the fact that also most gatekeepers operate under considerable information, time, and resource constraints. This leads to a regular overexposure of the national decision-making process to a very narrow and limited amount of inputs, assessments and experiences,

which due to the nature of their filtering process, often merely reaffirm existing convictions, and consequently also levels of trust, at a higher political and military level.

In addition to a less balanced national-decision making process, the limited exposure of policy-makers to a carefully selected amount of inputs and experiences from a narrow range of different topics, only further perpetuates the – in some policy areas already quite considerable – information and knowledge gap between the policy-making and the implementation level. This can be particularly observed with regard to less urgent, politically less attractive, or more technical policy areas, which often have a much more difficult time in generating a sufficient level of attention at a higher political and military level. In the worst case, this can lead to less expediently or even to the complete absence of political guidance and instructions, as will also be discussed in the next section of this chapter. In addition, it also increases the risk of political problems and disputes to be transferred into otherwise functioning working relations between practitioners on the ground. This politicization became, for example, evident in political disputes that resulted in a cessation of observation flights under the treaty on Open Skies in 2018 or in the different assessments of the observation program for NATO's exercise Trident Juncture '18. Since functioning working relations at the operational or tactical level are usually unable to actively address the actual political or strategic issues at stake, such a politicization often only constrains a more balanced defence and security political picture and simply reproduces an existing (often negative) status quo in the defence and security relations between states.

Therefore, in order to contribute to a more balanced and informed national decision-making process and to avoid or at least minimize the risk of an often only counterproductive politicization of functioning working relations, it is important that governments find credible ways for more thoroughly compartmentalizing their defence and security relations with each other. For instance, as the example of Norwegian-Russian relations since 2014 indicate, such a compartmentalization can be achieved by maintaining a pragmatic cooperation in areas of common interest (e.g. Search and Rescue), but also by more actively acknowledging functioning working relations in national decision-making processes. As a Norwegian arms control officer suggested, this could be done through national reporting:

Maybe we should include some more statements, personal experiences [from our work into national reports]. The military does not work on that level, but some feedback on, not personal relations, but on the interactions between the teams (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Another important factor contributing to a more balanced and informed national decision-making process, is the maintaining of a more regular and credible exchange between policy-makers and practitioners coming from different policy areas and hierarchy levels. As practitioners highlighted, this is often approached through regular coordination meetings between policy-makers and the implementation level or by being able to provide inputs and comment on drafts of national policies and strategies. However, since many of those mechanisms only take place on an occasional or irregular basis and are often very formal and hierarchical, they hardly allow for a more regular and credible input from the implementation level. In other words, many of these standardized forums and procedures usually merely reinforce existing power structures and dynamics between the implementation and the policy-making level. To overcome this problem, it is important that the exchange between policy-makers and practitioners does not only occur on an occasional basis or only on the request or demand by higher-level authorities, but that the institutional procedures, culture and command structure (military and civilian) of national bureaucracies, not only allows, but even encourages practitioners to bring relevant issues and experiences to the attention of the higher political and military level, also outside official and regular formats. A Canadian military officer described the importance of such a more permeable bottom-up process and exchange between the political and implementation level in national decision-making:

There is no Canadian Armed Forces infrastructure in the north, besides Resolute Bay, pretty much. You know, that means that I give [my rangers] equipment, but I have given them nowhere to store it. Trying to explain that to one of the policy guys saying: 'Look, you folks need to do those land use-agreements, so that I can get a place to put a c-can there, so that they can secure their kit.' These are all types of things that policy does not necessarily carefully consider [...], [but] I have that direct communication link with the policy makers to say: 'Hey, something is not quite right here', explain them the context and the result of it, which might be violating another policy over there (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

In addition, practitioners also highlighted the role and impact of short and less bureaucratic lines of communication between practitioners and higher-level authorities. This was illustrated by various examples from smaller countries and organizations, such as the Norwegian and Swedish armed forces:

We are so small, so few of us that we actually know each other personally. We work together. We sit in meetings together. It is both, formal and informal and that is the beauty of a small organization. When I compare it, for instance, with my German colleagues, we have shorter and less bureaucratic decision making channels, so to speak (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

If we do face some issues during a mission or observation flight, as I said earlier, we have short communication lines. We are allowed to call our people in the ministry of defense and/or ministry of foreign affairs, to make sure that we are not making the situation worse and also to make sure that they have their input on what, for example, will show up in a report or what we will try to avoid getting into the report. So, we can use them as a good tool and help in difficult situations. They do listen of course also when we have new paper or issues to be brought to the table in Vienna and they depend on us, because we have the practical implementers experience and that is a lot of what they need to put down into political wording into text and terms (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

However, since not all countries or organizations can count on being small (which also only exacerbates the already mentioned time and human resource constraints), it is important that larger institutions find other ways for ensuring a better flow of information and exchange of experiences between the policy-makers and the implementation level, but also for improving the practical knowledge of higher-level decisions makers. During my interviews, practitioners suggested that this could be achieved (or at least facilitated) through designated policy advisors at the different units or through regular visits by policy-makers to headquarters or activities that provide them with a better understanding of the operational environment of practitioners on the ground (e.g. exercises, operations or arms control inspections).

In sum, many institutional structures, processes, and mechanisms of governments to cope with the various political and institutional constraints in defence and security policy-making often only allow for a mere reproduction of existing identities, interests, and practices in the defence and security relations between states. To overcome this problem, it is important that governments find credible ways for achieving a more informed, balanced and inclusive national decision-making process that ideally takes into account the interests, expertise and experiences from a wide array of different topics, backgrounds and hierarchy levels. Fostered by an institutional hierarchy, structure and culture which ensures a more regular and credible exchange between policy-makers and the implementation level, such a more balanced and informed national decision-making process contributes to a more nuanced understanding and credible representation of trust at the structural level in defence and security politics.

### **7.3.2 Representation at the Interpersonal Level**

At the interpersonal level, a successful socialization of practitioners with the identities, interests, and practices of their states in defence and security politics contributes to a more credible and reliable representation of the current level of trust in the defence and security relations between states. Based on

my interviews and the analysis of the previous sections and chapters, at least two major factors facilitating such a successful socialization could be identified: again a more regular and credible exchange between policy-makers and practitioners at the different levels in the military chain of command as well as the issuing of less ambiguous and more practically relevant national policies, strategies and guidelines that make it easier for practitioners to implement them in line with their intended outcomes and goals.

First, a more regular and credible exchange between policy-makers and practitioners at different levels in the military chain of command is not only important for a more balanced and informed national decision-making process, but is also crucial for a successful socialization of practitioners with the identities, interests, and practices of their states in defence and security politics. Most importantly, it allows practitioners to provide better inputs into national decision-making, to develop a better understanding of the intended goals and outcomes at a higher political and military level, and to represent national policies more credibly and confidently in their interactions with practitioners from other states. To achieve this effect and to improve the exchange and coordination between the policy-making and the implementation level, many governments – as already mentioned – rely on different mechanisms, venues and procedures (e.g. regular meetings or comments and inputs into policy drafts). Yet, besides the already mentioned problem of these mechanisms being often too hierarchical or only taking place on a rare or irregular basis, they often also lack sufficient feedback on how inputs by practitioners are or are not being used in the further decision-making process as also the following statement by a Norwegian arms control officer indicates:

I would say that [our input into broader defence and security discussions] is very little. [...] Those meetings that we have with the ministry of defence and the ministry of foreign affairs are dealing with arms control and only that, as far as I would say. It could be of course that they use it also in their plans on other topics and developing other things, but I do not have that impression (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3, 2019).

His uncertainty regarding the role of inputs by practitioners into national decision-making was a widely shared perception during my interviews and appeared particularly acute in situations in which perceptions, goals, and understandings differ quite substantially between the political and military side in defence- and security-policy making:

There are these two sides to [defence and security policy-making]. What is it the prime minister and the cabinet want to achieve and was it that the military wants to achieve? After

years, you understand that these things are actually not always in sync (Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN, 2019).

As this example indicates, it is important that practitioners gain a better understanding and insights into the considerations, goals, and constraints that inform policy decisions at a higher political and military level. To this end, despite clear hierarchies and considerable information, time and resource constraints, governments should try to ensure a more transparent, comprehensible and plausible decision-making process in defence and security politics. In the end, such a more transparent decision-making process contributes to a stronger identification and (pro)active alignment of practitioners with the identities, interests, and practices of their states in defence and security politics and enables practitioners to look upon their own policy areas in light of the wider defence and security political context. During my interviews, such a (self-)alignment could, for example, be observed in the preference of practitioners to exercise, train, and increase the interoperability with allied forces or in more regular, frequent and tighter working relations between politically and strategically important partners. In addition, a successful socialization and better understanding of decision-making processes at a higher political and military level allows practitioners, to much more confidently and credibly represent the defence and security political identities, interests, and practices of their states in their interactions with practitioners from other states. For example, this was emphasized by a Swedish arms control officer referring to the regular and close coordination between the Swedish armed forces, the ministry of foreign affairs, the ministry of the defence, Sweden's delegation at the OSCE, and the Swedish Defence Research Agency:

We have been doing this for a long time and the beauty of this – and this is of course not a secret – the beauty is that when Sweden speaks in Vienna, they know that this does not go against the interests of the armed forces or of the Swedish Defence Ministry. Whereas, when we do something, we know that we are not working against our foreign or security policy. It makes it easier to manoeuvre (Swedish Arms Control Officer, 2019).

Not only practitioners, but also political processes and the structural level of trust can sometimes benefit from the personal relations as well as an often more pragmatic and practice-oriented approach of practitioners at the implementation level as one of my informants explained:

Working levels and relations do count also in political settings. [...] I think the best example is sometimes when you run into trouble (laughing), when you have difficulties. I think everyone then, in the relation you have on the working level, can help to pull the language back, to avoid that you all over sudden get into accusing each other [...]. Instead, you can get an acceptance [...] to the extent: 'Let us agree to disagree. We have an issue here. There is something we do not agree upon, but let us leave it at that. The politicians

can solve that later.' We do not have to do that as implementers, but we have to identify the problem and I think the experience and trust there goes that people listen and pull back on how they formulate [things], on how the wording is going to be in a report or something. It is than easier to bring it back to the table and try to find a solution, instead of having two ice fronts attacking each other (Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1, 2019).

Secondly, a more regular and meaningful exchange between the policy-making and the implementation level does not only allow for a more credible representation of defence and security policies at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners, but also supports the formulation of less ambiguous and more practically relevant defence and security policies. As we have already learned in the previous chapter of this thesis (see 6.5), the more national policies, strategies and political guidelines reflect the operational and practical realities of practitioners on the ground (e.g. their training, resources and capabilities) and the more they are formulated in a clear and unambiguous way, the easier it is for practitioners to fully understand and implement them in line with the goals and outcomes intended by higher-level authorities. However, the previous chapters have already shown that policies and strategies are sometimes developed without sufficient inclusion of relevant subject-matter expertise. This problem became particularly apparent in policy areas, which due to their very specific technical or operational environment; have to deal with a considerable knowledge gap between the policy-making and the implementation level. While this problem repeatedly surfaced in most of my interviews, it is representatively illustrated by the following example from the Canadian armed forces:

The policies that are generated from a Canadian Armed Forces perspective generally do not think about the unique context of the Rangers as part of a component of the reserve. The default answer is: 'Well, follow reserve policy.' 'Well, ok, but reserve policy says that I have to interview this guy and I have to see him and I have to talk to him and he is like three days away from me.' 'Oh, all right, then just E-Mail him.' 'Right, you understand that there is no E-Mail or that there is a data cap on everything. So, every time I ask him or try to transmit imagery and so on, he is into his internet cap and now he is paying a thousand-dollar bill at the end of the month.' Understanding these dynamics is very key (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

These problems highlight the importance of a better inclusion of practitioners with relevant subject-matter expertise into national decision-making processes. Especially, if they have a direct impact and effect on their immediate working area and in policy areas in which decision-makers lack a clear enough own understanding of the actual practical and operational realities on the ground. In this case, subject-matter experts cannot only better inform the actual decision-making process, but also help translating

higher political and strategic goals into plausible and practically relevant policy instructions. Together with an institutional culture that frees itself from an understanding of lower-level practitioners as mere recipients of orders, but which actually encourages practitioners to provide critical feedback and to ask for clarification if the purpose and intended outcome of certain instructions remain unclear, this can contribute to a better implementation and a more credible representation of defence and security policies on the ground. As for example a Canadian military officer explained: “I would argue that the Canadian military encourages questioning when there is a lack of understanding, because you get a better effect when you do fully understand what is trying to be achieved” (Commanding Officer 1st CRPG, 2019).

In sum, a more regular and credible exchange between policy-makers and the implementation level does not only lead to a more balanced and adaptable defence and security policy, but also to the issuing of less ambiguous and more practically relevant defence and security policies that sufficiently takes into consideration the operational needs and practical realities of practitioners on the ground. This leads to a more credible and reliable representation of the current level of trust in the defence and security relations between states and as such makes it easier for practitioners to understand, identify with and credibly represent the national defence and security political identities, interests and practices in their interactions with practitioners from other states.

