

Canada's Arctic policy

Striking a balance between national interests and circumpolar cooperation

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

What is fascinating about the Arctic region¹ is that despite its remoteness, sparse population and hostile climate, it is still of high interest and relevance in contemporary politics. From an environmental perspective, it is by now well documented that the polar areas are deeply interconnected with the rest of the world. This is alarmingly demonstrated by the impacts of climate change, and most Arctic states recognize the need for cooperative actions to deal with these challenges. Politically, even though there seems to be a general agreement that the likelihood of a “new Cold War” in the Arctic is scant, the Arctic states, as well as non-Arctic states and actors, are paying close attention to the region and what others are doing in terms of establishing a presence, resource development, capacity building and military activities. In addition, there have been recent examples of spillover from conflicts elsewhere in the world affecting Arctic cooperation and circumpolar relations. Such realities have also gained increased media attention, and as a result, Arctic issues are rising on the political as well as the public agenda.

Canada is the world’s second largest country after Russia, over 40 % (3.4 million km²) of its landmass is located in the Arctic – including the northern territories the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut – and the Arctic coastline of 162,000 km constitutes almost 75% of Canada’s total shoreline (Bonikowsky, 2012). Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy (2010, 4) states: “Given our extensive Arctic coastline, our Northern energy and natural resource potential, and the 40 percent of our land mass situated in the North, Canada is an Arctic power”. Yet, up until very recently, Canada’s knowledge about and presence in its northern region has been more or less absent. Canada clearly needs to cooperate with other states to be able to respond to the challenges and opportunities arising in the Arctic, in particular to manage both natural and human resources in the region. The consequences of this reality are becoming evident, and the Canadian government is working to advance its knowledge about the High North², to position itself in the region and increase control over its Arctic territories by asserting and exercising sovereignty. When Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper took office in 2006, he made the Arctic a central part of his electoral platform and has later made several promises regarding the region, which will be examined throughout this thesis.

¹The term *Arctic* will be used to refer to the northernmost region of the world, containing the Arctic Ocean and parts of the eight Arctic states: Canada, the United States (Alaska), the Russian Federation, Norway, Denmark (Greenland), Sweden, Finland and Iceland.

²An example is “The State of Northern Knowledge in Canada” issued by the Canadian Polar Commission in March 2014.

1.1 Research objective and problem statement

1.1.1 Research objective

Firstly, I have chosen Canada's Arctic policymaking and implementation as the object of study for my thesis because the Canadian north is severely underdeveloped compared to the High North of most of the other Arctic states, and I find it interesting that this otherwise well-developed country face such vast challenges in its Arctic region. Secondly, the Arctic is an unpredictable region in which several states express ambitions for territorial claims and sovereignty expansions. In this regard, Canada has the potential to become an Arctic great power by virtue of its landmass, coastline and resource potential in the region. This combination of Canada's prospect to become an Arctic great power with its underdeveloped northern territories allows for an interesting case in terms of examining how Canada works domestically and maneuvers on the international arena to meet these challenges while safeguarding national interests and protects its Arctic sovereignty. To this end, Canada's actions, the intentions and motives behind these actions, as well as the outcomes and effects of Canadian Arctic policymaking are matters of interest. I will examine the 'new era of the Arctic' and how Canada works to position itself in this transforming region unilaterally, through bilateral relations with the other Arctic states and through transnational cooperation in multilateral forums, primarily the Arctic Council.

1.1.2 Problem statement and research questions

The problem statement of this thesis is:

What are the main priorities for Canada in its Arctic region, and how does Canada pursue its Arctic policy on the domestic and international level?

The first part of the problem statement leads to the question:

- Is Canada driven primarily by sovereignty and security motives, or by a genuine interest in cooperative stewardship?

The second part of the problem statement derives two research questions:

- How does Canada work to position itself in its High North, both domestically and internationally, seen in light of the recent spark of interest in the circumpolar region?
- To what extent does Canada's Arctic policy contribute to influence international relations and shape the international Arctic agenda?

1.1.3 Theoretical foundation and justification for the problem statement

To structure the empirical findings and enable an analysis, a theoretical framework addressing particularly international relations, the state and the role of international regimes is necessary.

To this end, realism and neoliberal institutionalism are appropriate, seeing how they represent opposing views on relevant aspects I wish to examine in the thesis. Of particular relevance are views on central actors in international relations and driving forces behind state behavior; to what extent are states able or willing to disregard national security interests in order to achieve broader goals? In addition, the role and significance of international regimes and prospects for transnational cooperation based on shared interests to achieve mutually beneficial political outcomes are matters of interest. The main divide in the literature on Canadian Arctic policymaking can be related to these two theoretical perspectives. On one side, realist scholars request a stronger assertion of Canadian control and sovereignty in the Arctic, and criticize the Government for not doing enough to upgrade Canada's military capabilities in the region, which are considered far below international standards. On the other side, those in the liberal camp emphasize how Canada's Arctic region and circumpolar relationships are well managed through diplomacy, partnerships and collaboration, and that the Government should focus on other political issues, such as integrating the northern territories into Canada as a whole (Griffiths et al., 2011; Coates et al., 2008). This project consequently relates to the theoretical tradition within political science as well as the existing literature on Canadian Arctic policymaking.

1.1.4 Contributions

Being aware of the above-mentioned divide in the theory and literature, I wish to go beyond theory testing and development. The main purpose of this project is rather to examine different aspects of Canada's political approach to the Arctic, and deepen the understanding of Canadian Arctic policymaking. By shedding light on recent developments and exploring in depth Canada's domestic circumpolar policy and actions internationally, this project will contribute to existing research in the field. One of the main contributions of the thesis is to present a change in the social efforts directed towards the Canadian High North since the change in government in 2006. While the conservative Harper government as expected focuses on security and sovereignty, the well being of and development for Canada's northerners is also at the forefront of its Arctic policy. Throughout this thesis, I will demonstrate both the main initiatives in the Canadian northern territories and why these issues are prioritized by the Government.

1.2 Canada's territorial north

Canada is a federal state, with one federal, ten provincial and three territorial governments: the Northwest Territories (NWT) created in 1870, the Yukon established in 1898, and Nunavut in 1999 (Coates & Poelzer, 2014). The three territories constitute "the territorial north", while "Canada's north" often refers to a wider area including the northern part of some of the provinces (Figure 1.1). While Canada's territories covers a vast land area, the population is very sparse. In 2013, Canada had a total population of 35,158,304, while the population in the territories was 36,700 inhabitants in Yukon, 43,537 in the Northwest Territories and 35,591



Figure 1.1: Map over Canada’s provinces and territories (Natural Resources Canada, 2006)

in Nunavut (Statistics Canada, 2014). Thus, the entire population of the territories is approximately 115,828 people, which means 0.32% of Canadians inhabit 40% of the country’s land-mass. The sparse population give rise to a wide range of socio-economic, administrative and financial challenges, which I will return to in later in the thesis. The Aboriginal peoples of Canada, as defined by the *Constitution Act* of 1982, comprise of First Nations (Indians), Métis and Inuit. Aboriginal communities are predominantly located in reserves, in the northern territories, as well as in Nunavik in Northern Quebec and in Nunatsiavut, Labrador in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2013a). In terms of distribution among ethnic groups, Nunavut has the largest Aboriginal population. In 2006, about 85% of the total population in Nunavut was of Aboriginal identity, while the Aboriginal population constituted 25% in the Yukon, and 50% in the Northwest Territories (Statistics Canada, 2009). Lastly, there is a significant constitutional difference between the Canadian provinces and territories. While the provinces are co-sovereign units and practice constitutional powers in their own right, the territories are part of the federal realm and exercise delegated powers under the authority of the Parliament of Canada (Privy Council Office, 2010). However, since the 1970s, the territories have attained increased self-government, and I will elaborate on this development known as the “devolution process” in chapter seven.

1.3 Historical background: Developments in Canada’s Arctic approach

The Arctic is undergoing rapid transformations, and in order to develop an understanding of Canada’s contemporary circumpolar policy, it is useful to look at the historical development of

Canada's approach to the region and how it has been altered by changes in the international environment. The Canadian Arctic was transferred from the British in 1880, but the Government showed little interest in the region and did not send official missions to the Arctic until the Klondike gold rush in the early 20th century (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 73). For decades, Canada's northern sovereignty remained unchallenged, partly based on entitlement through international law, and partly due to the territory's geographical remoteness (Coates et al., 2008, 51-53). This changed with the Second World War, which can be seen as one of the first illustrations of the implications of international events on the Arctic region. Even though Canada's territorial ownership remained intact after the war, the north was brought into strategic focus and the interdependence between security and sovereignty became evident (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 73-74). Consequently, the Canadian government became concerned about its Arctic security, realizing its importance for national security in general (Huebert, 2011, 34). This reality became evident for the United States (US) as well, which during the 1950s pushed for access to Canada's Arctic for strategic reasons, focusing on surveillance and air defense (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 74). Reactions to the American involvement in Canada's north were split. Some expressed concern about the Canadian government's lack of control over its own territory, while others, seeing how the US accommodated Canadian interests and sought harmony instead of relying on coercion, saw it as an affirmation of Canada's Arctic sovereignty (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 75-76).

Canada has since been more or less dependent on the United States to uphold its Arctic security. This has certain benefits for Canada, who has been able to "free-ride" American projects in the region, but also complicates the bilateral relationship. For instance, in the 1960s, the Canadian government was able to pursue an ad hoc approach to Arctic sovereignty and focus on environmental projects, development and higher living standards for northerners because it could ultimately rely on the United States to provide security in the region (Coates et al., 2008, 123-124). At the same time, it was American actions that sparked Canadian Arctic sovereignty concerns in 1969 and 1985, when the US government announced it would be using the Northwest Passage as though it was an international strait and not Canadian internal waters, i.e. transiting through the Passage without seeking Canadian permission (Byers, 2009). These incidents must be seen in light of Canada's dependence on the United States, and are considered the primary threats to Canada's Arctic sovereignty over the past 50 years (Byers, 2009). The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union again illustrate how shifts in the international climate triggered changes in Canada's Arctic approach. As the potential for conflict at this point seemed unlikely, the Government lost its strategic interest in the region and traditional preoccupations with "defending sovereignty" and military activities in the north declined (Coates et al., 2008, 125-135). Instead, focus turned to diplomacy and cooperation, attention shifted from traditional to new security concerns, and issues such as Aboriginal land claims, northern self-government and environmental considerations came to the forefront in the 1990s (Coates et al., 2008, 126). This also resulted in downsizing of the Canadian Forces, and by the end of the 2000s their assets in the north were sparse (Coates et al., 2008, 133).

1.3.1 The Harper government's Arctic approach

In 2006, Stephen Harper from the Conservative Party became Prime Minister, and Canada's Arctic approach was altered again. The Conservatives and the Liberals are known for different Arctic priorities, with the former emphasizing enforcement and surveillance capabilities, and the latter focusing on diplomatic initiatives (Huebert, 2011, 60). During the 2005-06 election campaign, Harper made Arctic matters a central piece of the electoral platform for the first time, assigning great political importance to the Arctic as one of his primary legacy projects (Griffiths et al., 2011, 4). Also after taking office, Prime Minister Harper has made the north a top priority, and the Government sees the north as a fundamental part of Canada's heritage and identity, as key to current and future prosperity, and critical to Canada's economic strength (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009). In accordance with Huebert's characteristic, the conservative government emphasizes the primacy of safety and security for Canadians, the importance of Canadian sovereignty and the need to ensure Canada can return to the international stage as a credible and influential country (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008). Underlining the importance attributed to the region, the Prime Minister has since 2006 conducted an annual Northern Tour, meeting with and listening to northern people and leaders to help make lives easier and more affordable for Canada's northerners (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014b). The ninth tour, conducted in August 2014, reflects the priorities set out in Canada's Northern Strategy:

“[the tour] will build on the Government's comprehensive and far-reaching work to date, by supporting Northerners through investments in education, research and development, agricultural science and modern technology, as well as by enforcing and defending Canadian territorial sovereignty” (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014b).

Despite the efforts and investments allocated to the Canadian High North, the Harper government is criticized for its Arctic policy from all fronts. Some express concern about the Government's lopsided approach, claiming there is too much emphasis on military initiatives over the integration of the territories into the country as a whole (Coates et al., 2008), or that the Government's thinking is not able to meet the new problems and possibilities of the 21st century (Lackenbauer, 2011a). On the other side, based on the promises made to invest in northern defense capabilities, the Harper government is criticized for not attributing enough resources to capacity building in the High North, and Canada is still seen as a laggard internationally in terms of Arctic military capabilities. The first critique is not entirely justified, as Canada's Arctic foreign policy focuses not only on national security and exercising sovereignty, but also protection of the Arctic environment, social and economic development and the empowerment of northerners (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010). Arguably, the Government has a somewhat more comprehensive approach to the Arctic than it is given credit for, and there has been significant investments in social initiatives directed towards the territorial north since Harper took office. In short, this can be seen as a result of two factors. Firstly, the political mobilization

among indigenous peoples beginning in the 1970s and increased pressure from more organized communities means the Government needs to take northerners' demands and needs into account when formulating domestic policies. Secondly, the Harper government recognizes the need to improve the living conditions in the Canadian north to facilitate the continued habitation of the territory, which again is a prerequisite for safeguarding Canadian Arctic sovereignty. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated, the Canadian territories are severely underdeveloped compared to most of the remaining circumpolar north, and there is still a vast gap between what is being done and what needs to be done for Canada's northerners to have the same opportunities and quality of life as southerners. Related, I will argue there is more truth to the second point of critique - that there is not enough resources attributed to the north. The Government has been investing in the Canadian Arctic, and its attention towards the region is definitely superior to that of its predecessors. However, Canada still lags behind the other circumpolar states in terms of Arctic investments, presence and capabilities³. For instance, Canada's icebreaking fleet consists of only six ice-breakers, each patrolling 27,000 km of the 162,000 km Arctic coastline (Kingston, 2014). In comparison, Russia is adding ten new nuclear-powered heavy icebreakers to what is already the world's largest icebreaking fleet at 36 ships, and the significantly larger Russian fleet is responsible for an Arctic coastline of "only" 40,000 kilometers (Kingston, 2014).

1.4 Arenas for Arctic policymaking and cooperation

In order to situate Canada's Arctic policy in a broader context, it is necessary to look at multi-national arenas for circumpolar cooperation. In this regard, Young and Cherkasov (1992, 9) differentiate between two types of regions: regions in which conflicts threaten to escalate in ways that entangle outside parties and trigger conflicts, and regions attracting outside powers in pursuit of their wider interests, like the Arctic. The central problem in the latter category is to establish institutional arrangements regulating the interaction of outside actors to protect the integrity of the region, without impeding the pursuit of national interests (Cherkasov & Young, 1992, 9). Cooperation occurs when parties realize there is potential to achieve joint gains by coordinating actions, and I will demonstrate how this has been the development in the Arctic.

The end of the Cold War marked a shift in thinking about the Arctic, and the region has over the past decades become the focal point for a range of initiatives, forming a complex picture of transnational cooperation (Young, 2005, 9). Arctic issues tend to transcend national borders, and states recognize that many of the challenges and opportunities cannot be dealt with or exploited unilaterally, in large part due to the region's brutal environment and the global reality of climate change. Young argues that the cooperative arrangements emerging in the Arctic differs from what is traditionally considered international regimes. Arctic arrangements are based on ministerial declarations rather than conventions or treaties, which means their legal

³More specific numbers on the Harper government's investments in the Arctic and northerners will be presented in ch. 5.4, Canada's Economic Action Plan, and in ch. 7 on governance in Canada's northern territories.

status is relatively weak, and they are not regulatory in nature or empowered with the authority to make binding decisions (Young, 2005, 10). However, this is not necessarily a weakness, and while realists push for a “hard law” approach and the creation of a regional treaty for the Arctic, others emphasize how “soft law” declarations and informal arrangements are the most effective and appropriate regimes in the region, illustrated by growing institutional cooperation (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 138-139). Young argues for the latter based on three factors. Firstly, he highlights the position of non-state actors in circumpolar cooperation, particularly the central role of indigenous peoples in the Arctic Council. Secondly, he claims adjustable governance agreements have clear advantages because of the unpredictable conditions prevailing in the Arctic. Lastly, because many Arctic issues result from the impact of outside forces, a legally binding treaty would not be able to address the root causes of the issues (Young, 2009, 76).

1.4.1 The Arctic Council

The salient organization for multilateral cooperation in the circumpolar north today is unquestionably the Arctic Council (AC) (Huebert, 2014b), and accordingly, significant attention will be devoted to the Council throughout the thesis. To provide the background for the later discussion and analysis of the Canadian chairmanship, this subchapter will account for the history and structure of the Arctic Council. Canada considers itself a leading Arctic state, and a core element of its multilateral approach to the region is the Arctic Council, which has emerged as a significant component of Canada’s northern foreign policy (House of Commons Canada, 2013; Huebert, 2014b). The Canadian government expresses great faith in the Arctic Council as the cornerstone of intergovernmental cooperation on Arctic issues, considering it to play a key role in developing a common agenda among Arctic states and as an important venue for deepening global understanding of the region (Canada’s Northern Strategy, 2009, 35).

Already in 1989, Canadian Prime Minister Mulroney suggested the creation of a multilateral body to improve cooperation among the Arctic states, but neither the Americans nor the Soviets welcomed this initiative (Huebert, 2011, 36). However, the governments of the Arctic states did recognize the need for a collective approach to the environmental threats to the Arctic (AEPS, 1991, 6). Thus, on a Finnish initiative, the Soviet Union/Russia, the United States, Canada, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Denmark (Greenland) – the Arctic States – signed the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) in 1991. AEPS can be seen as a compromise between the cooperative Canada and the rather reluctant United States, but perhaps the only viable option under the international circumstances in the aftermath of the Cold War. Noteworthy, Canada was able to include participation of northern indigenous peoples as permanent participants in AEPS (Huebert, 2014b, 3), which shows Canada’s commitment to the involvement of and consultation with northerners at an early stage of circumpolar cooperation.

Canada finally succeeded in transforming the somewhat limited AEPS into the Arctic Council in 1996, which was established as a high-level intergovernmental forum by the Governments the Arctic states at a meeting in Ottawa (Arctic Council, 1996). The United States

was still reluctant towards the creation of an international organization with a legal personality, and only agreed to join after the proposed powers of the Council had been substantially reduced (Huebert, 2011, 24). The Arctic Council's objective was to provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants, on common Arctic issues, in particular sustainable development and environmental protection (Arctic Council, 1996). The Council was also intended to oversee and coordinate the programs established under the AEPS, to adopt terms of reference for, oversee and coordinate a sustainable development program, and lastly, disseminate information, encourage education and promote interests in Arctic related issues (Arctic Council, 1996). The Arctic Council's leadership is based on a bi-annual rotating chairmanship between the eight member states, and its activities are conducted in six working groups⁴, in addition to task forces created for specific initiatives (Arctic Council, 2011g).

In addition to the member states, permanent participant status has been granted to six indigenous people's organizations⁵. According to the Ottawa Declaration: "the category of Permanent Participation is created to provide for active participation and full consultation with the Arctic indigenous representatives within the Arctic Council" (Arctic Council, 1996). The Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat in Copenhagen, established under the AEPS, has been maintained to support the permanent participants. Funding for the secretariat is provided by the Arctic states on a voluntary basis, but while the Government of Canada has been more helpful than most Arctic states in this regard, the support is still insufficient to address capacity issues and funding needs (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 55). Moreover, there are also currently twelve non-Arctic states⁶ that have been admitted as observers to the Arctic Council, in addition to nine intergovernmental organizations, and eleven NGOs (Arctic Council, 2014b). Observer status continues as long as consensus exists among the Ministers, and observers engaging in activities at odds with the Ottawa declaration or the Rules of Procedure will have its status suspended (Arctic Council, 2013). Decision-making in the Council is the exclusive right and responsibility of the member states with the involvement of permanent participants, and all decisions are made by consensus. However, observers are encouraged to make contributions, primarily through engagement at the working group level (Arctic Council, 2013).

1.4.2 The Arctic Five

While the Arctic Council is the primary forum for circumpolar cooperation, and the main object of interest in this thesis, another constellation of Arctic stakeholders has formed over the past

⁴Arctic Contaminants Action Plan (ACAP), Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF), Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR), Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) and the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG).

⁵The Arctic Athabaskan Council, the Aleut International Association, the Gwich'in Council International, the Inuit Circumpolar Council, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North and the Saami Council (Arctic Council, 2011e).

⁶France, Germany, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom, Italy, China, Japan, India, Singapore and the Republic of Korea (Arctic Council, 2014b).

years that is worth mentioning. Among the eight Arctic states, geography divides the “Ocean Five” from the “Non-Littoral Three” (Griffiths, 2011, 191). The Arctic Ocean coastal states are often referred to as the “Arctic Five”, and comprise of Canada, the United States (US), the Russian Federation, Norway and Denmark (Greenland). These states have found it purposeful to address certain Arctic issues among themselves rather than within the Arctic Council, and the exclusion of the territorial states, indigenous peoples groups and observers of the Council from the decision making process in region has caused tensions among the Arctic stakeholders (Young, 2012, 171). This arrangement has thus been considered to undermine the primacy and authority of the Arctic Council, and to challenge the Council’s role as the “principal international forum for addressing Arctic issues” (Young, 2012, 171). In this way, the Arctic Five illustrates an intermediate position between unilateral and multilateral actions in the High North and suggest a fragmentation of Arctic affairs (Young, 2012, 171).

In 2008, the Arctic Ocean coastal states met in Ilulissat, Greenland with the objective of affirming the role of the United Nations Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in the process of mapping out and submitting claims for the outer limits of the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean. The meeting produced a statement of common purpose on the adherence to UNCLOS: the Ilulissat Declaration (Ilulissat Declaration, 2008). On the one side, it seems natural that issues concerning the Arctic Ocean are dealt with in the forum of the coastal states, seeing that these countries have immediate interests at stake, in particular related to extended continental shelf claims. However, on a general basis, all Arctic issues are of relevance for each of the Arctic states, and this form of “exclusive cooperation” has been criticized by the non-littoral states as well as representatives of indigenous peoples organizations. In 2010, the Arctic Five met again, on invitation from the Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister, in Chelsea, Quebec. As with the Ilulissat meeting, the remaining Arctic Council member states, permanent participants and observers were excluded, and the Canadian government was criticized for marginalizing the role of the Council (Lackenbauer, 2011b, 241). The non-littoral states expressed public frustration over the fact that they had not been invited, the EU opposed this narrowing of the Arctic agenda, and Hilary Clinton stated the United States did not support the exclusion of actors with legitimate interests in the region, even though the US itself is a member (Lackenbauer, 2011b, 242). The thesis will further elaborate this “sub-regional approach to Arctic governance” (Griffiths, 2011, 191) and the tensions between the Arctic Five and the other Arctic stakeholders when presenting the political context in the region and in the chapter on Canada’s Arctic Council chairmanship.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This chapter has provided an introduction to the topic of the thesis - Canadian Arctic policy-making and implementation - with the objective to facilitate later discussions and analysis. I have presented Canada’s territorial north, the historical background for Canada’s approach to its High North and an outline of the current Harper government’s Arctic approach. I have also

addressed arenas for Arctic policymaking and cooperation, emphasizing the supremacy of the Arctic Council. The following chapter will present the theoretical framework of the thesis, consisting of realism and neoliberal institutionalism, and I will illustrate how both perspectives can be said to have certain explanatory power when it comes to Canadian Arctic politics and the political situation unfolding in the region. Thereafter, I will account for the methodological approach, and why qualitative methods are most appropriate for my research objective. I will justify the case selection and describe the data collection process, address strengths and weaknesses of my data, as well as ethnical considerations for carrying out this research project.

After the theoretical and methodological framework for the thesis has been established, I will address the political context and central stakeholders in the Arctic. Firstly, I have chosen to devote quite a lot of attention to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), based on the significance of this maritime treaty in the governing of the world's oceans, and hence in regulating relations between the Arctic states and their sovereignty in the region. Thereafter, I will present the Arctic policies and strategies of the other Arctic states, with the objective to outline their political priorities and to conduct a comparison with Canada's highlighted policy areas. Based on statements from these documents, I will briefly discuss the tensions between the Arctic Five and the remaining member states of the Arctic Council. Lastly, this chapter will address the general political situation in the Arctic with the purpose of deepening the understanding of the trends and processes unfolding in the region: are we moving in a cooperative direction or towards a conflicted situation?

In the subsequent chapter, I will present a summary of the main documents constituting the foundation for the thesis' discussions and analysis. The purpose of this synopsis is to set forth Canada's Arctic policy as it is expressed in official documents in order to examine highlighted areas, how the Government is working to position itself in the region, and to what extent it is successful in promoting and implementing its Arctic policy domestically and internationally. Thereafter, I will discuss and analyze the cases: the Canadian Arctic Council chairmanship 2013-2015 and governance in Canada's northern territories. Chapter six will begin with an account of the Arctic Council's development from a transnational forum towards an international organization, followed by a discussion of Canada's chairmanship, including highlighted policy areas, motives behind these and how Canada acts both in its own national interests and in the interests of the broader circumpolar community through the chairmanship. Lastly, I will establish Canada's influence on the Arctic agenda through the chairmanship, as well as the Arctic Council's significance for Canadian policymaking. Chapter seven examines the political development of the northern territories, achievements so far in terms of the transfer of governmental power, authority and resources to the territorial governments, as well as remaining challenges. In the final chapter, I will analyze and develop an answer to the research questions, and based on this discussion, draw a conclusion on the problem statement.

THEORY

This chapter will outline the theoretical foundation for the thesis, consisting of realism and neoliberal institutionalism. The objective is to look at Canadian Arctic policymaking from both perspectives, and examine which theory best explains state actions and events unfolding in the Arctic as a result of the spark of interest in the region. The theories have different views on international relations (IR), particularly regarding the role and impact of international regimes¹ and prospects for cooperation. Realism argues states are mainly driven by self-interests and security concerns, and rarely collaborate because of barriers to cooperation in the international system. This is a systemic feature institutions cannot mediate, as they are unable to make significant contributions to policy outcomes. In contrast, neoliberal institutionalism holds that states can find common ground for cooperation, especially through international institutions, which are considered capable of influencing the political agenda and state actions.

2.1 Theoretical approaches to international relations

The two main theories in international relations are realism and liberalism, and most debates take place between or within these approaches (Mearsheimer, 2001). Liberalism was prevalent after the First World War and the creation of the League of Nations; the first international organization intended to maintain world peace. However, largely as a result of the outbreak of the Second World War and the failings of the idealist project in the 1940s, realism came to the forefront and has since been the salient theory (Marsden & Savigny, 2011). This is the reason why I have included it in the theoretical framework of my thesis. Furthermore, liberal institutionalism is considered the major challenger to realism's dominance, and I will focus on neoliberal institutionalism, a branch developed in the 1980s (Grieco, 1988, 486). However, in spite of divergences between realism and liberalism, the transition to neorealism and neoliberalism resulted in "the neo-neo synthesis of the 1980s", meaning the main theories of IR became increasingly compatible (Waeber, 2000, 163). Consequently, both theories view states as the principal actors in international politics, and the difference of primary interest for this thesis is thus whether international regimes markedly affect the prospects for cooperation and international stability. Hence, I have chosen neoliberal institutionalism because the theory combines the realist assumption of states as the main actors with a strong faith in international regimes' ability to impact world politics and optimism regarding cooperation. These aspects make neoliberal institutionalism relevant for this project, as it can shed light on the combination of unilateral actions and cooperative arrangements emerging in the Arctic.

¹Regimes and institutions are used interchangeably in both realist and institutionalist literature (Mearsheimer, 1995). International regimes are in this thesis understood as "principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue area" (Krasner, 1982).