### **7.3.3 Summary**

In sum, we have seen that several elements contribute to a more adaptable and at the same time more *credible two-way representation* of the identities, interests, practices, and levels of trust at the structural and interpersonal level in defence and security politics. At the structural level, this process is supported by a more informed national decision-making process, while at the interpersonal level; it is primarily achieved through a successful socialization of practitioners with the defence and security political identities, interests, and practices of their states. Both are summarized in the following figure:



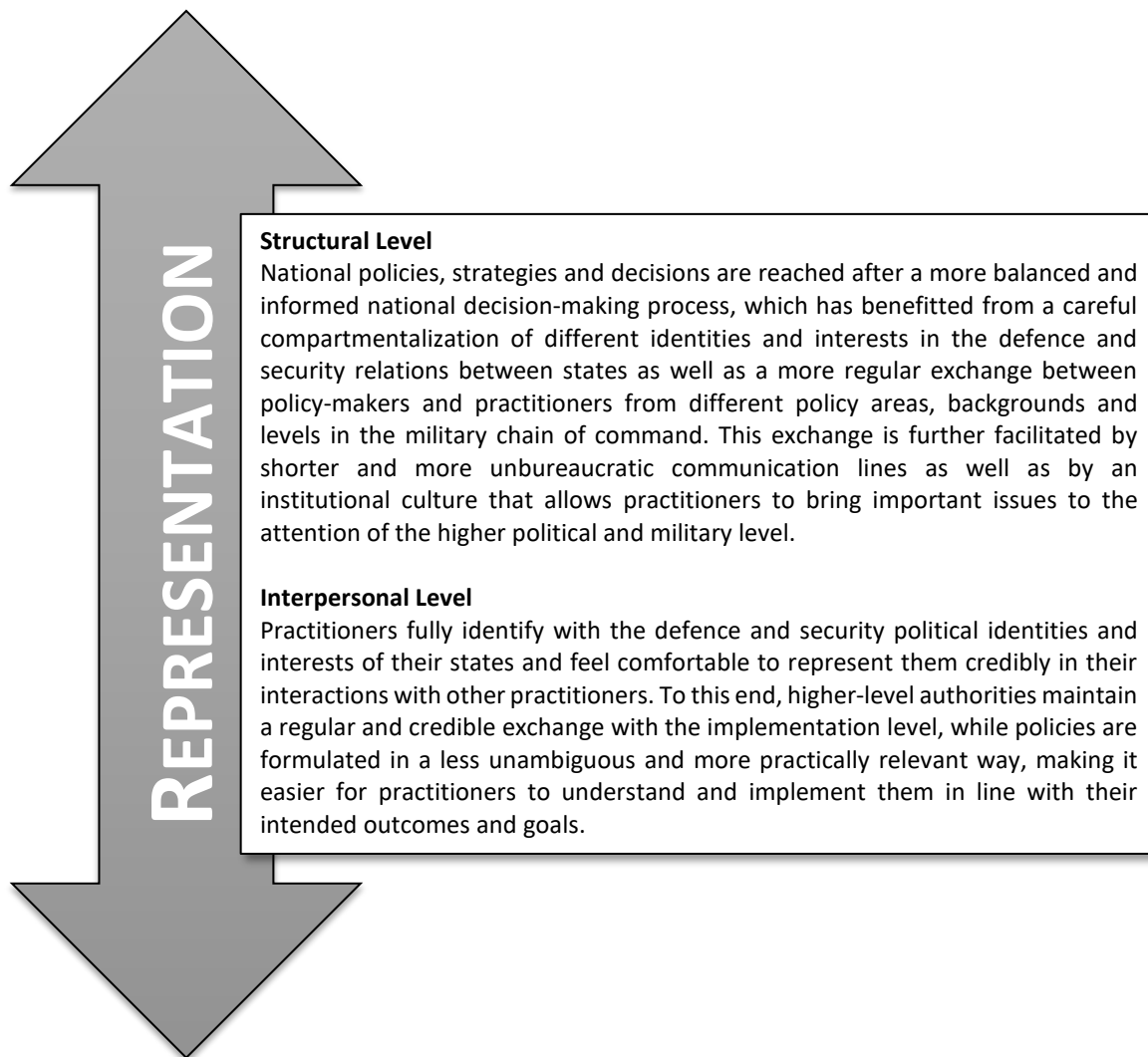


Figure 25. The representation of defence and security politics at the structural and interpersonal level.

## 7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the complex interplay between the structural and interpersonal levels of trust and distrust in defence and security politics and discussed the factors and conditions that either lead to a *top-down reproduction*, *bottom-up transformation* or *credible two-way representation* of the defence and security identities, interests, practices, and levels of trust at the structural and interpersonal level in defence and security politics. The goal of this concluding section is to relate these discussions back to our theoretical framework and to draw a number of conclusions regarding the communicating level of trust in defence and security politics.

First, the analysis of the interplay between the structural and interpersonal levels of trust has shown that political factors, above all the national identities and interests of states, play a central role for the formation of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. They are not only the key factors in determining the level of trust at the structural level of interstate relations, but also have a strong impact on the development and role of trust at the interpersonal level of defence and security practitioners (e.g. through the issuing of national policies, strategies, political guidelines etc.). They do not only decide upon the amount, type, frequency, and qualitative background conditions that determine the trust-building effect of various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts, but also define the level of attention and impact that experiences from these interactions might have on the overall levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. For example, national policies might actively promote deeper defence cooperation between countries that have compatible or collective identities or interests, while such cooperation might be restrained in the case of incompatible or even opposing identities and interests. As such, political factors and national decision-making processes help harmonizing the diverse interests and perceptions of actors at the national level and by helping to avoid that individual issues and negative experiences compromise strategic partnerships and vital defence and security policy interests and thereby contribute to more coherent and dependable levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. Yet, at the same time, this stabilizing function comes on the expense of constraining the impact of successful trust-building at the lower implementation level as well as the ability of states to respond more flexibly and adequately to changes in their security environment. In short, the stabilizing function of political facilitators and constraints often leads to a mere top-down reproduction of existing levels of trust in defence and security relations between states.

Secondly, the analysis of the various facilitators and constraints in defence and security politics has shown that this lack of adaptability in defence and security politics is less a problem of the inevitable need of harmonizing different interests, perspectives and experiences of national actors into a coherent national defence and security policy, but rather of the incredible complexity of national decision-making processes. Because of the sheer size and complexity of national bureaucracies, many states struggle to ensure a most balanced and informed national decision-making process that adequately reflects upon the interests, experiences, and expertise from a wide array of different actors, topics, and backgrounds in defence and security politics. These problems are only further amplified by a significant information overload as well as by considerable time and human resource constraints. Trying to manage these constraints, gatekeepers at the various levels in state bureaucracies usually limit the amount and complexity of information that eventually reaches the final decision-making process at a higher political or military level. However, this leads to the problem that decisions in defence and security politics are

sometimes reached under situations of imperfect information and without the sufficient inclusion of relevant military expertise. As such, national decision-making processes do not only simply reinforce existing hierarchy and power dynamics between the policy-making and the implementation level, but also regularly results in vaguer, sometimes even in ambiguous defence and security policies that do not match the operational or practical realities of practitioners on the ground. This not only makes it difficult to implement them in line with the intended goals and outcomes of the higher political and military level, but also hampers the successful socialization of practitioners with the defence and security political identities, interests, and practices of their states. Furthermore, since many gatekeepers filter inputs into national decision-making either consciously or subconsciously in accordance with the political or strategic priorities of their states, they often only further reaffirm existing convictions at the higher political or military level and contribute to a less adaptable reproduction of existing identities, interests, practices, and levels of trust in defence and security politics.

Thirdly, the analysis of personal facilitators and constraints in defence and security politics has shown that experience is a central enabling factor for practitioners to develop a deeper understanding and a wide array of different skillsets that allow them to better manoeuvre and eventually overcome the various political and institutional constraints in defence and security politics as well as to more effectively shape and influence decision-making at a higher political or military level. In this regard, it became also evident that the personal relationships and contacts that practitioners develop during their careers, both at the national as well as at the international level, play an important role. At the national level, they sometimes serve as institutional shortcuts that help to ease and expedite otherwise long and tedious bureaucratic processes or allow practitioners to be better informed and more actively involved in national decision-making. At the international level, they can likewise help in the communication and coordination with other states and sometimes even have a stabilizing effect in times of increased political tensions or crisis. Altogether, this contributes to a more balanced and informed national decision-making process as well as to a more nuanced understanding and credible representation of trust at the structural level in defence and security politics.

Fourthly, the analysis of the communicating level of trust in defence and security politics has shown that the probably most ideal interplay between the structural and interpersonal level of trust, is the right balance between a more dependable and coherent, but at the same time also more adaptable and balanced representation of defence and security policies at the structural and interpersonal level. In the course of this chapter, we have seen that a better flow of information and experiences between various actors and hierarchy levels at the national level as well as a more inclusive and credible national decision-making

process are important facilitators in this regard. In light of the previously discussed political and institutional constraints, this appears to be particularly true with regard to ensuring a more regular and credible exchange between higher-level decision-makers and subject-matter experts on the ground. Such a more regular and credible exchange helps reducing the often considerable information and knowledge gap between both levels and thereby contributes significantly to a more balanced, nuanced, and informed national decision-making process. A better inclusion of relevant subject-matter expertise into national decision-making, does not only increase the quality and adaptability of defence and security policies and strategies, but also contributes to a better understanding of higher-level decision-making processes among practitioners. This fosters a more successful socialization with the defence and security political identities, interests, and practices of their states and thereby contributes to a more reliable representation of existing levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. In other words, a more regular and credible exchange between higher-level authorities and practitioners on the ground is the key to a credible two-way representation of the defence and security identities, interests and practices at the structural and interpersonal level of trust in defence and security politics. While smaller countries and institutions, in this regard benefit from shorter and less bureaucratic command structures and lines of communication, larger institutions need to find other ways for ensuring a better involvement of relevant subject-matter expertise into national decision-making processes, a more regular and credible exchange between higher-level authorities and practitioners at the implementation level as well as a better flow of information and experiences at the national level.

Finally, beyond a better *vertical* flow of information and experiences between policy-makers and subject-matter experts on the ground, a better and more credible *horizontal* flow of information and experiences at the national level is likewise important for a better dissemination of knowledge, information and notions of trust and distrust from different policy areas, actors, regional and political contexts in defence and security politics. This seems particularly important with regard to the impact of the interpersonal notions of trust on the wider defence and security relations between states. Since many of the measures and forms of cooperation that contribute to the formation of trust at the interpersonal level (see 6) are often limited to a small group of practitioners (e.g. arms control units or exercise planners), it is important that their trust-building effects are shared and disseminated across a wider spectrum of actors and different hierarchy levels in defence and security politics. Besides a better *horizontal* flow of information and coordination or a better involvement of different actors and hierarchy levels, the regular rotation of military personnel was a central theme during my interviews and was seen as both, a curse and a blessing for a better dissemination of experiences, knowledge and trust at the national level in defence and security politics. On the one hand, practitioners underlined that the regular

rotation of personnel often contradicts with the considerable time it sometimes takes to develop an adequate level of expertise as well as to establish and maintain the necessary personal relations that are so central in the formation of trust between defence and security practitioners. At the same time, practitioners underlined the risk of such positive experiences and notions of trust remaining limited to a very small group of specific subject-matter experts (e.g. arms control officers), highlighting the need for a more regular rotation of defence and security practitioners. Therefore, as also a Norwegian military advisor underlined:

You need both. You need people that rotate on a three to four-year basis, as the normal, but you also need somebody who keeps an eye on [certain] issues over time. Not necessarily from the same position, you might change your position, but you got to relate to the [same area of expertise, because that is what gives you an insight over time and it gives weight to your voice (Senior Advisor, FOH, 2019).

In sum, the analysis of the communicating level of trust has shown that states are confronted with numerous challenges and constraints that make it particularly difficult to find the right balance between a more coherent and dependable, but at the same time also a more adaptable and nuanced level of trust in their defence and security relations. While many of the political and institutional constraints can be understood as an attempt to manage and harmonize the broad spectrum of different actors and interests into a coherent and consistent national defence and security policy, they also considerably reduce the ability of governments to adequately react to changes in their security environment and to develop more balanced and adaptable defence and security relations. In addition, a less inclusive and balanced national decision-making process often also results in more ambiguous and incomplete policies, which make it more difficult for practitioners to implement them in line with the desired goals and outcomes of the higher political and military level. In addition, they also undermine the successful socialization of practitioners with the defence and security political identities, interests, and practices of their states, leading to their less credible and reliable representation in the interaction with practitioners from other states. To address these issues, it is important that policy-makers maintain a regular and credible exchange with practitioners at the implementation level and to this end develop mechanisms that include subject-matter experts better into national decision-making. In addition, states need to seek ways that contribute to a better understanding among practitioners of higher political and military goals and considerations and to ensure a better flow of information and experiences across different hierarchy levels and national actors in defence and security politics. Altogether, these steps facilitate a more credible two-way representation of identities, interests, practices, and trust at the structural and interpersonal level in defence and security politics.

## **8 Summary & Conclusions**

Trust and distrust have always played an important role in the studying of international relations. Realist scholars have depicted the absence of trust as the key element of the anarchical structure of world politics, while liberalists have identified trust as a key element in overcoming the security dilemma and for establishing a rules-based international order. However, despite its prominent role, for many years, trust remained a largely neglected and undertheorized analytical concept of its own. This thesis set out to contribute to a better conceptual understanding of trust and distrust in international relations as well as to shed more light on the mechanisms, processes, and conditions that lead to its loss and to its formation. To this end, this thesis combined previous conceptual approaches of trust in international relations and social psychology and conducted an in-depth multi-level analysis of the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia. It has not claimed to be able to grasp the complexities and different dynamics of trust and distrust in their entirety. Rather, by introducing new theoretical ideas and with its comprehensive analysis of the structural, interpersonal, and communicating levels in defence and security politics, this thesis has contributed to a more complex and nuanced understanding of trust and distrust in international relations, making important contributions to the theoretical, empirical and policy debates surrounding this so important and central phenomenon in international relations.

In the further course of this final chapter, I would like to briefly summarize and reflect upon some of these contributions; discuss some of the limitations of this thesis, point to interesting avenues for further research, and conclude with a number of policy implications and recommendations.

### **8.1 Trust and Distrust in Defence and Security Politics**

At the structural level, this thesis looked at the roles of national identities, interests, and security practices in the formation of trust and distrust in international relations. It showed that trust and distrust at the structural level are largely the outcome of a constant interplay between the moralistic, strategic, and practice layer of trust in international relations. We have seen that all three layers are generally capable of contributing to more trustful defence and security relations between states, but we have also seen that they differ in how quickly and easily trust is established as well as in how durable the levels of trust subsequently are. On the one hand, relations that form around compatible or collective interests generally lead more quickly to deeper levels of trust as they more easily allow for more substantial forms of cooperation. However, we have also seen that, since state interests are more regularly subject to

changes and adaptations, strategic trust is often also less durable. Moralistic forms of trust that form around common identities, on the other hand, are generally much more difficult and lengthy to establish as they often struggle to identify goals of common interest that would lead to more substantial forms of cooperation. However, once established, moralistic trust is also more durable and less likely subject to radical changes, not least because diminishing identities are much more easily reassured than a decline in common interest that removes the foundation for more substantial forms of cooperation. As a consequence, we have seen that the most durable and far-reaching levels of trust in the relations between states are those that form around all three layers of trust – moralistic, strategic, and practice – at the same time, while those that form only around one are much more prone to sudden changes. For example, this problem could be observed in the rapid deterioration of trust between Western states and Russia since 2014, when the Russian annexation of Crimea and the beginning of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine suddenly laid open the still largely incompatible and opposing identities and interests that had prevailed between Russia and West since the end of the Cold War. Seemingly aware of the strong interconnectedness of the different layers of trust, governments often try to consolidate their compatible and collective interests by the construction of common identities (e.g. Nordic, Arctic, Barents) and by engaging in initiatives that allow them to pursue their interests more collectively, for example, through the formation of political organizations, formats or military alliances (e.g. the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, NORDEF, NATO, etc.). However, the analysis of this thesis has shown that such steps usually require at least a minimum level of compatible (ideally even collective) interests, as states otherwise struggle to identify areas for meaningful collective action and instead end up in a less reliable cycle of more symbolic steps of reassurance. For many years, this problem could not only be observed in the defence and security relations between Norway and Sweden under the umbrella of NORDEF, but even among the NATO allies Norway and Canada, both of which until recently lacked a more substantial common interest and focal area in their defence and security relations. A gap that has since 2014 been filled by a common interest in deterring potential Russian military aggression against their territories and allied countries.