2.2 Neoliberal Institutionalism

2.2.1 Core assumptions

Liberalism has its roots from the Enlightenment and thinkers such as John Locke and Immanuel Kant, and is optimistic about the prospects of making the world safer and more peaceful (Mearsheimer, 2001, 15). In contrast to earlier versions of liberalism, the neoliberal approach accepts the realist argument that states, as unitary-rational actors in pursuit of self-interests, are the main actors in world affairs, as well as the notion of the international system as anarchic (Grieco, 1988, 492). However, seeing the world as interconnected and interdependent, neoliberal institutionalism refuses realism's prioritization of strategic and military power, which is considered secondary to absolute gains and long-term mutual benefits, and argues states care about a wider range of issues than just relative power gains (Marsden & Savigny, 2011, 51-55).

2.2.2 Cooperation and institutions

Neoliberalism emphasizes cooperation and how states can join forces with other states and non-state actors to achieve their goals and mutually beneficial outcomes (Marsden & Savigny, 2011, 76). Neoliberal institutionalism considers cheating to be the greatest obstacle to cooperation, but that international institutions can contribute to overcome this barrier and facilitate interstate collaboration (Grieco, 1988, 486-487). Thus, while accepting the realist assumptions of the state as a rational actor in pursuit of self-interests and the premise of an anarchic international system, neoliberal institutionalists argue realism is wrong to dismiss possibilities for international cooperation and the abilities of international institutions (Grieco, 1988, 492). Seeing institutions as mechanisms to achieve cooperation, states are not the only significant actors on the international arena. International institutions are relevant in world politics as arenas; bringing officials together and activating potential coalitions, as members of transgovernmental coalitions and as points of governmental intervention in transaction systems (Keohane & Nye, 1974, 55). Institutions facilitate interstate cooperation by providing services, through norm creation and allocation, rule observation and settlement of disputes, as well as facilitating communication and information flow (Keohane & Nye, 1974, 54).

2.3 Realism

The principal branches of realism are classical and structural realism, represented by Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz, in addition to Mearsheimer's offensive realism. What makes these realist theories important is the explanation for why states pursue power and how much power they are likely to want (Mearsheimer, 2001, 18). Classical realism dominated the study of international relations from the late 1940s until the early 1970s. This perspective is based on the assumption that human beings have an inherent "will to power", which is seen as the

principal driving force behind state behavior as they look for opportunities to dominate other states (Mearsheimer, 2001, 19). States aim to gain as much power as they can, looking to maximize their relative power to others, and hegemony is the ultimate goal (Mearsheimer, 2001, 22). Classical realists recognize that international anarchy can make states worry about the balance of power, but such structural constraints are nevertheless considered a second-order cause of state behavior (Mearsheimer, 2001, 19). Structural realism entered the field in the late 1970s, and this approach assumes states primarily aim for survival, making security their main priority. In contrast to classical realists, Waltz focuses on the structure of the international system as the principal explanation for state behavior (Mearsheimer, 2001, 19). Anarchy is a central factor, forcing states to compete with each other for power. However, structural realists argue states ultimately act defensively, and concentrate on maintaining the balance of power in the system (Mearsheimer, 2001, 22). Mearsheimer's offensive realism is also a structural theory of international relations, emphasizing the system rather than human nature as the driving force behind state behavior, and that states consider power as key to their survival (Mearsheimer, 2001, 21). However, offensive realists dismiss the idea of status-quo powers acting defensively, and claims the system creates powerful incentives for states to maximize their relative power at the expense of rivals, with hegemony as the ultimate state goal (Mearsheimer, 2001, 21).

2.3.1 Core assumptions

In contrast to liberals, realists have a pessimistic outlook on international politics and see the world as dominated by security competition and war (Mearsheimer, 2001, 17). Realism encompasses five basic assumptions: states are the key unit of analysis and assumed to behave as unitary-rational actors. International anarchy is the principal force shaping states' motives and actions. States in anarchy are preoccupied with power and security, thus predisposed towards conflict and competition, and often failing to cooperate even when they have common interests. Lastly, international institutions have only marginal affect on the prospects for cooperation (Grieco, 1988, 488). The main behavioral patterns resulting from these assumptions are that states in the international system fear each other, all states aim to guarantee its own survival and to maximize its relative power positions over other states (Mearsheimer, 1995, 10-11).

Power is a key concept for realists, defined primarily through military capabilities: the ability of the state to achieve its objectives, ensure its survival, and the capacity to coerce other states (Marsden & Savigny, 2011, 49-50). Also central to the study of foreign policy is the emphasis on the international system as anarchic. Neoliberal institutionalism defines anarchy as the lack of a common government in world politics to enforce promises, and thus increasing the likelihood of cheating. Realism has a more gloomy interpretation of anarchy, stressing it means there is no overarching authority to prevent others from using violence, thus increasing the likelihood of war (Grieco, 1988, 497-498). This reality explains for realists why states rely on power and seek to maintain or increase their power position relative to others (Viotti & Kauppi, 2010, 56-57). Because they operate in an anarchic world, each state faces a self-

help situation in order to ensure their own survival. This increases the likelihood of the use of violence and further leads to what is known as a “security dilemma”: even if a state is sincerely arming only for defensive purposes, it is rational in a self-help system to assume the worst about other states and keep pace in any arms buildup (Viotti & Kauppi, 2010, 57).

2.3.2 Cooperation and institutions

Realism also has a pessimistic outlook on the prospects for international cooperation and on the capabilities of international institutions. Because international anarchy fosters competition and conflict among states, they are unwilling to cooperate even when they share common interests, which is something international institutions are unable to mitigate (Grieco, 1988, 485). However, classical realists have more faith in the ability of international regimes to contribute to stability than structural realists (Viotti & Kauppi, 2010, 67). The latter does not believe institutions can have an independent effect on state behavior, but are created and shaped by the most powerful states in the system to serve their interests and increase their power base. Thus, institutions are essentially “arenas for acting out power relationships”, reflecting state calculations of self-interests based on and mirroring the distribution of power (Mearsheimer, 1995, 13).

Neoliberal institutionalist assumptions have thus been met with heavy critique from the realist camp. Especially the claim that states seek to maximize individual absolute gains and are indifferent to the gains attained by others (Grieco, 1988, 487) seems to be hard to swallow. The possibility of cooperation is not completely ruled out by realists, but when states do cooperate, it is often because balance-of-power logic causes them to form alliances against common enemies (Mearsheimer, 1995, 12-13). Seeing the world as fundamentally competitive, realists argue that there are two major barriers to international cooperation. Firstly, states are often reluctant to enter cooperative agreements out of fear that the other side will cheat. Second, because they are always concerned about systemic balance of power and because “today’s friend may be tomorrow’s enemy in war”, they also worry their partners might gain more from cooperation and thus care about relative gains, which complicates cooperation (Grieco, 1988, 487). Hence, realists claim that by focusing merely on the obstacle of cheating, neoliberal institutionalism fails to consider the threat of conflict arising from international anarchy. This allows them to ignore the matter of relative gains, and consequently, neglect a major source of state inhibitions about international cooperation (Grieco, 1988, 487). Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin counter these claims by specifying two issues regarding the “relative gains debate”; the conditions under which relative gains are important, and the role of institutions when relative gains are at stake (Keohane & Martin, 1995, 44). They argue liberal institutionalism does not ignore relative gains, but is aware of the conditionality of such considerations. Relative gains considerations are not likely to have much impact on cooperation if the potential for absolute gain is substantial or in any context involving more than two states. Secondly, they argue that distributional conflicts and coordinating joint actions to achieve a stable cooperative outcome can make institutions more important (Keohane & Martin, 1995, 44-45).

2.4 Applying the theoretical framework to Canada's Arctic policy

The aim of this chapter has been to account for two competing perspectives on international relations. Both theories can be considered to have certain explanatory power with regards to Canadian Arctic policymaking and state actions, and complement each other by one theory being strong where the other is weak. Undoubtedly, the Arctic is being altered by a widespread set of factors, and the region is exposed to geopolitical changes with implications for all the Arctic states. Some argue emerging trends suggests that the prospect of conflict and an “arms race” in the Arctic remains a real possibility. For instance, Rob Huebert points to the development of Arctic foreign and defense policies, and the strengthening of militaries’ ability to operate and conduct more complex operations in the High North (Lackenbauer, 2011b, 232). These concerns are dismissed by those arguing the Arctic is still a peaceful region in which transnational cooperation prevails, that an armed conflict is very unlikely to play out in the foreseeable future, and what we are witnessing is nothing more than a classic security dilemma (Lackenbauer, 2011b, 233). These opposing views suggest that both the realist and the liberal approach needs to be taken into account when analyzing the current situation and future of the Arctic.

Realism consider states to be the only relevant actors in international relations, operating in an anarchical world based on self-interests. This approach can best explain state actions such as the emphasis on sovereignty and security, the formulation of defense policies and measures taken to protect national interests and secure natural resources. Considering the transformations taking place in the Arctic from a realist perspective, every state should “assume the worst” of others’ intentions and activities in the region, and should be prepared to defend their national sovereignty and security primarily through military means and the ability to act on potential threats. Realism however fails to provide a good explanation for the cooperative transnational arrangements emerging in the High North, as well as for the stability that has characterized the region since it appeared on the political radar. Seeing institutions merely as tools in the hands of states, reflecting the balance-of-power in the international system and expressing the interests of the most powerful actors, they are considered unable to contribute to policy outcomes of significance. Realism would emphasize the weak legal status and “soft law” character of Arctic arrangements and declarations, as well as the lack of formal conventions or treaties in the region. On that account, the American reluctance towards creating the Arctic Council as an international organization with regulatory power and authority to make legally binding decisions fits well within the realist outlook. From this perspective, it is to be expected that states are hesitant to surrender sovereignty to super-national bodies on Arctic issues, seeing how the region holds valuable natural resources and could become strategically important if predictions of new waterways opening to year-round navigation are fulfilled. Based on realism’s worldview, Canada’s first priority in the Arctic should be to protect national interests, security considerations should always be at the forefront, and the Government should devote substantial resources

to military capabilities, since the ability to respond to threats is the core of national security².

Neoliberal institutionalism on the other hand, would dismiss the importance of military upgrades and other “hard power” initiatives in the region, and fails to explain states’ intentions behind such actions. Instead, this theory emphasizes cooperation and interdependence, and has its strengths where realism falls short, namely to account for the rise of cooperative circumpolar arrangements and the general commitment to international law when regulating Arctic affairs. Neoliberal institutionalism emphasize the value of international regimes in world politics, which are considered to influence policymaking outcomes by functioning as arenas where representatives from states meet to address common issues. Intentions behind entering such cooperative arrangements are not simply based on national security concerns or pursuit of self-interests, and this optimistic outlook on international relations downplays the significance of relative gains concerns, claiming states can work together to achieve absolute gains. Looking at transnational issues from the neoliberal institutionalist perspective, an explanation of outcomes made simply in terms of “sovereignty” and “national interests” is therefore insufficient (Keohane & Nye, 1974, 57-58). There is also the question of distribution, and governments may find themselves politically dependent on other governments in order to achieve their goals. In such cases, sub-units of governments are likely to make use of international organizations for policy coordination and coalition building (Keohane & Nye, 1974, 58). The different forms of transnational cooperation in the Arctic region can be categorized by using neoliberal institutionalist theory. Examples of *direct intergovernmental agreements* are the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy from 1991 and the creation of the Arctic Council in 1996 (Young, 2005, 9). The Northern Forum, subnational actors cooperating based on interests that differ from those of their national government (Young, 2005, 9), is an example of *transgovernmental coalition building*. Such coalitions take place when subunits of government collaborate with like-minded agencies from other governments, jointly using their resources to influence the decision making process (Keohane & Nye, 1974, 44-47). Lastly, international institutions can be involved in transgovernmental relations in an issue area requiring a *central point or agency for coordination* (Keohane & Nye, 1974, 54). Examples of such arrangements designed to address specific Arctic issues and convey the significance of these concerns are the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the International Arctic Science Committee (Young, 2005, 9). Therefore, a natural extension of the increased activity in the Arctic region would be the establishment of international regimes to coordinate and manage transnational issues, and to pursue common interests and achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. From the neoliberal institutionalist perspective, Canada can benefit from collaboration with other states on Arctic issues, both to advance national interests and achieve joint objectives in the circumpolar north.

²Canada has for decades more or less neglected its Arctic region, leaving it to the United States to provide security in the region. Realists consider this to be a major flaw in Canada’s foreign and security policy. Seeing that multiple factors are transforming the North into a more accessible region, and how Arctic states has begun rebuilding their Northern military capabilities, Canadian policymakers need to strengthen Canadian Arctic security to be able to control these new activities (Huebert, 2011, 22).

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

The purpose of this study is to examine and develop an explanation for “why” and “how” in the Canadian Arctic policymaking process. In other words, to uncover the intentions behind Canada’s Arctic policy and to analyze how Canada works to position itself in the circumpolar north, both domestically and internationally. In addition, I will examine the outcomes of this process, with the objective of deepening the understanding of Canada’s influence on international relations and in shaping the Arctic agenda. This research objective consequently corresponds to literature and theory on actors and state actions in international relations. What are the driving forces behind states’ foreign policies, and what are the methods used to pursue national interests on the international arena? What are prerequisites for political influence and agenda setting internationally? Specifically, who sets the agenda in the Arctic? I find a qualitative methodological approach to be most appropriate for this research objective. Through document analysis, literature review and unstructured interviews, I will develop an answer to the problem statement and research questions.

3.1 Qualitative research design and case study

Social science methodology can be divided into qualitative and quantitative methods - often labeled “large-n” and “small-n” analysis, based on the number of units being studied (Ragin, 1992). Quantitative research projects are variable-oriented, aiming to define key variables that might influence a dependent variable, i.e. the objective of study, and problem statements are usually concerned with statistical generalizations (Ragin, 1992; Thagaard, 2009). Variables and relations between them dominate the research process, and the understanding of these relations is shaped by examining patterns of covariation in the data set, observed and averaged across many cases, not by studying how different features or causes fit together in individual cases (Ragin, 1992, 5). As opposed to “large-n” statistical quantitative analysis, qualitative research projects are often case-oriented, examining one case at the time with the objective to provide in-depth information on a smaller selection of units (Ragin, 1992; Thagaard, 2009, 17). Qualitative methods include observation, interviews, document analysis and analysis of audio and video recordings, and entail research questions emphasizing the meaning behind phenomena, aiming for an analytical description and understanding (Thagaard, 2009, 13; 17).

Despite its widespread use and centrality to social scientific discourse, the term “case” is not well defined within the social sciences (Ragin, 1992). However, implicit to most notions of case analysis is the idea that the objects of investigation are similar and separate enough to permit treating them as comparable instance of the same phenomenon (Ragin, 1992). Bennett

and George (2005, 17) define a case as “an instance of a class of events referring to a phenomenon of scientific interest”. In other words, the case, or “unit of analysis”, is an instance of a phenomenon selected for study. The case study approach in social sciences consists of detailed examination of an aspect of an episode to develop or test explanations that may be generalizable to other events (Bennett & George, 2005, 5). Case study methods include both within-case analysis of single cases and comparisons of a small number of cases, and this method is generally strong where statistical methods and formal models are weak (Bennett & George, 2005, 18-19). The strengths of case study methods are conceptual validity, deriving new hypothesis, exploring causal mechanisms and the ability to accommodate complex causal relations (Bennett & George, 2005, 19-22). The limitations and potential pitfalls are that case studies are particularly prone to case selection bias, meaning cases are chosen that share a particular outcome, they are generally strong at assessing whether and how a variable mattered to the outcome, but weak in terms of assessing how much it matters. Lastly, case studies are criticized for being unable to discriminate between competing explanations on the basis of the evidence, for a lack of representativeness of diverse populations and for overgeneralizing findings to types or subclasses of cases unlike those studied (Bennett & George, 2005, 22-32). Bennett and George (2005, 6) emphasize that process tracing, tracing the links between possible causes and observed outcomes in close detail, can be used to remedy some of the shortcomings of the case study method.

3.1.1 Case selection

The starting point for my research project was a general interest in international relations, which I wanted to direct towards the High North seeing that the region is currently the focal point for a range of unilateral actions, as well as interstate and multilateral cooperative arrangements. Specifically, I chose to focus on Canada because while the country cannot be said to be a global superpower, it still holds great potential for influence and opportunities in the Arctic. Canada is one of the main initiators in the circumpolar north, and I wanted to look in depth at the prospective for Canada to assume a leadership role in the region. While the two potentially strongest poles in the Arctic – The United States and Russia – are unwilling and unable to dominate the region for various reasons, Canada enjoys influence through the UNCLOS and the Arctic Council, and is thus one of the main beneficiaries of the region’s legal and intergovernmental framework (Wegge, 2011, 173). In addition, seeing that Canada’s territorial north covers such a vast area of the total land mass, and is home to most of Canadian Aboriginal peoples, it is interesting to look at Canada’s domestic approach to the Arctic. How does the Government operate to foster social and economic development while safeguarding the environment in the region? How has the northern territories evolved in terms of greater self-government? What are the achievements and remaining challenges? The main purpose of this thesis is thus to examine Canada’s Arctic policymaking, both domestically and internationally, and in order to develop an understanding of this process I will elaborate on the Canadian Arctic Council chairmanship from 2013-2015, as well as governance and indigenous peoples in Canada’s territorial north.

The Arctic Council chairmanship can be seen as a case of the phenomena “circumpolar cooperation” and “international leadership”. Of interest is how Canada has worked through the Council since taking over the chairmanship from Sweden at the Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna in May 2013, in particular, how Canada advances national interests and/or common objectives with the other Arctic states. To this end, the Canadian chairmanship can shed light on Canada as a unilateral actor in pursuit of domestic interests on the international arena, and to what extent Canada is successful in promoting national priorities through this multilateral forum. Secondly, this case allows for an examination of Canada’s commitment to international leadership and cooperative efforts intended to serve the whole Arctic community. Thirdly, the Arctic Council case is chosen because of its contemporary relevance. Canada is in the last year of its chairmanship, which allows for an examination of priorities and achievements so far. Lastly, the cases needed to be embedded within the theoretical framework guiding the thesis. The establishment and development of the Arctic Council, as well as interstate relations taking place within the forum, are well in line with the neoliberal institutionalist approach to international relations. Based on this theory’s assumptions, the Council functions as an arena for cooperation and the production of mutual beneficial policy outcomes among the Arctic states. From a realist outlook on the other hand, Canada can be expected to utilize the chairmanship exclusively in pursuit of national policy interests, preferably to achieve relative gains compared to other actors, and the Arctic Council is seen as expressing the will and interests of its most powerful member states. Throughout the thesis, it will become evident that the neoliberal institutionalist perspective is most accurate when examining Canada’s Arctic policymaking. However, it will also be demonstrated how Arctic states are greatly preoccupied with national interests, resources, sovereignty and security concerns in the region. These issues fit within the realist perspective, and are worth investigating to develop a complete picture of the political situation in the Arctic today.

The second case, concerning governance in Canada’s northern territories, evolved as a result of the work with the Arctic Council chairmanship when it became evident how much emphasis and political attention is directed towards the north by the Government of Canada. The main purpose of this case is consequently to look in depth at Canada’s northern territories and the situation for Canada’s northerners and indigenous peoples. To this end, I will outline historical developments, the evolution towards greater self-government for the territories, achievements through the devolution process, as well as remaining challenges, both regionally and for the federal government. These two cases can be seen as representing Canada’s political focus in the Arctic internationally and domestically. Above all however, I have aimed at maintaining a connection between the cases, focusing on how domestic interests are pursued internationally and how Canada’s domestic policy can be seen in a broader international perspective. This is interesting because the Arctic is considered to be a region blurring the lines between national and interstate politics (House of Commons Canada, 2013), thus challenging traditional distinctions in IR, and because Canada has been criticized for focusing on the “local” - especially Canadian indigenous peoples - over the global in its Arctic Council chairmanship (Extner-Pirot, 2014).

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 Challenges related to attaining data material for my thesis

I initially intended to pursue this study primarily through interviews. First and foremost I was determined to approach someone from the Arctic Council secretariat, and I assumed this was an achievable objective, seeing as the secretariat is located in Tromsø. I initiated contact with the secretariat through email March 18th 2014, and again on April 23rd after a month without receiving an answer. After my second email, the secretariat replied that they have a purely administrative role, and are not able to answer questions about the current chairmanship. However, they referred me to Julie Boyer, the Canadian coordinator for the chairmanship, and I tried to contact her without success. In addition, I asked the Arctic Council secretariat whether they would be able to answer questions about the Council on a general basis, as a forum for transnational cooperation, and/or how the secretariat works as an administrative body and coordinator, to which they declined but offered to send me the Canadian chairmanship program. Furthermore, I was in contact with several officials in the Norwegian Foreign Department who work towards Canada or the High North, but neither had the time to meet with me. I also attempted to establish contact with Canadian governmental officials, but this proved difficult due to rules and regulations within the Canadian bureaucracy. I was informed that no Canadian official can participate in interviews for something that will be published or printed without permission from the Government in Ottawa. After several attempts to different bureaucracies and departments, I realized this was going to prove more challenging than expected. The conclusion based on the replies I got was that, adding to the issue of time and availability, it seemed as though contributing to a master project was not considered a priority. As a consequence of these experiences and through consultation with my supervisor, I decided to change the approach and use document analysis as the primary data material for my thesis. The decision was also based on the fact that I had both limited time and resources, and at one point needed to move forward with my project. However, I am confident that I have been able to gather valuable and fruitful information through careful examination of governmental documents and other written sources, and that this data is sufficient for the discussions and analysis conducted throughout the thesis.

3.2.2 Document analysis

Document analysis has a long tradition within qualitative research, and “documents” include all written sources available for investigation (Thagaard, 2009, 62). However, I will base my analysis primarily on governmental documents and policy statements and strategies. The main sources for my thesis are *Canada’s Northern Strategy* (2009), *Achievements under Canada’s Northern Strategy* (2011), *Statement on Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy* (2010) and the *Canada First Defense Strategy* (2008). These publications have proved very valuable for my project, giving insight into the Government of Canada’s domestic priorities, as well as intentions, in-

terests and involvement in the Arctic and the broader international arena. Other governmental publications of relevance include the *Economic Action Plan* introduced in 2009 and later updates, the *Action Plan to Improve Northern Regulatory Regimes* (2010), as well as devolution agreements transferring power and authority to the territorial governments and other documents regarding indigenous peoples. Seeing as the Canadian Arctic Council chairmanship 2013-2015 is the main case under investigation, and to examine the Council's development and political output, I have studied its founding documents, declarations, meeting documents, joint statements and working group reports and assessments. Furthermore, to portray a more complete picture of the political situation in the circumpolar north, I have analyzed the Arctic foreign policies of the other Arctic states, and will provide a summary of these. Additionally, I have looked at international treaties, conventions and declarations, in particular documents relevant to Canada's Arctic sovereignty and northern territories, as well as scientific publications and research reports, especially resulting from programs Canada have participated in, such as the International Polar Year 2007-2008. Lastly, to constantly keep up with current developments and political initiatives, I have monitored the Government of Canada's and the Office of the Prime Minister's news centers, and used press releases, statements and speeches to comment on the Government's responses to recent events and changing international circumstances.

In terms of document analysis, it is important to note that this method distinguishes itself from data collected in the field by the fact that the documents are written for a different purpose than what the researcher uses them for. Thus, in order to maintain a holistic perspective of the data, a principal aspect of this method is evaluation of the sources relative to the context they are created in (Thagaard, 2009, 62-63). This means that when for instance looking at Canada's defense strategy, one must keep in mind that this will naturally focus on the Canadian Forces and the security and safety of Canadian citizens, but will not include policy areas such as health, education, economy and trade. Consequently, it is wrong to interpret this as an expression of "exclusive focus on security" by the Government, as other issues and policy areas are addressed in other statements and strategies. What can be read from this document however is priorities within the defense policy: what is at the center of Canadian security concerns and what issues are devoted most attention? The same caution applies to the other governmental documents, and hence, it is important to consider them together in order to grasp Canadian Arctic policymaking as a whole, covering all issues and priorities.

3.2.3 Literature review

In order to construct a chronological narrative to help understand the basic outline of the case, it is useful to gather academic literature on the case and its context (Bennett & George, 2005, 89). I have done this by reviewing existing literature on Canada's Arctic policy from central northern experts. These include Franklyn Griffiths, Rob Huebert and Whitney Lackenbauer, who were granted research fellowships for 2008-09 by the Canadian International Council to examine Arctic issues. The resulting white papers guiding Canadian Arctic policy were published in

the book *Canada and the Changing Arctic. Sovereignty, Security and Stewardship* (2011). I have chosen to present a short summary of these three authors, as their views fits well within the theoretical framework of my thesis, and as they express opposing outlooks on how Canada should work to position itself in the High North given the transformations taking place there.

Rob Huebert aims to provide an understanding of Canadian sovereignty and security in the context of a fundamentally changing Arctic, emphasizing geopolitic forces, strategic developments, climate change and resource development. Huebert is among the critics who argue Canada has neglected its High North for too long and needs to move to assert its presence, in particular seen in light of the increased international interest in the region (Huebert, 2011, 13). Huebert focuses on international challenges emerging over Canada's claim to its Arctic maritime space, and argues the core issue of Canadian Arctic sovereignty is control, while the core issue of Canadian Arctic security is about responding to threats (Huebert, 2011, 19-21). Such statements situates him within the realist camp, and his work is central for the discussion of the political context in the Arctic. Nevertheless, Huebert ultimately acknowledges that Canada cannot act alone in the Arctic, and needs to work with its circumpolar neighbors to develop a spirit of cooperation and international rules to protect the region (Huebert, 2011, 60-61).

While Huebert sees the Arctic as a "potential battleground" and a "hostile world where only the strong will survive", Griffiths and Lackenbauer have more faith in Canada's sovereignty being secure, and that shared interests among the circumpolar states indicate a future of cooperation (Griffiths et al., 2011). Their position is thus more in line with neoliberal institutionalism. Lackenbauer points out that what we are witnessing might just be a classic security dilemma, and that fears of a "polar race" or "new Cold War" in the Arctic are exaggerated (Lackenbauer, 2011b, 233). His main message is that the Government must avoid creating a sense of alarmism, and instead focus on integrating defense, diplomacy and development in the region (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 93). Griffiths emphasizes stewardship and the need for ongoing dialogue between southern stakeholders and northern residents with regard to agenda setting and priorities. He provides recommendations for Canadian leadership, and argues Canadian efforts for stewardship in the Arctic should be governed by three main objectives. To elevate Arctic international relations to the highest political level, to engage Russia on behalf of a larger collective commitment to cooperative stewardship, and lastly, Canada should strive to invigorate the Arctic Council and its ability to coordinate and support stewardship projects (Griffiths, 2011, 195).

3.2.4 Semi-structured interview

Even though I was not able to conduct interviews to form the basis for analysis in my thesis, I was fortunate to get the opportunity to talk to Jeannette Menzies, Head of the Canadian International Centre for the Arctic Region at the Canadian Embassy to Norway, and Professor Greg Poelzer at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada. These conversations were based on a semi-structured approach, where I had relevant topics prepared beforehand but we also addressed other issues that came up through discussion. The topics I had prepared were closely

connected to the research questions, in order to facilitate the overall objective of the thesis and gain information to help develop an understanding of Canada's Arctic policy. The informants provided me with useful insight in Canadian domestic policymaking and national priorities and interests. In particular, they helped me understand the challenges facing Canadian northerners, territorial governments and the federal government in Canada's Arctic region from a domestic perspective and in comparison to other circumpolar states.

3.3 Research quality: strengths and weaknesses of my data

Central features when evaluating research quality are reliability and validity. Reliability concerns how trustworthy the research is, for instance if it is accounted for how the data has been developed (Thagaard, 2009, 198). One can distinguish between internal and external reliability, where the former refers to the accordance in the construction of data between researchers working on the same project and the latter concerns replicability (Thagaard, 2009, 199). With respect to this project, internal reliability is not applicable, but external reliability can be achieved by others examining the same data material to see whether they are left with the same conclusions. Another way to strengthen the reliability is to make the research process transparent by giving a detailed description of the research strategy and analytical method so these can be evaluated step by step (Thagaard, 2009, 199). I have strived to achieve this throughout my thesis, accounting for my intentions, objectives and approach, as well as referring to the theoretical framework representing the foundation for my interpretations and analysis when appropriate.

A fundamental objective of qualitative methods is to achieve an understanding of social phenomena, and interpretations are central in this type of research. Thus, it is important to be aware of how the researcher to some extent creates data based on his/hers understanding of society by utilizing qualitative methods (Thagaard, 2009, 11; 47). Validity concerns the soundness of the interpretations derived from the study, meaning the researcher should critically examine his/hers interpretations and possibly get them confirmed by other studies (Thagaard, 2009, 201). Consequently, one must show precaution in terms of how one understands actions and behavior, interpret documents, and analyze and present results and findings. I have strived to avoid making presumptions, in particular regarding Canada's political priorities, motives and intentions. For instance, Canada is usually known as being a cooperative state, primarily using "soft power" in international relations. However, it would be a mistake to approach Canadian policy statements and strategies with the assumption that they are only looking to cooperate and please others, and if sanctions were to become necessary, these would only include diplomatic means. Canada, as all other states, have national interests and priorities, and it was important to examine the governmental documents looking for both sides of the political specter - international cooperation and national self-interests. This approach also corresponds with the opposing views on international relations of the two theories forming the foundation of my thesis.

The strengths of my data are the amount of official documents, strategies, statements,

treaties, conventions, declarations, speeches and press releases I have examined. I have looked into all political aspects of the Canadian Arctic, from foreign policy and security to the human dimension and economic and environmental policies. This has provided me with a sound overview of Canada's priorities and interests in the High North, and I would argue it has given me a solid base for analysis and conclusions on Canada's Arctic policymaking - how Canada works to position itself in the region, and motives behind its actions. Another strength of my data is the fact that I also have examined the Arctic foreign policies of the other Arctic states, which facilitates an evaluation of Canada's interests and actions in the broader context of circumpolar politics and stakeholders. The weaknesses of my data are first and foremost that it would be beneficial if I had more informants, which would be a means to avoid personal bias. However, I have strived to achieve this by looking into secondary sources, such as literature by esteemed scholars, both from the realist and liberal camp. Another possible pitfall by studying governmental documents is that they mostly present an official outlook, largely focusing on accomplishments and progress made by the Government, and are rarely self-critical. To compensate for this, I have looked at literature by northern scholars commentating on the statements and strategies, which has given me a more balanced outlook. In addition, the examination of recent articles and press releases has enabled the evaluation of what has actually been done compared to the promises made in these documents. Lastly, my participation at conferences, such as the Arctic Frontiers in Tromsø, January 2014, the Canada Norway Northern Innovation Initiative in Tromsø, September 2014, and the Trans-Arctic Agenda in Reykjavik, Iceland in October 2014 has been very useful for the work with this thesis. It has given me the opportunity to confirm or disprove my interpretations, and to get several different outlooks on the situation in the Arctic, both from political, environmental, business and indigenous perspectives.

3.4 Ethical considerations

All scientific activities require the researcher to adhere to ethical guidelines and to demonstrate integrity and accuracy in the presentation of results and in the assessment of other researchers' work (Thagaard, 2009, 23-24). Regarding studies involving close contact between the researcher and objectives, the researcher must adhere to specific ethical precautions applicable to studies involving the processing of personal data (Thagaard, 2009, 24-25). These include the principles of informed consent and confidentiality, and that the researcher is responsible for avoiding that the participants are subject to harm or distress from partaking in the study (Thagaard, 2009, 26-29). These guidelines are not of particular relevance for me, as I have not gathered any personal data. What is more applicable is the fundamental principle of scientific integrity to avoid plagiarizing others' work. To this end, I have constantly made sure to cite researchers, scholars, documents and so on I have used, in order to make clear that these are not my ideas, but the work of others which I build upon in discussions through the thesis.

THE ARCTIC:

POLITICAL CONTEXT AND SALIENT STAKEHOLDERS

This chapter will focus attention to the general political situation in the Arctic, with the objective to deepen the understanding of developments and processes taking place in the region. Firstly, I will account for the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), an important treaty central to the legal regulation of affairs concerning the world's coastal states. I will elaborate on its contents and account for the Arctic Ocean coastal states' extended continental shelf claims, including implications of potential overlapping claims. The objective is to give insight in the political and legal context Canada operates in when formulating and executing its Arctic policy, which will contribute to the backdrop for the analysis of Canada's policy in the region. Next, I will present an overview of the Arctic policies of the circumpolar states, with the aim to portrait a fuller picture of the circle of stakeholders by comparing their interests in and approaches to the region, and in this regard, I will also devote attention to the tensions surrounding the Arctic Five arrangement. Lastly, I will address the general political situation in the Arctic to look at whether it is developing mainly in a cooperative or conflicted direction.

4.1 The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was negotiated from 1973 to 1982 and entered into force in 1994 when it had the required 60 ratifications. The UNCLOS consists of rules and regulations governing the world's oceans, and is the most comprehensive international maritime treaty (Côté & Dufresne, 2008, 2). The Convention defines three zones of maritime control of particular interest for the analysis of territorial claims and Arctic sovereignty: the territorial sea, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the extended continental shelf (Huebert, 2011, 15). The UNCLOS establishes that the sovereignty of a coastal state extends beyond its land territory and internal waters to an adjacent belt of sea: *the territorial sea*, including the airspace above and its seabed and subsoil (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 2). Further, Articles 55-75 addresses the maritime zone beyond and adjacent to a coastal state's territorial sea: *the Exclusive Economic Zone* (EEZ). The EEZ extends up to 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 57). Within its EEZ, a coastal state has sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring, exploiting, conserving and managing natural resources, both living and non-living, as well as jurisdiction regarding the establishment and use of installations and structures, marine scientific research and the protection and preservation of the marine environment (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 56).

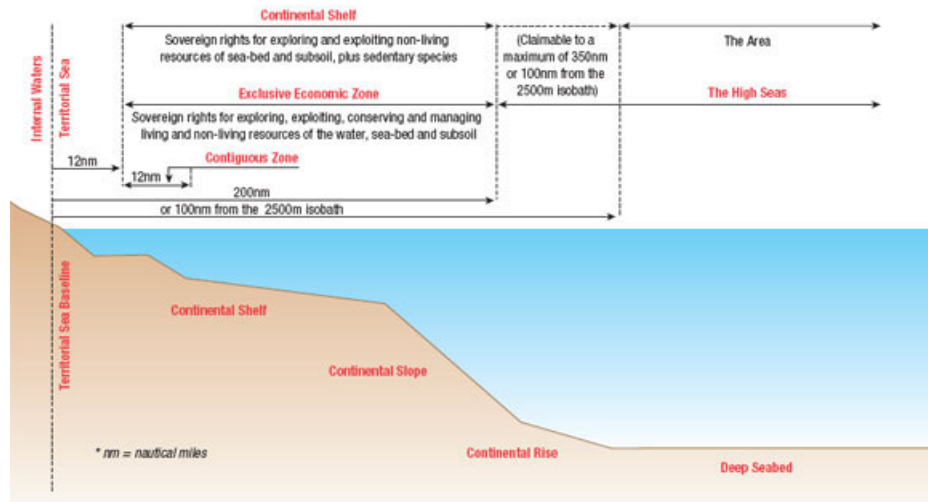


Figure 4.1: Illustration of maritime zones (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2014)

UNCLOS' Article 76 defines the *continental shelf* of a coastal state, comprising of the seabed and subsoil extending 200 nautical miles beyond the territorial sea as a natural prolongation of the land territory (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 76.1). While the EEZ must be proclaimed by the state and cannot extend beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines of the territorial sea, the continental shelf inherently belongs to the state and can extend beyond 200 nautical miles if it is a natural prolongation of the land territory (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 76.4). This is known as the *extended continental shelf*, and under Article 77 the coastal state has sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting its natural resources. Noteworthy is the specification that these rights “do not depend on occupation, effective or notional or on any express proclamation” (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 77.3), meaning the coastal state does not have to exercise sovereignty over the continental shelf in order to enjoy its rights. It is the state's responsibility to establish the outer edge of its continental shelf, and information on the limits of the extended continental shelf must be submitted to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf on the basis of unbiased geographical data. The Commission makes recommendations to coastal states, and the limits of the shelf established on the basis of these recommendations are final and binding (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 76.8). The Commission, which is entirely a technical body, does not partake in overlapping claims or disputes. They must be solved by the states themselves by peaceful means and based on international law (UNCLOS, 1982, Article 83).

As of today, all the Arctic Ocean coastal states with the exception of the United States (US) have acceded the UNCLOS: Norway in 1996, the Russian Federation in 1997, Canada in 2003 and Denmark in 2004. After acceding the treaty, a state has ten years to submit its claim for an extended continental shelf to the UN Commission. Thus, Canada had until 2013 to submit evidence for its extended continental shelf outside the 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone, and filed its submission regarding the Atlantic Ocean, as well as preliminary information concerning the Arctic Ocean, on December 6th 2013 (Foreign Affairs, Trade and

Development Canada, 2013). The United States, which has neither signed nor ratified the Convention, cannot obtain international recognition for Alaska's extended continental shelf. Efforts to accede the treaty are being prevented by a small minority of Republican senators, primarily motivated by an ideologically based opposition to the United Nations (Huebert, 2011, 41-42). The general opinion seems to be that the likelihood of the US acceding to the UNCLOS in the near future is scant (Centre for Arctic Policy Studies, 2014), but should they do so, this would have consequences for Canada's relationship to the United States, as well as for negotiations concerning the Arctic maritime disputes addressed below.

Lastly, it is worth drawing attention to the UNCLOS as a source of power and influence for the Arctic Ocean coastal states vis-à-vis the territorial states and other Arctic Council actors. In the article "*New power, new priorities: the effects of UNCLOS on Canadian arctic foreign policy*" (2013), Ciara Sebastian argues that as continental shelf claims are being submitted, the coastal states find themselves in a temporary power position in the region. Canada, by virtue of its lengthy coastline, gets influence in the Arctic without having to invest in traditional military and economic sources of international power (Sebastian, 2013, 140). This is also emphasized by Njord Wegge in the article "*The political order in the Arctic: power structures, regimes and influence*", in which he claims the UNCLOS and the Arctic Council give Canada much greater influence than it would have in the absence of this institutional framework (2011, 174). As mentioned, the potential consequence is that the power invested in the Arctic Five through the UNCLOS could undermine the Arctic Council as the leading forum for Arctic cooperation, and promote the pursuit of national interests over multilateral cooperation in the region. Sebastian claims this is in line with the Conservative Harper government's priorities, aiming towards more unilateral action or bilateral agreements in the circumpolar north (Sebastian, 2013, 142-144).

4.1.1 Canada's Arctic sovereignty and continental shelf submission

Canada has exclusive sovereignty rights, authority and privileges in relation to the landmasses of its Arctic Archipelago, hence can enforce its laws, regulate activities and exclude foreign nationals entering without permission (Côté & Dufresne, 2008, 1). The basis for Canadian sovereignty rests on a combination of *cession*; grants of northern territory by the United Kingdom, *occupation*; Canada's activities in the Arctic since cession, and *self-determination*; the will of northerners to be governed under Canadian institutions (Côté & Dufresne, 2008, 1). These criteria are similar to Huebert's definition of sovereignty, which includes three elements: a defined territory, an existing governance system and a people within the defined territory (Huebert, 2011, 14). Firstly, within the borders of the Canadian Arctic, the northern population has accepted the government's right to govern, and thus, transferring powers to the territories does not diminish the sovereignty of the Canadian state. Secondly, as there is no limit to how many people must live within the defined territory for a state to exercise sovereignty over it, the small number of individuals living in Canada's Arctic is enough for Canada to claim sovereignty over the region (Huebert, 2011, 14-15). The third element - defined boundaries - has the greatest

significance for the discussion of Canadian Arctic sovereignty and is the element of sovereignty being possible challenged, especially Canada's Arctic maritime borders (Huebert, 2011, 15-16).

With the exception of Denmark's claim to the uninhabited 1.3 km² Hans Islands, Canada's sovereignty over its Arctic lands and islands is undisputed. According to the Government of Canada, this dispute is "on a diplomatic track" following the Joint Statement of September 2005 between Canada and Denmark (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 13). However, both countries have reasserted their sovereignty through on-site visits, and neither has abandoned its claim, which means the dispute remains unresolved (Côté & Dufresne, 2008, 1). Some see the question of sovereignty over Hans Islands as having broader implications for Canada's Arctic claims, while others argue disputes over Canadian Arctic waters are more serious than this marginal island, which seems to be an issue primarily about national pride (Hartmann, 2013).

Regarding Canada's sovereignty over its Arctic waters, these borders are not settled yet, seeing that the Arctic coastal states are still in the process of mapping out their territory and submitting claims to the UN Commission. The mapping of continental shelves is not only a territorial issue, but also very much a matter of securing national resources and potentially significant economic gains. In 2008, the US Geological Survey completed an appraisal of the oil and gas reserves in the Arctic. The Arctic Circle encompasses about 6 percent of the Earth's surface, which equals more than 21 million km², of which 8 million km² is onshore and more than 7 million km² is on continental shelves (Brid et al., 2008). The report from the survey concludes that the extensive Arctic continental shelves may constitute the largest unexplored area for petroleum remaining on Earth, estimated to approximately 90 billion barrels of oil, 1,669 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 44 billion barrels of natural gas liquids, which equals 15 % of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 % of undiscovered gas (Brid et al., 2008).

The main point of liberal scholars is that Canada should use diplomacy and cooperative mechanisms, rather than unilateral measures, to seek support for their case and secure national interests (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 123). Still, despite the diplomatic spirit characterizing relations among the Arctic coastal states, there are current maritime boundary disputes in the region, and further overlaps are expected as the states file their extended continental shelf claims. Canada and Denmark has had a longstanding dispute regarding the northern maritime boundary in the Lincoln Sea: the body of water bordering the Arctic Ocean between Canada's Ellesmere Island and Greenland. However, the two states reached a tentative agreement on the northern boundary in November 2012, which means the boundary between Canada and Denmark is complete with the exception of Hans Island (Hartmann, 2013). Other disputes in the Arctic include the Lomonosov Ridge, which Canada, Denmark and Russia claim is an extension of their continental shelf. The United States argues it is an oceanic ridge, and thus disproves any claim to its ownership (Stimson, 2013). In addition, Canada and the United States have an ongoing dispute regarding the boundary line in the Beaufort Sea, and disagree about the legal status of the Northwest Passage. Canada holds the position that the Passage is part of its internal waters, and thus subject to full Canadian sovereignty, while the United States argues it fulfills the legal

criteria of an international strait by connecting two expanses of high seas - the Atlantic and Arctic oceans - and because it is being used for international navigation (Byers, 2009, 42). The two states have a long-standing precedence of “agreeing to disagree” on the legal status of the Passage, and the dispute does not seem to be a very pressing issue for the Canadian government. In Canada’s Arctic foreign policy, it is stated that the Northwest Passage is not predicted to become a large-scale transit route in the near future, due to mobile and unpredictable ice posing significant navigational challenges, and because other routes are likely to become more commercially viable (2010, 13). Even so, increased international interest and activity in the region may force the states to settle the legal status of the Passage sooner than later, which would be in their best interest regarding security and environmental regulations in the North American Arctic. Canada’s Northern Strategy addresses these disagreements, claiming they are well managed and pose no sovereignty or defense challenges for Canada:

“the disagreements have no impact on Canada’s ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively with the United States, Denmark or other Arctic neighbors on issues of real significance and importance.” “Canada will continue to manage these discrete disputes and may seek to resolve them in the future, in accordance with international law” (Canada’s Northern Strategy, 2009, 13).

A central priority regarding exercising Canadian Arctic sovereignty is securing international recognition for the full extent of its extended continental shelf wherein it can exercise sovereign rights over the resources of the seabed and subsoil (Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 8). Canada has been engaged in the scientific, technical and legal work needed to delineate the outer limits of its continental shelf since adhering to the UNCLOS in 2003, and to this end, the Government has made a significant investment of \$170.6 million from 2004 to 2021 (Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010; Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). In August 2014, the CCGS *Terry Fox* and CCGS *Louis S. St-Laurent* set out on a six week scientific survey to collect data for Canada’s Arctic continental shelf submission, which will be followed by a second survey in 2015. The two vessels will be examining an area in the Eurasian Basin on the eastern side of the Lomonosov Ridge (Government of Canada, 2014b). According to Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, these surveys demonstrate the Governments’ commitment to devote the necessary resources to ensure Canada secures international recognition of the full extent of its continental shelf, including the North Pole (Government of Canada, 2014b). This is a controversial issue, and when Russia planted its flag on the North Pole in 2007 then Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Peter MacKay, stated: “This isn’t the 15th century. You can’t go around the world and just plant flags to claim territory” (Huebert, 2011, 43). Nevertheless, when submitting preliminary information concerning the Arctic Ocean in December 2013, Canada made a similar claim, arguing the North Pole is within Canadian territory. This, in addition to the statement from Minister Baird in August 2014, illustrates Canada’s ambitions in the region in terms of territorial claims and expansion.

“Our government is securing our sovereignty while expanding our economic and scientific opportunities by defining Canada’s last frontier. This is important to Canadians, especially those in the North, as this is their future and prosperity at stake” - Honorable Leona Aglukkaq, Canadian Minister for the Arctic Council (Government of Canada, 2014b).

4.2 Arctic Policies of central stakeholders in the region

4.2.1 The United States

The United States (US) was for decades one of the more passive Arctic states, reluctant to engage in any form of binding multinational, circumpolar cooperation, and constantly blocking efforts to create new forums of Arctic governance (Huebert, 2011, 24). However, the United States’ orientation towards the Arctic has markedly changed in the past years, and it has emerged as an engaged actor with ambitions in the region. The *US National Security Strategy* from 2010 states the US is an Arctic nation with broad and fundamental interests in the region:

[the US] “will seek to meet our national security needs, protect the environment, responsibly manage resources, account for indigenous communities, support scientific research, and strengthen international cooperation on a wide range of issues” in the Arctic region (United States Government, 2010, 50).

Moreover, the US’ *National Strategy for the Arctic Region* from 2013 sets forth the Government’s strategic priorities for the High North. Thus, although the United States can be considered a laggard in terms of Arctic engagement, considering Norway issued its strategy for the High North already in 2006, the 2013 strategy expresses strong intentions to position the US in the Arctic to respond to challenges and opportunities. The American strategy is built on three lines of effort: advance US security interests, pursue responsible Arctic region stewardship and strengthen international cooperation (United States Government, 2013, 2). These issues - security, stewardship and international cooperation - are recurring themes among the circumpolar states, including Canada. The US also recognizes that the changing conditions in the Arctic brings with them not only strategic and economic opportunities, but also significant challenges. Therefore, it is considered crucial that the US proactively establish national priorities and objectives for the region (United States Government, 2013, 5). The acknowledgement of the need for a stronger US presence in the High North was confirmed with the appointment of a special representative for the Arctic region in February 2014. The representative, Admiral Robert J. Papp Jr., will play a critical role in advancing American interests, particularly in preparation for the US Arctic Council chairmanship beginning in 2015 (Kerry, 2014). The press release stated:

“The Arctic region is the last global frontier and a region with enormous and growing geostrategic, economic, climate, environmental and national security implications for the United States and the world” (Kerry, 2014).

The third objective in the American strategy - international cooperation - is of particular interest for this thesis, towards the US Government outlines four objectives: pursue arrangements that promote shared Arctic state prosperity, protect the Arctic environment and enhance security, work through the Arctic Council to advance US interests in the Arctic region, and accede to the Law of the Sea Convention and cooperate with other interested parties (United States Government, 2013, 9-10). The US Government will continue to emphasize the Arctic Council as a forum for facilitating cooperation among the Arctic states on issues of mutual interest within its current mandate (United States Government, 2013, 9). Thus, there is not mention of the need to strengthen the Council, which is a recurring theme in other Arctic states' policies, nor does the US government mention the Arctic Five. However, it is recognized that a growing number of non-Arctic states and other actors express increased interest in the region, and that the Arctic states should seek cooperation in a manner that protects their national interests and resources (United States Government, 2013, 10). Accordingly, clearly at the forefront of the United States' newfound interest in the Arctic are security concerns and resource development.

Because of the importance attributed to the United States by the Government of Canada, I will devote some attention to this relationship before addressing the other circumpolar states. The United States is considered Canada's premier partner and closest ally in the Arctic, and the Canadian government strives for more strategic bilateral engagement on Arctic issues with the US (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 24). The Canadian-American relationship can be seen from two angles: Canadian dependency on the United States for Arctic security and American challenges to Canada's Arctic sovereignty - and the historical military significance of the Arctic is fundamental to understanding this ambivalent relationship.

Firstly, it is natural that Canada devotes a majority of its political and diplomatic efforts towards the United States. The US is Canada's closest neighbor, and has been the safety net for Canadian Arctic security since the Cold War. The ignorance and neglect characterizing Canada's approach to its north changed with the outbreak of the Cold War, when Canada became geographically positioned between two increasingly hostile superpowers (Coates et al., 2008, 58-63). Canada as a potential backdoor to the United States placed it in a security dilemma: the US, in the process of guaranteeing Canada's safety, may itself become a threat to Canadian Arctic sovereignty. If Canada would or could not defend its own territory, the US would be forced to help in order to ensure its own safety and to take whatever measures they considered necessary, regardless of Canadian preferences (Coates et al., 2008, 64). In this situation, partnership with the US offered Canadians at least a say in decision-making, solidified its alliance with the US, and could guarantee both Canadian security and sovereignty (Coates et al., 2008, 78). Canadian and American security and defense has thus been linked since the Cold War, through American strategic interests in the north and Canada's need for American assistance to fulfill its defense mission (Coates et al., 2008, 124). Throughout the years of, more or less voluntarily, security cooperation with and protection from the United States, Canada's territorial sovereignty has all the same remained intact, and their essential interests have been

safeguarded. In fact, Canada's most successful unilateral actions over the past decades have been backed by negotiations with the Americans (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 73). Therefore, Canada sees obvious benefits from cooperation with the US, and understandably aspires to maintain a good diplomatic relationship with its superpower neighbor. This is also connected to Canada's reluctant attitude towards NATO. In his rather bleak assessment of Canada's NATO membership, historian Jack Lawrence Granatstein argues NATO does little to nothing to protect Canada at home, and has proven its limited effectiveness on operations. The United States is the only partner that can be relied on to support Canadian troops, as it protects Canada in its own interest through the most effective military force on earth (Granatstein, 2013, 3-4). From the United States' point of view, they could also benefit from bilateral security cooperation with Canada, seeing Canada's Arctic is a backdoor into North America, and that patrolling these territories is a task neither country is equipped to handle on their own (Baker & Kraska, 2014, 5). This is recognized in the US' National Security Strategy, which states:

“The strategic partnerships and unique relationships we maintain with Canada and Mexico are critical to U.S. national security and have a direct effect on the security of our homeland” (United States Government, 2010, 42).

On the other hand, the United States has long refused to take its circumpolar responsibilities seriously, and it still remains to be seen whether the US is able to implement its Arctic policy. It is also the US who have posed the most severe threat to Canadian Arctic sovereignty over the past decades, by challenging the legal status of the Northwest Passage and claiming it is an international strait in which Canada has no jurisdiction. Seen from this perspective, and the fact that Canada and the US in many ways differ in terms of fundamental values, the rationality behind American dominance in Canada's Arctic foreign policy is less evident. This also contributes to explain contemporary aspects of Canada's Arctic policy. For instance, Canada's commitment to develop a national Arctic security and defense policy can be understood in terms of a desire to withdraw from American dependency. Canadians have never liked to be reliant on the US, even though this has been the defense reality for decades (Granatstein, 2013, 3).

4.2.2 The Russian Federation

There is almost unison agreement among Arctic scholars that Canada needs to engage with Russia in a constructive manner, given Russia's interests and position in the region. Russia is considered an Arctic superpower, and the Arctic is of vast importance for Russia both economically and strategically (Griffiths et al., 2011, 10). Russia's Arctic policy consists of two main documents: *The fundamentals of state policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the period up to 2020 and beyond*, and the *Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020* (Padrtová, 2012, 340). The Arctic is vital to Russia's relevance in world affairs, and the objective of the Arctic strategy is to strengthen Russia's role as a leading Arctic power (Padrtová, 2012, 340-341). Russia's national interests related to economic development

are mainly based on natural resources and maritime transport, while on the geopolitical level, the most important objective is to maintain nuclear deterrence by securing open access of its submarines to the world's seas. However, Russia's ambitions in the region are far from being fully realized, and there is a gap between rhetoric and actual capabilities (Padrtová, 2012, 347).

According to Sven Holtsmark, director at the Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies, managing relations with Russia is the key to and measure of success or failure in securing continued prosperity and stability in the High North (Holtsmark, 2009, 12). Russia's strategy for increased influence in the Arctic rests on strengthened national control and international cooperation. The Arctic Council is emphasized as the central forum for Arctic cooperation, and the function of UNCLOS as a framework for activities in the Arctic Ocean is underlined (The Norwegian Intelligence Service, 2014). While Russia is making investments to secure control over areas of jurisdiction and to establish a military presence in the Arctic, the Norwegian Intelligence Service (2014) emphasizes there are no signs of quantitative escalation of the permanent Russian power level in the region, their activity is rather characterized by routine and continuity.

The overall picture of Russia as an Arctic power thus seems to be quite optimistic, and Russia has indeed showed willingness to cooperate and solve disputes in a peaceful manner, exemplified by the Norwegian-Russian treaty concerning maritime delimitation and cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean signed in 2010. There are good arguments supporting the claim that Russian policymakers might indeed realize that adherence to international law, cooperation and collective solutions are the best way forward in the Arctic (Holtsmark, 2009, 9). At the same time, Russia differs from Western states, both culturally and in strategic thinking, which affects international relations and diplomacy with the Russians. Norway has been quite successful in this regard, maintaining a peaceful relationship with its superpower neighbor throughout the Cold War until the present. However, for the future stability of the Arctic, it is necessary that Western policymakers demonstrate the ability and will to take Russian foreign and security interests into account as the Russians perceive them (Holtsmark, 2009, 12).

This reality was demonstrated in March 2014 with Russia's move into Crimea, Ukraine. In the aftermath, some observers claimed this event would not affect circumpolar collaboration while others argued it would spill over into the Arctic (Huebert, 2014a). Regardless, the importance of sheltering Arctic cooperation from international issues and disputes elsewhere became critically evident. The Crimea crisis for instance revoked the NATO issue between Russia and the alliance, and reignited the debate regarding full membership for Sweden and Finland, which could be perceived by Russia as an aggressive act by NATO on its northern flank (Huebert, 2014a). Another example of the tensions between Russia and NATO is how Canada was reluctant to send troops to Norway to participate in the northern exercise Cold Response, despite the government's promises to increase Canadian arctic security capabilities, out of fear that this would antagonize Russia. At the same time, during the Crimean crisis, Canadian Prime Minister Harper was leading the effort to expel Russia from the G8, and Canada was one of the most vocal critics of Russian actions (Huebert, 2014a).

4.2.3 Norway

Norway is a small country but still very relevant in Arctic affairs. It considers the Arctic to be its “near abroad”, and aims for a high profile in the region. Norway published the first High North strategy issued by any Arctic state in 2006: *The Government’s Strategy for the High North*, which introduced the High North as a new dimension in Norway’s foreign policy and focused to a large degree on defense (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, 13).

“It is important to maintain the presence of the Norwegian Armed Forces in the High North both to enable Norway to exercise its sovereignty and authority and to ensure that it can maintain its role in resource management. The presence of the armed forces increases predictability and stability, and is decisive for our ability to respond to emergencies in the High North” (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, 19).