Identities, interests, and security practices can generally be seen as having a mutually reinforcing and stabilizing effect and serve as useful indicators for assessing the current levels of trust in the relations between states. However, we have also seen that state relations are hardly ever defined by only one type or set of identities, interests, or security practices; and that they are in fact fluent, tend to overlap, and sometimes even substantially differ across policy areas, regions and political settings. In other words, traditional structural approaches do not suffice in providing us with a complete picture of the complexities, different dynamics, and nuances of trust and distrust in international relations. The

differences and overlaps in identities, interests, and practices make it not only analytically more difficult to identify the current state of trust and distrust in the relations between states, but are sometimes even actively sought-after by governments in an attempt to balance and stabilize their relations. This can, in particular, be observed in situations of increasing tensions, uncertainty, and distrust. This has been highlighted by the upholding of cooperation between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia on non-military security issues in the Arctic (e.g. Search and Rescue, Coast Guard cooperation), despite increased political and military tensions over the crisis in and around Ukraine. However, we have also seen that the success of such a strategy, and its impact on the overall level of trust in defence and security relations between states, largely depends on how central and important the respective policy areas and settings, both regional and political, are within both countries' overall defence and security politics.

Finally, the impact of the Ukrainian crisis on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia has also shown how highly disruptive events, such as the breach of common principles and norms, can have a strong and lasting negative effect on the defence and security relations between states, as they require states to assess carefully the risks and dangers emerging from this new situation. Since this is a difficult and time-consuming process that is marked by high levels of uncertainty, states often intuitively react by trying to deter any potential threats to their own identities and interests, seek reassurance by allies and partners, and put nearly their entire relations with the deviating state on hold. Such a freeze of cooperation often also affects regions and policy areas of compatible and common interest and stops the process of (re-)evaluation and social learning, which is so important for the formation of trust. The negative consequences of severe breaches of trust are often particularly far-reaching and long lasting. Having been put back to a stage of generalized distrust and still under the impression of the more recent negative experiences, both sides will only slowly reengage each other on carefully selected issues of common interest. This also explains why the restoration of trust is often particularly difficult and time-consuming.

## **8.2 Successful Trust-Building on the Ground**

The analysis at the structural level has shown that traditional theories of IR are insufficient and that a much more complex, nuanced and multi-level approach to the study of trust and distrust in international relations is required. As the second analytical chapter of this thesis has shown, such a more complex and nuanced understanding also requires a better understanding of the interpersonal level of trust in defence and security politics. This is particularly important, considering that the cooperation and interaction between practitioners at the implementation level appears to be much less immediately



affected by tensions at a higher political and military level. In fact, practitioners highlighted that they felt that the most trust-building forms of interaction and cooperation were those that put difficult political questions aside and allowed them to focus on a clear and limited practical military task. A particularly positive example that many highlighted in this regard was the treaty on Open Skies. While formal meetings in Vienna are regularly blocked and politicized by disputes and political tensions among treaty states, the joint observation flights that are conducted in close cooperation between members of the different air forces were described as taking place largely in a friendly, relaxed, and positive atmosphere. While often overlooked or sometimes even actively thrust aside by scholars and policy-makers, it is these differences between the political and the implementation level in which the key to a more thorough and nuanced understanding of trust in international relations is to be found.

The analysis at the interpersonal level has shown that measures that bring together practitioners from the same military branches (army, air force, navy), the same level of command (tactical, operational or strategic) or a similar regional or operational environment appear generally more capable of contributing to increased levels of trust among practitioners. This is because they make it easier to formulate common goals, to engage in more substantive forms of cooperation, and to relate personally to each other. In this regard, those measures, which appear particularly qualified to lead to increased levels of trust among practitioners (e.g. joint trainings, exercises, or operations), are usually only conducted between states that already enjoy high levels of mutual trust in their relations. In other words, they are primarily a form of collective action or sign of reassurance, as opposed to a tool for building trust between political or military opponents. At the same time, we have seen that even though measures that states implement to build trust with political (and military) opponents (e.g. arms control, CSBM, incident prevention mechanisms) likewise lead to increased levels of trust at the implementation level, their trust-building effects are confined to a very small group of subject-matter experts, limiting their impact on the overall levels of trust in defence and security relations between states.

Altogether, we can conclude that while military interactions, contacts, and cooperation indeed lead to higher levels of trust at the interpersonal level, they are often conducted between practitioners whose countries already enjoy considerable levels of trust in their relations or their trust-building effect is achieved only within a very small group of subject-matter experts. Therefore, since many of the more severe political and military tensions between states are often to be found at a higher political or military level, many measures struggle to contribute to increased levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states. In other words, most measures target, involve, or affect the wrong actors,

hierarchy levels, or policy areas, preventing them from having a more meaningful impact on the overall levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states.

### **8.3 Developing Deeper and More Stable Levels of Trust in Defence and Security Politics**

The analysis of the structural and interpersonal levels of trust in defence and security politics has shown that the relations between states are in reality hardly ever defined by only one type or level of trust, but usually offer us a much messier picture of supporting, competing, and sometimes even contradicting identities, interests, and security practices. These differences and overlaps across policy areas, regions and political settings, make it analytically difficult to simply pin down the current state of trust in the relations between states. This is the result of the fact that the identities, interests and practices of states are – other than often depicted by traditional IR scholars – not simply written in stone nor are they the inherent feature of uniform actors in an anarchical international system. In fact, they are constantly reproduced or transformed in an extensive and continuous negotiation and coordination process at the national level. While this complex interplay does not always lend itself easily to empirical investigation, developing a better understanding of the internal structures, processes, and power dynamics of national decision-making and assessing its effects on the overall level of trust in defence and security politics provides us with a more complex and nuanced understanding of trust and distrust in international relations. Additionally, it provides highly relevant and useful insights regarding the difficult question of how states might be able to develop not only deeper, but also more reliable, levels of trust in their relations.

From the analysis of the communicating level of trust in defence and security politics, we could see that this negotiation and coordination process at the national level is to a large extent driven and determined by political factors, most importantly by the wish and need of governments to harmonize the different identities, interests, and policy preferences of various national actors into a coherent and consistent national foreign policy (e.g. through strict hierarchies or the issuing of policies and political guidelines). Ideally, this process helps governments to stabilize existing partnerships and relations with other states, avoids that individual issues and experiences compromise strategic partnerships and vital defence and security policy interests, and overall contributes to more stable and dependable levels of trust in their defence and security relations. However, despite various institutional procedures and arrangements (e.g. regular coordination meetings, involvement in policy development or policy advisors), decisions at the national level are regularly reached without a diligent weighing of the different inputs and experiences

from practitioners at various levels in defence and security politics. Rather, decisions are made in situations of incomplete information (e.g. because of time constraints, information overload, rotation of personnel, or internal power dynamics between different actors) that often lead to a mere reproduction of existing perceptions, identities, interests, practices, and consequently levels of trust in state-to-state relations. This problem becomes particularly evident in situations that challenge established beliefs and mindsets in certain regions or policy areas. In these situations, states frequently struggle to find more balanced or nuanced responses, but instead usually submit their entire relations to a long and difficult process of re-evaluation that also impedes on functioning cooperation and established levels of trust in other regional settings and policy areas. To address this problem, it is important that governments find credible ways to formulate their national policies on the basis of a more transparent and inclusive national decision-making process that credibly takes into account the identities, interests, and experiences from a broad scope of different national actors, policy areas, regions and political settings (e.g. through regular coordination meetings or more direct lines of communication between the policy-making and implementation level). As we have seen, this not only results in a better harmonization of the different identities, interests, and policy preferences at the national level, but also contributes to the issuing of less ambiguous and more practically relevant defence and security policies that make it easier for practitioners to implement them in line with the desired outcomes of higher-level authorities. In other words, the analysis at the communicating level of trust has shown that a more inclusive and transparent decision-making process at the national level facilitates a more credible representation of national identities, interests, and practices at the structural and interpersonal level, thereby contributing to more thorough, stable, and reliable levels of trust in the defence and security relations between states.

## **8.4 Limitations and Areas for Further Research**

The goal of this thesis has been to develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the role of trust and distrust in international relations. However, in order to be able to explore in depth the phenomenon of trust and distrust across the structural, interpersonal, and communicating level in international relations, it was necessary to reduce the empirical scope and to focus on a few selected influential cases in the analytical part of this doctoral thesis. While the analysis of this thesis has provided us with valuable insights into some of the complexities of trust and distrust in international relations, its necessarily narrow empirical focus on the defence and security relations between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia, surely limits the possibility of drawing more general conclusions. For example, it became evident that further research regarding the bilateral defence and security relations of all four countries with the United States, or the close bilateral defence cooperation between Sweden and Finland,

would be desirable. Yet, even more importantly, in order to be able to draw more general conclusions about the role of trust and distrust in international relations, additional interviews would be required to account for the small number and potential biases of my respondents. In addition, further research is needed on the role of trust and distrust in other policy areas (e.g. economics, culture, environmental issues, etc.), regional (e.g. Africa, Asia, Latin America) and institutional settings (e.g. in the United Nations or the European Union). For example, it would be interesting to explore the role of trust and distrust between different military and non-military actors in multinational peacekeeping operations and how different levels of trust affect the efficiency and intended outcomes of these missions. In addition, it would also be interesting to take a closer look at the national level and to explore, for example, how trust and distrust between different national actors (e.g. politicians, government agencies, businesses, civil society, citizens, etc.) affect the resilience and responses of states to disinformation campaigns and other sorts of 'hybrid' or 'grey-zone'-attacks.

Another obvious limitation, which was already discussed at length in the methodological section of this thesis (see 4.1.2), was the inability of reaching out to Russian defence and security practitioners. While this shortcoming could be accounted for with regard to Russia's defence and security relations with Norway, Sweden, and Canada by conducting a thorough document analysis and focus group discussion with defence attachés in Moscow, the perspectives and experiences of Russian militaries could unfortunately not be included into my analysis of trust and distrust at the interpersonal and communicating levels of trust, a shortcoming that I hope to be able to address in the future. This is also true with regard to the possibility of conducting a participant observation of different forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts in order to gain a better picture of some of the less easily verbalized social and personal factors in the interaction between military practitioners from different countries. In other words, it would be interesting not to only talk about, but also to observe, trusting and distrustful defence and security relations between states.

With regard to the trust-building effects of different forms of military cooperation and interaction, several additional areas for potential future research emerged during my study. The most obvious is to analyse additional forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts, but also to look at other factors that seemingly affect the formation of trust and distrust in defence and security politics. For example, given my sample of practitioners – mainly senior male military officers – it would not only be interesting to look at differences in military culture and style of leadership between countries, but also to more thoroughly investigate the role of professional experience, gender, and age in the formation of trust at the interpersonal level and explore the extent to which these factors influence the

ability of practitioners to affect national decision-making processes. Another interesting factor, that practitioners frequently referred to, is the role of interpreters in the interaction with practitioners from other countries, which they described as not only helping them to overcome potential language barriers, but which also provided them with useful information and important social and cultural cues regarding the backgrounds of their counterparts. Similar interesting points of departure for future research would be the ability of practitioners to speak multiple languages as well as investigating the differences between face-to-face encounters and digital forms of communication (e.g. through E-Mail or video conferences).

## 8.5 Policy Implications

About six years after the beginning of the crisis in and around Ukraine, Western-Russian relations are still largely dominated by deep levels of mutual distrust and mutual deterrence postures. While the findings of this thesis are certainly not able to resolve the deep political impasse that Russia and the West have found themselves in now for many years, some of its findings might still provide useful insights and interesting food-for-thought for policy debates on Western-Russian defence and security relations, in particular regarding the future of arms control and military confidence-building in Europe.

First, the findings of this thesis suggest that governments should focus on how to enhance the trust-building effects of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBM) on the ground. From the analysis of various forms of military cooperation and military-to-military contacts, we have learned that measures that focus on a clear and limited military task, and that foster high levels of interdependence and cooperation between practitioners coming from the same military branches, level of command, or from a similar regional or operational environment, are generally more successful in facilitating interpersonal trust between practitioners (see 6.5). This became evident in the conducting of joint observation flights under the treaty on Open Skies and also in the implementation of more technical incident prevention mechanisms. In addition, we have seen that governments should put more emphasis on multilateral verification or monitoring teams, which likewise showed a high trust-building potential among members of these teams. Furthermore, political discussions should identify ways through which arms control and CSBM can be strengthened with regard to their capacity of *deconflicting* distrustful relations, rather than merely *reassuring* already existing levels of trust and distrust between states. This problem is regularly reflected in arguments declaring arms control and CSBM as mere *fair-weather instruments*. To address this problem, it is important that arms control and CSBM are more clearly targeted to the political and strategic incompatibilities that define the core of distrust in the defence and

security relations between states as well as to focus more on steps, measures, and commitments that reduce the level and scope for interpretation, for example, through more rigorous and less ambiguous forms of monitoring and verification.

Second, beyond the improvement of the trust-building effects of arms control and CSBM on the ground, the analysis of this thesis has shown that governments also need to work on increasing the impact and effect of military confidence-building at the national level in defence and security politics. While generally effective, many measures only reach their intended trust-building effect within a very small and confined group of practitioners, mainly between the members of the arms control units of different countries (see 6.5). This rather limited trust-building effect at the national level is further constrained by the fact that arms control officers are usually highly specialized subject-matter experts, who stay much longer in their respective positions than most military officers usually do. While this is surely owed to the complex, difficult, and technical nature of many arms control agreements, and while it surely helps in developing more serious personal relations on the ground, it clearly impedes on a wider trust-building effect of CSBM at the national level. Thus, in order to find a good balance between a regular rotation and a credible level of knowledge and expertise, it could be worthwhile to consider rotating (at least some) arms control officers on a longer rotation cycle (e.g. five to ten years), ideally between the implementation, conceptual, and political/ministerial level. Another way would be a more regular inclusion of officers from other parts of the armed forces or desk officers from the ministries of defence or foreign affairs into inspection and observation teams. While some countries – mainly for reasons of limited personnel – already rely on a system of part-timers, such a system could also be used more purposefully to spread the trust-building effects of arms control and CSBM across different actors in defence and security politics.

Third, and closely related to the previous point, we have seen that many measures that contribute to increased levels of trust among practitioners are not only confined to a very small group of experts, but also often only play a tangential role in defence and security politics (see Appendix 2). On the whole, it is valuable to maintain and appreciate well-functioning cooperation in smaller policy areas, such as within the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, in times of increased political and military tensions. However, such cooperation will not be able to address or overcome the current tensions and dividing lines at the higher political and military level (e.g. Russia's annexation of Crimea and support for separatist groups in Eastern Ukraine, NATO's enlargement to the East, ballistic missile defence, conventional and nuclear arms control, etc.) (see 5). In other words, it is important that governments acknowledge that the roots of the current levels of distrust in Western-Russian relations run much more deeply and that existing

trust-building measures are often targeting the wrong actors, hierarchy levels, and issues in defence and security politics. Therefore, it is important that existing measures are complemented by more trust-building efforts at a higher political and military level. This does not imply that both sides simply resume normal relations with each other (or as some might call it ‘to return to business as usual’), but to create venues and opportunities that allow for a frank and open exchange about some of the most central underlying sources of tension in the relations between both sides. To be effective, this exchange needs to take place more immediately at a higher political and military level, without a seemingly far less influential and effective detour through practitioners at the implementation level. Good examples of such steps are the recently resumed high-level meetings between the Norwegian and Russian Ministry of Defence or the establishment of direct channels for communication at the strategic level between Russia and Norway (see 5.2.4 and 5.5.2) as well as between Russia and Sweden (see 5.3.4 and 5.5.3). In addition, other venues, such as the OSCE Structured Dialogue or the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar of the Vienna Document, could be more purposefully utilised in this regard.

Finally, and relatively detached from the previous points, the findings of this thesis have highlighted the importance of better inclusion of practitioners and subject-matter experts into national decision-making processes as well as an institutional culture that not only allows, but actively encourages practitioners to bring important issues to the attention of decision-makers at a higher political and military level (e.g. through regular coordination meetings, direct lines of communication, etc.) (see 7.4). This contributes to more transparent, plausible, less ambiguous and, more practically relevant defence and security policy decisions that make it easier for practitioners to implement, in line with the intended outcomes and goals of the higher political and military level. In other words, it does not only lead to better policy decisions, but also enhances the quality and reliability of their implementation (see 7.4).

# Appendix

## Appendix 1 – Interview Guide

---

### Section A. Understanding the Job, International Co-operation and Professional Contacts

---

#### 1. Can you explain me your job/current position?

- What are your main tasks? Daily Routines?
- What are currently the main priorities of your unit?
- What is the regional/geographic focus of your work?

Arctic  Europe  Northern Europe  Northern America  Other

#### Additional Notes:

- How and where does interaction and communication take place with people from:
  - Your own team/unit?
  - Other units of the armed forces?
  - Policy-Makers?
  - Members of other armed forces or international organizations?

#### 2. How do you view your job's/position's role in security policymaking?

- On a national level? International level?
- What do you think is the impact of your work on policy-/decision-making on the military level? The political level?
- How do you think others perceive your work or position?

#### 3. Are you working together with members of other armed forces?

##### If 'Yes':

- How long already? How frequently and can you tell me from which states mainly?
- How does this cooperation look like in practice? Examples?
- What are the biggest opportunities or challenges of this cooperation?
- Does it feel similar or different from working with members of your own armed forces? Can you describe how and why?
- Are there also more social venues for you to interact outside your job? Examples?
- Can you think of examples how to strengthen this cooperation further?

##### If 'No':

- Do you think it would make a difference for your work?
- Do you have other venues (e.g. social events) for interacting with members of other armed forces?



---

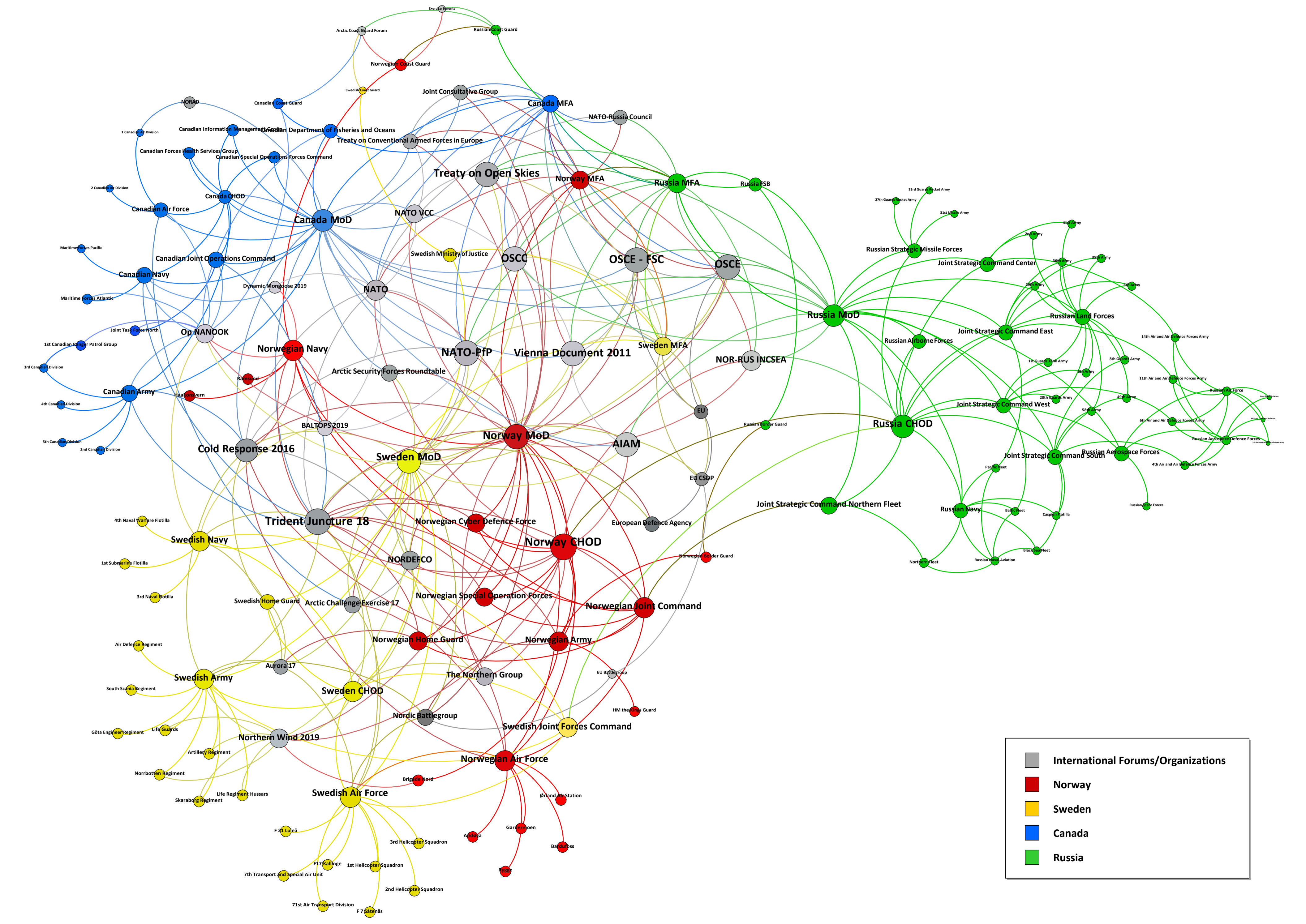
**Section B. Security Perceptions and Possible Responses**

---

- 1. How do you view the current security situation in (depending on own regional focus):**
  - the Arctic
  - Europe
  - Northern Europe
  - Northern America
  - Other?
  
- 2. How can the situation be maintained OR improved?**
  - What are the most important venues/fora/means to do so?
  
- 3. What do you anticipate as the main challenges to security in your region in:**
  - the next years?
  - 30 years from now?
  - 50 years from now?
  
- 4. How can these challenges be addressed?**
  - What are the most important venues/fora/means to do so?

## **Appendix 2 – Defence Cooperation and Contacts between Norway, Sweden, Canada, and Russia**

See next page.



<span style="color: grey;">■</span>	International Forums/Organizations
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	Norway
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	Sweden
<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	Canada
<span style="color: green;">■</span>	Russia

## References

- Abdelal, R., Herrera, Y. M., Johnston, A. I., & McDermott, R. (2006). Identity as a Variable. *Perspectives on Politics*, 4(4), 695–711. doi:10.1017/S1537592706060440
- Aberese-Ako, M. (2017). ‘I won’t take part!’: Exploring the multiple identities of the ethnographer in two Ghanaian hospitals. *Ethnography*, 18(3), 300–321. doi:10.1177/1466138116673380
- Adler, E., & Barnett, M. N. (1998a). A framework for the study of security communities. In E. Adler & M. N. Barnett (Eds.), *Cambridge studies in international relations: Vol. 62. Security communities* (pp. 29–65). Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Adler, E., & Barnett, M. N. (Eds.). (1998b). *Cambridge studies in international relations: Vol. 62. Security communities*. Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Adler, E., & Greve, P. (2009). When security community meets balance of power: overlapping regional mechanisms of security governance. *Review of International Studies*, 35, 59–84. doi:10.1017/S0260210509008432
- Adler, P. A., & Adler, P. (2001). The Reluctant Respondent. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research. Context & method* (pp. 515–531). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.
- Aftenposten (2018, October 26). Russlands ambassade: NATO-øvelsen i Norge er av antirussisk karakter: NTB. Retrieved from <https://www.aftenposten.no/norge/i/e1gvzR/Russlands-ambassade-NATO-ovelsen-i-Norge-er-av-antirussisk-karakter>
- Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM). (2019). *SNMG 1 Steams into Dynamic Mongoose 2019*. Retrieved from <https://mc.nato.int/media-centre/news/2019/snmg-1-steams-into-dynamic-mongoose-2019.aspx>
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Blackwell.
- Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF). (2019). *Live Exercise Polaris 2019*.
- Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF). *ACGF - The Arctic Coast Guard Forum*. Retrieved from <https://www.arcticcoastguardforum.com/>

- Arctic Portal. (2011). *Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement*. Retrieved from <https://arcticportal.org/yar-features/421-arctic-search-and-rescue-agreement>
- Åselius, G. (1994). *The "Russian Menace" to Sweden. The belief system of a small power security elite in the Age of Imperialism* (Doctoral Dissertation). Stockholm University, Stockholm.
- Ask, A. O. (2017, December 16). Utenriksministeren dropper forgjengerens prestisjeprosjekt: Norge vil ikke lede OSSE. *Aftenposten*. Retrieved from <https://www.aftenposten.no/norge/politikk/i/Xw8Qqn/Soreide-dropper-Brendes-prestisjeprosjekt-Norge-vil-ikke-lede-OSSE>
- Åtland, K. (2008). Mikhail Gorbachev, the Murmansk Initiative, and the Desecuritization of Interstate Relations in the Arctic. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 43(3), 289–311. doi:10.1177/0010836708092838
- Åtland, K. (2011). Russia's Armed Forces and the Arctic: All Quiet on the Northern Front? *Contemporary Security Policy*, 32(2), 267–285. doi:10.1080/13523260.2011.590354
- Avtale mellom Norge og Russland om samarbeid ved ettersøking av savnede og redning av nødstedte mennesker i Barentshavet (Kongeriket Norges Regjering; Regjeringen i Den Russiske Føderasjon 04.10.1995).
- Baert, P. (2007). *Philosophy of the social sciences: Towards pragmatism*. Cambridge, UK, Malden, MA: Polity.
- Baev, P. K. (2015). *Russia's Arctic illusions*. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/08/27/russias-arctic-illusions/>
- Baev, P. K. (2018). Russia's Ambivalent Status-Quo/Revisionist Policies in the Arctic. *Arctic Review on Law and Politics*, 9(0), 408. doi:10.23865/arctic.v9.1336
- Bakke-Jensen, F., Frederiksen, C. H., Hultqvist, P., Niinistö, J., & Thór Thórdarson, G. (2018). *Defending the Nordic neighbourhood*. Oslo. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/defending-the-nordic-neighbourhood/id2617168/>
- Barnaby, F. (1975). *The nuclear age*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

- Barnett, M. N., & Adler, E. (1998). Studying security communities in theory, comparison, and history. In E. Adler & M. N. Barnett (Eds.), *Cambridge studies in international relations: Vol. 62. Security communities* (pp. 413–441). Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bassin, M. (2006). Geographies of imperial identity. In D. Lieven (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of Russia. Vol. 2: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917* (pp. 45–64). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bastian, M., Heymann, S., & Jacomy, M. (Eds.) 2009. *Gephi : An Open Source Software for Exploring and Manipulating Networks*.
- Becker, L. C. (1996). Trust as Noncognitive Security about Motives. *Ethics*, 107(1), 43–61.
- Bell, A., & Wier, A. (2019). Open Skies Treaty: A Quiet Legacy Under Threat. *Arms Control Today*, 49.
- Bell, C. (1969). A Note on Participant Observation. *Sociology*, 3(3), 417–418.
- Bellamy, A. (2014). *Security communities and their neighbours: Regional fortresses or global integrators?*: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bengtsson, T. (2019, April 9). Inga upplösta knutar när Löfven mötte Putin: Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå. Retrieved from <https://www.mvt.se/nyheter/inga-upplosta-knutar-nar-lofven-motte-putin-om5976829.aspx>
- Benton, T., & Craib, I. (2011). *Philosophy of social science: The philosophical foundations of social thought* (2. ed.). *Traditions in social theory*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bentzrød, S. B. (2015, March 17). Både Russland og Norge viser styrke i nord. *Aftenposten*. Retrieved from <https://www.aftenposten.no/norge/i/O9RA/Bade-Russland-og-Norge-viser-styrke-i-nord>
- Bentzrød, S. B. (2018, April 10). Russland presser frem tett nordisk forsvarssamarbeid: De nordiske landene kjenner presset fra Russland. Det endrer nå forsvarssamarbeidet fra festtaler til reelt militært samarbeid. *Aftenposten*. Retrieved from <https://www.aftenposten.no/norge/i/J1qB1R/Russland-presser-frem-tett-nordisk-forsvarssamarbeid>
- Bercuson, D. J. (2018). *The Context of Canadian Defence Policy* (Policy Update). Calgary.
- Berg, R. (2016). *Norsk utanrikspolitikk etter 1814*. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.