The Conservative/Progress Party Government taking office in 2013 also included a chapter on the High North in their political platform. It states that the Government will pursue a proactive High North policy that will promote industrial development, safeguard Norwegian interests, strengthen cooperation with Russia and the Arctic states, and enhance the basis for activity and settlement in the North (Norwegian Government, 2013, 73). Their ambitions in the region are high, aiming to provide a clear national presence, ensure sustainable management of natural resources, improve preparedness for environmental disasters and expand search and rescue operations and infrastructure (Norwegian Government, 2013, 73). The High North is considered Norway’s most important foreign policy interest, and vital in terms of both security policy and economics. Norwegian presence and exercise of sovereignty in the High North must be safeguarded, which also requires military capacity (Norwegian Government, 2013, 73).

Norway thus ascribes high importance to a military presence and military operations in the region, which is understandable considering Russia is one of its closest neighbors. The attentiveness towards Russia is apparent both in the 2006 strategy and in the political platform from 2013, but it is also noteworthy that when elaborating on Norway’s relationship with Russia and Russia as an Arctic player, the focus is primarily directed towards Russia’s contribution to diplomatic Arctic collaboration. Still, Norway has invested \$250 million in a spy ship to track Russian activities in the Arctic, which will be operational by the military intelligence service from 2016 (McIntosh, 2014), and verifies that Norway pays close attention to its neighbor despite seemingly cooperative relations. In addition to high-quality military capabilities, Norway’s focus in the Arctic is on knowledge generation and competence building, indigenous peoples, the environment, resource management, maritime transport and business development (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006). The Research Council of Norway is a key player in the Government’s efforts to increase focus on knowledge about the High North. Norway and Canada has several research areas in common, for instance social challenges related to geopolitics and indigenous issues, technology, energy and environmental research, as well as

maritime activities, management of marine areas and aquaculture (Research Council of Norway, 2014). The Norwegian Research Council emphasizes that Norwegian-Canadian research collaboration is at a lower level than it should be, and polar research is highlighted as a prioritized area for cooperation, in which Norway is ranked third worldwide, after the US and Canada, measured in number of publications (Research Council of Norway, 2014).

To summarize, despite Norway's small size and population base, it is an active and central Arctic player, and considers the High North to be of significant national strategic interest. It can be expected that Norway will continue its strong presence in the region, and remain an essential member of the Arctic Council and other forums for multinational circumpolar cooperation. The Government of Norway does not mention the Arctic Five forum specifically, but instead ascribes great importance to bilateral relations and cooperation, in particular with Russia, Canada and the United States. Norway has always had a close relationship to Canada, and this is likely to intensify in the common years, in particular in the field of Arctic research.

4.2.4 Denmark

Greenland and the Faroe Islands belong to the Danish Realm, which makes Denmark an Arctic state and member of the Arctic Council. In 2011, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the Governments of Greenland and the Faroes, issued the *Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020*. The aim is to strengthen the Danish Realm's status as a global player in the Arctic, and to reinforce the foundation for appropriate cooperation on the many new opportunities and challenges in the region (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011). In spite of the Faroes and Greenland having home rule since 1948 and 1979, and that the two autonomous states are continuously moving towards greater independence, the Kingdom of Denmark has strong ambitions for its position and influence in the Arctic, and aims to play a key role in shaping the future of international agreements and cooperation in the region:

“In an equal partnership between the three parts of the Danish Realm, the Kingdom will work overall for a peaceful, secure and safe Arctic with self-sustaining growth and development with respect for the Arctic's fragile environment and nature in close cooperation with our international partners” (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 10-11).

In terms of international Arctic collaboration, the strategy emphasizes the UNCLOS as the basis for peaceful cooperation, as well as the 2008 Ilulissat Declaration, which aimed to confirm the responsibility of the five coastal states for managing the development of the Arctic (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 13). Regarding extended continental shelf claims, it is recognized that Denmark's claim will to some extent overlap with other state's, but the Kingdom commits to close collaboration with the other Arctic Ocean coastal states, and that unresolved boundary issues will be resolved in accordance with international law (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 15). This is in accordance with Canada, and other states', declarations on

these challenges. The strategy addresses the unresolved issue with Canada over the sovereignty of Hans Island: “the dispute will be handled professionally as would be expected between two neighboring countries and close allies” (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 15).

The strategy also addresses the need for global solutions to global challenges, enhanced regional cooperation and bilateral safeguarding of the Kingdom’s interests. Strengthening cooperation in the Arctic Council, which is seen as the primary organ for cooperation in the Arctic, is a central goal, and the Council must be reinforced as “the only relevant political organization that has all Arctic states and peoples as members” (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 52). At the same time, it is stated that the Kingdom will retain the Arctic Five format as a forum for matters primarily relevant for the coastal states, currently continental shelf issues (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 52). This is a similar attitude expressed in Canadian statements – the need to address certain issues outside the Arctic Council to best safeguard national interests. Regarding bilateral safeguarding of the Kingdom’s interests, Canada, the United States, Norway and Iceland are emphasized as key partners for cooperation, Denmark will maintain close contact with Sweden and Finland on Arctic issues, and wants to further expand and develop cooperation with Russia (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 54).

4.2.5 Sweden

Sweden issued its *Strategy for the Arctic Region* in 2011, which lays forth three priorities for the region: climate and the environment, economic development and the human dimension (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011). The strategy focuses mainly on the dramatic effects of climate change - including impacts on the living conditions of indigenous peoples, new opportunities for more sea transport, extraction of the region’s natural resources and increased focus on international law - and describes the Arctic as an area of low political tension (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011). Multilateral Arctic cooperation is emphasized as a main priority for Sweden, and the Arctic Council is seen as the primary multilateral arena for Arctic issues (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011, 19). As with the most of the other member states, Sweden sees the need to strengthen the Arctic Council institutionally and politically, specifically by broadening its mandate to include important strategic issues such as joint security, infrastructure and social and economic development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011, 19). Sweden has no coastline bordering the Arctic Ocean, and is thus excluded from collaboration among the Arctic Five. However, the Swedish government claims the establishment of the coastal states’ continental shelves is very much in Sweden’s interest.

“an energized Arctic Council could reduce the need for the coastal states to drive forward issues in the Arctic Five format. It is important for Finland, Iceland and Sweden to be able to participate in decision-making in cases where they have legitimate interests and that the status of the Arctic Council is maintained” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011, 22).

This is a quite explicit message expressing clear dissatisfaction with the Arctic Five meetings, and, naturally, stand in stark contrast to Denmark's attitude. While Denmark sees this forum as necessary to deal with issues related to the Arctic Ocean, Sweden openly condemns the the Arctic Five forum, which is considered to undermine multilateral cooperation through the Arctic Council and excluding actors with legitimate interests in what is being addressed in these meetings. It is evident that Sweden would rather see all Arctic issues dealt with in the presence of the full circle of Arctic stakeholders through a strengthened Arctic Council.

Sweden is home to 20.000 of the around 70.000 Sámi people, and highlights the human dimension and the gender perspective in the Arctic (Arctic Council, 2011f). Sweden's Arctic strategy emphasizes how climate changes makes many traditional customs and livelihoods more difficult to maintain for the indigenous peoples living in the Arctic, and intends to strengthen knowledge processes regarding the traditional lifestyle and necessary adaptations to these changes (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011, 41). These are important issues to address, which are very much in accordance with Canada's goals and ambitions for northerners in the Arctic and with its Arctic Council chairmanship program's highlights. As with Canada's Northern Strategy, Sweden's strategy emphasizes economic development, the environment and the human dimension. However, in contrast to the strategies of Canada, the United States, Norway and Denmark, Arctic sovereignty is not an issue addressed by the Swedish government, and security and military engagement in the region is barely mentioned. This points towards the different position held by Sweden in the Arctic, as it has no territorial claim to the Arctic Ocean. Sweden's national interests in the region are hence on a lower political level, more exclusively related to climate change and the environment, than those of the coastal states. The Arctic Ocean coastal states have more at stake in terms of sovereignty claims, and thus focus more on military presence and national security. Lastly, Sweden's strategy has no equivalent to the Canadian focus on bilateral relations with the United States, and instead emphasizes collaboration through numerous organizations, primarily the Arctic Council.

4.2.6 Finland

Finland's position in the Arctic is considered similar to Sweden's, as neither country boarder the Arctic Ocean, both are EU members, and both are home to the Sámi people (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011, 9). Finland issued its *Strategy for the Arctic Region* in 2013, which focuses on Finland's Arctic population, education and research, business operations, the environment and stability, as well as international cooperation. Similar to the Swedish strategy, Arctic sovereignty is given less importance, but in contrast, security and military presence is devoted more attention. It is emphasized how security and stability in the region is crucial to develop the Arctic economy, which is a main priority area for Finland, and to improve the welfare of the northern population (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 40). Finland's strategy recognizes that the Arctic Ocean coastal states have upgraded their maritime surveillance and military capacities in the region, but that a military conflict is unlikely, as all Arctic states have

declared that any disputes will be settled peacefully and in accordance with international law (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 40). Nevertheless, it is stressed that Finland must pay close attention to security developments and the complex and increasingly multidimensional security threats in the Arctic, which requires a comprehensive approach and cooperation at a national and international level (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 40).

International cooperation in the Arctic has been a main priority for Finland since the end of the Cold War, when it initiated cooperation between the Arctic states resulting in the 1991 Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (Arctic Council, 2011c). Finland's relationship to the Arctic from an international perspective also prevail in the 2013 strategy, which states: "one of Finland's key objectives is to bolster its position as an Arctic country and to reinforce international Arctic cooperation" (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 43). Cooperation, mutual dependence, trust and transparency are seen as the fundamental components of the Arctic debate, and Finland commits to comply to the existing legal framework of international conventions for the Arctic (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 43). The Government of Finland considers the Arctic Council to be the most important forum for addressing Arctic issues, and emphasizes how the Council should recognize its global role and responsibility, and consequently, Finland is in favor of admitting new observers (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 44). In addition, Finland has been actively involved in efforts to strengthen the Arctic Council, supports the plan to establish it as an international treaty-based organization, and is open to expanding its operations to new sectors of value-adding activities (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 44). Lastly, the Arctic Council's task of monitoring and assessing the state of the environment in the region is emphasized, as well as the importance of increasing the media visibility of the Council's efforts (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 44). What can be read from this is that Finland has high ambitions for the Arctic Council, and, even more so than what is elaborated in the other Arctic states' strategies, has clear goals and visions for the future of the Council. While strengthening the Arctic Council is seen as a general necessity among the Arctic Eight, the Finnish government proposes specific actions to achieve this. There is no mention of the Arctic Five in the Finnish strategy, instead it focuses on bilateral Arctic partnerships, in particular with Russia (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 46).

4.2.7 Iceland

Iceland issued a *Parliamentary Resolution on Iceland's Arctic Policy* in 2011, encompassing twelve principles aiming to secure Icelandic interests in the region. I will focus on the first two principles, which concern the Arctic Council and the Arctic Five, and Iceland's goal to secure status as an Arctic Ocean coastal state. The first principle is:

"Promoting and strengthening the Arctic Council as the most important consultative forum on Arctic issues and working towards having international decisions on Arctic issues made there" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 1).

Iceland is not an Arctic Ocean coastal state, and thus naturally would prefer to have all Arctic issues addressed through the Arctic Council. In this regard, the Government of Iceland expresses explicit dissatisfaction with the “Arctic Five” forum:

“If consultation by the five States develops into a formal platform for regional issues, it can be asserted that solidarity between the eight Arctic States will be dissolved and the Arctic Council considerably weakened” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 5).

Even though the strategy does not provide any specific measures for how to strengthen the Arctic Council, it is stressed that individual member states of the Arctic Council must be prevented from joining forces to exclude others from important decisions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 6). The Icelandic Government has publicly, as well as in talks with the five Arctic Ocean coastal states, protested their attempts to assume decision-making power in the region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 6). However, according to Iceland’s Arctic policy, despite denying that the forum is a step towards a consultation forum on Arctic issues, some of the states in question are willing to develop cooperation in this direction, and the Icelandic Government stresses that further efforts that may undermine the Arctic Council and Iceland’s interests in the region must be prevented (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 6). At the same time, the second principle of Iceland’s Arctic Policy is:

“Securing Iceland’s position as a coastal state within the Arctic region as regards influencing its development as well as international decisions on regional issues on the basis of legal, economic, ecological and geographical arguments”(Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 1).

The Government claims Icelanders more than others rely on the fragile resources of the Arctic, and therefore it is vital that Iceland secures its position as an Arctic Ocean coastal state (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 6). Iceland’s Arctic policy goal of securing this status is based on the fact that since the northern part of its Exclusive Economic Zone falls within the Arctic and extends to the Greenland Sea adjoining the Arctic Ocean, Iceland has both territory and rights to sea areas north of the Arctic Circle (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 6).

“Iceland’s legal position in the North needs to be further secured in order to put Iceland on equal footing with the other coastal states in the region”, and that “the Government should take the initiative of developing arguments in support of this objective in cooperation with relevant institutions” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 6).

In summary, Iceland’s Arctic Policy focuses on cooperation, ensuring the UNCLOS forms the basis for the settlement of possible disputes over jurisdiction and rights in the Arctic, the strengthening of general security and prevention of militarization of the region (Ministry

of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011). The Government stresses that cooperation must be strengthened and bilateral agreements sought with individual Arctic states, and claims there is common willingness among the Arctic states to increase cooperation of this kind (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 10). Other focus areas include climate changes, the well being of indigenous peoples, economic development, education and research, as well as national interests.

4.2.8 The Arctic Council versus the Arctic Five

By reviewing the Arctic policies of the circumpolar states, the tensions between the Arctic Five and the remaining member states of the Arctic Council becomes quite evident. This issue is relevant to Arctic cooperation, and I will briefly summarize the main findings. Firstly, the United States does not explicitly mention the Arctic Five in their Arctic strategy, but instead emphasize the Arctic Council as the most important forum for cooperation among Arctic states on issues of mutual interest. However, the US does not address the need to strengthen the Council, but rather will pursue cooperation through its existing structure, as well as through new arrangements for cooperation on issues of mutual interest or concern, but does not elaborate on what this implies. Russia, like the US, aims for increased influence in the Arctic through strengthened national control and international cooperation, and the Arctic Council is emphasized as the central forum for the later. The remaining Arctic Ocean coastal states - Norway, Denmark and Canada - have different approaches to cooperation through the Arctic Five format. Norway greatly emphasizes collaboration through the Arctic Council and bilateral cooperation, but does not address the Arctic Five in its High North strategy. Denmark on the other hand, also sees the Arctic Council as the primary organization for Arctic cooperation, but in addition explicitly address the Arctic Five. Denmark considers this to be a appropriate forum for matters primarily relevant for the coastal states, and to this end conforms to Canada's position on the issue, as both countries seems more concerned with protecting national interests than including all the circumpolar states on questions related to the Arctic Ocean coast.

The three non-littoral states - Finland, Sweden and Iceland - also have different views on the implications of the Arctic Five arrangement for Arctic collaboration and policymaking. Finland has been central to circumpolar cooperation since the end of the Cold War, and continues to emphasize the Arctic Council as the most important forum for addressing Arctic issues. Perhaps more so than the other Arctic states, Finland stresses the need to strengthen the Council and outlines specific actions to this end, but has no mention of the Arctic Five format. Sweden on the other hand, openly condemns the excluding cooperation pursued among the Arctic Five, and wish to strengthen the Arctic Council in order to reduce the need for the coastal states to address issues through this forum. Although Sweden is not an Arctic Ocean coastal state, it still consider topics such as the establishment of the coastal states' continental shelves to be in its national interest, and would rather see them addressed through a reinforced Arctic Council in the presence of all Arctic stakeholders. Likewise, the Government of Iceland considers the Arctic Five to be a threat to cooperation through the Arctic Council, and has publicly, as

well as directly to each of the Arctic Ocean coastal states, protested their attempts to assume decision-making power in the region. The Icelandic Arctic Policy is without doubt the document expressing the greatest concern over collaboration among the Arctic Five, seeing this not only to undermine the work and position of the Arctic Council, but also threatening Iceland's interests in the region. Iceland obviously wants to see all Arctic issues dealt with in the presence of all stakeholders, even though they also strives for status as an Arctic Ocean coastal state.

What can be read from this review of Arctic strategies is the great primacy and importance attributed to the Arctic Council by all of the Arctic states. The Arctic Council is seen as the most important forum for multinational cooperation and for addressing Arctic issues of mutual interest. However, what is more interesting is what is said about the Arctic Five. Some states, primarily Canada and Denmark, sees this as a necessary forum for addressing issues related to the Arctic Ocean coast, such as the claim to and establishment of extended continental shelves. Other states however, mainly Sweden and Iceland, consider the Arctic Five to threaten and weaken the Arctic Council, and to a large extent undermine their own national interests in the region. The United States, Norway and Finland are less explicit about whether they consider the Arctic Five to be necessary association or a threat to broader Arctic cooperation.

4.3 'State of the nation' in the Arctic - cooperation or conflict?

The above account of the Arctic states' policies allows for an analysis of the general political situation in the region. From a foreign policy perspective, regulating affairs in the Arctic is a unique issue, incomparable even to Antarctica. The Antarctic region is a clearly defined area, governed by a treaty suspending all territorial claims, demilitarizing the region, banning resource development and instructing parties to scientific and environmental cooperation (Griffiths, 2011, 183). In contrast, the Arctic is surrounded by the territory of five coastal states: Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, the United States and Russia, in addition to the territories of Sweden, Finland and Iceland, complicating international governance in the region (Griffiths, 2011, 184). Thus, the Arctic region is unique to the extent that it blurs the lines between domestic and foreign policy (House of Commons Canada, 2013), which makes the political situation in the circumpolar north particularly challenging. Each state must consider the interests and actions of the other seven Arctic states, rights and freedoms of other countries granted under international law, as well as the indigenous peoples inhabiting the territory (Griffiths, 2011, 184). Broadly speaking, Arctic commentators are divided between those focusing on the diplomatic spirit characterizing circumpolar cooperation, and those emphasizing the probability for a spillover from conflicts elsewhere. The Arctic has thus far remained a stable and peaceful region, characterized by a web of bilateral and multilateral arrangements. However, as states strive for resources and to secure national interests in the region, and as the security picture changes elsewhere in the world, how long will the Arctic peace last?

On one hand, diplomacy and cooperation in the High North over the past decades is quite

impressive. States have generally adhered to the rules in the region, which has generated the development of common norms (Wegge, 2011, 173). There seems to be a general agreement that there is no ongoing “race for resources” in the Arctic, and that the likelihood of international military conflict in the region is low¹. In addition, the Arctic states express that they consider international law, mainly the UNCLOS, to provide the legal framework for the Arctic Ocean and commit to adhere to the Convention when solving potential boundary disputes following overlapping claims, and when addressing issues resulting from climate change. Commentators also point out the material and political costs of a large-scale interstate military conflict in the Arctic due to the region’s remoteness and climate, and thus conclude it is highly unlikely that states will use such means to secure their interests in the region (Holtsmark, 2009, 10). Lastly, even Russia, who elsewhere is exhibiting a propensity towards military actions, generally plays a constructive role in maintaining regional stability in the Arctic (Baker & Kraska, 2014, 2). The fact that this great power has shown such commitment to cooperation and diplomacy concerning circumpolar affairs is for many a strong indicator that a military conflict in the region is unlikely.

On the other hand, in accordance with realist theory, national interests are a strong driving force for states. The Arctic states, as well as non-Arctic actors, are paying close attention to the region and what is happening in terms of military activities and resource development. There might not be a “race for resources”, but the Arctic states have begun rebuilding their military capabilities on the basis that new economic developments are going to increase the activity level in the region (Huebert, 2011, 50). As the Arctic opens up to new shipping routes and opportunities for resource exploitation and development, the prospect for conflict in the region could increase accordingly. Indeed, there are several powerful nations with their eyes on Arctic resources, such as Russia, China, the United States and EU member states (Granatstein, 2013). In addition, despite the general cooperative spirit and downplaying of the conflict potential in the Arctic, one cannot escape the fact that the growing strategic attention to the region makes it more vulnerable to conflicts unfolding elsewhere (Holtsmark, 2009, 10). Therefore, it is questionable, or at least worth investigating, how robust Arctic diplomatic agreements really are. An example of how increased Arctic integration can lead to spillover from conflicts unfolding elsewhere is Canada, Norway and Denmark canceling of joint military operations with Russia after the latter’s invasion of Crimea, Ukraine in March 2014. In addition, other possibilities for military escalations may result from localized episodes developing into armed clashes despite the original intentions of the parties involved, or one state may consider the use of limited military force, confident that the other side will not escalate the conflict due to asymmetric power relations (Holtsmark, 2009, 10). Seeing that interstate cooperation is absolutely essential for stability and responsible stewardship in the circumpolar north, these are worrisome issues.

¹The Canadian Government does not believe there is significant potential for conflict unfolding in the Arctic region (Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 26). Also the Norwegian Intelligence Service, in its annual assessment released in February 2014, concludes that the conflict potential in the Arctic is low, there is no interstate “race for resources” in the region, and rights, obligations and rules are clarified, primarily through the Law of the Sea (The Norwegian Intelligence Service, 2014, 6).

In conclusion, while it may be fair to argue that we are unlikely to experience the unfolding of a direct military conflict in the Arctic region itself, it is an inescapable fact that security related conflicts elsewhere might affect the region in terms of hindering or canceling cooperative arrangements. However, at the current time, there seems to be a prevailing order in the Arctic for which Njord Wegge (2011) highlights three potential explanatory factors. Firstly, no actor seems to dominate the region in terms of power capabilities, as the two potentially strongest poles – the United States and Russia – are unwilling and unable to do so. The Arctic has not been a priority for the US, they are ambivalent towards the Arctic Council and have not acceded to the UNCLOS. Russia score high on military capabilities, but does not have the economic power to dominate (Wegge, 2011, 173). Given the distribution of these power capabilities, Wegge characterizes the Arctic as a multipolar system where the Arctic Five together dominates. Such multipolar features can be considered a destabilizing factor, but the second factor – institutional developments – contributes significantly to the cooperative environment prevailing in the Arctic today (Wegge, 2011, 173). The UNCLOS and the Arctic Council gives the region a fairly robust international framework, and states have generally adhered to the rules provided by these international regimes (Wegge, 2011, 173). Engagement in forums such as the Arctic Council is a way for states to consolidate their alliances and partnerships, and thus undoubtedly contributes positively to the security situation in the circumpolar north, seeing how states are much less likely to engage in conflict with their collaborators. The third explanatory factor is domestic regime types – democracies - but seeing how it is questionable whether Russia can be characterized as a true democracy, this is considered the weakest factor in terms of explaining the political order in the Arctic (Wegge, 2011, 173). Wegge concludes the smaller states are the prime beneficiaries of the multipolar system based on respect for international law, expressed by their robust presence in the High North, strong support for an enhanced Arctic Council and steadfast position in respecting the UNCLOS (Wegge, 2011, 174).

CANADA'S ARCTIC POLICY: THEMES AND STRATEGIES

This chapter will present a short synopsis of the main documents this thesis builds on: *Canada's Northern Strategy* (2009), *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2007-2011* (2011), *Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy* (2010) and the *Canada First Defense Strategy* (2008). Throughout the summaries, I will highlight themes of particular significance for the thesis, such as statements about Arctic sovereignty and security, indigenous peoples and northerners, circumpolar cooperation and the Arctic Council. Lastly, I will briefly account for Canada's Economic Action Plan, seeing as these investments are of relevance for later discussions.

5.1 Canada's Northern Strategy (2009) and Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2007-2011 (2011)

Canada's Northern Strategy was introduced in 2007 and issued in 2009, and in 2011 the Harper government published *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2007-2011*. Canada's Northern Strategy elaborates on the Government's overarching vision for the North, building on four priorities to safeguard the region's position within a strong and sovereign Canada (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, introduction). The four pillars are: exercising our Arctic sovereignty; promoting social and economic development; protecting the North's environmental heritage; and improving and devolving northern governance (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 2). The north is described as a fundamental part of Canada's heritage, future and national identity, as well as being home to many of the Aboriginal peoples. The Government recognizes the great opportunities and many challenges in the region today, and claims to be allocating more resources and attention to northern issues than ever before (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, introduction). Moreover, international interest in the north has intensified as a result of the potential for resource development and the opening of new transportation routes, and the government stresses the importance of demonstrating Canadian leadership to promote a prosperous and stable region responsive to Canadian interests and values (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 1-5). Furthermore, central to the forthcoming analysis of Canadian territorial governance is the emphasis put on northerners and Aboriginal peoples:

“Canada's North is first and foremost about people - the Inuit, other Aboriginal peoples and Northerners who have made the North their home [...]” “Our nation's strong presence in the Arctic today is due in large part to the contributions of Inuit, who continue to inhabit the North” (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 3).

The north is undergoing rapid changes, environmentally from the impacts of climate change, and politically through the growth of northern governments and institutions, and the strategy highlights today's close collaboration between the federal and territorial governments, and how Aboriginal people have negotiated land claims and self-government agreements, giving them the institutions and resources they need to achieve greater self-sufficiency (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 4). As the vast economical potential of the north is being unlocked, the Canadian government commits to address critical areas such as infrastructure, housing and education, to help ensure northerners are positioned to seize the opportunities in the region (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 5). Regarding the effects of climate change, the Government states:

“Few countries are more directly affected by changes in the Arctic climate – or have as much at stake – as Canada. We have an important role to play in the ongoing stewardship of the Canadian Arctic, its vast resources and its potential” (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 8).

The first pillar of Canada's Northern Strategy is exercising Arctic sovereignty, which is described as longstanding, well established and based on historic title. However, it is also recognized that current changes in the region necessitate the need to maintain a strong presence in the north, to enhance stewardship, define domain and advance knowledge in order to exercise this right (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 9). To this end, the Harper government is making investments to ensure Canada have the capacity and capability to protect and patrol its sovereign Arctic territory (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 9). The strategy addresses the research and mapping studies undertaken to ensure recognition for the maximum extent of Canada's continental shelf in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, a process described as “not adversarial and not a race” but rather as a “collaborative process based on a shared commitment to international law”, and Canada is working with Denmark, Russia and the United States (US) to undertake this scientific work (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 12). Closely related are boundary disputes regarding Canadian Arctic land, islands and waters. The only land dispute is with Denmark over Hans Islands, but “managed disagreements” over maritime boundaries at this point exists between Canada and the United States in the Beaufort Sea and the Northwest Passage, and between Canada and Denmark in the Lincoln Sea¹ (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 13). The strategy emphasizes how these disputes “pose no sovereignty or defense challenges for Canada”, have “no impact on Canada's ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively with [...] Arctic neighbors on issues of real significance and importance”, and “Canada will continue to manage these discrete disputes, and may seek to resolve them in the future, in accordance with international law” (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 13). *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy* addresses the Government's actions towards the objective of asserting its presence in the north. Examples are aerial, land and satellite surveillance, strengthening of the Canadian Rangers, NORAD missions, RADAR SAT-

¹The disagreement with Denmark in the Lincoln Sea was settled in 2012.

2; enhancing the ability to track ships navigating Canadian waterways, space-based surveillance through Canada's Polar Epsilon project, and the Long Range Identification and Tracking System (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 11). Another measure to increase control over Canada's north came in July 2010, when the voluntary traffic reporting system for the Northern Canada Vessel Traffic Services (NORDREG) Zone was made mandatory, meaning all vessels of a certain size are now required to submit reports prior to entering, while navigating within and upon exiting Canada's Arctic waters (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 12). The Canadian Forces engage in major sovereignty operations in Canada's Arctic every year: Nanook, Nunakput and Nunaliivut. In 2010 and 2011, partners from the US and Denmark also participated in Operation Nanook (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 11), indicating the Canadian government is following up on its intention to work together with Arctic neighbors on search-and-rescue preparedness, as well as disaster and sovereignty patrols in the Arctic. In general, states recognize that these tasks are too comprehensive to deal with unilaterally, and aim for collaboration on such missions.