- Bergh, K. (2012). *The Arctic policies of Canada and the United States: Domestic motives and international context* (SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security No. 2012/1). Stockholm.
- Bergh, K., & Klimenko, E. (2016). Understanding national approaches to security in the Arctic. In L. Jakobson & N. Melvin (Eds.), *SIPRI Research Report: no. 25. The new Arctic governance* (pp. 41–75). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bergman Rosamond, A. (2011). *Perspectives on security in the Arctic area* (DIIS Report No. 9). Copenhagen. Retrieved from <http://www.diis.dk/sw111547.asp>
- Berryman, J. (2017). Russia and the European Security Order: Impact and Implications of the Ukraine Crisis. In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment* (pp. 167–188). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Bertram, C. (1976). European Arms Control. In N. Andren & K. E. Birnbaum (Eds.), *East-West perspectives: Vol. 3. Beyond detente. Prospects for east-west co-operation and security in Europe* (pp. 123–137). Leyden: Sijthoff.
- Bhaskar, R. (1993). *Reclaiming reality: A critical introduction to contemporary philosophy* (Repr.). London: Verso.
- Bhaskar, R. (2008). *A realist theory of science. Classical texts in critical realism*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group (Original work published 1975).
- Bilgic, A. (2010). Security through trust - building in the Euro - Mediterranean cooperation: two perspectives for the partnership. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 10(4), 457–473. doi:10.1080/14683857.2010.529994
- Bjola, C., & Kornprobst, M. (2007). Security communities and the habitus of restraint: Germany and the United States on Iraq. *Review of International Studies*, 33(2), 285–305. doi:10.1017/S0260210507007516
- Blunden, M. (2012). Geopolitics and the Northern Sea Route. *International Affairs*, 88(1), 115–129. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2012.01060.x



- Bones, S. (2012). Renegotiating Neighbourliness: the Stoltenberg-Kozyrev connection. In K. A. Myklebost & S. Bones (Eds.), *Caution & Compliance. Norwegian-Russian Diplomatic Relations : 1814-2014* (pp. 185–195). Stamsund: Orkana akademisk.
- Booth, K., & Wheeler, N. J. (2010). *The security dilemma: Fear, cooperation, and trust in world politics* (3rd print). Houndmills [u.a.]: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Borawski, J. (1986). Confidence-Building Measures: Rescuing Arms Control. *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, 10(1), 111–131.
- Borgatti, S. P., & Halgin, D. S. (2011). Analyzing Affiliation Networks. In J. Scott & P. J. Carrington (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis* (1st ed., pp. 417–433). London: SAGE.
- Børresen, J. (2011). Alliance Naval Strategies and Norway in the Final Years of the Cold War. *Naval War College Review*, 64(2), 97–116.
- Bothwell, R. (2009). Foreign Affairs a Hundred Years On. In R. Bothwell & J. Daudelin (Eds.), *Canada Among Nations 2008. 100 years of Canadian Foreign Policy* (Vol. 2008, pp. 19–37). Montreal Que.: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice. Cambridge studies in social and cultural anthropology: Vol. 16*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511812507>
- Bremberg, N. (2015). The European Union as Security Community-Building Institution: Venues, Networks and Co-operative Security Practices. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 53(3), 674–692. doi:10.1111/jcms.12219
- Brundtland, A. O. (1995). Den norske sikkerhetspolitiske debatt: Fra strategisk trussel til uspesifisert risiko. In I. B. Neumann (Ed.), *NUPI Utenrikspolitisk serie. Ny giv for nordisk samarbeid? Norsk, svensk og finsk sikkerhetspolitikk før og etter EUs nordlige utvidelse* (pp. 131–170). Oslo: TANO.
- Bryman, A. (2015). *Social Research Methods* (5th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bucharest Summit Declaration (North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) 03.04.2008).



- Buch-Hansen, H. (2014). Social Network Analysis and Critical Realism. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 44(3), 306–325. doi:10.1111/jtsb.12044
- Bull, H. (1961). *The control of the arms race: Disarmament and arms control in the missile age. Studies in international security: Vol. 2*. New York: Praeger.
- Burnham, P., Gilland, K., Grant, W., & Layton-Henry, Z. (2006). *Research methods in politics* ([Nachdr.]). *Political analysis*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave.
- Bushkovitch, P. (2006). Peter the Great and the Northern War. In D. Lieven (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of Russia. Vol. 2: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917* (pp. 489–503). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework (Government of Canada 2019).
- Canada's Northern Strategy - Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future (Government of Canada 2009).
- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). (2013). *Canada's Chief of the Defence Staff Attends Second Annual Northern Chiefs of Defence Conference*. Ottawa. Retrieved from <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=canada-s-chief-of-the-defence-staff-attends-second-annual-northern-chiefs-of-defence-conference/hjiq6lbr>
- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). (2015). *Operation UNIFIER*. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-unifier.html>
- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). (2018a). *Canada's participation in NATO's Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE*. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/exercises/trident-juncture.html>
- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). (2018b). *Operation REASSURANCE*. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-reassurance.html>
- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). (2018c). *The Canada-U.S. Defence Relationship*. Retrieved from <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=the-canada-u-s-defence-relationship/hob7hd8s>

- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). (2019). *Operation NANOOK*. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-nanook.html>
- Canadian Defence Attaché (2019, April 17). Interview by B. Schaller. Moscow.
- Canadian Diplomat (2019, April 2). Interview by B. Schaller. Ottawa.
- Canadian Military Doctrine (Canadian Forces April 2009).
- Canby, S. L., & Smith, J. E. (1987). Restructuring Canada's Defense Contribution: A Possible Key to Western Security. *Political Science Quarterly*, 102(3), 441–457.
- Carling, J., Erdal, M. B., & Ezzati, R. (2014). Beyond the insider–outsider divide in migration research. *Migration Studies*, 2(1), 36–54. doi:10.1093/migration/mnt022
- Carter, A. (1989). *Success and failure in arms control negotiations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Charron, A. (2017). *NATO, Canada and the Arctic* (NATO Series). Calgary.
- Charron, A., Plouffe, J., & Roussel, S. (2012). The Russian Arctic hegemon: Foreign policy implications for Canada. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 18(1), 38–50. doi:10.1080/11926422.2012.674384
- Charter of Paris for a New Europe (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) 1990).
- Ciolan, I. M. (2016). The Role of the "New Cold War" Concept in Constructing Russia's Great Power Narrative. *CES Working Papers*, 8(4), 625–647.
- Commanding Officer 1st CRPG (2019, April 5). Interview by B. Schaller. Yellowknife.
- Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part (Council of the European Union 14.09.2016).
- Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) 1975).
- Conley, H. A. & Rohloff, C. (2015). *The New Ice Curtain: Russia's Strategic Reach to the Arctic*. Washington, D.C.

- Considine, L. (2015). 'Back to the Rough Ground!' A Grammatical Approach to Trust and International Relations. *Millennium-Journal of International Studies*, 44(1), 109–127. doi:10.1177/0305829815590678
- Cordesman, A. H. (2018). *NATO “Burden Sharing”: The Need for Strategy and Force Plans, Not Meaningless Percentage Goals*. Retrieved from <https://www.csis.org/analysis/nato-burden-sharing-need-strategy-and-force-plans-not-meaningless-percentage-goals>
- Czarny, R. M. (2018). *Sweden: From Neutrality to International Solidarity*. Cham: Springer International Publishing. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77513-5>
- Dalsjö, R. (2006). *Life-line lost: The rise and fall of 'neutral' Sweden's secret reserve option of wartime help from the West*. Stockholm: Santérus Acad. Press.
- Dalsjö, R. (2015). *Nationella intressen och Sverige* (FOI Memo No. 5470).
- Danermark, B., Ekström, M., Jakobsen, L., & Karlsson, J. C. (2012). *Explaining society: Critical realism in the social sciences. Critical realism: Interventions*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Darilek, R. E. (1992). The Theory of Confidence-Building Measures. In J. E. Nation (Ed.), *The De-escalation of Nuclear Crises* (pp. 3–35). London, s.l.: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Decision No. 2/18 Distribution of Active Quotas for Observation Flights in the Year 2019 (Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC) 22.10.2018).
- Defence and Exercise Planner, Swedish Armed Forces (October 2018). Interview by B. Schaller.
- Defence Attachés in Moscow (2019, April 17). Interview by B. Schaller. Moscow.
- Deputy Chief of Staff Ops and Plans, JTFN (2019, April 4). Interview by B. Schaller. Yellowknife.
- Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement. (2014). *Bilaterale militære aktiviteter med Russland innstilles ut året*. Oslo. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/Bilaterale-militare-aktiviteter-med-Russland-innstilles-ut-aret/id761039/>
- Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement. (2018a). *Embetsdialog i Russland*. Oslo. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/embetsdialog-i-russland/id2588469/>

- Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement. (2018b). *Increased allied training and exercises*. Oslo. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/mer-oving-og-trening-med-allierte/id2608345/>
- Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement. (2019). *Embetsamtaler med Russland*. Oslo. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/embetsamtaler-med-russland/id2632582/>
- Deutsch, K. W., Burrell, S. A., Kann, R. A., Lee, M., Jr., Lichtermann, M., Lindgren, R. E., . . . van Wagenen, R. W. (1957). *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International organization in the light of historical experience*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Duncan, M., & Watson, R. (2010). Taking a stance: Socially responsible ethics and informed consent. In M. Savin-Baden & C. H. Major (Eds.), *New approaches to qualitative research. Wisdom and uncertainty* (1st ed., pp. 49–58). London: Routledge.
- Ebinger, C. K., & Zambetakis, E. (2009). The geopolitics of Arctic melt. *International Affairs*, 85(6), 1215–1232. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2009.00858.x
- Engerman, D. C. (2009). The Cold War. In A. Gleason (Ed.), *Blackwell companions to world history. A Companion to Russian History* (pp. 414–428). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Et forsvar for vår tid (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement 23.03.2012).
- Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement 28.03.2008).
- Etterretningstjenesten. (2018). *Fokus 2018: Etterretningstjenestens vurdering av aktuelle sikkerhetsutfordringer*. Oslo.
- Etterretningstjenesten. (2019). *Fokus 2019: Etterretningstjenestens vurdering av aktuelle sikkerhetsutfordringer*. Oslo.
- Etzold, T. & Steinicke, S. (2015). *Regional Security and Cooperation in the Arctic and Baltic: Destabilisation Follows Ukraine Crisis* (SWP Comments No. 44). Berlin.
- European External Action Service (EEAS). (2017). *EU Battlegroups*. Brussels.
- Exercise and Operations Planer, JTFN (2019, April 4). Interview by B. Schaller. Yellowknife.

- Exercise Planner for the Continental North, CJOC (2019, March 28). Interview by B. Schaller. Ottawa.
- Exner-Pirot, H., & Huebert, R. (2020). Arctic security: the Canadian context. In G. Hoogensen Gjørsv, M. Lanteigne, & H. Sam-Aggrey (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Arctic Security* (pp. 140–151). London, New York : Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.: Routledge.
- Facon, I. (2017). *Russia's national security strategy and military doctrine and their implications for the EU* (In-Depth Analysis).
- FCdr Larsson, T. (2014, March). *NBG - Nordic Battlegroup 2015*. Retrieved from [https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/siteassets/english/nbg15---eng/14mar\\_-fcd\\_r\\_master-f.pdf](https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/siteassets/english/nbg15---eng/14mar_-fcd_r_master-f.pdf)
- Federal Foreign Office. (2016a). *Ministerial declaration by the foreign ministers of the like-minded group supporting a relaunch of conventional arms control in Europe*. Berlin. Retrieved from <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/161125-erkl-freundesgruppe-konv-ruestungskontrolle-europa/285610>
- Federal Foreign Office. (2016b). *Relaunching conventional arms control in Europe*. Retrieved from <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/themen/abruestung/161125-ruestungskontrolle/285652>
- Federal Foreign Office. (2018). *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty)*. Retrieved from <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/themen/abruestung/uebersicht-konvalles-node/ruestungskontrolle/kse-vertrag-node>
- Feis, H. (1971). *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950* ([1st ed.]). New York: Norton.
- Feldman, M. S., Bell, J., & Berger, M. T. (2003). Finding Informants. In M. S. Feldman, J. Bell, & M. T. Berger (Eds.), *Gaining Access. A Practical and Theoretical Guide for Qualitative Researchers* (pp. 3–11). Lanham: AltaMira Press.
- Finnemore, M. (1996). *National Interests in International Society. Cornell studies in political economy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Fisher, M. (2018). *Trident Juncture 18: NATO's Norwegian Exercise* (Commentary). Calgary.

- Former Norwegian Brigade Commander (2018, November 1). Interview by B. Schaller. Oslo.
- Forsberg, T. (1999). Power, Interests and Trust: Explaining Gorbachev's Choices at the End of the Cold War. *Review of International Studies*, 25(4), 603–621.
- Forsvaret. (2015a). *Northern Eagle*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/fakta/aktivitet/ovelser/northern-eagle>
- Forsvaret. (2015b). *Pomor*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/fakta/aktivitet/ovelser/pomor>
- Forsvaret. (2016). *Cold Response 2016*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/coldresponse>
- Forsvaret. (2017a). *Øvelse Joint Viking*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/jointviking>
- Forsvaret. (2017b). *The third biennial Arctic Challenge Exercise*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/en/press/the-third-biennial-arctic-challenge-exercise>
- Forsvaret. (2018). *Trident Juncture 18*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/en/exercise-and-operations/exercises/nato-exercise-2018>
- Försvaret av Sverige - Starkare försvar för en osäker tid (Försvarsdepartementet 2014).
- Forsvaret. (n.d.). *GLOBUS Modernization*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/etjenesten/globus-modernization>
- Forsvarsdepartementet. (2016). *Strategiske samarbeidspartnere for Norges neste ubåter*. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/strategiske-samarbeidspartnere-for-norges-neste-ubater/id2482241/>
- Försvarsmakten. (2018). *Trident Juncture 18*. Retrieved from <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/var-verksamhet/ovningar/avslutade-ovningar/trident-juncture-18/>
- Försvarspolitisk inriktning - Sveriges försvar 2016-2020 (Försvarsdepartementet 23.04.2015).
- Forsyth, D. R. (2014). *Group dynamics* (6. ed., International ed.). Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

- Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). (2016). *Special Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (834th Plenary Meeting)*. FSC.JOUR/840. Vienna.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London: Allen Lane.
- Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation (North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); Russian Federation 27.05.1997).
- Friis, K. & Garberg Bredesen, M. (2017). *Swedish-Norwegian Defence Cooperation: New opportunities?* (Policy Brief). Oslo.
- From Lisbon to Hamburg: Declaration on the Twentieth Anniversary of the OSCE Framework for Arms Control (OSCE Ministerial Council 09.12.2016).
- Fuller, W. C. (2006). The imperial army. In D. Lieven (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of Russia. Vol. 2: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917* (pp. 530–553). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Garofano, J. (2002). Power, institutions, and the ASEAN regional forum - A security community for Asia? *Asian Survey*, 42(3), 502–521.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Global Affairs Canada. (2016). *Canada's Response to the Situation in Ukraine*. Retrieved from <https://www.international.gc.ca/international/ukraine.aspx?lang=eng>
- Godfrey-Smith, P. (2008). *Theory and reality: An introduction to the philosophy of science* ([4. print]). *Science and its conceptual foundations*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press. Retrieved from <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/bios/uchi051/2002155305.html>
- Godzimirski, J. M. (2009). Russia and the OSCE: From high expectations to denial? In E. Wilson Rowe & S. Torjesen (Eds.), *Routledge contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe series: Vol. 15. The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy* (pp. 121–141). London, New York: Routledge.
- Goncharenko, R. (2017, September 27). Zapad-2017: 'Normal military business'. *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/en/zapad-2017-normal-military-business/a-40710010>

- Government of Canada. (2007). *Prime Minister Stephen Harper Announces New Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships*. Esquimalt. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2007/07/prime-minister-stephen-harper-announces-new-arctic-offshore-patrol-ships.html>
- Græger, N. (2018). Need to have or nice to have? Nordic cooperation, NATO and the EU in Norwegian foreign, security and defence policy. *Global Affairs*, 4(4-5), 363–376. doi:10.1080/23340460.2018.1492351
- Graham, T. (2010). The Sources of Russia's Insecurity. *Survival*, 52(1), 55–74. doi:10.1080/00396331003612471
- Greco, S., & Hlatky, S. von. (2018). Soft contributions are hard commitments: NATO and Canada's global security agenda. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 24(3), 273–285. doi:10.1080/11926422.2018.1467837
- Griffiths, F., Huebert, R., & Lackenbauer, P. W. (2011). *Canada and the changing Arctic: Sovereignty, security and stewardship ; forewords by Bill Graham and Hugh Segal*. Waterloo Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Haftendorn, H. (2011). NATO and the Arctic: is the Atlantic alliance a cold war relic in a peaceful region now faced with non-military challenges? *European Security*, 20(3), 337–361. doi:10.1080/09662839.2011.608352
- Hagen, M. von. (2009). From the First World War to Civil War, 1914–1923. In A. Gleason (Ed.), *Blackwell companions to world history. A Companion to Russian History* (pp. 337–352). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2010). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (3. ed., reprinted.). London: Routledge.
- Hanneman, R. A., & Riddle, M. (2011). Concepts and Measures for Basic Network Analysis. In J. Scott & P. J. Carrington (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis* (1st ed., pp. 340–369). London: SAGE.
- Hardin, R. (2002). *Trust and trustworthiness. The Russel Sage Foundation Series on Trust: vol. 4*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.



- Harvey, D. L. (2009). Complexity and Case. In D. Byrne & C. C. Ragin (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of case-based methods*. Los Angeles [Calif.], London: SAGE.
- Hattrem, T. (2015, October). *Russia and the Nordic Countries – Relations and Cooperations*, Oslo. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/russia-and-the-nordic-countries--relations-and-cooperations/id2459215/>
- Heier, T., & Kjølberg, A. (2015). Russland og Norge i en ny tid. In T. Heier & A. Kjølberg (Eds.), *Norge og Russland. Sikkerhetspolitiske utfordringer i nordområdene* (pp. 9–23). Oslo: Universitetsforlag.
- Henderson, J. & Loe, J. (2014). *The Prospects and Challenges for Arctic Oil Development* (Working paper / Oxford Institute for Energy Studies WPM No. 56). Oxford. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/WPM-56.pdf>
- Higgins, A. (2000, June 6). How a Storm Spread A Cold War Chill. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB960245559833861741>
- Higgins, A. (2017, June 13). On a Tiny Norwegian Island, America Keeps an Eye on Russia. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/13/world/europe/arctic-norway-russia-radar.html>
- Hilde, P. S. (2014). Armed forces and security challenges in the Arctic. In R. Tamnes & K. Offerdal (Eds.), *Routledge global security studies. Geopolitics and security in the Arctic. Regional dynamics in a global world* (pp. 147–165). London: Routledge.
- Hoffman, A. M. (2002). A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations. *European Journal of International Relations*, 8(3), 375–401. doi:10.1177/1354066102008003003
- Hoffman, A. M. (2005). *Building Trust: Overcoming suspicion in international conflict*. New York: State University of New York.
- Holland, K. M. (2012). How unipolarity impacts Canada's engagement with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 18(1), 51–64. doi:10.1080/11926422.2012.662615
- Holtsmark, S. G. (Ed.). (2015). *Naboer i frykt og forventning: Norge og Russland 1917-2014*. Oslo: Pax.

- Hønneland, G. (2009). Cross-Border Cooperation in the North: The Case of Northwest Russia. In E. Wilson Rowe (Ed.), *Russia and the North* (pp. 35–52). Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.
- Huebert, R. (2014). *Canada, the Arctic Council, Greenpeace, and Arctic Oil Drilling: Complicating an Already Complicated Picture* (Policy Paper). Calgary.
- Huebert, R. & Exner-Pirot, H. (2016). *The Arctic Factor: Can regional cooperation thaw relations between Canada and Russia?* Retrieved from <https://www.opencanada.org/features/arctic-factor-can-regional-cooperation-thaw-relations-between-canada-and-russia/>
- Hughes, L. (2009). Petrine Russia. In A. Gleason (Ed.), *Blackwell companions to world history. A Companion to Russian History* (pp. 165–179). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Israel, M., & Hay, I. (2006). *Research ethics for social scientists: Between ethical conduct and regulatory compliance*. London, Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.
- Jankovski, A. (2017). The Russian Federation and the West: The Problem of International Order. In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment* (pp. 137–164). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Jervis, R. (1978). Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma. *World Politics*, 30(2), 167–214.
- Johnson, D. (2017). *ZAPAD 2017 and Euro-Atlantic security*. Brussels. Retrieved from <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2017/Also-in-2017/zapad-2017-and-euro-atlantic-security-military-exercise-strategic-russia/EN/index.htm>
- Jupp, V. (2006). *The Sage Dictionary of Social Research Methods*. London, Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications.
- Kaiser, K. (2012). Protecting Confidentiality. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, A. Marvasti, & K. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft* (pp. 457–464). 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks California 91320 United States: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Kampkraft og bærekraft. Langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren (Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement 17.06.2016).

- Kapiszewski, D., MacLean, L. M., & Read, B. L. (2015). *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and principles* (1. publ). *Strategies for social inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Käpylä, J. & Mikkola, H. (2015). *On Arctic Exceptionalism: Critical reflections in the light of the Arctic Sunrise case and the crisis in Ukraine* (FIIA Working Paper No. 85). Helsinki.
- Keating, V. C., & Ruzicka, J. (2014). Trusting relationships in international politics: No need to hedge. *Review of International Studies*, 40(4), 753–770.
- Keohane, R. O. (1969). Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in Internatinal Politics. *International Organization*, 23(02), 291. doi:10.1017/S002081830003160X
- Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (1st Princeton classic ed.). *A Princeton classic edition*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. S. (1999). *Power and Interdependence* (2. ed., [Nachdr.]). New York: Longman.
- King, N., & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Klimenko, E. (2016). *Russia's Arctic security policy: Still quiet in the High North?* (SIPRI Policy Paper No. 45). Stockholm.
- Klimke, M., Kreis, R., & Ostermann, C. (Eds.). (2016). *Cold War International History Project. Trust, but Verify: The Politics of Uncertainty and the Transformation of the Cold War Order, 1969-1991*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press. Retrieved from <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gbv/detail.action?docID=4785182>
- Knoke, D. (2011). Policy Networks. In J. Scott & P. J. Carrington (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis* (1st ed., pp. 210–222). London: SAGE.
- Knutsen, B. O. (2007). *NATO and the changing nature of the transatlantic security community. FFI rapport*. Kjeller: FFI. Retrieved from <http://rapporter.ffi.no/rapporter/2007/00070.pdf>
- Koivula, T. (2017). Conventional Arms Control in Europe and its Current Challenges. In T. Koivula & K. Simonen (Eds.), *National Defence University Series 1, Research publications: No. 16. Arms*

- control in Europe. Regimes, trends and threats* (pp. 113–132). Helsinki: National Defence University.
- Krass, A. S. (1985). Verification and Trust in Arms Control. *Journal of Peace Research*, 22(4), 285–288.
- Krempel, L. (2011). Network Visualization. In J. Scott & P. J. Carrington (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis* (1st ed., pp. 558–577). London: SAGE.
- Kühn, U. (2010). Medvedev's Proposals for a New European Security Order: A Starting Point or the End of the Story? *Connections*, 9(2), 1–16.
- Kühn, U. (2013). Conventional Arms Control 2.0. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 26(2), 189–202. doi:10.1080/13518046.2013.779859
- Kulesa, L., Frear, T., & Raynova, D. (2016). *Managing Hazardous Incidents in the Euro-Atlantic Area: A New Plan of Action* (Policy Brief). London.
- Kydd, A. H. (2005). *Trust and mistrust in international relations*. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Lachowski, Z., & Rotfeld, A. D. (2002). Success or Failure? CSBMs in the Post-Cold War Environment. In Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (Ed.), *OSCE Yearbook: Vol. 7. OSCE Yearbook 2001. Yearbook on the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)* (315-329). Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- Lackenbauer, P. W. (2010). Mirror Images?: Canada, Russia, and the circumpolar world. *International Journal*, 65(4), 879–897.
- Lackenbauer, P. W. (2011). Polar Race or Polar Saga?: Canada and the Circumpolar World. In J. Kraska (Ed.), *Arctic Security in an Age of Climate Change* (pp. 218–243). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Laruelle, M. (2014). *Russia's Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North*. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

- Lasserre, F., & Têtu, P.-L. (2016). Russian Air Patrols in the Arctic:: Are Long-Range Bomber Patrols a Challenge to Canadian Security and Sovereignty? *Arctic Yearbook*, 5, 305–327.
- Laugen, T. (2001). Mot et kaldere klima? Utviklingen av det bilaterale forholdet mellom Norge og Russland på 1990-tallet. *Internasjonal Politikk*, 59(1), 91–109.
- Le Mière, C., & Mazo, J. (2013). *Arctic opening: Insecurity and opportunity*. Adelphi: Vol. 440. Abingdon, Oxon [u.a.]: Routledge.
- Lead Exercise Planner, CJOC (2019, March 22). Interview by B. Schaller. Ottawa.
- Lewis, J. D., & Weigert, A. (1985). Trust as a Social Reality. *Social Forces*, 63(4), 967–985.
- Lieberman, B. (1964). i-Trust: a notion of trust in three-person games and international affairs. *Conflict Resolution*, 8(3), 271–280.
- Lieven, D. (2006a). Russia as empire and periphery. In D. Lieven (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of Russia*. Vol. 2: *Imperial Russia, 1689-1917* (pp. 9–26). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lieven, D. (Ed.). (2006b). *The Cambridge history of Russia: Vol. 2: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Light, M. (2009). Russia and the process of EU enlargement. In E. Wilson Rowe & S. Torjesen (Eds.), *Routledge contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe series: Vol. 15. The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy* (pp. 83–96). London, New York: Routledge.
- Lindsey, G. (1989). *Strategic stability in the Arctic* (Adelphi papers No. 241). London.
- Lofland, J., Snow, D., Anderson, L., & Lofland, L. H. (2006). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis* (4. ed.). Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth. Retrieved from <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy1212/2005927914-d.html>
- Loftus, S., & Kanet, R. E. (2017). Growing Confrontation Between Russia and the West: Russia's Challenge to the Post-Cold War Order. In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment* (pp. 13–36). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Lohr, E. (2006). War and revolution, 1914–1917. In D. Lieven (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of Russia*. Vol. 2: *Imperial Russia, 1689-1917* (pp. 655–669). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Lomagin, N. (2007). Forming a New Security Identity Under Vladimir Putin. In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *Studies in central and eastern Europe. Russia. Re-Emerging Great Power* (pp. 31–53). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lomagin, N. (2009). The Soviet Union in the Second World War. In A. Gleason (Ed.), *Blackwell companions to world history. A Companion to Russian History* (pp. 386–413). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- López, J. (2007). Critical realism: The difference that it makes, in theory. In J. Cruickshank (Ed.), *Routledge studies in critical realism: Vol. 6. Critical realism. The difference it makes* (pp. 75–89). London: Routledge.
- LTC Aamo, H. (2016, March). *Allied Training and Exercises in Norway*. Retrieved from <https://forsvaret.no/en/ForsvaretDocuments/Allied%20training%20in%20Norway.pdf>
- Luhmann, N. (1973). *Vertrauen: Ein Mechanismus der Reduction sozialer Komplexität* (2. erw. Aufl.). *Flexibles Taschenbuch. Soziologie*. Stuttgart: Enke.
- Luhmann, N. (2000). Familiarity, Confidence, Trust: Problems and Alternatives. In D. Gambetta (Ed.), *Trust. Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations* (pp. 94–107). New York: Blackwell.
- Lynch, D. (2000). Russia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In M. Webber (Ed.), *Russia and Europe. Conflict or cooperation?* (pp. 99–124). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan.
- Malek, M. (2012). *NATO-Russia relations under Putin. Emergence and Decay of a Security Community? An Analysis of the Russian Discourse on NATO (2000-2008)* (Vol. 62).
- Mankoff, J. (2012). *Russian foreign policy: The return of great power politics* (2. ed.). Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation (President of the Russian Federation 2015).
- Maritime Planner, CAF (2019, March 26). Interview by B. Schaller. Halifax.
- McGillivray, F., & Smith, A. (2000). Trust and Cooperation Through Agent-Specific Punishments. *International Organization*, 54(4), 809–824.