The second pillar of the Northern Strategy is promoting social and economic development, which is considered important to ensure the vast potential of the Arctic is realized in a sustainable way, and that northerners participate in and benefit from the development (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 14). In *Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy*, numerous investments and measures are listed, demonstrating the Government's work towards this objective. For instance, the Territorial Formula Financing is considered a primary tool to fund programs and services, and in 2010 the Government introduced an Action Plan to improve northern regulatory regimes and unlock the region's resource potential without compromising environmental protection. In addition, the economic development agency CanNor was established in 2009 to help ensure a stronger, more dynamic economy for northern workers and businesses by enabling them to benefit from resources and opportunities in the region (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 3-4). I will elaborate on these initiatives and investments when discussing governance in Canada's northern territories.

Under the third pillar - protecting our environmental heritage - the Canadian government emphasizes how the fragile and unique ecosystem of the north is under attack from the impacts of climate change, and commits to ensure these ecosystems are safeguarded for future generations (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 24). To this end, Canada strives to be a global leader in Arctic science, and scientific collaboration through international organizations and Canada's contribution to the International Polar Year (IPY) is highlighted. The IPY program took place from 2007 to 2009, involving more than 60 countries, over 200 international research networks, and was valued at \$7 billion worldwide (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2011). This was the largest international program of coordinated, interdisciplinary science focused on the Arctic and Antarctic ever conducted. The purpose was to deepen the understanding of polar processes, global linkages and increase the ability to detect changes at the poles, to involve Arctic residents in research activities, attract and develop the

next generation of polar scientists, and capture public interest (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2011). Canada played an important part in this global initiative, including research on human activities, societies, cultures and health, and provided leadership for eight international science networks, collaborating with more than 240 researchers from 23 countries (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2011). Nationally, the Canadian IPY program focused on two key research areas for the north: climate change impacts and adaptation and the health and well-being for northern communities, and the \$156 million investment was the largest the Government has ever made in northern science (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2011). The Canadian government further commits to establish a new world-class research station in the Arctic, and the Arctic Research Infrastructure Fund has been established to update other research facilities across the Canadian north (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 25-26). Also in *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy*, the ambition to become a global leader and promote scientific collaboration prevails. In addition, focus is directed towards domestic actions and what has been done in terms of environmental monitoring and the promotion of sustainable development of the north's natural resources while protecting the ecosystem (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 8). The growing role of science and technology in supporting the Government's activities in the north is also highlighted, particularly regarding the submission to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, in which Canada seeks international recognition for the full extent of its continental shelf (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 16).

Fourthly, the Canadian government aims to improve and devolve northern governance, emphasizing land claims by and self-government for indigenous peoples as they develop customized policies and strategies to address their unique challenges and opportunities (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 30). Territorial governments have taken on greater responsibility for regional affairs over the past decades, most recently control over land and resource management, and the Canadian government commits to continuing to work with all partners to advance practical, innovative and efficient governance models (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 28-31). These goals still stand in *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy*, which has an even stronger emphasis on the Government's commitment to rebuilding its relationship with Canada's Aboriginal peoples, thus admitting the historically unjust treatment of indigenous peoples. To this end, the Government issued an apology in 2010 to the Inuit families relocated to the High Arctic in the 1950s, including a recognition of their contribution to a strong Canadian presence in the region (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 9).

Lastly, regarding the international dimension, it is emphasized how "cooperation, diplomacy and international law have always been Canada's preferred approach in the Arctic". Canada has a strong history of collaboration with northern neighbors to promote Canadian interests internationally while advancing its role as a responsible Arctic nation, and will continue to work with Arctic partners to achieve common goals while advancing national priorities (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 33). As such, the strategy combines diplomatic lan-

guage focusing on cooperation and stewardship with direct assertions about sovereignty and national interests. The United States is highlighted as an exceptionally valuable partner in the Arctic. The two states' long history of effective collaboration on common interests in the region is emphasized, and the Canadian government will continue to deepen cooperation on emerging Arctic issues bilaterally, through the Arctic Council and other multilateral institutions (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 34). Russia is also mentioned as a significant Arctic actor, and the Canadian government focuses on bilateral efforts including new trading relationships and transportation routes, environmental protection and indigenous issues (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 34). The Arctic Council is attributed great significance as an "important venue for deepening global understanding of the Arctic", which "has played a key role in developing a common agenda among Arctic states" (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 35). Canada will continue to ensure the Council has the necessary strength, resources and influence to respond effectively to emerging challenges in the Arctic (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 35). Also in *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy*, the Arctic Council is described as a "leading forum for intergovernmental cooperation on Arctic issues", and it is emphasized how its structure unites the eight Arctic states and the six indigenous permanent participants around a common agenda, enhancing its strength and effectiveness (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 13). Even though Canadian national interests are at the forefront, it is clearly acknowledged that because of the depth and complexity of the challenges and opportunities in the Arctic, many circumpolar issues are best approached cooperatively. The Canadian government therefore commits to cooperation with domestic and international partners - through the Arctic Council, with the Arctic Ocean states and bilaterally with key Arctic partners - to ensure Canada is able to seize opportunities and address challenges in the Arctic region.

5.2 Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy (2010)

The *Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy: Exercising Sovereignty and Promoting Canada's Northern Strategy Abroad* advances the four pillars of Canada's Northern Strategy while focusing international efforts towards specific policy areas (2010, 4). The statement highlights that the geopolitical significance of the Arctic and the consequences for Canada has never been greater, and how the region evolves will have major implications for Canada and its role as an Arctic power (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 3). In pursuing the pillars of the Northern Strategy, Canada is committed to exercising the full extent of its sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the Arctic. The Government will take a robust leadership role in shaping the stewardship, sustainable development and environmental protection of this strategic region, and will engage with others to advance its interests (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 4).

Exercising sovereignty over the Far North is seen as the most important pillar towards realizing the potential of Canada's Arctic, and protecting Canadian sovereignty and the integrity of its borders is cited as the Government's primary responsibility (Canada's Arctic Foreign

Policy, 2010, 5-6). Canada's priority areas in the Arctic are: seeking to resolve boundary issues; securing international recognition for the full extent of its extended continental shelf wherein it can exercise their sovereign rights over the resources of the seabed and subsoil; and addressing Arctic governance and related emerging issues (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 7).

Promoting economic and social development is the second priority area addressed in Canada's Arctic foreign policy. It is emphasized that creating a dynamic, sustainable northern economy and improving the social well-being of northerners is essential to unleashing the true potential of the region, and is an important means of exercising sovereignty (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 11). Therefore, the Government will actively promote social and economic development internationally on three key fronts: take steps to create the appropriate international conditions for sustainable development; seek trade and investment opportunities that benefit northerners and all Canadians; and encourage a greater understanding of the human dimension of the Arctic to improve the lives of northerners (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 12). Encouragement of greater understanding of the human dimension will be pursued particularly through the Arctic Council, and the Government commits to continue its leadership role in the Council's initiatives on human well-being in the Arctic, and to host the Secretariat for the Sustainable Development Working Group (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 15). Furthermore, addressing human health issues in northern communities is seen as critically important, and Canada has been supporting such efforts through the Arctic Council and International Polar Year research (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 15). Lastly, and of particular interest for this thesis is the statement on traditional ways of life in the north:

“Canada's commitment to Northern economic and social development includes a deep respect for indigenous traditional knowledge, work and cultural activities. Going forward, Canada will promote a better understanding of the interests, concerns, culture and practices of Northerners, including with regards to seals and polar bears. In this context, Canada is committed to defend sealing on the international stage” (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 16).

The priority area “protecting our environmental heritage” focuses on how the Arctic environment is affected by events occurring outside the region, in particular the effects of climate change (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 16). Strong environmental protection is an essential component of sustainable development, and another way in which Canada expresses its northern sovereignty (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 16). Canada is working internationally to: promote an ecosystem-based management approach with its Arctic neighbors and others; contribute to and support international efforts to address climate change in the Arctic; enhance efforts on other pressing international issues, including pursuing and strengthening international standards; and strengthen Arctic science and the legacy of the International Polar Year (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 17). The Government recognizes that climate change is a global challenge requiring a global solution, and again attention is centered on

the Arctic Council and the importance of working with indigenous peoples, building on their unique knowledge of the region and addressing their land claims in the process of establishing national parks (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 18-20). The Government sees itself at the forefront in protecting the Arctic environment, and underlines its ambition to be a global leader in Arctic science, consequently taking a lead role in the Arctic Council's Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks project (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 16; 22).

Lastly, Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy addresses how northern governments are taking on greater responsibility for many aspects of the region's affairs, which is also cited as a way for Canada to exercise its Arctic sovereignty (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 22). The Government is committed to providing northerners with more control over their economic and political destiny, and is taking steps to endorse the UN's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in a manner consistent with Canada's constitution and laws (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 22). Domestic efforts for strong governance in the north are reinforced in three ways. Canada will engage with northerners on the Arctic Foreign Policy, continue to support indigenous permanent participant organizations to strengthen their capacity to fully participate in the activities in the Arctic Council, and provide Canadian youth with opportunities to participate in the circumpolar dialogue (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 23-24).

Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy is a somewhat balanced mix of diplomatic rhetoric and the overarching objective of protecting national interests. The Government is highly aware of the rapid changes taking place in the Arctic, as well as the growing importance of the region. This reality has implications for Canada as an Arctic state, and it is repeatedly emphasized how "exercising sovereignty over Canada's North is the number one Arctic foreign policy priority". This is expressed through the priority areas from the Northern Strategy, which are all seen as important means of expressing and exercising sovereignty. Therefore, while cooperation, diplomacy and respect for international law is cited as Canada's preferred approach in the Arctic, the Government sends a clear message that it will never waver in its commitment to protect the Canadian north (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 27). While to some extent concealed behind talk of stewardship, sustainable development and environmental protection, sovereignty and Canada's national interests are clearly at the forefront. The term "Arctic power" is used several times, demonstrating the Government's international ambitions, and Canada intends to show leadership in demonstrating responsible stewardship, while building a region responsive to Canadian interests and values (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 27).

Nonetheless, in its commitment to deliver Canada's priorities on the international arena, the Government recognizes the need to work with other circumpolar actors bilaterally, through regional mechanisms and in multinational institutions (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 24). The United States, "Canada's premier partner in the Arctic", is clearly at the center of these ambitions, but Canada is also working with the other Arctic states to advance shared interests (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 24). The statement emphasizes that the key foundation for any collaboration will be acceptance of and respect for the perspectives of northerners and

Arctic states' sovereignty. Additionally, there must be recognition that the Arctic states remain the best place to exercise leadership in the management of the region (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 24), underlining Canada's international ambitions in the circumpolar north. The Arctic Council is seen as the leading multilateral forum for promotion of Canadian northern interests, and Canada is committed to engage with other actors to strengthen the Council and ensure it continues to respond to the challenges and opportunities in the region, thus furthering Canadian national interests (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 24-25). It is noted how the increasing accessibility of the Arctic has led to a widespread perception that the region could become a source of conflict. However, Canada does not anticipate any military challenges in the Arctic, and believes the region is well managed through existing institutions, particularly the Arctic Council (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 26). Nevertheless, when positions or actions taken by others affect Canadian national interests, undermine the cooperative relationships they have build or demonstrate lack of sensitivity to the interests or perspectives of Arctic peoples or states, the Government will respond (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 27).

5.3 Canada First Defense Strategy (2008)

The *Canada First Defence Strategy* was issued in 2008 in support of the Harper government's commitment to "stand up for Canada". The strategy aims to improve the security of Canadian citizens, defending Canadian sovereignty and ensure that Canada can return to the international stage as a credible and influential country (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008). The Government considers defending Canadians to be its core responsibility, and addresses its predecessors' under-investments in the Canadian Forces, which has left it unprepared to deal with the increasingly complex global environment. Thus, since taking office in 2006, the Harper government has confronted the nation's security weakness by investing in the military and committed to modernize and rebuild the Canadian Forces (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 5-6).

The first chapter addresses Canada's strategic security environment, in which uncertainty, changes and increased complexity dominate (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 6). The effects of globalization are central, and several international conflicts with potential implications for Canadian security are listed, including concerns about the Arctic region, which is becoming more accessible to sea traffic and economic activity. This has potential economic benefits for Canada, but also exposes it to new challenges with possible implications for Canadian sovereignty and security (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 6). The Government commits to ensure Canada has the tools it needs to deal with the full range of potential threats, and essential in this regard is to give the Canadian Forces the capabilities it need to operate effectively in the current and future uncertain environment (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 6).

The second chapter addresses the roles of the Canadian Forces: defending Canada and North America, and contributing to international peace and security. The first responsibility – ensure the security of Canadian citizens and help exercising Canada's sovereignty – is given

primacy in the defense strategy and is the most important role of the CF (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 7). This entails constant monitoring of Canada's territory, including the Arctic, to detect threats to Canadian security as early as possible, and to address them quickly and effectively (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 7). It is stated that in response to opportunities and challenges arising in the Arctic resulting from increased activity levels in the region, the military will play a vital role in demonstrating a visible Canadian presence in this potentially resource rich region (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 8). Regarding defense of North America, the United States is emphasized as Canada's closest ally, to which Canada needs to be a strong and reliable partner. Cooperation is in both's strategic interest, given their common security and defense requirements (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 8). The Canadian Forces will carry out bilateral training and exercises with the United States, Canada Command will continue to work with US Northern Command on shared objectives, and the nations' armed forces will collaborate on operations in North America and abroad (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 8). Lastly, the Canadian Forces role is to contribute to international peace and security. Canadian prosperity and security rely on stability abroad, and Canada must do its part to address international challenges as they arise (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 8). The Government recognizes that international leadership is vital if Canada is to continue to be a credible player on the world stage (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 9). It is also recognized that today's deployments are more complex than in the past, requiring more than a purely military solution. Canada will continue to contribute to key international bodies such as the United Nations and NATO, in addition to participate in missions with like-minded states as a responsible member of the international community (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 9).

“Canada cannot lead with words alone. Above all else, leadership requires the ability to deploy military assets, including “boots on the ground”. In concert with its allies, Canada must thus be prepared to act and provide appropriate resources in support of national interests and international objectives” (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 9).

Lastly, the document addresses investments required to implement the Canada First Defense Strategy, which are supported by increased long-term funding aiming to reverse the damage done by major cuts to the defense budget in the 1990s (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 11). Overall, the Government intends to spend about \$490 billion on defense over the next 20 years, which will be allocated across personnel (51%), infrastructure (8%), readiness (29%) and equipment (12%) (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 14-19). In addition, it is pointed out how this funding is in direct support of the Government's strategic plan for boosting the economic prosperity, global competitiveness and quality of life for Canadians, benefiting every region of the country (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008, 20).

5.4 Canada's Economic Action Plan

Canada's Economic Action Plan (EAP) was introduced in 2009 to counter the effects of the worldwide recession, and includes specific initiatives towards "building the north", developed in support of Canada's Northern Strategy's four priority areas (The Government of Canada, 2014). The Economic Action Plan 2013: *Jobs, Growth and Long-Term Prosperity* announced \$872 million in total investments for Aboriginal and northern communities, to allow them to participate more fully in Canada's economy and benefit from its growth (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2013b). Furthermore, through the Economic Action Plan 2014: *The Road to Balance: Creating Jobs and Opportunities*, the Government aims to assert Canada's sovereignty by investing in the north (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2014b). This will be done by a \$40 million investment over two years to renew the *Strategic Investment in Northern Economic Development* program delivered by CanNor, a commitment to work with territorial governments to develop transportation infrastructure in the North, and a \$70 million investment over three years for a new targeted and time-limited fund to increase health services in the territories (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2014b). The Canadian government's website lists three EPA initiatives related to exercising Arctic sovereignty. Firstly, Natural Resources Canada received \$38.9 million for new satellite data reception facilities and the development of a data management system in 2012 (The Government of Canada, 2014). Secondly, the Government has committed to renewing the Canadian Coast Guard Fleet, and provided \$5.2 billion over a decade to this project through the 2012 EAP (The Government of Canada, 2014). An example is the investment in a multi-purpose icebreaker, the *John G. Diefenbaker*, which will be constructed from 2018-2021 at a cost of \$1.3 billion (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). However, the fact that it will be finished 15 years after Prime Minister Harper was elected and made the Arctic a central part of his platform supports the point of the critics claiming he is too slow to deliver on his promises for Canada's north. Lastly, the construction of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) in Cambridge Bay, announced in August 2012 and scheduled to open in 2017, is the third initiative aiming to strengthen Canada's Arctic sovereignty. The Government has committed \$142.4 million for the construction and equipment of the station, \$46.2 over six years for the CHARS Science and Technology research program, and \$26.5 for the ongoing program and operations from 2018-2019 (The Government of Canada, 2014). CHARS is considered a key component of Canada's Northern Strategy, and these investments underline Canada's goal of becoming a world leader in Arctic science and technology. The construction of the station was initiated in August 2014 as an event in Prime Minister Harper's ninth annual Northern Tour.

"The ceremony marked another important step towards the Government's goal of improving the quality of life of Northerners, to better understand the North, and to exercise sovereignty over Canadian territory" (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014c).

In terms of the other priority areas of Canada's Northern Strategy, a majority of the EAP investments listed on the Government's website - 13 in total - are related to social and economic development in the north, indicating the primacy ascribed to this issue by the Harper government. Examples are the establishment of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) in 2009 and the Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund (CIIF). The CIIF was a program running from 2012 to 2014 and delivered by regional development agencies through which the federal government invested \$150 million in the rehabilitation and improvement of existing community infrastructure facilities (The Government of Canada, 2014).

In addition to the above mentioned projects, there are other federal military investments, including in the Arctic, worth mentioning in order to get a full overview of what the Harper government is doing to safeguard Canadian security. Major Pan-Northern initiatives in this regard includes the Canadian Ranger Expansion project, which was provided \$39 million annually between 2008 and 2012 with the objective of achieving a strength of 5000 rangers (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). This goal was reached in May 2013, and as of May 2014, 18 new Canadian Ranger patrols have been established since 2007, making up a total of 179 patrols across the country (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). The Canadian government has also invested \$4.4 billion through the Department of National Defense in the modernization of the Royal Canadian Air Force's Air Transportation Fleet, and from 2018-2023, the Government will invest \$3.1 billion in the acquisition of Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). This is an important step towards securing Canadian Arctic sovereignty and security, but seeing that construction of these ships will not begin until 2015, Canada is still far behind some of the other Arctic states in terms of military capabilities in the region. In August 2013, the Canadian Armed Forces Training Centre (CAFATC) facility opened to a cost of \$25 million, allowing for specialized training in cold weather survival and military and search and rescue techniques (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e).

THE CANADIAN ARCTIC COUNCIL CHAIRMANSHIP, 2013-2015

In order to deepen the understanding of Canada's Arctic policymaking, I have examined the Canadian Arctic Council (AC) chairmanship from March 2013, which will shed light on methods used to pursue national interests in multilateral forums and prerequisites for political influence and agenda setting internationally. The case will illustrate how Canada works both cooperatively and based on domestic interests through the chairmanship, and is thus in accordance with the theoretical framework of the thesis. Realism best explains actions based on states' self-interests, while neoliberal institutionalism can be used to rationalize why a state would seek collaboration and work towards common objectives and benefits for the larger community.

The Arctic Council is a relatively young establishment, which makes it possible to observe and outline its development from the outset. The trend seems to be in the direction of intensified political pressure through the Council, which increases the political constraints put on the member states and has attracted the interest of non-Arctic states, demonstrated by the incorporation of several new observers at the Kiruna Ministerial Meeting in May 2013. One can therefore argue the Arctic Council has evolved from a transnational forum towards an international organization, and the first objective in this case is consequently to outline the Council's development, focusing in particular on the role played by Canada in this process.

Furthermore, the choice to look in depth at the Arctic Council and the Canadian chairmanship is based on the seemingly immense importance attributed to the Council by the Government of Canada. The Arctic Council is described as "the leading multilateral forum through which Canada advances its Arctic foreign policy and promotes Canadian Arctic interests internationally" (Arctic Council, 2011b). Canada is also committed to ensure the Council has the necessary strength, resources and influence to respond effectively to emerging challenges affecting the Arctic and its inhabitants (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 36). Prior to Canada assuming its chairmanship, the House of Commons issued a report summarizing key findings from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development's meetings aimed at providing parliamentary input to Canada's Arctic Council agenda, and to identify the most pressing challenges facing the Arctic states (House of Commons Canada, 2013).

"The Arctic Council combines the resources and knowledge of the eight Arctic states with those of six international indigenous peoples organizations for the benefit of cooperation on a common regional agenda. The unique nature and flexibility of the Arctic Council makes it as relevant to Canadian priorities today as when it was created." (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 4).

This case thus relates to the third research question: *To what extent does Canada's Arctic policy contribute to influence international relations and shape the international Arctic agenda?* More

specifically, to what degree is Canada successful in advancing its Arctic foreign policy and promote its Arctic interests internationally through the Arctic Council? The second and primary objective in this case is accordingly to develop an answer to these questions. To this end, I will examine issue areas highlighted through the Canadian chairmanship and how Canada operates to position itself in the High North seen in light of the need to establish a presence in the region, to improve the social and economic situation for people in the territories, and to facilitate sustainable development and management of the region's resources. I will establish Canada's influence on the Arctic political agenda through the Arctic Council, as well as why and how Canada's participation in the Council can shed light on Canadian Arctic policymaking.

6.1 From transnational forum to international organization

The Arctic Council (AC) was established in 1996 as a "high level forum" and not an international organization, which reflected the general trend towards informal cooperation among states at the time (Bloom, 1999). The United States (US) was particularly reluctant to create forums of Arctic governance with legally binding decision-making authority. However, Canada saw the importance of having the Americans on board to achieve the highest level of circumpolar cooperation, and succeeded in persuading the US by substantially reducing the powers of the Council (Huebert, 2011, 24). The AC's limitations are therefore that it was designed for policy-shaping and not policy-making, all outcomes require consensus, and "hard" security issues are explicitly excluded from the agenda (Centre for Arctic Policy Studies, 2013). The Arctic Council has primarily been engaged in scientific work and assessments aimed at documenting challenges and opportunities in the region for policy recommendations, it has played an important role in rising Arctic issues on the policy agenda and in enlightening the general public (Young, 2005, 11). In particular, the Council is praised for its role in raising the voices of indigenous peoples on the Arctic agenda and as an important venue for cooperation with indigenous peoples groups¹, and Canada has contributed in large part to this. The AC's advantages thus include agenda setting, promotion of stability and peace, and emphasizing the human dimension in the High North (Centre for Arctic Policy Studies, 2013). It is also important to note how the Council's output has improved since its establishment, and now includes agreements and treaties (Huebert, 2014b, 1). Therefore, while the Arctic Council was initially established as a high-level forum, primarily with "soft power" influence and lack of regulatory authority to make legally binding decisions, it is now considered the cornerstone of Arctic governance and circumpolar cooperation, and has acquired more of the qualities of an international organization. This development is in accordance with neoliberal institutionalism's view on regimes and state interdependence. Rob Huebert (2014b, 4) considers the growth of the Arctic Council to be driven by two main forces: renewed interest in the Arctic by the United States, and the desire

¹See for instance Canada's Northern Strategy (2009) or Young, Oran R. (2005): "Governing the Arctic: From Cold War Theater to Mosaic of Cooperation." *Global Governance* 11 (1): 9-15.

among non-Arctic states and entities to join. In addition, I will emphasize two decisions made at the Nuuk Ministerial Meeting in May 2011 aiming to reinforce the Council: the decision to create a permanent secretariat in Tromsø, Norway and the signing of the *Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic* - the SAR Agreement.

The recognition of the increased importance of the Arctic for the United States began at the end of the George W. Bush Jr. administration, which issued a renewed American policy for the region (Huebert, 2014b, 4). Since then, the Arctic has acquired greater prominence within American politics, exemplified by the attendance of Hillary Clinton at the 2011 Nuuk Ministerial Meeting - the first time the US sent its most senior State Department official to a meeting of either AEPS or the AC (Huebert, 2014b, 4). The United States' interest in the Arctic has later been manifested through *The US National Strategy for the Arctic Region* (2013). The strategy highlights the Arctic Council's notable achievements in the promotion of cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic states and indigenous peoples, and that the US will continue to emphasize the Council as a forum for facilitating cooperation on issues of mutual interest (United States Government, 2013, 9). This is quite the change in position, showing recognition of the Arctic Council's function both as a forum to advance national interests in the Arctic region, and as a mechanism to strengthen international cooperation and partnerships.

The Nuuk Ministerial Meeting is significant regarding the Arctic Council's development towards an international organization beyond increased US involvement. Firstly, the permanent secretariat was established in January 2013 to strengthen the Council's capacity to respond to the challenges and opportunities facing the Arctic (Nuuk Declaration, 2011). The secretariat is an administrative body working under the chairmanship, and is to perform the following functions: administrative and organizational support, communication and outreach, finance, Human Resources, and other services required by the Council and its chair (Arctic Council, 2012). The legal personality of the secretariat is the Kingdom of Norway, and an administrative budget to cover its operating costs is determined every second year by the Ministerial Meeting (Arctic Council, 2012). The fact that the Arctic Council can be held legally accountable for its actions can be said to raise its legitimacy as an organization (Sellheim, 2012, 71). However, beyond the establishment of the secretariat, there have been few changes to the internal operation of the Arctic Council since its establishment, and thus, it still struggles with organizational issues (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 7). The second important aspect of the Nuuk Declaration was the approval of the SAR Agreement - the first legally binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council (Nuuk Declaration, 2011). The other institutional agreement negotiated with the Council's support is the *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic* adopted in 2013. While these agreements indicate that the Arctic Council is acquiring more of the features of an international organization, it is important to note that the Council is not the legal entity adopting these documents. They are intergovernmental state agreements negotiated by sovereign states based on national jurisdiction, and the Council's contribution is to function as a forum for consultations (Keil, 2014).

The second point made by Huebert – the desire among non-Arctic states and entities to achieve observer status in the Arctic Council – is a more contested and debated topic. On one side, the will of several non-Arctic actors to become observers demonstrates how the Council has developed as an authority in Arctic governance, is perceived as increasingly legitimate and considered crucial for the future of the region (Sellheim, 2012, 68). On the other side, the question of observer status has become highly politicized (Young, 2012, 176), and can be seen as a matter of not jeopardizing the interests of the Arctic states and actors. For instance, the principal argument against accepting the European Union (EU) as a permanent observer stems from the belief that the Arctic Council has been successful as a regional body because of its focused membership of Arctic states and permanent participants. They have joint interests in the region, as well as a shared way of thinking on the principles of governance and on the importance of indigenous knowledge and practices (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 59). Hence, the EU's application at the 2013 Kiruna Ministerial Meeting was denied, largely because of the Canadian opposition to the EU's ban on import and sale of seal products, which was seen as a challenge to Inuit cultural practices (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 59). However, the Canadian-EU dispute was resolved on August 18th 2014 when the EU Commission approved a Joint Statement from July 2014 between Canadian and EU officials. The statement set out the framework for “cooperation to enable access to the EU of seal products that result from hunts traditionally conducted by Canadian indigenous communities and which contribute to their subsistence” (European Commission, 2014). Thus, the EU has lifted the ban on seal products from Canadian communities, and in return, Canada lifted its reservations concerning the EU's observer status in the Arctic Council, and as Chair of the Council, will launch the procedure for the full implementation of the Kiruna decision on the EU's observer status (European Commission, 2014). However, even though Canada is no longer in the way of the EU becoming an observer to the AC, other states may still look for obstacles or excuses to keep the EU out of the forum. The EU's observer status application has become particularly politicized, and some claim the Union does not fit within the Arctic Council (Centre for Arctic Policy Studies, 2014). Lastly, while there are obvious benefits for non-Arctic states to be included in the Arctic Council, seeing as it has developed into the primary forum for multinational cooperation on Arctic issues, Michael Byers also emphasizes how the Council can benefit from accepting additional observers:

“[...] any international organization [...] is only as important as the people in the room. We want the Arctic Council to be the center of Arctic diplomacy, Arctic governance. It is a compliment to us that the European Union and China want to be there”. “[...] there are some issues that can't be dealt with in the absence from those major players. If we want to deal with black carbon, we need to have China in the room. If we want to deal with regional fisheries management, we need to have the European Union in the room” (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 59).