- Mearsheimer, J. J. (1990). Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War. *International Security*, 15(1), 5–56.
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2014). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (Updated ed.). *The Norton series in world politics*. New York: Norton.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Finland and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden on Defence Cooperation (The Government of the Republic of Finland and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden 09.07.2018).
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland and the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden on Nordic Defence Cooperation (Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland and the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden 04.11.2009).
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Sweden and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation as well as Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe regarding the Provision of Host Nation Support for the Execution of NATO Operations / Exercises / Similar Military Activity (The Government of Sweden and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation as well as Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe 04.09.2014).
- Mercer, J. (2005). Rationality and Psychology in International Politics. *International Organization*, 59(1), 77–106.
- Michel, T. (2013a). Time to get emotional: Phronetic reflections on the concept of trust in International Relations. *European Journal of International Relations*, 19(4), 869–890. doi:10.1177/1354066111428972
- Michel, T. (2013b). Trust, Rationality and Vulnerability in International Relations. In A. R. Beattie & K. Shick (Eds.), *The vulnerable subject. Beyond rationalism in international relations* (pp. 86–109). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Miller, T., & Bell, L. (2008). Consenting to What? Issues of Access, Gate-Keeping and 'Informed' Consent. In M. Mauthner, M. Birch, J. Jessop, & T. Miller (Eds.), *Ethics in qualitative research* (pp. 54–67). London: SAGE.
- Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Sweden. (2019). *Swedish chairmanship priorities for Nordefco 2019*. Stockholm.
- Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation. (2017a). *Military observers from seven countries attended Zapad 2017 exercise*. Retrieved from [http://eng.mil.ru/en/news\\_page/country/more.htm?id=12142760@egNews](http://eng.mil.ru/en/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12142760@egNews)
- Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation. (2017b). *Zapad 2017 joined strategic exercise*. Retrieved from <http://eng.mil.ru/en/mission/practice/more.htm?id=12140115@egNews>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden. (2011). *Statement of Government Policy: in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs*. Stockholm.
- Misztal, B. (2013). *Trust in Modern Societies: The Search for the Bases of Social Order*. Somerset, UNKNOWN: Polity Press.
- Moe, I., & Andreassen, T. A. (2015, February 5). 5000 soldater i Finnmark kan provosere Russland. *Aftenposten*. Retrieved from <https://www.aftenposten.no/verden/i/9mxaw/5000-soldater-i-Finnmark-kan-provosere-Russland>
- Moen, K. E. (1998). *Selvpålagte restriksjoner i nord* (Forsvarsstudier No. 5). Oslo.
- Möller, F. (2007). *Thinking peaceful change: Baltic security policies and security community building* (1. ed.). *Syracuse studies on peace and conflict resolution*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press.
- Møller, J. E. (2019). Trilateral defence cooperation in the North: an assessment of interoperability between Norway, Sweden and Finland. *Defence Studies*, 1–22. doi:10.1080/14702436.2019.1634473
- Morgenthau, H. J. (1948). *Politics among nations: The struggle for power and peace*. New York: Knopf.
- Mouritzen, H. (2001). Security communities in the Baltic Sea region: Real and imagined. *Security Dialogue*, 32(3), 297–310.



- Nation, J. E. (Ed.). (1992). *The De-escalation of Nuclear Crises*. London, s.l.: Palgrave Macmillan UK.  
Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-12734-4>
- Nationell säkerhetsstrategi (Regeringskansliet, Statsrådberedningen January 2017).
- Nielsen, J. P. (Ed.). (2014). *Norge og Russland: 1814 - 2014. Russland kommer nærmere: Norge og Russland 1814 - 1917*. Oslo: Pax.
- Nilsen, T. (2017a, March 3). Larger portion of Russia's nukes will be on subs in Arctic waters. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2017/03/larger-portion-russias-nukes-will-be-subs>
- Nilsen, T. (2017b, May 8). Satellite images show expansion of nuclear weapons sites on Kola. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/content/satellite-images-show-expansion-nuclear-weapons-sites-kola>
- Nilsen, T. (2018a, June 13). Alarm-drill: 36 Russian warships sail out to Barents Sea. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2018/06/36-russian-warships-sails-out-barents-sea>
- Nilsen, T. (2018b, June 15). Russia says U.S. Marines in Norway destabilises situation. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2018/06/russia-says-us-marines-norway-destabilises-situation>
- Nilsen, T. (2018c, March 13). Norway says Russia's mock attack on Vardø radar troubles stability in the north. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2018/03/oslo-such-behavior-does-not-promote-good-neighborly-relations>
- Nilsen, T. (2018d, October 31). Russia announces rocket shootings just outside Finnmark in final days of NATO's Trident Juncture. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2018/10/russian-navy>
- Nilsen, T. (2018e, September 16). Satellite images reveal Russian navy's massive rearmament on Kola Peninsula. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/node/4370>

- Nilsen, T. (2019a, April 11). Russia claims to have demonstrated complex exercise outside Norway. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2019/04/russia-demonstrated-complex-bastion-defense-exercise-outside-norway>
- Nilsen, T. (2019b, February 12). 11 Russian fighter jets made mock attack on Norwegian Arctic radar. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2019/02/11-russian-fighter-jets-made-mock-attack-norwegian-arctic-radar>
- Nilsen, T. (2019c, February 8). Moscow accuses Norway of northern military buildup - Here is map of submarine ports. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2019/02/moscow-continues-accuse-norway-northern-military-buildup-here-map-submarine-ports>
- Nilsen, T. (2019d, March 4). Russian military officials arrive in Oslo as Norway puts GPS jamming facts on the table. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2019/03/russian-military-officials-arrive-oslo-norway-provides-facts-gps-jamming>
- NORDEFECO. (2017). *NORDEFECO Annual Report 2017*. Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Finland.
- NORDEFECO. (2018). *NORDEFECO Annual Report 2018*. Norwegian Ministry of Defence.
- Nordic Defence Cooperation Vision 2025 (Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland and the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden 13.11.2018).
- North American Aerospace Defense Command. (2013). *A Brief History of NORAD*. Colorado Springs.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (1984). *NATO and Warsaw Pact: Force Comparisons*. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified\\_138256.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_138256.htm)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (2011). *Verification Coordinating Committee (VCC)*. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_69341.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69341.htm)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (2017a). *Partnership for Peace programme*. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/topics\\_50349.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/topics_50349.htm)

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (2017b). *Partnership Interoperability Initiative*. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/em/natohq/topics\\_132726.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/em/natohq/topics_132726.htm)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (2018). *NATO's role in conventional arms control*. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/topics\\_48896.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/topics_48896.htm?selectedLocale=en)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (2019a). *NATO navies test readiness in Baltic Sea*. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_166717.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_166717.htm)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (2019b). *NATO-Russia Council (NRC)*. Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics\\_50091.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics_50091.htm)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (2019c). *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2018*. Brussels.
- Norwegian Arms Control Officer 1 (February 2019). Interview by B. Schaller.
- Norwegian Arms Control Officer 2 (February 2019). Interview by B. Schaller.
- Norwegian Arms Control Officer 3 (February 2019). Interview by B. Schaller.
- Norwegian Centre for Research Data. *Vocabulary*. Retrieved from <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvernombud/en/help/vocabulary.html>
- Norwegian Defence Attaché (2019, April 17). Interview by B. Schaller. Moscow.
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2014). *Norway's Arctic Policy: Creating value, managing resources, confronting climate change and fostering knowledge. Developments in the Arctic concern us all*. Hammerfest.
- Nossal, K. R. (2015). *The Politics of Canadian Foreign Policy, Fourth Edition. Queen's Policy Studies Series: v.188*. Ontario: MQUP.
- Nygren, B. (2019). The 2008 Russia-Georgia War. In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *Routledge handbooks. Routledge Handbook of Russian Security* (pp. 377–387). Routledge, New York, NY: Abingdon, Oxon.

- O'Dwyer, G. (2017, November 29). Finland establishes 24/7 military hotline with Russia. *Defense News*. Retrieved from <https://www.defensenews.com/global/2017/11/29/finland-establishes-247-military-hotline-with-russia/>
- Oldberg, I. (2007). Russia's Great Power Ambitions and Policy Under Putin. In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *Studies in central and eastern Europe. Russia. Re-Emerging Great Power* (pp. 13–30). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Olesen, M. R. (2014). *After Ukraine: Keeping the Arctic stable* (DIIS Policy Brief). Copenhagen.
- OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre. (2011). *What is the Forum for Security Co-operation?* (OSCE Factsheet). Vienna.
- OSCE Secretariat. (2016). *What is the OSCE?* (OSCE Factsheet). Vienna. Retrieved from <http://www.osce.org/whatistheosce/factsheet>
- Østhagen, A., Levi Sharp, G., & Hilde, P. S. (2018). At Opposite Poles: Canada's and Norway's approaches to security in the Arctic. *The Polar Journal*, 8(1), 163–181. doi:10.1080/2154896X.2018.1468625
- Permanent Mission of Canada to the OSCE. (2019). *Canada and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)*. Retrieved from [https://international.gc.ca/world-monde/international\\_relations-relations\\_internationales/osce/index.aspx?lang=eng#a2](https://international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/osce/index.aspx?lang=eng#a2)
- Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to NATO, Alexander Grushko (2017, June). *Statement by Mr. Alexander Grushko, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to NATO, at the 2017 Annual Security Review Conference*. PC.DEL/853/17. Annual Security Review Conference 2017, Vienna.
- Peters, J. E. (2000). *The changing quality of stability in Europe: The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty Toward 2001*. Santa Monica CA.
- Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual review of psychology*, 49, 65–85. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.65

- Pettigrew, T. F., Tropp, L. R., Wagner, U., & Christ, O. (2011). Recent advances in intergroup contact theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(3), 271–280. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.03.001
- Posen, B. R. (1982). Inadvertent Nuclear War?: Escalation and NATO's Northern Flank. *International Security*, 7(2), 28–54.
- Pouliot, V. (2008). The logic of practicality: A theory of practice of security communities. *International Organization*, 62(2), 257–288.
- Pouliot, V. (2010). *International security in practice: The politics of NATO-Russia diplomacy. Cambridge studies in international relations: Vol. 113*. Cambridge [etc.]: Cambridge University Press.
- President of the Russian Federation. (2007). *Information on the decree "On Suspending the Russian Federation's Participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and Related International Agreements"*. Moscow. Retrieved from <http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/3327>
- President of the Russian Federation. (2019a). *Meeting with Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg*. St. Petersburg. Retrieved from <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/60253>
- President of the Russian Federation. (2019b). *Meeting with Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven*. St. Petersburg. Retrieved from <http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/countries/SE/events/60254>
- President Vladimir Putin (2001, September). *Speech in the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany*, Berlin.
- President Vladimir Putin (2007, February). *Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy*, Munich.
- Priego, A. (2019). NATO Enlargement: A security dilemma for Russia? In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *Routledge handbooks. Routledge Handbook of Russian Security* (pp. 257–265). Routledge, New York, NY: Abingdon, Oxon.
- Ragsdale, H. (2006). Russian foreign policy, 1725-1815. In D. Lieven (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of Russia. Vol. 2: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917* (pp. 504–529). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Rathbun, B. C. (2009). It takes all types: social psychology, trust, and the international relations paradigm in our minds. *International Theory*, 1(3), 345–380. doi:10.1017/S1752971909990121
- Rathbun, B. C. (2011). Before Hegemony: Generalized Trust and the Creation and Design of International Security Organizations. *International Organization*, 65(2), 243–273. doi:10.1017/S0020818311000014
- Regeringskansliet. (2019). *Prime Minister attended International Arctic Forum in St Petersburg*. Stockholm. Retrieved from <https://www.government.se/articles/2019/04/prime-minister-attended-international-arctic-forum-in-st-petersburg/>
- Rich, P. B. (2009). Russia as a great power. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 20(2), 276–299. doi:10.1080/09592310902975398
- Riches, C., & Palmowski, J. (2016). *A dictionary of contemporary world history* (4. ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780191802997.001.0001/acref-9780191802997>
- Rioux, J.-F., & Hay, R. (1999). Canadian Foreign Policy: From internationalism to isolationism? *International Journal*, 54(1), 57–75.
- Riste, O. (2001). *Norway's foreign relations: A history*. Oslo: Universitetsforl.
- Rittberger, V., Efinger, M., & Mendler, M. (1990). Toward an East-West Security Regime: The Case of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. *Journal of Peace Research*, 27(1), 55–74.
- Roberts, K. (2015). Why Russia will play by the rules in the Arctic. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 21(2), 112–128. doi:10.1080/11926422.2014.939204
- Roi, M. L. (2010). Russia: The Greatest Arctic Power? *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 23(4), 551–573. doi:10.1080/13518046.2010.525465
- Romaniuk, S. N. (2011). *New polar horizons: Conflict and security in the Arctic*. Saarbrücken: LAP Lambert Academic Publ.

- Rowe, W. E. (2014). Positionality. In D. Coghlan & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *SAGE reference. The SAGE encyclopedia of action research* (p. 628). Los Angeles, Calif.: SAGE Publ.
- Rukavishnikov, V. (2007). Choices for Russia. In R. E. Kanet (Ed.), *Studies in central and eastern Europe. Russia. Re-Emerging Great Power* (pp. 54–78). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Russian Foreign Minister, Evgenii Primakov (1996, December). *Intervention of Russian FM Evgenii Primakov at the Morning Meeting of the NACC*. North Atlantic Cooperation Council. Meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, Brussels. Retrieved from <https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1996/s9612115.htm>
- Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov (2019a, April). *Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks and answers to media questions at the opening of the ministerial session of the 5th International Arctic Forum The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue*. 5th International Arctic Forum The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue, St. Petersburg. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/meropriyatiya\\_s\\_uchastiem\\_ministra/-/asset\\_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/3608543](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/meropriyatiya_s_uchastiem_ministra/-/asset_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/3608543)
- Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov (2019b, February). *Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's comments and answers to media questions during the joint news conference following talks with Foreign Minister of the Republic of Finland Timo Soini*. Press Briefing, Moscow. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/meropriyatiya\\_s\\_uchastiem\\_ministra/-/asset\\_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/3513560](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/meropriyatiya_s_uchastiem_ministra/-/asset_publisher/xK1BhB2bUjd3/content/id/3513560)
- Russian National Security Strategy (President of the Russian Federation 31.12.2015).
- Rutland, P., & Kazantsev, A. (2016). The limits of Russia's 'soft power'. *Journal of Political Power*, 9(3), 395–413. doi:10.1080/2158379X.2016.1232287
- Ruzicka, J., & Keating, V. C. (2015). Going global: Trust research and international relations. *Journal of Trust Research*, 5(1), 8–26. doi:10.1080/21515581.2015.1009082
- Ruzicka, J., & Wheeler, N. J. (2010). The Puzzle of Trusting Relationships in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)*, 86(1), 69–85.