In addition to the factors addressed above, it can be added that the Arctic Council's strong position and growing importance in Arctic governance is evident through the significance attributed to it by the Arctic states. When examining the Arctic foreign policies of the member

states, cooperation through and strengthening of the Arctic Council are recurring themes. Norway's High North Strategy emphasized sustainable resource management and work towards increased international understanding of the urgency of addressing climate changes as ambitions for its 2007-2009 chairmanship (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, 15). These were bold goals, manifesting Norway's confidence in this forum for circumpolar cooperation. Denmark's strategy for the Arctic describes the Arctic Council as the "primary organ for concrete cooperation in the Arctic" (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 52), and Sweden's Arctic strategy claims "the main multilateral arena for Arctic-specific issues is the Arctic Council" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2011, 19). Furthermore, the Government of Finland claims the Arctic Council should establish contact with operators outside the Arctic based on its global role and responsibility, and supports establishing the AC as an international treaty-based organization (Prime Ministers Office Finland, 2013, 44). Lastly, the Icelandic government stresses the role of the Arctic Council as the most important forum for international cooperation on Arctic issues, and how the growing number of observer states demonstrates increased international interest in the region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iceland, 2011, 5).

6.2 The Canadian Arctic Council chairmanship program 2013-2015

Canada, as the initiator of the Arctic Council, held the first chairmanship from 1996 to 1998 and assumed its second office at the Kiruna Ministerial Meeting in May 2013. According to the Arctic Council's website, the chairmanship's primary role is to coordinate joint projects and meetings between the member states, permanent participants and working groups, and to represent the Council externally. This description points towards something noteworthy, namely that this is an office intended to serve and represent the community – the eight Arctic states and other participants in the Council – as a whole. Therefore, the chairmanship can be assumed to entail limitations on the state holding it, such as restrictions on egocentric initiatives and actions and the pursuit of purely national goals. In addition, the fact that the Arctic Council works based on consensus means its priorities are determined collectively, limiting the possibility for the chair to unilaterally push an agenda (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 9).

At the same time, the chairmanship does allow for agenda setting and other 'symbolic' initiatives, and issues brought forward in the Arctic Council often emphasize links between domestic and foreign policy (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 8). This means there are opportunities for the chair to steer the Council's policy agenda in a direction that accommodates domestic priorities and/or its foreign policy, while at the same time addressing issues of relevance for the other member states. This is seemingly what Canada does through its 2013-2015 chairmanship with the theme *Development for the People of the North*. On the one side, the program states that Canada's chairmanship is putting northerners first, and this topic is arguably chosen primarily based on domestic interests and the critical need to improve the situation for indigenous peoples and northerners living in Canada's Arctic. On the other side, the Canadian

chairmanship theme can also be considered relevant for the other Arctic states, seeing that there are indigenous peoples living in challenging situations throughout the circumpolar region. Addressing such issues allows for the sharing of knowledge and identification of best practices (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 8), which produces a multilateral approach beneficial for all the Arctic Council's members. I find it interesting that, out of all the interests Canada could have pursued through its chairmanship – such as resource exploration and extraction, economic and business development, shipping or tourism – they chose northerners. This indicates a commitment from the Government to improve the living situation and well-being for northerners in Canada and across the circumpolar north. To this end, the Canadian program emphasizes how the appointment of Leona Aglukkaq, an Inuk from Nunavut, as Canada's minister for the Arctic Council “underlines the priority the Government of Canada places on the Arctic as well as its commitment to ensure that the region's future is in the hands of Northerners” (Development for the People of the North, 2013). In addition to the objective of social development, the other side of this policy area is equally important to underline, namely the sovereignty aspect. By facilitating continued habitation in the Canadian north, the Government strengthens its territorial claims and assertion of sovereignty in the region, which can become even more predominant in the years to come with growing opportunities for resource development in the Arctic.

6.2.1 Issue areas highlighted through the Canadian Arctic Council chairmanship

The Canadian chairmanship program highlights three focus areas: responsible Arctic resource development, safe Arctic shipping and sustainable circumpolar communities. Regarding responsible Arctic resource development, the *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic* is emphasized. So is the Council's work on oil-pollution prevention, which is critical to ensure the protection of the Arctic marine environment, and will continue under Canada's chairmanship (Development for the People of the North, 2013). Secondly, with increased opportunities for Arctic tourism, the Arctic Council will establish guidelines for sustainable tourism and cruise-ship operations, and thus encourage the benefits tourism brings to communities while reducing risks associated with increased activity. The Arctic states will also continue to work together to encourage the International Maritime Organization's efforts to develop a mandatory Polar Code for the Arctic Ocean (Development for the People of the North, 2013). Under the third highlight, sustainable circumpolar communities, the importance of traditional ways of life for northern communities is underlined. The Arctic Council is working to increase regional and global awareness of these, and to incorporate traditional and local knowledge into its work (Development for the People of the North, 2013). Lastly, the Canadian government stresses the need to strengthen the Arctic Council and enable it to respond to the challenges and opportunities emerging in the Arctic region as it evolves. Canada intends to work collaboratively with Arctic partners to realize this objective, with the aim of enhancing the capacity of the permanent participant organizations, improve the Council's coordination and maximize its effectiveness (Development for the People of the North, 2013).

6.2.2 Motives behind Canadian policy initiatives in the Arctic Council

“Canada has a clear vision for the Arctic, in which self-reliant individuals live in healthy, vital communities, manage their own affairs and shape their own destinies” (Development for the People of the North, 2013).

Looking at the three highlighted areas in the Canadian Arctic Council program for 2013-2015, it is possible to identify different motives behind these policy initiatives. Responsible Arctic resource development is mainly a cooperative priority area, although building a sustainable and economically vibrant future for the region is clearly in the domestic interest of Canada as well. The first initiative, establishing a circumpolar business forum, is a collaborative initiative aiming to foster circumpolar economic development and provide opportunities for businesses to engage with the Arctic Council (Development for the People of the North, 2013). This goal has been accomplished with the agreement between Senior Arctic Officials on the establishment of the Arctic Economic Council, which was announced on March 26th 2014 (Arctic Council, 2014a). However, Dr. Heather Exner-Pirot, editor of the Arctic Yearbook, argues that the Arctic Council is not necessarily the right place to deal with economic development, which is more of a national issue that varies greatly within the Arctic, and that Canada has not been successful in linking different priorities and realities (Quinn, 2014; Exner-Pirot, 2014). This underscores a recurring theme, namely the distinctness of the Arctic states and great variations in challenges, opportunities and needs among northerners. Secondly, the *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution and Preparedness Response in the Arctic* signed in May 2013 is considered critical to ensure the protection of the Arctic marine environment, and is also clearly in the interest of the international community as a whole.

Arctic resource development is an interesting policy area because of its complexity, and is highlighted by Rob Huebert as an example of a challenging issue Canada might not be able to solve through the Arctic Council. In a policy brief for the Canadian Defense and Foreign Affairs Institute, Huebert illustrates how balancing supporting economic development for northerners while protecting the Arctic’s fragile environment is one of the greatest challenges facing Canada and the Arctic Council at the moment (Huebert, 2014b, 1). Huebert argues that the question of oil development or not is poised to become the most divisive issue facing the Arctic states, and how well Canada navigates the Arctic Council through it will determine the success of the Canadian chairmanship (Huebert, 2014b, 1). The development of oil and gas resources in the Arctic is one of the region’s most significant economic activities, but seeing that environmental protection is one of the Arctic Council’s primary roles, this is not compatible with the Council’s mandate (Huebert, 2014b, 5). Huebert argues it seems unlikely that the Council will be able or willing to deal with this issue on a consensus basis, and instead, the individual Arctic states will most likely want to guard their unilateral sovereign rights to develop these resources within their national territory, regardless of the Council’s approach to the matter (Huebert, 2014b, 5-8).

The second highlighted area, safe Arctic shipping, is also a cooperative priority with national implications for Canada. Guidelines for sustainable tourism, cruise-ship operations, and a mandatory Polar Code for the Arctic Ocean is necessary for and will benefit the entire international community, especially the circumpolar states. At the same time, such efforts are highly significant for Canada, seeing as it has the world's second largest coastline. The third highlighted area – sustainable circumpolar communities – is more exclusively based on national interests and needs, but while it is an important domestic priority for the Government of Canada, it is also a challenge facing the other Arctic states (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 8-9). There are several subareas to this priority, firstly the importance of traditional ways of life for northern communities. The emphasis of the Council's work to increase regional and global awareness around this issue is very much in Canada's national interest. It is critical for the Government of Canada to make southerners, both within Canada and worldwide, understand the significance of seal hunting for the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, in particular the Inuit. Because settlements in Canada's north are so remote and inaccessible, hunting is essential for the survival and livelihood of the people living there. However, this is a controversial issue, one that has complicated for instance Canada's relationship with the European Union². Secondly, the Arctic Council's work to enhance scientific cooperation in the Arctic is emphasized. This is a cooperative measure, intended to improve shared knowledge of the region and advance joint efforts to promote good governance in the Arctic (Development for the People of the North, 2013). However, it is also in Canada's domestic interest, seeing that the conduct of research and studies in the Arctic's challenging environment is very costly and time consuming for one state to undertake alone. Scientific cooperation is thus something Canada pursues bilaterally or multilaterally for the joint benefit of all participants as well as the international community. For instance, Canada and the United Kingdom has signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in polar research (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 35), which also is an example of Canada's work with non-Arctic states on Arctic issues. The third subarea is the development of recommendations for incorporating traditional and local knowledge into the Arctic Council's work, which is in line with Canada's domestic priorities. There have been several developments in the direction of self-government for the territories since the 1970s (Coates & Poelzer, 2014), and the federal government recognizes the importance of working together with territorial governments on Arctic issues. Fourthly, the program addresses climate changes and pollutants, and efforts made to target these issues are in the interest of the entire international community. So is the aim to pursue cooperation among Arctic states and non-Arctic states to support the conservation of migratory birds. Lastly, the Canadian program states: "by promoting mental wellness, the Council will increase the ability of Arctic residents to thrive and adapt to the many changes affecting the region" (Development for the People of

²For an in depth account of the European Union's ban on seal trade products and Canada's attempts to influence the outcome of the EU proposition, see Wegge, Njord (2013): Politics between science, law and sentiments: explaining the European Union's ban on seal trade products." *Environmental Politics* 22 (2): 255-273.

the North, 2013). The transition from hunting-and-gathering lifestyles to ones more connected to southern economies has not been easy for Canada's northerners (Huebert, 2014b), so this is a pressing domestic issue, considering suicide rates in Canada's High North are very high³.

To summarize, although the Arctic Council chairmanship allows for the accommodation of domestic and/or foreign policy issues together with issues relevant for the whole Arctic community, there is at the same time the challenge of different perceptions or interpretations among the stakeholders. For instance, the Arctic Council's mandate rests on two main pillars: sustainable development and environmental protection. Canada has in particular pushed for the inclusion of sustainable development - economic and social development, improved health conditions and cultural well-being - but has interpreted this differently from some of the other Arctic states, who focus more on the resource aspect of Arctic development (Extner-Pirot, 2014). Thus, when Canada sat the theme for its chairmanship many actually saw this as breaking with the Arctic Council's agenda, and Canada has been criticized for the pursuit of domestic interests (Extner-Pirot, 2014; Menzies, 2014). There are concerns that Canada sees the chairmanship as a means to further its own Northern Strategy, and the focus on the "local" - especially Canadian indigenous peoples - versus the global aspect of the Arctic is seen as problematic by external actors (Quinn, 2014; Extner-Pirot, 2014). Northern communities in Canada differ greatly from those in other Arctic states. Scandinavian countries in particular have more infrastructure, less indigenous demographics and access to resources that are not available in the Canadian north (Quinn, 2014). This is a valid point, and undoubtedly, the Scandinavian Arctic is much more developed than the Canadian territories, which means they face more advanced challenges and have different needs to further evolve than northerners in Canada.

6.2.3 Comparison of the Arctic Council program and Canada's Northern Strategy

To further examine how Canada pursues its national interests and policy through the Arctic Council chairmanship, I have compared the program with Canada's Northern Strategy and found striking similarities between the two documents. This gives prominence to the critique that Canada is using the chairmanship to further its Northern Strategy. For instance, the quote: "Canada has a clear vision for the Arctic, in which self-reliant individuals live in healthy, vital communities, manage their own affairs and shape their own destinies" is also found in Canada's Northern Strategy (2009, 1) when presenting Canada's vision for the north. The Canadian government intends to achieve this vision through the strategy based on four priorities: exercising Arctic sovereignty, promoting social and economic development, protecting the environmental heritage and improving and devolving northern governance (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009,

³In 2013, deaths by suicide in Canada was 10.2 per 100,000 population, which equaled 1.56% of the total deaths that year (Statistics Canada, 2013a). The rate in the Northwest Territories was 13.4 per 100,000 population, and deaths by suicide (18) constituted 3.8% of the total (476) deaths in the NWT in 2013 (Statistics Canada, 2013a). In the Yukon, the rate was 8.9 per 100,000 population and equaled 1.9% of total deaths (10 of 531) (Statistics Canada, 2013c). In Nunavut, the rate was as much as 52.2 per 100,000 population, which equals about 0.15% of the total population in 2013 and 15.1% of total deaths that year (Statistics Canada, 2013b).

1-2). The fact that Arctic sovereignty is not mentioned anywhere in the Arctic Council program demonstrates the noted limitation of using the chairmanship for egocentric purposes. Canada would not be able to promote such nationalist objectives internationally through the Council. This also illustrates the shortcomings of the realist perspective on international regimes, which sees them as only mirroring the most powerful member state's priorities and interests. In this case, the neoliberal institutionalist perspective is much more accurate, seeing international organizations as expressing common objectives for the mutual benefit of all participants.

The last three priority areas on the other hand are clearly recognizable in the Canadian Arctic Council program for 2013-2015, hence supporting the argument that Canada pursues national interests through the chairmanship. Although, it can be argued that it is possible to continue the priorities from Canada's Northern Strategy in the Arctic Council because they are in the common interest of the other Arctic states. Looking at the second Canadian priority – promoting social and economic development – this corresponds well with the Arctic Council program highlight of responsible Arctic resource development. The third and fourth priorities in Canada's Northern Strategy – protecting our environmental heritage and promoting and devolving northern governance – are compatible with the last highlighted area of the Arctic Council program: sustainable circumpolar communities. Regarding promoting and devolving northern governance, Canada's Arctic Council program focuses on the importance of traditional ways of life, the incorporation of traditional and local knowledge into the Council's work and promotion of mental wellness for Arctic residents, while Canada's Northern Strategy emphasizes devolution, land claims and self-government agreements for the northern territories (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 28-31). Thus, while the latter focuses more on the specific governance situation in Canada's northern territories and the Arctic Council program highlights traditional ways of life and traditional and local knowledge, the basic idea is still the same: improving the lives of northerners and making their voice heard both in Canada and internationally.

6.3 Canadian influence on the Arctic agenda through the Arctic Council

Based on the above account of the Canadian chairmanship program, I will elaborate on Canada's influence on the international Arctic agenda through the Arctic Council. Specifically, I will discuss the question posed initially: *to what extent is Canada successful in advancing its Arctic foreign policy and promote its Arctic interests internationally through the Arctic Council?* Without question, the Arctic Council is considered vital for the advancement of Canadian domestic interests on the international arena, to promote circumpolar cooperation and facilitate collaboration on Arctic issues. The Government of Canada also intends to invest in and strengthen the Arctic Council for the future, which is considered necessary to ensure it is equipped to address challenges arising in the region. To this end, Canada will lead efforts to develop a more strategic communications role for the Council and address its structural needs (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 24-25). The latter objective was partly accomplished by the establishment of the

permanent secretariat, but as mentioned, the Council still struggles with organizational issues, such as the increased workload undertaken by the working groups and matters related to the permanent participants and observers (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 7).

Firstly, Canada has been very active in the establishment of the Arctic Council, as well as its development from a transnational forum towards an international organization, and has always been pushing for closer cooperation and integration between the Arctic states. Canada's engagement and leadership role in the Council's six working groups is an illustration of this. According to the Arctic Council's website, "Canada is taking a leadership role or contributing in a significant way to much of the work underway in the Working Groups and Task Forces of the Arctic Council" (Arctic Council, 2011b). This is in accordance with the Canadian foreign policy ambition to assume international leadership in shaping the stewardship, sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic region (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 13). Participation gives a state at least a say in decision making, and undoubtedly, Canada has demonstrated more than the will to just participate. The dedicated engagement and responsibility assumed by Canada is a way of shaping the direction of the Arctic Council and the broader international Arctic policy agenda. In addition, the active involvement in the production of working group assessments is a way of influencing policy recommendations directed towards other states and actors. At the same time, this is not unconditionally, and there are challenges facing states when engaging in multilateral cooperation through international regimes. Even though Canada's engagement in the Arctic Council entails the opportunity to influence circumpolar politics, the national interests of other member states still matter to a large extent. This reality is illustrated by the recent issue of Arctic resource development conflicting with the Arctic Council's mandate and primary focus on environmental protection.

Secondly, agenda setting is power. The foremost example of this is how Canada has been central, and successful, in pushing for the human dimension in circumpolar cooperation. This can be seen from the insistence on the involvement of indigenous peoples at the establishment of the AEPS through the theme for the 2013-2015 Arctic Council chairmanship. Encouraging greater understanding of the human dimension of the Arctic is one of the focus areas for Canada's international efforts as it advances the four pillars of the Northern Strategy (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 4). The Government of Canada recognizes the important role northern governments and indigenous peoples organizations at the Arctic Council have played and will continue to play in shaping Canada's international actions (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 22). Thus, this is an essential topic for the Canadian government, both domestically and to promote on the Arctic agenda. The permanent participants of the Arctic Council are already well integrated in the Arctic Council's work in terms of partaking in negotiations and decisions (Arctic Council, 2011e). In the future, Canada aims to enhance the capacity of the permanent participants organizations as a means of strengthening the Council, a commitment that is consistent with the Government's obligation to renewing and rebuilding its relationship with the Aboriginal peoples of Canada (Development for the People of the North, 2013; Achieve-

ments Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011). Moreover, Canada encourages the other Arctic states to support the participation of their permanent participants organizations, and will work to ensure the central role of these organizations is not diminished as interest by non-Arctic actors in the work of the Council grows (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 22). Lastly, the human dimension has been a recurrent theme in Arctic events, such as the 2012 IPY conference *From Knowledge to Action* in Montréal, which emphasized this topic in polar research for the first time (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2013), and illustrates the possibility to influence the broader circumpolar agenda through the Arctic Council.

In conclusion, although the Canadian chairmanship has been somewhat problematic both internally and externally (Extner-Pirot, 2014), I will argue Canada has been fairly successful in promoting its national interests through the Arctic Council. This can be seen as a result of two strategies. Firstly, Canada's genuine engagement in the establishment of and active participation in the Arctic Council, especially by assuming leadership through the working groups, is a way of influencing the policy direction of the Council and the Arctic policy agenda in general. The second strategy is agenda setting, and the emphasis on domestically important themes and issues of national interest through the Arctic Council and the current chairmanship. Through promotion of, and transnational cooperation on, matters of common interest for the circumpolar states, particularly the involvement of indigenous peoples in Arctic issues, Canada contributes to steering the international Arctic policy agenda in a direction that accommodates its domestic priorities. At the same time, challenges related to resource exploration and oil development in the Arctic points towards an important aspect of the Arctic Council as an international organization, and limitations in terms of steering its policy direction. Underlining realist assumptions about international relations, this issue shows that despite the cooperative spirit among Arctic actors, individual state interests and motivations ultimately matter. Not all issues can be solved by consensus through the multinational arena the Arctic Council offers, in particular when large economic gains are at stake. Comparing the Canadian success of including indigenous peoples in circumpolar cooperation with the challenges facing Canada and the Arctic Council regarding oil development, the difference of "soft" and "hard" politics becomes evident, despite the Council's accomplishments and developments in the direction of binding political agreements.

6.4 The Arctic Council's significance for Canadian Arctic policymaking

Considering the Arctic Council's development and increasingly binding political outcomes, one can hardly analyze Arctic policymaking without taking it into consideration. There is little doubt that the Government of Canada holds the Council in high regard, and the importance and supremacy attributed to it in policy statements and strategies indicates its significance for Canadian Arctic policymaking. The influence of the Arctic Council can be established by looking at Canadian policy initiatives resulting from the Council's general political direction, recommendations and decisions. For instance, the Arctic Council's mandate and Canada's priorities

in High North converge around several issues, such as environmental protection, sustainable resource development, social and economic development and the well-being of northerners. This illustrates the close connection between Canada's Arctic policy and the Arctic Council.

However, this interdependence can be interpreted differently according to the two perspectives constituting the theoretical framework of this thesis. From a realist account, the Arctic Council's policy and actions are exclusively a result of member states' agendas and goals, and the Council has no 'will of its own' or ability to influence the political agenda or state policies. Neoliberal institutionalism on the other hand, asserts that by acting as an arena bringing together members of governments, the Arctic Council can influence the international political agenda and shape state politics. In reality, both perspectives are relevant when evaluating the Arctic Council's position in world politics, but based on the above account of its development, I will argue it has evolved from fitting the realist outlook on international organizations towards fulfilling more of neoliberal institutionalism's assumptions. The Arctic Council, by bringing together Arctic senior officials as well as other interested parties, does have an influence on the international political agenda and state policies. By functioning as an arena for states to pursue their Arctic foreign policies, the Council will certainly be an expression of the member states' ambitions and goals. However, it is at the same time a forum serving the circumpolar community as a whole, which means egocentric actions will be limited, and one can assume the Council acts more or less on behalf of the common interests of the member states combined.

Consequently, the Arctic Council influences Canada's Arctic policy in two ways. Firstly, it is a forum for Canada to express and pursue its national interests and policy objectives in the circumpolar north, and this is the "beneficial side" of membership. An illustration of the functioning as an arena to act out Arctic foreign policy ambitions is how Canada operates through the Council to pursue leadership and cooperative stewardship. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that the success of this process depends on compliance with other states' goals, and whether the other members consider Canada's policy direction to be worth pursuing and endorse its initiatives. Secondly, the Arctic Council influences Canada's Arctic policy by limiting unilateral actions and merging Canada's political objectives with those of the other Arctic states to achieve consensus in the decision-making process. This aspect can be considered "the price to pay" for participation, as there is no guarantee the member states will get their national interests advanced in the Council's policy outcomes. Accordingly, the Government of Canada will have to decide how to best balance its bilateral, regional and global efforts in the region, and Canada does pursue certain issues outside the Arctic Council. Matters such as Arctic military security is emphasized through bilateral relations with the United States, seeing that these two states share common defense and security requirements in the region, and issues related to the Arctic Ocean are addressed among the Arctic Five without the involvement of outside parties. This shows that despite Canada's high regard of the Arctic Council, if it is considered to limit the fulfillment of national interests in areas of great importance for the Government, Canada will resort to other forums to ensure domestic concerns are safeguarded in the best way possible.

GOVERNANCE IN CANADA'S NORTHERN TERRITORIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Through the discussion and analysis of the Canadian Arctic Council chairmanship, it became evident that the Government of Canada attributes great significance to cooperation with and development for the Aboriginal peoples and northerners living in Canada's territories. This chapter will pursue this topic by examining some of Canada's domestic challenges and opportunities in its High North. I will commence by presenting the general political situation and population composition in Canada's northern territories, followed by the history of territorial governance, indigenous rights and land claims. Thereafter, I will account for the devolution process of increased self-government for the territories, emphasizing accomplishments in terms of regional resource control, the modernization of the Northern Regulatory Regime, job creation and financing, as well as remaining challenges, including the completion of the devolution process as part of Canadian nation building, infrastructure, and social and economic development. Afterwards, I will conduct an analysis of northerners in Canadian governmental documents, and lastly, summarize how indigenous peoples' issues are raised on the international agenda.

7.1 Canada's northern territories and Aboriginal peoples

About 500,000 of the Arctic's 4 million inhabitants are indigenous peoples, with the highest proportions found in Greenland (88.1%), the Canadian north (50.8%) and Alaska (15.6%) (House of Commons Canada, 2013, 2). The Canadian constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: First Nations (Indians), Métis and Inuit (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2013a), and these minorities makes Canada a multinational state consisting of three distinct groups: the English, French and Aboriginal peoples (Kymlicka, 1995, 12). Canada is a federal state, which means power is divided between the national government, the provinces and the territories. However, as mentioned initially, an important aspect about governance in Canada is the fact that the northern territories are part of the federal realm and exercise delegated powers under the authority of the Parliament of Canada (Privy Council Office, 2010). This has broad implications for nation building, the way of life in the Canadian north, and for resource development and revenues derived from natural resources (Poelzer, 2014).

Firstly, nation building in Canada is largely an incomplete process, and most Canadians have a distant relationship with the country's High North (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 6). Because national interest in the north has changed based on external sovereignty threats or the prospect for resource development, there has never been a long-term strategy for northern development and political incorporation of the region (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 6). Consequently, the Canadian north is severely underdeveloped compared to the southern provinces in terms of road systems, community infrastructure, technology, health care, housing quality and educa-

tion facilities, and these inequalities are a source of irritation and political unease for Canada's northerners (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 29). These gaps in conditions impedes the process of nation building in Canada by contributing to alienation between the provinces and territories.

Secondly, in terms of well-being and quality of life, the Community Well Being (CWB) index, developed by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to measure the quality of life for First Nations and Inuit communities relative to other communities and over time, reveals a significant gap between indigenous communities and non-Aboriginal communities in Canada. The index uses Statistics Canada's Census of Population data to produce "well-being scores" for individual Canadian communities based on four indicators: income, education, housing and labor force activity, and range from 0 to 100 (O'Sullivan, 2011). One of the main findings of the review of the CWB index in First Nations, Inuit and non-Aboriginal communities between 1981 and 2006 are that CWB scores for First Nation and Inuit communities were respectively 20 and 15 points lower than non-Aboriginal communities on average (O'Sullivan, 2011; Penney et al., 2012). Among the "bottom 100" Canadian communities, 96 were First Nations, and only one First Nations community ranked among the "top 100" in 2006 (O'Sullivan, 2011). Likewise, 34 of the "bottom 500" communities were Inuit, and no Inuit communities ranked among the "top 500" (Penney et al., 2012). CWB scores improved for both First Nation, Inuit and non-Aboriginal communities between 1981 and 2006, but while the gap between First Nation/ Inuit and non-Aboriginal communities decreased slightly in the earlier part of this period, it widened again between 2001 and 2006 (O'Sullivan, 2011; Penney et al., 2012).

What can be read from this data and review of developments since the 1980s is that while the well-being scores in First Nation and Inuit communities has generally improved, it is alarmingly that the gap has recently widened between these and non-Aboriginal communities. This indicates that the former are not benefiting from general advancements and improvements in quality of life in Canada. It is also noteworthy that differences in scores are greater among Aboriginal communities than non-Aboriginal communities (O'Sullivan, 2011), which illustrates the multiple and diverge challenges facing the various indigenous communities in Canada, and the necessity for community-specific measures to meet their local needs. Related, it is worth noting the challenges facing the Aboriginal peoples of Canada compared to other indigenous peoples across the circumpolar north. Canada's northern region and the living conditions for its inhabitants are incomparable to other Arctic states, in particular the Scandinavian countries. In fact, Canada's north is more often compared with Russian Siberia than the equivalent territories in the Nordic countries (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 29). There are enormous differences in terms of infrastructure, technological development, job opportunities, education, housing, health care and so on. To mention one example, there is no university in Canada's Arctic, only one college in each territory, while all the other circumpolar states have universities in their Arctic regions.

Thirdly, the fact that the territories are not sovereign units, but exercise delegated power under the federal government, has vast impact on natural resource development and management. Natural resources in the territories have been under federal control, thus belonging to the

whole of Canada. In contrast, the provinces are in charge of their own resource development, giving the federal government little power over the distribution of the revenues derived from these (Poelzer, 2014). The devolution accords transferring authority to the territories are still limited in terms of resource development and revenues, and does not relate to offshore land. Seeing as the revenues are capped for the territories, they are left with a smaller share than the funds available to the provinces, with the federal government of Canada remaining an active player in the north (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 32).

7.2 The history of territorial governance in Canada

Before presenting and discussing the devolution process, I will provide a brief overview of the history of Canadian territorial governance. The Northwest Territories (NWT) was established in 1870, and the Yukon was created in 1898 by removing land from the NWT in order for the federal government to secure the revenues from the Klondike Gold Rush (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 6). The Canadian government continued to break up the Northwest Territories, which was down to a third of its original land mass by 1905 (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 6). Indigenous peoples and their territories have thus been subordinated to and governed within the Canadian political system without their consent, a process described by James Tully as “internal colonization” (Tully, 2000, 37-38). The essence of internal colonization is the appropriation of land, resources and jurisdiction, not for the sake of resettlement and exploitation, but for the territorial foundation of the dominant society (Tully, 2000, 39), in this case the Canadian state. The treatment of indigenous peoples in Canada is undeniably a dark chapter in the country’s history, which the Government is working to redress. Tully elaborates on the long-term effects of internal colonization, which reduced formerly economically self-sufficient and interdependent societies to small and overcrowded reserves, led to welfare dependency, high levels of unemployment, poor health, low life expectancy, high levels of infant mortality and so on (Tully, 2000, 39).

After the Second World War and increased American presence across the High North, the Canadian government’s attention was directed towards the north in order to assert sovereignty and attempt to equalize social and economic opportunities in the region (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 8). In the mid-1960s, demands for local autonomy in the north increased, and a series of court cases in the 1970s drew attention to the sustained political and legal bias against Aboriginal peoples (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 9-10). The Supreme Court later defined the rights of Aboriginal peoples in section 35 of the *Constitution Act* of 1982 (Tully, 2000, 45). Land claims negotiations followed the political and legal mobilization among the Aboriginal population, and in 1973 the liberal government, under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, accepted the Yukon’s submission, which was soon followed by claims from the Northwest Territories. In 1979, both Yukon and the Northwest Territories gained responsible government (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 10-12). During the 1980s, tensions were building related to rising Inuit political aspirations and the evolution of land claims. Following the 1982 plebiscite, the Northwest Territories agreed

to division, which resulted in the formal establishment of Nunavut in 1999 with a jurisdiction of 85% Inuit (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 12). The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement provided the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic with 350 000 km² in the largest Aboriginal land claim settlement in Canadian history (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 30). The signing of agreements and modern treaties in the 1980s brought about major changes in the north, such as the infusion of capital, removal of the Indian Act as a governing document over indigenous peoples in much of the north, royalties from future resource developments, new government structures and enhanced financial opportunities and responsibilities (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 13).

7.3 The devolution process in Canada's northern territories

Devolution is defined as the transfer of governmental power, authority and resources from the federal government to sub-national governments, which has been an ongoing process in Canada's territorial north from the 1970s until today¹ (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 2). Through this process, territorial governments are gaining greater authority over development, economic planning and community improvement strategies. However, the federal government also continues to pursue an active agenda, focusing on sovereignty, resource development and its relationship with Aboriginal peoples (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 2). Today, Yukon is the most advanced territory both in terms of self-government and connection to the south, followed by the Northwest Territories and lastly, Nunavut; the most challenged region in almost every regard (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014). I will now account for achievements through this process, followed by remaining challenges for the federal and the territorial governments in Canada's north.

7.3.1 Accomplishments through the devolution process

Since the devolution process begun, northerners are undoubtedly more in command of their affairs. Among the many elements in the overlapping processes of Aboriginal self-government and devolution, Coates and Poelzer emphasize the engagement of indigenous peoples in governance of natural resources as the potentially most significant (Coates & Poelzer, 2014). In 2003, Yukon became the first territory to take over land and resource management responsibilities, in 2008, the Governments of Canada and Nunavut signed a protocol for future negotiations towards a devolution agreement, and in 2011, an agreement-in-principle for the transfer of land and resource management responsibilities to the Northwest Territories was signed (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 10). The later project has been running from 2011, and in April 2014, the *Northwest Territories Land and Resource Devolution Agreement* was successfully implemented (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). The Northwest Territories is the most promising economic region in Canada's Arctic in terms of public and

¹This process is presented in detail in the article "*An Unfinished Nation. Completing the Devolution Revolution in Canada's North*" from 2014 by Ken Coates and Greg Poelzer.

private potential, scale of resources, variety of transportation routes, well functioning governments and close cooperation with neighbors (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 3). Approximately one third of the NWT's GDP is generated by mining, oil and gas, and the territory is the world's third largest diamond producer by value (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 5). These numbers underline the economical significance of regional control over natural resources for the territories. However, as mentioned above, the devolution accords are limited in terms of revenues derived from natural resources, so despite advancements, the territories are left with a smaller share than the funds available to the provinces (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 32).

The modernization of the legislative foundation governing the territories – the Northern Regulatory Regime – is another essential development in the devolution process. Building on the Government of Canada's efforts to create a strong and prosperous north, and as a key step in implementing the Northern Strategy, an *Action Plan to Improve Northern Regulatory Regimes* was launched in 2010 (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011). The Action Plan focuses on job creation, growth and long-term prosperity by making the northern regulatory frameworks strong, effective, efficient and predictable (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). On March 25th 2014, the *Northwest Territories Devolution Act* received Royal Assent. This act involved amendments to three pieces of legislation: the *Territorial Lands Act*, the *Northwest Territories Waters Act* and the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, and intended to spur economic development in the north by placing more decision making power in the hands of northerners (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2014a). On June 3rd 2014, Bill S-6 – *the Yukon and Nunavut Regulatory Improvement Act* – was introduced in the Senate, completing the legislative component of the Action Plan. Bill S-6 includes proposed amendments to the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* and the *Nunavut Waters and Nunavut Surface Rights Tribunal Act*, and aims to foster economic opportunities and growth while promoting environmental stewardship, which again will boost investor confidence in the territories (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2014a).

Furthermore, for people in northern communities to benefit from the opportunities arising in the region, federal contributions to job creation and investments in skill training is essential. In June 2013, the *Northern Jobs and Growth Act* received Royal Assent, a legislation creating the *Nunavut Project and Planning Assessment Act* and the *Northwest Territories Surface Rights Board Act*, and made amendments to the *Yukon Surface Rights Board Act* (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). On August 12th 2014, the Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories announced the signing of the *Canada Job Fund*, including the creation of the *Canada Job Grant* to help connect Canadians with available jobs (Government of Canada, 2014a). The grant will be delivered through the *Canada-Northwest Territories Job Fund Agreement*, through which the federal government will transfer \$ 1.1 million to the Northwest Territories, in addition to an annual transfer of \$19 million in support of skill training (Government of Canada, 2014a). In addition to job creation and skills training, it is important to ensure the business environment and investment climate in the region is stable and attractive for outside

actors. To facilitate this, the Canadian government has established the Northern Projects Management Office, a key element of CanNor that works with the industry, Aboriginal communities and federal and territorial government partners (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). Currently, the office is working with 50 industry clients to advance major resource exploration or development projects across the north, which represents \$26 million in capital investments and over 12,000 operating jobs (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e).

Advancements have also been made regarding finance and funding for the territories. Before 1985, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development worked on a complex and unreliable program-by-program funding model. The Territorial Formula Financing system introduced in the mid-1980s was an improvement in this regard, providing the north with more stable and substantial formula based funding (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 17). Through this system, the Government of Canada provides an annual unconditional funding of \$2.5 billion to the territories (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 19). Territorial funding is a crucial part of the devolution process, and it is important to bring increased revenues to the territorial governments to provide the region with the resources needed to manage their new duties (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 19). The political transformations have also had a significant impact on the economic structures, processes and opportunities in Canadian territories (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 24). Over the years, the Government of Canada has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in regional economic development strategies through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. For instance, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) has since its establishment in 2009 allocated almost \$196 million to a range of significant economic initiatives to help strengthen and diversify the northern economy, and to create business and job opportunities northerners (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). Another positive element in the territorial economic system is the Aboriginal Development Corporations – Aboriginal controlled businesses – which has improved the financial wellbeing for the larger indigenous political community and have become major players in the northern economy (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 27). However, although the economic situation in the territorial north is reasonably strong and improving, with increased income and employment rates, there are still large numbers of unemployed and poor northerners, especially in the Aboriginal population and in the smaller, remote communities (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 25-26). Furthermore, devolution is no substitute for federal planning and investments, seeing that sustainable Arctic development is expensive, requires strategic and well-coordinated governance, partnerships and significant investments (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 5). Consequently, it is important that the federal government continues its investments and funding through agencies such as CanNor.

7.3.2 Remaining challenges in Canada's northern territories

Despite advancements and accomplishments, there are still significant challenges remaining in Canada's High North, and the devolution process, as part of Canadian nation building, is far from complete (Poelzer, 2014). Professor Greg Poelzer (2014) highlights three areas of

particular difficulty for the Government of Canada in terms of completing this process. First and foremost, there are economic challenges associated with the enormous costs of developing and modernizing the region, both in terms of infrastructure and technology. Secondly, Canada's political constituencies problematize territorial development. Naturally, politicians care about the majority of the voters, and with 95% of Canada's population living in the southern provinces, the northern territories become politically marginalized. The territories have only three of the total 308 members of parliament sitting in the House of Commons, which equals less than 1%. Thirdly, according to professor Poelzer, a weakness of Canada's Arctic foreign policy is that it only focuses on the territories. By not consulting the provincial governments on northern issues, the federal government creates distance and alienation between the Canadian High North and the remaining Canadian population (Poelzer, 2014).

Yukon is by far the most advanced Canadian territory in terms of devolution and self-government, and is highly integrated with Alaska and its southern provincial neighbor British Columbia when it comes to transport and infrastructure compared to the other two territories (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 7). Yukon is not in control of its offshore zone, but considering its short Arctic Ocean boarder and low dependence on Arctic maritime transport, this is not as important as for the other territories (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 7). The *Northwest Territories Lands and Resource Devolution Agreement* transferred responsibilities to the territorial government related to onshore lands, but as with Yukon, the agreement does not extend to offshore waters (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 4). However, as a large part of the NWT's gas and oil reserves are situated in the Beaufort basin, offshore control becomes an increasingly important concern for the NWT government (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 7). The Northwest Territories has the greatest potential of economic gains from resource exploitation, but lack of transport and Arctic maritime infrastructure constrains resource development by limiting access to markets and investments, and thus prevents the territorial government from improving the lives of its population with these potential assets (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 5-7). Lastly, Nunavut is the territory facing the greatest administrative and financial challenges, which is further complicated by deeply entrenched socio-economic and cultural problems, and dependence on the sea and lack of maritime transport infrastructure disables it from serving community needs (Coates & Poelzer, 2014; Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014). Examples of the challenges facing the least developed territory are incomplete administrative transitions and staffing, capacity issues, federal and territorial government spending being the foundation for the economy, shortage in terms of the availability of personnel and the Aboriginal governments being under-resourced and under-staffed to deal with their new responsibilities (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 19-23). Nunavut has a lot to gain in the long-term from the economic opportunities the melting polar ice will present. However, the region faces several challenges related to the development and management of natural resources, and is far from prepared to address the maritime challenges emerging in the Arctic (Grosu & Higginbotham, 2014, 6).

Overall, infrastructure stands out as one of the most crucial and comprehensive chal-

lenges in the Canadian territories, and there is still a long way to go in terms of connecting the region with southern Canada. Several of the northern communities have little or no modern infrastructure, and depend on sea transport or even transportation along frozen rivers to access other towns. For these communities to be able to evolve, prosper and integrate into Canada as a whole, infrastructure development is essential. In addition, the Aboriginal's traditional livelihood based on hunting and fishing is threatened by the effects of climate change, and therefore, better connection to southern cities is necessary for these people to have sufficient access to food in the future. Nevertheless, there have been some improvements in the right direction, and the Government is making significant and highly necessary investments towards improving infrastructure in the northern territories. Over the next decade, the Canadian government intends to invest \$70 billion in federal, provincial, territorial and community infrastructure (Canada, Governor General, 2013, 9). For instance, the *Building Canada Plan* - the largest long-term federal commitment to infrastructure in Canadian history - was launched through the 2013 Economic Action Plan (Canada, Governor General, 2013, 9). One of the most significant investments is the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway, announced in 2011 and expected to be finished in 2018 at a total cost of \$200 million. This 137 km highway will be the first year-round road linking the Arctic coast and the rest of the country, it will complete Canada's road network from coast to coast, strengthen Canada's Arctic presence, and contribute to economic and social development in the north (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). Another example is the \$130 million provided from 2014-2018 for the building of the Nanisivik Naval Facility, a deep water docking and fueling facility that will serve as a staging area for government vessels operating in the Arctic (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). However, federal investments have not been exclusively successful, in large part due to northern economic liabilities and the uneven distribution of pre-conditions for economic success (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 27-28), and infrastructure remains one of the major limitations to development in Canada's High North.

Housing is another critical issue in Canada's north, and consequently a priority in Canada's Economic Action Plan. Through the project "Affordable Housing in the North", the Government has invested \$300 million between 2009-2015 (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). Yukon and the Northwest Territories each received \$50 million, while the remaining investment was allocated to Nunavut. This is where the need for social housing is greatest, seeing how the territory continues to face unique challenges in providing affordable housing due to its climate, geography and dispersed population (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). Another major housing project is the "Investment in Affordable Housing" from 2011-2019, through which the federal government is investing \$2 billion to reduce the number of Canadians in housing need. The territories and provinces are responsible for adapting the program's design and delivery in order to meet their local need and priorities (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e). Poor health in Canada's territories is also severe domestic problem, and the Economic Action Plan 2014 committed \$70 million over three years for a new fund to increase health services in the territories in priority health areas, and to reduce the reliance on

outside health care systems and medical travel (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014e).

Lastly, it is worth mentioning the security situation in Canada's Arctic region. The Government of Canada is still responsible for defense and formal international relations, and the territorial north remains a crucial zone of engagement for the federal government in this regard (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 29). However, as emphasized in previous chapters, Canada is still far behind the other circumpolar nations in terms of military investments, leaving the northern territories almost without substantial defense facilities or capabilities (Coates & Poelzer, 2014, 30). A central area of focus and investment for the Canadian government has been and is the Canadian Rangers, but several commentators argue that leaving Canada's permanent presence in the northern territories to the Rangers and reservists is not sufficient, and that PM Harper is too slow to deliver on his promises to upgrade and strengthen Canada's military capabilities.

7.4 Northerners in Canadian governmental documents

7.4.1 Northerners in Canada's Northern Strategy (2009)

The Canadian government makes great effort to underline its commitment to protecting the interests and status of northerners. Especially, when examining *Canada's Northern Strategy* and *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy*, indigenous peoples hold a very central role. "Canada as a northern nation" and "Canada's north is first and foremost about people" is strongly emphasized. The focus is on the growth of and collaboration with northern and Aboriginal governments and institutions, and a key objective in the Government's vision for the north is "self-reliant individuals living in healthy, vital communities, managing their own affairs and shape their own destinies" (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 1). The Government emphasizes the importance of close cooperation with territorial and Aboriginal leaders, northerners and partners in the Arctic, to ensure the north achieves its full promise as a vibrant region within a sovereign Canada (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011).

Noteworthy under the pillar "exercising our Arctic sovereignty" is the acknowledgement that Canada's Arctic sovereignty and strong presence in the region today is founded in large part on the historical occupation of Aboriginal peoples (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 9). Aboriginal peoples, First Nations, Métis and Inuit have all made significant contribution to the understanding and appreciation of a shared history, and continue to influence the Canadian way of life in the north (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 2). This recognition is not a statement of historical curiosity, but rather of highly contemporary significance for the Government. The basis for Canadian Arctic sovereignty rests on a combination of cession, occupation and the will of the inhabitants of the Arctic islands to be governed under Canadian institutions (4.1.1), therefore, for Canada to exercise this sovereignty, continuous habitation in the northern region is necessary. Further, it is stated that northerners have an important role to play in shaping regional priorities and actions, exemplified by the work of the indigenous peoples groups granted permanent participant status in the Arctic Council (Canada's Northern Strategy,

2009, 13). Naturally, northerners are also central in the priority aiming to promote social and economic development in Canada's Arctic. When the Canadian government talks about social and economic development, they really mean for northerners (Menzies, 2014). The immense need for improvement of the living conditions for people in the Canadian territories has been demonstrated, and their situation is incompatible to that of indigenous peoples in other Arctic states. Thirdly, regarding environmental protection, northerners are attributed a significant role in the work aiming to ensure the safeguarding of the Arctic's fragile and unique ecosystems (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 24). This is also addressed through Canada's Arctic Council chairmanship program, acknowledging the importance of traditional and local knowledge in the region, as well as through Canada's International Polar Year research program.

Under the fourth priority, "improving and devolving northern governance", land claims and self-government agreements is attributed fundamental importance. As elaborated above, northern governments have taken on greater responsibility for many aspects of their regional affairs over the past decades, with the objective to transfer jurisdictional powers and responsibilities to the territories, and to provide them with the necessary institutions and resources to achieve greater self-sufficiency (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 28-30). In 2009, eleven of the fourteen Yukon First Nations had signed self-government agreements, and a majority of the Northwest Territories is covered by comprehensive land claim agreements giving Aboriginals the authority to manage their land and resources (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 30). The Government also expresses its commitment to renewing and rebuilding its relationship with the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, and it is emphasized how the devolution of land and resource management is an important part of building the future of the north (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 9-10). This is an explicit recognition of the historically unjust treatment of Canadian minorities by the Government. In August 2010, the Government of Canada issued an apology to the Inuit families relocated in the High Arctic in the 1950s, including recognition of their contribution to a strong Canadian presence in the High Arctic (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 9). Another significant redress was the historic agreement signed in February 2011 with the Teslin Tlingit Council, a self-governing First Nation in Yukon, allowing it to administer, enforce and adjudicate its laws in its traditional way (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 10).

7.4.2 The Harper Government's Speech from the Throne, October 2013

In addition to Canada's Northern Strategy, I have chosen to look at a more recent publication, namely the Speech from the Throne - *Seizing Canada's moment: prosperity and opportunity in an uncertain world* - from October 16 2013. Here, the Government outlined its agenda for the current period, focusing on the economy and job creation. Robert Murray, Vice-President of Research at the Frontier Centre for Public Policy and Professor at the University of Alberta, claims PM Stephen Harper returns to rhetoric and policy ideas from the early years of his office, especially concerning Canada's Arctic sovereignty, and is not prioritizing Canada or the

Canadian Arctic (Murray, 2013). Nevertheless, several of the priorities addressed in the speech concern Canada's northerners, and are thus of interest for this analysis.

Creating jobs and securing economic growth is emphasized as the Canadian Government's top priority. Natural resources is considered fundamental for Canada's economy, and the Government promises to ensure the jobs and opportunities these bring are available to all Canadians, in particular, Aboriginal peoples must have every opportunity to benefit (Canada, Governor General, 2013, 4-8). Again, indigenous peoples are explicitly mentioned, and as has been demonstrated, the well-being of and development for Canada's Aboriginals is a re-occurring theme in governmental documents. Economic development often go hand in hand with environmental protection, also in the throne speech. The Government's plan for responsible resource development includes measures to protect against oil spills and other risks to the environment and local communities (Canada, Governor General, 2013, 8), which is another significant promise for Canada's northerners.

Under the headline "Putting Canada First", considerable attention is devoted to northern sovereignty and interests. It is stated that Canada is a northern country with northern people, and the Government is working to secure Canadian northern sovereignty, promoting prosperity for northerners, protecting the Arctic environmental heritage and giving the people of the north a greater say in their own affairs (Canada, Governor General, 2013, 18). These topics are identical with the priorities in Canada's Northern Strategy. Efforts made so far include the opening of the Canadian Armed Forces Arctic Training Center, expanding the Canadian Rangers, creating the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, mapping Canada's Arctic seabed to assert sovereignty, investing in health care, education and affordable housing for northerners, concluding the Devolution Agreement with the Northwest Territories and negotiate one with Nunavut (Canada, Governor General, 2013, 18). Additional promises include completing the Dempster Highway to the Arctic Ocean, opening the Canadian High Arctic Research Station and the first deep water Arctic port in Nanisivik, working with Inuit, First Nations, territorial governments and the industry to ensure northerners are well trained to participate in the new economy, and the Government will continue to defend seal hunt, an important source of food and income for coastal and Inuit communities (Canada, Governor General, 2013, 19). However, Murray interestingly questions how these initiatives will help secure Canada's northern borders:

"The world has changed since 2008, and other states have made great strides in living up to their Arctic claims, while Canada has been left behind. If Harper truly wants to put Canada first, he owes it to the country to come up with new strategies that reflect the realities of the contemporary Arctic and Canada's limited capability to protect its own interests" (Murray, 2013).

With this statement, Murray falls in line with Harper's critics who argue he is moving too slow and doing too little for Canada's north and northerners.

7.5 Indigenous peoples internationally

In addition to the domestic policy areas addressed above, northerners and Aboriginal peoples should also undoubtedly play a central role in the framing and development of Canada's Arctic foreign policy, seeing as it concerns issues affecting them directly in several ways. Relevant in this regard are the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Canada, as well as the Government of Canada's work to raise indigenous peoples' issues on the international agenda, which is primarily done through the Arctic Council.

The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), established in 1977, is a body representing the views and positions of approximately 160 000 Inuit from Greenland, Canada, Alaska and Russia on an international level (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2013). The ICC's principal goals are: strengthen unity among Inuit of the circumpolar region, promote Inuit rights and interests on an international level, develop and encourage long-term policies safeguarding the Arctic environment, and seek full and active partnership in political, economic and social development in the circumpolar region (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2013, 12). The international and circumpolar interests of Canadian Inuit are expressed and represented through ICC Canada, a non-profit organization led by a Board of Directors comprising the elected leaders of the four land settlement regions: Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2013). The ICC Canada's activities consists of participation through the Arctic Council, engagement in Arctic marine shipping, protection and facilitation of the use of Arctic indigenous languages, government relations with officials responsible of Arctic matters, involvement in United Nations meetings, engagement in Arctic resource development and responses to climate change (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2013).

The *Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada's Operational Plan* for 2014-2015 outlines the initiatives and objectives for this period, and focuses on organizational priorities, existing multi-year programs, on-going projects and funding strategies for ICC Canada (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2014). Highlighted policy areas are implementation of the Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Arctic resources, circumpolar health, food security, contaminants, research initiatives, biodiversity, sustainable utilization of resources, elders and youth and human rights (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2014). These policy areas are to a large extent in line with the Government of Canada's priorities for the Arctic region, but at the same time, the ICC Canada's operational plan clearly focuses on the human dimension to a much larger degree, and address more specific issues regarding Inuit well-being than Canadian federal documents.

As mentioned, three of the six indigenous peoples organizations in the Arctic Council have roots in Canada, and the Council and its working groups is seen by the ICC Canada as one of the most important multilateral forums for its work (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2013, 3). Canada has played a central role in promoting a human dimension to the Arctic Council, and in acting on northerners' wishes to extend the it's mandate beyond a narrow scientific focus (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 138). The previous chapter illustrated how the emphasis on the human

dimension is continued through the current Arctic Council program, expressing Canada's chairmanship will put northerners first. The ICC's operational plan highlights that the Arctic Council will remain a central pillar of the ICC Canada's work during the remaining term of Canada's chairmanship, and ICC Canada will continue its contribution to the Council's Senior Arctic Officials meetings, the Arctic Council Advisory Committee and five of the working groups² (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2014). Of particular relevance is the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG), due to its focus on the human dimension. ICC Canada participates in the working group's meetings as co-chair, has a representative on the SDWG Arctic Human Health Expert Group and leads two special projects: the *Arctic Indigenous Languages Initiatives* and the *Inuit Use of the Sea and Arctic Shipping* (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2014, 8-9). The ICC Canada also emphasizes the Canadian chairmanship priority of including local and traditional knowledge into the work and working groups of the Arctic Council, and that this is a means of strengthening the Council (Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2014, 9).

To summarize, by first sight the Canadian government seems committed to the inclusion and well being of indigenous peoples and northerners in the circumpolar north. In Canada's Northern Strategy, indigenous peoples are mentioned as central in cooperation with other Arctic states and through multinational forums. Indeed, the respected status and participation of indigenous peoples in the Arctic Council is the main indicator of their involvement in circumpolar affairs. Also, an example of cross-boarder engagement is the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Russian Ministry of Regional Development. This agreement is underlined in Canada's Northern Strategy as an initiative intended to examine cooperative projects with indigenous peoples, which also includes new trading relationships, transportation routes and environmental protection between Canada and Russia (Canada's Northern Strategy, 2009, 34). Nevertheless, despite such rhetoric and efforts, a gap remains between federal officials insisting on the engagement of northern leaders on circumpolar affairs and northerners asserting they are not fully embraced as active partners (Lackenbauer, 2011a, 141), and the question remains about how far they really influence decision-making processes. One of the challenges in this regard is that under existing international law, indigenous peoples are considered objects and not subjects, and thus special care is needed to involve them actively in decision-making processes (Centre for Arctic Policy Studies, 2013). In addition, not enough attention is paid to who owns the resources to be developed, and handling indigenous groups and their diversity may in fact be difficult within modern, state oriented policies (Centre for Arctic Policy Studies, 2013). Therefore, as Coates and Poelzer points out, there is still a lot to be done in terms of offering Aboriginals and northerners in the Canadian territories the same opportunities as the rest of the country, also regarding political participation and representation.

²The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna, the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response, the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development Working Group.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The final chapter will return to the problem statement the thesis set out to answer - *What are the main priorities for Canada in its Arctic region, and how does Canada pursue its Arctic policy on the domestic and international level?* - as well as the research questions derived from it. I will summarize and conclude based on the main findings in the analysis of Canada's Arctic policy, conducted primarily by document analysis, throughout the thesis. What stands out as the most significant topics are the Canadian government's emphasis on Arctic security and military capabilities as well as indigenous peoples and northerners domestically, Canada's bilateral relationship with the United States (US), and its workings through the Arctic Council, focusing on stewardship and circumpolar leadership. In the last section of this chapter, I will address unsolved issues and potential research areas for further examination.

8.1 Analysis of the research questions

8.1.1 Motives for and driving forces behind Canada's Arctic policymaking

The first research question - *Is Canada driven primarily by sovereignty and security motives, or by a genuine interest in cooperative stewardship?* - concerns the motives for and driving forces behind Canada's Arctic policymaking and implementation, and aims to support the development of an answer to the first part of the problem statement. It also relates to the theoretical framework of the thesis: sovereignty and security concerns being in line with realism's assumptions about state motives, while neoliberal institutionalism would argue Canada's actions are driven by the ambition to accomplish mutually beneficial policy outcomes with the other Arctic states.

“Exercising sovereignty over Canada's North is the number one Arctic foreign policy priority” (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010).

Canada's Arctic sovereignty and security are undoubtedly priority areas and matters of great importance for the current government. The United States has in large part provided for Canadian Arctic security in the past, and to some degree still is, but Canadians have never liked to be reliant on the US. This has led to questions about Canadian sovereignty, and in fact, over the past decades it is the US, through utilizing the Northwest Passage as an international strait, who has posed the biggest threat to Canada's Arctic sovereignty. Consequently, the Canadian government has been and is working to increase its own capabilities to protect its north. This is expressed through investments, especially in the Canadian Forces and the Coast Guard, in addition to Arctic sovereignty being at the center of governmental statements and strategies.