- Sarty, R. (2009). The Interplay of Defence and Foreign Policy. In R. Bothwell & J. Daudelin (Eds.), *Canada Among Nations 2008. 100 years of Canadian Foreign Policy* (Vol. 2008, pp. 111–141). Montreal Que.: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Schatzki, T. R., Knorr Cetina, K., & Savigny, E. von. (2001). *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (Transferred to digital print). London: Routledge.
- Schelling, T. C., & Halperin, M. H. (1961). *Strategy and arms control*. New York: Twentieth Century Fund.
- Schmidt, H.-J. (2004). *Der Wandel in der konventionellen Rüstungskontrolle 1989 - 1996*. Zugl.: Frankfurt (Main), Univ., Diss., 2002. *Studien der hessischen stiftung friedens- und konfliktforschung: Vol. 45*. Frankfurt: Campus-Verl.
- Schmidt, H.-J. (2013). *Verified transparency: New conceptual ideas for conventional arms control in Europe* (PRIF report No. 119). Frankfurt am Main, Germany.
- Schofield, J. (2000). Arms Control Failure and the Balance of Power. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 33(4), 747–777.
- Schultz, T. (2017, September 14). NATO voices skepticism over size of Russia's Zapad military exercise. *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/en/nato-voices-skepticism-over-size-of-russias-zapad-military-exercise/a-39682346>
- Scott, J., & Carrington, P. J. (Eds.). (2011). *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis* (1. publ). London: SAGE.
- Secretary of State, Michael R. Pompeo (2019, May). *Looking North: Sharpening America's Arctic Focus*, Rovaniemi. Retrieved from <https://www.state.gov/looking-north-sharpening-americas-arctic-focus/>
- Senior Advisor, FOH (May 2019). Interview by B. Schaller.
- Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe (European Union (EU) June 2016).
- Sheehan, M. (1983). *The arms race*. Oxford: Robertson.



- Shenton, A. K., & Hayter, S. (2004). Strategies for gaining access to organisations and informants in qualitative studies. *Education for Information*, 22(3-4), 223–231. doi:10.3233/EFI-2004-223-404
- Skogrand, K. (2004). *Alliert i krig og fred: 1940 - 1970. Norsk forsvarshistorie: Bd. 4*. Bergen: Eide.
- Smith, A. D. (1992). National Identity and the Idea of European Unity. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)*, 68(1), 55–76.
- Solbakk, J. H. (2015). *Vulnerable groups*. Retrieved from <https://www.etikkom.no/en/library/topics/research-on-particular-groups/vulnerable-groups/#Vulnerability>
- Søreide, I. E. (2016, August). *NATO and the North Atlantic: Revitalizing Collective Defense and the Maritime Domain*. Minister of Defence. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/prism/id2508886/>
- Søreide, I. E., Wammen, N., Haglund, C., Sveinsson, G. B., & Hultqvist, P. (2015, April 9). Fem nordiske ministre i felles kronikk: Russisk propaganda bidrar til å så splid. *Aftenposten*. Retrieved from <https://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kronikk/i/wnao/Fem-nordiske-ministre-i-felles-kronikk-Russisk-propaganda-bidrar-til-a-sa-splid>
- Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova (2018, May). *Briefing by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova*. Press Briefing, Moscow. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3231268](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3231268)
- Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova (2019a, January). *Briefing by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova*. Press Briefing, Moscow. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3470895](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3470895)
- Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova (2019b, July). *Briefing by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova*. Press Briefing, Moscow. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3719228](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3719228)

- Spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova (2019c, May). *Briefing by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova*. Press Briefing, Moscow. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3658436?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_cKNonkJE02Bw&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_cKNonkJE02Bw\\_languageId=en\\_GB#26](http://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3658436?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_cKNonkJE02Bw&_101_INSTANCE_cKNonkJE02Bw_languageId=en_GB#26)
- Staalesen, A. (2015, October 23). Russian military builds four more Arctic bases. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/2015/10/russian-military-builds-four-more-arctic-bases>
- Staalesen, A. (2017, January 11). Missile complex S-400 on guard in Kola Peninsula. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2017/01/missile-complex-s-400-guard-kola-peninsula>
- Staalesen, A. (2018, September 19). Former defense chief sees a serious Russian threat against Norway's Finnmark region. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2018/09/former-norwegian-defense-chief-sees-serious-russian-threat-against-norways-finnmark>
- Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy (Government of Canada 2010).
- Statistics Canada. (2016). *Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Highlight Tables: Ethnic Origin, both sexes, age (total), Canada, 2016 Census – 25% Sample data*. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/hltfst/imm/Table.cfm?Lang=E&T=31&Geo=01&SP=1&age=1&sex=1&SO=4D>
- Statsministerens kontor. (2019). *Statsminister Solbergs deltagelse på konferansen Arctic Territory of Dialogue' 9.-10. april i St. Petersburg*. Oslo. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/statsminister-solbergs-deltagelse-pa-konferansen-arctic-territory-of-dialogue-9.-10.-april-i-st.-petersburg/id2639193/>
- Stockdale, M. (2009). The Russian Experience of the First World War. In A. Gleason (Ed.), *Blackwell companions to world history. A Companion to Russian History* (pp. 311–334). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

- Stoltenberg, T. (2009). *Nordic Cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy: Proposals presented to the extraordinary meeting of Nordic foreign ministers in Oslo on 9 February 2009*. Oslo.
- Stoltenberg, T. (2014, October). *Speech at the Nordic Council Session 2014*, Stockholm. Retrieved from <https://www.norden.org/en/news/thorvald-stoltenberg-set-nordic-defence-and-security-commission>
- Strategic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Canada, of the other part (Council of the European Union 05.08.2016).
- Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy (Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) 2017).
- Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). (2018). *Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Scaparrotti meets with Russian Chief of General Staff, General Gerasimov*. Baku. Retrieved from <https://shape.nato.int/news-releases/supreme-allied-commander-europe--general-scaparrotti-meets-with-russian-chief-of-general-staff--general-gerasimov>
- Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). (2019). *NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Wolters speaks with Russian Chief of General Staff, General Gerasimov*. Belgium.
- Sutyagin, I. (2017). *Zapad-2017: Why Do the Numbers Matter?* Retrieved from <https://rusi.org/commentary/zapad-2017-why-do-numbers-matter>
- Sweden's Defence Policy 2016 to 2020 (The Government of Sweden 01.06.2015).
- Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region (Regeringskansliet, Statsrådberedningen 01.01.2011).
- Swedish Armed Forces. (2017). *Aurora 17: Stronger Defence Together*. Retrieved from <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/activities/exercises/aurora-17/>
- Swedish Armed Forces. (2018). *Northern Wind: Swedish Army Exercise 2019*. Retrieved from <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/activities/exercises/northern-wind/>
- Swedish Armed Forces. (2019). *Northern Wind 2019: Battle of the North*. Stockholm. Retrieved from <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/siteassets/2-var-verksamhet/ovningar1/nw19/folder-nw19-webb.pdf>
- Swedish Arms Control Officer (June 2019). Interview by B. Schaller.
- Swedish Defence Attaché (2019, April 17). Interview by B. Schaller. Moscow.

Swedish Diplomat (October 2018). Interview by B. Schaller.

Tamnes, R. (1987). Integration and Screening. The Two Faces of Norwegian Alliance Policy, 1945-1986. In R. Tamnes (Ed.), *Årbok for Forsvarshistorisk forskningscenter* (Forsvarsstudier VI, pp. 59–100). Oslo: Institutt for Forsvarsstudier (IFS).

TASS (2015, March 10). Russia suspends joint consultations on Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Moscow: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/russia/781973>

TASS (2016a, February 5). Moscow sees no sense in modernising arms control deal due to NATO military activity. Moscow: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/politics/854725>

TASS (2016b, July 5). Diplomat: NATO's actions provoke risks and challenges to Russian security interests. Moscow: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/politics/886520>

TASS (2017, June 1). Putin emphasizes that Sweden's entry to NATO would jeopardize ties with Moscow. St. Petersburg: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/politics/949067>

TASS (2019a, April 12). Russia's Black Sea drills feature A-50 jets, S-400 missile systems. Moscow: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/defense/1053510>

TASS (2019b, April 13). Russia to respond in kind to NATO plans in Black Sea — diplomat. Moscow: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/politics/1053577>

TASS (2019c, May 25). Russia and Canada may hold conference on Arctic in 2020. Ottawa: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/economy/1060075>

TASS (2019d, May 27). Russia, Canada and Denmark discuss claimed 'disputable' Arctic shelf zones. Ottawa: TASS Russian News Agency. Retrieved from <https://tass.com/arctic-today/1060175>

The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (President of the Russian Federation 12.01.2008).

The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (President of the Russian Federation 12.02.2013).

The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (President of the Russian Federation 30.11.2016).

- The Foundations of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Arctic until 2020 and Beyond (President of the Russian Federation September 2008).
- The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation and of the United States of America (Ed.) 2008. *2008 Ilulissat Declaration*.
- The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation (President of the Russian Federation 05.02.2010).
- The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation (President of the Russian Federation 25.12.2014).
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. (2017). *Comment by the Information and Press Department on compliance with transparency measures during preparation for West 2017 drills*. Moscow. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2845944?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_cKNonkJE02Bw&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_cKNonkJE02Bw\\_languageId=en\\_GB](http://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2845944?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_cKNonkJE02Bw&_101_INSTANCE_cKNonkJE02Bw_languageId=en_GB)
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. (2019). *Comment by the Information and Press Department regarding new anti-Russia sanctions adopted by the United States and Canada*. Moscow. Retrieved from [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/komentarii\\_predstavatelya/-/asset\\_publisher/MCZ7HQuMdqBY/content/id/3573396](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/komentarii_predstavatelya/-/asset_publisher/MCZ7HQuMdqBY/content/id/3573396)
- The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. (2016). *Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Theology*. Oslo.
- The Nordic declaration on solidarity (The Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden 2011).
- The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and National Security Efforts for the Period up to 2020 (President of the Russian Federation 2013).
- Tomassen, J. H. & Bendixen, A. (2014). *Øvelse i Nord-Norge vil provosere*. Retrieved from [https://www.nrk.no/troms/militaerovelse-i-finnmark-vil-provosere\\_-mener-forsker-1.12043358](https://www.nrk.no/troms/militaerovelse-i-finnmark-vil-provosere_-mener-forsker-1.12043358)
- Treaty between the Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation concerning Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean (The Kingdom of Norway; The Russian Federation 15.09.2010).

- Trellevik, A. (2019, April 9). Solberg før Putin-møtet: - I Norges interesse med godt samarbeid med Russland. *High North News*. Retrieved from <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/solberg-putin-motet-i-norges-interesse-med-godt-samarbeid-med-russland>
- Tyldum, G. (2012). Ethics or access? Balancing informed consent against the application of institutional, economic or emotional pressures in recruiting respondents for research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 15(3), 199–210. doi:10.1080/13645579.2011.572675
- Uslaner, E. M. (2002). *The Moral Foundations of Trust*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Utrikesdepartementet. (2016). *Säkerhet i ny tid: Betänkande av Utredning om Sveriges försvars- och säkerhetspolitiska samarbeten*. SOU 2016:57. Stockholm.
- Vägval i en globaliserad värld (Försvarsdepartementet 2013).
- Värnkraft - Inriktningen av säkerhetspolitiken och utformningen av det militära försvaret 2021-2025 (Försvarsdepartementet 14.05.2019).
- Väyrynen, R. (2000). Stable Peace through Security Communities? In A. M. Kacowicz, Y. Bar-Siman-Tov, O. Elgström, & M. Jerneck (Eds.), *Stable peace among nations* (pp. 108–129). Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk (Det Kongelige Utenriksdepartement 21.04.2017).
- Veterans Affairs Canada. (2019). *Second World War (1939 - 1945)*. Retrieved from <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/history/second-world-war>
- Vick, A. J. (1988). *Building Confidence During Peace and War* (A RAND Note). Santa Monica CA.
- Walt, S. M. (1998). International Relations: One World, Many Theories. *Foreign Policy, Special Edition*(110), 29-32+34-46.
- Waltz, K. N. (1979). *Theory of International Politics*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Warren, C. A. B. (2001). Qualitative Interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research. Context & method* (pp. 83–101). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.

- Weeks, T. R. (2006). Managing empire: tsarist nationalities policy. In D. Lieven (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of Russia. Vol. 2: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917* (pp. 27–44). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Welch Larson, D. (1997). Trust and missed opportunities in international relations. *Political Psychology, 18*(3), 701–734.
- Welch Larson, D. (2016). Conclusion. In M. Klimke, R. Kreis, & C. Ostermann (Eds.), *Cold War International History Project. Trust, but Verify. The Politics of Uncertainty and the Transformation of the Cold War Order, 1969-1991* (pp. 279–287). Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics: International Organization. *International Organization, 46*(2), 391–425.
- Wendt, A. (1995). Constructing International Politics. *International Security, 20*(1), 71–81.
- Wendt, A. (Ed.). (2015). *Quantum Mind and Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wezeman, S. T. (2016). *Military capabilities in the Arctic: A New Cold War in the High North?* (SIPRI Background Paper). Stockholm.
- Williams, M. C., & Neumann, I. B. (2000). From alliance to security community: Nato, Russia, and the power of identity. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies, 29*(2), 357–387.
- Wilson Rowe, E. (2009). Russian regional multilateralism: The case of the Arctic Council. In E. Wilson Rowe & S. Torjesen (Eds.), *Routledge contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe series: Vol. 15. The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy* (pp. 142–152). London, New York: Routledge.
- Wormdal, B. (2011). *Satellittkrigen: Norges militarisering av polområdene og verdensrommet*. Oslo: Pax Forlag.
- Wormdal, B. (2018, December 20). Skal seile nærmere russiske atomubåtbaser enn under den kalde krigen. *NRK*. Retrieved from <https://www.nrk.no/finnmark/skal-seile-naermere-russiske-atomubatbaser-enn-under-den-kalde-krigen-1.14342374>

- Ydén, K., Berndtsson, J., & Petersson, M. (2019). Sweden and the issue of NATO membership: exploring a public opinion paradox. *Defence Studies*, 19(1), 1–18. doi:10.1080/14702436.2019.1568192
- YLE News (2019, July 19). Russia threatens response if Finland and Sweden join NATO. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2018/07/russia-threatens-response-if-finland-and-sweden-join-nato>
- Zysk, K. (2011). Military Aspects of Russia's Arctic Policy: Hard Power and Natural Resources. In J. Kraska (Ed.), *Arctic Security in an Age of Climate Change* (pp. 85–106). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zysk, K. (2015). Mellom fredsretorikk og militær opprustning: Russlands sikkerhetspolitiske og militære atferd i nordområdene. In T. Heier & A. Kjølberg (Eds.), *Norge og Russland. Sikkerhetspolitiske utfordringer i nordområdene* (pp. 71–84). Oslo: Universitetsforlag.