On the other side, Canada is also devoted to cooperative stewardship and the pursuit of shared interests and fulfillment of common goals with the other Arctic states. This is first and foremost expressed through Canada's sincere commitment to cooperation through the Arctic Council, with the other Arctic Ocean coastal states and bilaterally with the United States (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 12). Realism has a hard time accounting for why a state would enter cooperative arrangements, unless it saw the opportunity for relative gains at the expense of others. Thus, Canada's work towards responsible resource management is more in line with the neoliberal institutionalist perspective, as it is difficult to see how Canada can gain from such collaboration to the disadvantage of the other Arctic states.

Looking in depth at the Arctic stewardship pursued by Canada, actions can be identified on the national and international level. Firstly, several domestic efforts are being made by the Canadian government to promote sustainable resource development and management in the Arctic. "Protecting our environmental heritage" is one of the four priority areas in Canada's Northern Strategy, which is done in close cooperation with indigenous peoples and northern communities. In *Achievements under Canada's Northern Strategy*, several initiatives towards this objective are listed, illustrating that Canada is actually making an effort to promote economic development while protecting the environment. Examples are establishments and expansions of national parks and reserves, and programs to assess climate change vulnerabilities and develop adaptation plans in northern communities (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011). Secondly, Canada is also making efforts on the international arena in terms of cooperative stewardship. In particular, the Canadian government emphasizes, and is praised for, its leadership role in the Arctic Council and its six working groups. Canada made a significant contribution to the 2009 *Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment*, work that is informing ongoing efforts to develop an international Code of Safety for polar ships operating in ice-covered waters, and played a key role in the development of an assessment of mercury in the Arctic (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 13). Canada also aims at demonstrating leadership in Arctic science and technology, which plays an important role in supporting the Government's activities in the north, especially related to the mapping of the Arctic Ocean floor and Canada's submission to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 14-16).

Regarding the first research question, I initially began with the distinction between sovereignty and security concerns versus commitment to cooperative stewardship. This was based on the theoretical framework the thesis builds on, as well as focus areas highlighted in the existing literature on Canadian Arctic policymaking. As demonstrated in the introduction, scholars are divided between those in the realist camp encouraging the strengthening of Canadian Arctic security and assertion of Canadian sovereignty in the region, and those in the liberal camp claiming these matters are safeguarded, and that the Government instead should focus on cooperative stewardship and diplomatic relations. Examples of the latter are the authors of the book "Arctic Front: Defending Canada in the Far North", who praise the Harper government,

although with some reservations, for making progress to improve Canada's Arctic defense capabilities, and for responding to the threats and opportunities in the High North more serious than its predecessors (Coates et al., 2008, 192). At the same time, they emphasize how the Government has failed in integrating the north into the country as a whole, and how Canada lacks the northern outlook of other polar nations (Coates et al., 2008, 191-197). While there might still be some truth to this critique, I will argue the situation has changed since 2008.

Professor Greg Poelzer, one of the contributors to the above-mentioned book, pointed out that by making Arctic issues part of the electoral platform in 2005-06, and by shifting focus north during his time in office, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has indeed contributed to changes in the region. According to Poelzer (2014), it is therefore wrong to accuse Harper of doing nothing in or for Canada's north. Two of the most significant contributions towards improvement in the north made by the Harper government are the 2007 commitment to establish a Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut and the devolution agreement signed with the Northwest Territories in 2013 (Poelzer, 2014). This agreement entered into force June 25th 2013, and transferred significant government power, authority and responsibilities to the Northwest Territories, including the responsibility for the development and administration of natural resources (Government of Canada, 2013). Also worth mentioning are housing projects aiming to improve the living conditions for Canada's northerners, which is a critical issue. As of 2006, housing was the component of the Community Well Being index that showed the greatest differences between Inuit and non-Aboriginal communities, primarily due to the poor housing quality in regions where the Inuit live (Penney et al., 2012).

Hence, throughout the research and work with my thesis, a different area than security/sovereignty or cooperative stewardship stood out as a potential primary motive behind Canada's Arctic policymaking: the well being of and development for Canada's northerners. I find it remarkable that in terms of domestic interests and focus, the Harper government has chosen to strongly emphasize northerners. This is for instance expressed in the Arctic Council chairmanship program, focusing in large part on the human dimension of the Arctic. There is little doubt that this political choice can be justified by domestic interests and needs, seeing that Canada has a substantial demand for social, economic and infrastructure development in its northern region. Canada's territorial north covers 3,593,589 km² of land, which is about twelve times the size of Norway, and towns are dispersed and inaccessible. Thus, northerners in Canada live very isolated, both geographically and socially, from the rest of society compared to northerners in other countries. For these communities to adapt and thrive in the changing region, the Government acknowledges the importance of safeguarding traditional ways of life and the value of incorporating local and traditional knowledge into broader circumpolar work.

However, despite these commitments, I will like to again emphasize a noteworthy link between two seemingly different policy areas. The political focus on northerners and northern development, while important in its own regard and probably based on a genuine engagement by the Government, is also in fact related to sovereignty. Seeing that sovereignty consists of three

elements - a defined territory, a governance system and a people within the defined territory (Huebert, 2011, 14), and that Canada's Arctic sovereignty rests on occupation and the will of Arctic inhabitants to be governed under Canadian institutions (Côté & Dufresne, 2008), it is essential for the Canadian government that the northern population continue to inhabit the territory and accept the Government's right to govern. In other words, since Canada's assertion and exercise of sovereignty in its High North depends on the presence of a people, it is in the Government's interest to facilitate settlements in the region. In this way, development for northerners and of the Arctic region becomes linked to the broader national interest of Canadian sovereignty. However, even though northern issues were raised on the political agenda from the mid-2000s, there is a vast gap between the efforts made and the actual need in Canada's territorial north. There is an immense need for social and economic development, infrastructure projects, improvements in Aboriginal physical and mental health, better educational services, job opportunities and so on for the region to be equalized with southern Canada.

8.1.2 Canada's actions to position itself in the High North

Regarding the second research question – *How does Canada work to position itself in its High North, both domestically and internationally, seen in light of the recent spark of interest in the circumpolar region* – a noteworthy feature about Canada's Arctic policy was made apparent to me through conversation with professor Greg Poelzer. He pointed out how Canada usually sees itself as a “middle power” in international relations, and mostly considers multilateralism to be the best way forward. However, Arctic issues and sovereignty stands out as an exception from this approach, where Canada tends to prefer unilateral actions (Poelzer, 2014). This is a paradox, seeing how Canada is in great need of cooperation with other states in order to address and meet challenges and opportunities arising in its northern region. However, in addition to unilateral actions, efforts can also be identified on the bilateral and multilateral levels.

When examining Canada's *unilateral actions*, two main ways in which the Canadian government works to position itself in the High North stand out. Firstly by attempting to strengthen its military capabilities in the Arctic, and secondly by affirming the historical occupation of Canadian Aboriginal peoples in the region. When taking office in 2006, Prime Minister Stephen Harper was resolute to make the Arctic a top priority. He emphasized the primacy of security, defending Canadian sovereignty and ensuring Canadian credibility and influence on the international stage (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008). To this end, the Harper government made promises to upgrade Canadian capabilities in the High North, in particular, to rebuild the Canadian Forces into a first-class, modern military (Canada First Defence Strategy, 2008). This is realist “hard politics”, focusing on protection of national interests through military means. In addition, the Canadian government is working on the unilateral level with indigenous peoples and northerners to position itself in the High North. As elaborated above, the process of social and economic development of the territories is connected to the broader national objective of asserting and exercising Arctic sovereignty. The Government recognizes

the Inuits' contribution to a strong Canadian presence in the High Arctic, and cooperates with territorial and Aboriginal leaders to ensure their traditional ways of life and interests in the north are safeguarded, while at the same time taking advantage of their local knowledge to realize the north's full potential as a vibrant region within a strong and sovereign Canada (Achievements Under Canada's Northern Strategy, 2011, 2). The assertion of land claims through demonstrating the historical occupation of a territory has the potential to become a race for resources among the Arctic states. Thus, this activity conflicts with the interests of the other Arctic states, and it is natural that Canada pursues this objective on the unilateral level.

Bilaterally, there is no doubt that the majority of initiatives are directed towards the United States – Canada's premier ally and partner in the Arctic. The United States is explicitly mentioned several times in central governmental strategies and statements, and substantial efforts are being made to establish solid bilateral relations with the US. Other states are addressed mostly in terms of relations through the Arctic Council or collaboration among the Arctic Ocean coastal states. On the one side, it is understandable that Canada wishes to establish and maintain a strong relationship and cooperation with its closest neighbor, especially seen in light of the historical dependence on the US for security. At the same time, it also seems to be a Canadian priority to reduce its dependence on the United States and develop capabilities to safeguard its own north, which is seen at the unilateral level. In addition to focusing on the US, it is interesting that the Harper government does not devote more efforts towards a good working relationship with Russia, seeing how Russia is an Arctic great power and has been much more active in the region than the US for decades. As mentioned in section 7.5, Canada and Russia cooperate on indigenous peoples issues, but with the melting polar ice and increased Arctic shipping, Canada and Russia will become closer in the future, both geographically and politically, and Canada will have to deal with Russia on a higher level. To this end, northern expert Franklyn Griffiths (2011, 195) points out how American involvement is essential to engage Russia in cooperative stewardship, so Canada can definitely benefit from good relations with both its neighbor in the west and in the east. Even so, political developments on the international arena in the past year has greatly problematized Canada's and the other Arctic states' relations with Russia, including in the Arctic. The Russian invasion of Crimea, Ukraine in the spring of 2014 triggered boycotts and cancelations of meetings and military operations - thus illustrating how circumpolar cooperation has a vulnerable side and is sensitive to high politics in other regions of the world.

Lastly, in addition to Canada's inclination towards unilateral actions in the High North, and preferred bilateral relations with the United States, Canadian actions to position itself in the region can also be identified on a *multilateral level*. Such efforts are necessary, both due to the challenging conditions in the Arctic and the norms and rules prevailing in the international community. Resource development and management is a good example of a task that can be too comprehensive for one state to confront singlehandedly, especially when including environmental protection in case of oil spills, and thus, it is beneficial for the Arctic states to collaborate on these undertakings. Another example is search and rescue preparedness in the High North,

which is emphasized by most Arctic states as an area where they aim to conduct shared operations. Primarily, Canada is strongly committed to and engaged in the Arctic Council, which is constantly emphasized in governmental documents as the “leading forum for intergovernmental cooperation on Arctic issues”. At the same time, Canada participates in the Arctic Five meetings, so despite the commitment to and faith in the Arctic Council, Canada shows it will pursue national interests in other forums. The Government has expressed it considers it appropriate for the Arctic Five to deal with issues related to the Arctic Ocean coast, regardless of the critique it has received for excluding the remaining Arctic Council member states, permanent participants and observers. Lastly, Canada acts on a multilateral level in terms of UNCLOS negotiations concerning extended continental shelf claims and maritime boundaries in the Arctic, seeing how overlapping claims and disputes must be solved among states themselves. Canada has been working in particular with Denmark and Russia, but despite such joint efforts in science and the mapping process, there are still unsolved issues. The question of ownership to the North Pole - claimed by Canada, Russia and Denmark - is the most recent example.

8.1.3 The broader implications of Canadian Arctic policymaking

The third research question this thesis set out to answer was: *To what extent does Canada’s Arctic policy contribute to influence international relations and shape the international Arctic agenda?* I chose to include this perspective in order to examine the broader international implications of Canada’s Arctic policymaking, and I will focus primarily on the Arctic Council, cooperation in Arctic science and the expression of Canadian core values. This research question is also closely related to the theoretical framework and one of the primary differences between realism and neoliberal institutionalism. While the theories converge around the premise that states are the main actors in international relations, they have different views on which interests are expressed through international regimes, and whether they can affect the prospects for cooperation and international stability. Realism sees states as primarily concerned with security and military capacities, and an international organization expresses the interests of the most powerful state within it. Neoliberal institutionalism on the other hand, argue states care about a much wider range of issue areas, and that international regimes can facilitate the promotion of shared goals and the achievement of mutually beneficial policy outcomes.

The Arctic Council consists of all the Arctic states, and considering the emphasis put on the Council by every one of them, it can be expected to be the primary forum for influencing and shaping the circumpolar agenda. In addition, the Council is considered important and legitimate by non-Arctic actors, which means it can be an arena to impact international politics more broadly. This thesis has manifested the Arctic Council’s prominence for Canada when expressing its Arctic policy and interests regionally, and Canada’s efforts through the Council has been thoroughly demonstrated. These include contributions to working groups’ assessments, the involvement of indigenous peoples organizations since the beginning of interstate circumpolar cooperation, the promotion of the human dimension both before and during its current

chairmanship, contributions to preparations of the Council's agreements and so on. The question becomes whether this contributes to shape the Arctic agenda or not, and if it does, why? Realists would argue that if Canada was the most powerful member state in the Arctic Council, it would express Canadian interests and goals. However, while Canada has the potential to become an Arctic great power by virtue of its vast northern territory and extensive Arctic coastline, it is far from being one today due to poor military capabilities and underdeveloped communities in the region. Therefore, Canada would not be able to influence international politics through the Council. Seen from a neoliberal institutionalist perspective, the Arctic Council will converge member states' interests and goals into common objectives, and thus, if Canada is successful in promoting its national interests as the interests of the broader community, it could influence international relations and shape the Arctic agenda through the Council. The fact that international regimes are limited to the extent states can use them in pursuit of purely national interests and objectives, and that cooperative stewardship mainly takes place within the Arctic Council, underlines neoliberal institutionalism's assumptions about how international regimes can facilitate the promotion of shared goals and work towards mutually beneficial outcomes.

Canada also aims to be a leader in Arctic science and technology, and to this end, an important contribution was Canada's International Polar Year (IPY) research program. As with the opportunity for agenda setting through the Arctic Council, active participation and significant contributions through such programs is definitely a way to influence the Arctic agenda in terms of what areas are highlighted in policy recommendations and for future research. It is also a way to capture public attention if participants are successful in framing results in a comprehensive manner. To this end, Canada's ambitious objective was to support policy-relevant science useful at all levels of government and society, both nationally and internationally (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2011). Canada's actions through the IPY is an illustration of the Government's work to draw southerners' attention towards the north, both within Canada and globally. It also demonstrated how the Government recognizes the need to cooperate with other Arctic states and actors to meet challenges and opportunities in the High North. This was expressed through Canadian leadership for eight international science networks, and collaboration with more than 240 researchers from 23 countries. Such cooperation is a way for Canadian scientists to share their ideas and perspectives, and to promote Canadian focus areas and values to the international scientific community.

Lastly, I will address a situation in which international events had an effect on Arctic collaboration, namely the Russian invasion of Crimea, Ukraine in March 2014. In the aftermath, Canada chose to pursue a tough stance against Russia, leading to speculations about spill-over effects from the conflict to Arctic cooperation. Perhaps the most striking example was how Canadian Minister Leona Aglukkaq refused to attend the Arctic Council working group meeting held in Moscow in April 2014. This case can be seen as an illustration of the importance of Canadian core values, the human dimension and human rights, for Canada's political actions internationally (Poelzer, 2014). These issues have always been extremely important for

Canada, and it has always been in the forefront fighting for international human rights. The situation in Ukraine exemplifies the linkages between circumpolar politics and international relations, and illustrates how Canada used Arctic cooperation to set an example internationally. By refusing to participate at the Arctic Council meeting, Canada set the standard for what it considers acceptable behavior and showed that the Government is not afraid to speak up when others take actions it considers unjust, even at the expense of circumpolar cooperation. This is in accordance with what is expressed in Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy:

“When positions or actions are taken by others that affect our national interests, undermine the cooperative relationships we have built, or demonstrate a lack of sensitivity to the interests or perspectives of Arctic peoples or states, we respond” (Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, 2010, 27).

8.2 Problem statement and concluding remarks

What are the main priorities for Canada in its Arctic region, and how does Canada pursue its Arctic foreign policy on the domestic and international level?

Regarding the first part of the problem statement - *What are the main priorities for Canada in its Arctic region* - I will conclude that when formulating and pursuing its Arctic policy, Canada is doing so based on a combination of national interests and shared interests with the other Arctic stakeholders, in particular with concern to indigenous peoples. Policy areas promoted for domestic reasons include social and economic development for northerners, improvement of infrastructure in Canada's territorial north, better educational and job opportunities and improved housing quality. Likewise, the goal to establish sustainable circumpolar communities, as well as the aim to promote understanding for the importance and value of traditional and local knowledge and ways of life, are pursued based on national interests. Lastly, the improvement of indigenous peoples' health and the promotion of mental wellness among Arctic residents is also in Canada's domestic concern, as the suicide rates in the territorial north are very high¹.

Before addressing Canada's shared objectives with the other Arctic states, I will once more emphasize the the second agenda of the Harper government's engagement for northerners and Aboriginal peoples. While such political issues clearly have value in their own regard, it is also obvious that the promotion of the well-being of and development for Canada's northerners is pursued in wider national interests. By recognizing the occupation by Inuits in the Canadian Arctic for centuries, and by facilitating continuous habitation of the region, the Government is reaffirming and asserting Canada's Arctic sovereignty. This agenda was confirmed in September 2014, when Canadian scientist in the Government-supported Victoria Strait Expedition finally discovered one of ships that got lost in the Franklin Expedition in 1846. Since 2008, there have been six major Parks Canada-led searches for the two lost ships at the cost of millions of

¹See section 6.2.2 on page 62

dollars (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014d). However, the 2014 discovery had far from exclusively historical and scientific value for Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

“This is truly a historic moment for Canada. Franklin’s ships are an important part of Canadian history given that his expeditions, which took place nearly 200 years ago, laid the foundations of Canada’s Arctic sovereignty” (Office of the Prime Minister, Canada, 2014d).

Thus, the excitement surrounding the announcement of the discovery was not solemnly based on a newfound liking for science and archeology, but rather linked to Canada’s territorial claim to the Arctic region. Seeing as Canada is still a lagger in terms of naval capabilities compared to the other Arctic states, in particular Russia, it will have to rely on history, as well as occupation by the Aboriginal population, to assert its territorial claims in the region (Dvorsky, 2014).

Nonetheless, despite the Government of Canada might wanting to uphold a more unilateral approach to its north, it also pursues Arctic policy issues based on shared interests with other states and for the common good of the circumpolar community. This is to be anticipated, considering the norms and rules prevailing in the international community in general, and in the High North especially. In addition to expectations about interstate collaboration around issues of common interest, it is also an unescapable fact that such cooperation is necessary for Canada regarding matters too comprehensive to deal with unilaterally. Examples of priority areas pursued collaboratively are responsible Arctic resource development and safe Arctic shipping – including the establishment of guidelines for sustainable tourism and cruise-ship operations and a mandatory Polar Code for the Arctic Ocean, as well as the enhancement of scientific cooperation in the Arctic to improve shared knowledge and promote good governance. Also, environmental protection and addressing climate pollutants is seen as a collaborative task for the entire international community, in addition to conservation of animals, birds and plants.

The second part of the problem statement - *How does Canada pursue its Arctic policy on the domestic and international level* - is strongly supported by the discussion around the thesis’ second research question. Canada pursues its Arctic policy unilaterally, bilaterally - mainly in close cooperation with the United States, and multilaterally - primarily through the Arctic Council. Connecting the two parts of the problem statement, it is apparent that the different priority areas are pursued on different political levels. Unilaterally, Canada focuses in large part on Arctic sovereignty, security and military capabilities - policy areas naturally pursued on the national level. The assertion of Canadian sovereignty, the strengthening of Arctic security and upgrading Canada’s military capabilities in the region are key priority areas for the current Government. In conclusion, one can argue that the effects of this commitment and following investments have had mixed results. On the one hand, the Harper government is praised for doing more than its predecessors, but at the same time, several commentators criticize the Prime Minister for not doing enough and for moving too slow in terms of bringing Canadian Arctic defense up to international standards. The other side of the Government’s unilateral actions are

connected to priorities associated with indigenous peoples and northerners, which however also is linked to sovereignty. As demonstrated throughout this thesis, sovereignty is not only about national defense, but also about the historical and continuous occupation by the Aboriginals, as well as regional development. Thus, while it is important to bring Canadian Arctic defense up to international standards, it is equally important to continue efforts to improve the lives of northern residents and to act for the Arctic people and environment in order for the Canadian government to assert its sovereignty in the region (Coates et al., 2008, 213-217).

Bilaterally, Canada's Arctic policy is primarily pursued through cooperation with the United States (US). Security is also given primacy on this level, in addition to resource development. While the Canadian government over the past years have worked to improve its own military capabilities in the region, it is an inescapable fact that it still depends on the United States for security in the High North. From the United States' point of view, engagement in Canadian Arctic security is very much in its national interest, seeing that Canada is the back door into North America. This is particularly relevant if the polar ice continues to melt, leading to easier access to and increased shipping activity in the region. In this scenario, hostile states could utilize for instance the Northwest Passage to enter the US and Canada, so it is in the interest of both states to be able to control, and if necessary protect, these waters. As of today, neither state is capable of doing so alone, which makes security the main priority on their common agenda. Additionally, the primacy given to the United States by the Government of Canada in this regard is connected to its reluctant relationship with NATO and the general opinion that the Alliance is not doing enough to protect Canadian interests. Other bilateral relationships include with Denmark, and the United States, on sovereignty operations in the Arctic, with Denmark and Russia on the geological mapping of the Arctic Ocean seabed to establish extended continental shelves, with Russia on indigenous peoples issues and with Norway on research collaboration and university partnerships. Lastly, Canada pursues its Arctic policy on the regional and multilateral level, especially through the Arctic Council, which is highly central both for issues of primarily domestic interest, as well as common policy areas with the other member states. Canada's multinational efforts can be summarized as primarily channeled towards assuming international leadership and pursuing cooperative circumpolar stewardship. In addition, Canada consolidates its alliances and partnerships by engaging in multinational forums with the other Arctic states, which in turn contributes to its Arctic security as states are much likely to engage in conflict with their collaborators (4.3 on page 42).

Returning to the theoretical framework, I would argue the neoliberal institutionalist perspective on driving forces for state behavior and international regimes is most accurate in accounting for Canada's Arctic *motivations and priorities*. States do cooperate in a realist world as well, but this theory tends to focus on relative gains. When examining Canadian Arctic policymaking and participation in circumpolar cooperative arrangements, despite this being based on a combination of national interests and shared objectives, it is difficult to see how Canada can achieve large gains at the expense of other stakeholders. Examples are security cooperation with

the United States to their mutual benefit, and collaboration through the Arctic Council on environmental protection, to the benefit of the whole international community. With regards to the second part of the problem statement, while the unilateral focus on Arctic security, sovereignty and military capabilities is very much in line with the realist perspective on state behavior, I will argue neoliberal institutionalism also has the most accurate account for Canada’s *actions* in the High North. To a large extent, Canada aims for cooperation with other Arctic states and actors, the Government is accommodating and attentive to others’ interests, and realizes that certain challenges in the circumpolar north are too immense to deal with unilaterally.

Based on the findings from the research conducted throughout this project and the analysis of the research questions and problem statement presented above, Canada’s priorities and actions in the Arctic on different levels can be summarized as follows:

<p style="text-align: center;">Regionally</p> <p>Regionally, cooperation through the Arctic Council and its working groups dominates, as well as participation in the Arctic Five forum.</p> <p>Policy areas pursued on this level include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental protection • Responsible Arctic resource development • Economic and business development • Issues related to the Arctic Ocean and extended continental shelf claims • Safe Arctic shipping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tourism and cruise ship operations ○ Mandatory Polar Code for the Arctic Ocean 	<p style="text-align: center;">Multilaterally</p> <p>Canada’s primary objective multilaterally is to assume international leadership and pursue responsible circumpolar stewardship.</p> <p>Policy areas pursued on this level include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental protection and addressing the effects of climate change • Scientific cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve shared knowledge ○ Promote good governance • Addressing climate pollutants • Conservation of animals, birds and plants
<p style="text-align: center;">Unilaterally</p> <p>Canada’s main focus domestically is on the well being of northerners and indigenous peoples, and on Arctic sovereignty and security.</p> <p>Policy areas pursued on this level include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and economic development in the territorial north • Infrastructure development • Improved educational and job opportunities • Improve health conditions and promotion of mental wellness in the Arctic • Arctic sovereignty and security • Rebuilding of military capabilities • Facilitate the continued habitation by indigenous peoples and northerners in the Canadian Arctic 	<p style="text-align: center;">Bilaterally</p> <p>Canada’s premier partner in the Arctic is the United States, emphasizing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Resource development <p>Other bilateral partnerships include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping of the Arctic Ocean seabed ○ Indigenous peoples issues • Denmark <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping of the Arctic Ocean seabed ○ Sovereignty operations • Norway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research collaboration ○ University partnerships • The United Kingdom and Germany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scientific cooperation

8.3 Areas for further research

While this thesis has addressed Canada's work through the Arctic Council before assuming the chairmanship in 2013, as well as the primary policy areas pursued in the current period, it remains to conclude on Canada's overall success by the end of the office in 2015. In particular, an assessment of achievements in terms of international cooperation on significant issues beyond environmental protection will be in order. With the rapid changes taking place in the Arctic new issues will be brought forward, such as oil and gas exploration and exploitation, and it will be interesting to see how the member states handle these issues and balance them with the current mandate of the Council. Related, the United States (US) takes over the office in 2015, which means the chairmanship will remain in the North American region. Interesting in this regard is to what extent the US continues Canada's political focus, strongly emphasizing the human dimension, or whether the US will change the direction of the Council towards security issues and resource exploration - areas highlighted in the US Arctic strategy from 2013. Lastly, another interesting process to follow within the Arctic Council will be the European Union's observer status application, now that the Union has lifted its ban on Canadian seal products, and Canada in return has lifted its reservations concerning the EU's observer status to the Council.

Furthermore, a challenge during the work with my thesis was the conflicted situation unfolding between Russia and Ukraine, which clearly had a spillover effect on Arctic politics and affected circumpolar cooperation. Because of the many uncertainties related to this situation, I chose to downplay the focus directed towards the conflict, as it was not possible to outline the total effect of this crisis by the deadline for my work. Nevertheless, I chose to address the issue, seeing that Canada was one of the most outspoken critics of the invasion, and demonstrated its discontent by boycotting an Arctic Council meeting in Moscow and canceling joint military operations with Russia. At a later point of time, it will be interesting and necessary to look at this conflict in relation to Arctic policy and cooperation, in order to assess the vulnerability and/or robustness of circumpolar arrangements to outside factors in international relations.

Lastly, as emphasized, there is still a lot to be done in Canada's northern territories in order to give its inhabitants equal living conditions and opportunities as the southern Canadian population. Will the Harper government succeed with its promises for the north and northerners, or will his critics who claim he is doing too little for the north be proven right? Additionally, increased activity in the High North strongly affects Canada's Aboriginal population and other northerners. While these areas have been addressed in a significant number of studies and research projects, many of them referred to in this thesis, it is still highly important to keep monitoring the effects of the changes in the Arctic on its population, in order to help northern communities adapt to the transformations. What I find of particular interest in this regard are differences between the more and the less developed northern regions. It would be interesting to compare for instance the Scandinavian countries with Canada's northern territories, in order to examine what experiences can be learned from the more developed Arctic states.

List of Abbreviations

AANDC	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
AC	The Arctic Council
ACAP	Arctic Contaminants Action Plan (Arctic Council working group)
AEPS	The Arctic Environment Protection Strategy
AMAP	Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (Arctic Council working group)
CAFF	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (Arctic Council working group)
CanNor	Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CF	Canadian Forces
CIIF	Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund
CWB-Index	Community Well-Being Index
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
EPPR	Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (Arctic Council working group)
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Council
IMO	The International Maritime Organization
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense Command
NRC	National Resources Canada
NRC-Canada	National Research Council, Canada
IPY	International Polar Year
PAME	Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (Arctic Council working group)
SAO	Senior Arctic Official
SAR-agreement	Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic
SINED	Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development
SDWG	Sustainable Development Working Group (Arctic Council working group)
UNCLOS	The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

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