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Looking North of Vienna: The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe as a Facilitator of Arctic Security

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Abstract

Though the Arctic is known as a region of peace, military activity and militarization continue to influence it. The literature on Arctic security asserts that no international organization exists that can deal with military issues in the region. This article challenges this assertion by arguing that the OSCE is the perfect organization to coordinate Arctic security because of its initial purpose of facilitating NATO-Russia relations in Europe, which is precisely the same relationship that requires coordination in theArctic today. Given that all eight Arctic states are members, the OSCE is almost a pre-existing security organization for the Arctic. The article examines the security environment in the Arctic, the current institutional regime and the origins of the OSCE.Furthermore, it explores OSCE CSBMS as empirical examples of how the OSCE already builds military predictability in the Arctic.

Keywords

arctic security – OSCE – NATO-Russia relations – defence policy – CSBMS

Introduction[1]

In 2012, Prime Minister Steven Harper wanted to withdraw Canada from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).[2] Harperbelieved that the organization was no longer relevant because Europe hadbecome largely peaceful. The hostilities over Ukraine have changed this paradigm overnight, thereby demonstrating how important it is to maintain theOSCE as a channel of communication for European security. However, thereis another reason why Canada should remain in the OSCE: the OSCE might be more relevant to Canada's Arctic backyard than currently appears.

Numerous international organizations are involved in Arctic affairs, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the unique arctic forum, the Arctic Council. While these institutions deal with matters that relate to the environment, shipping, and search and rescue, there is currently no recognized institution that is devoted to military security in the Arctic.[3] Military security in the Arctic is a blurry issue. High levels of cooperation and thepresence of mechanisms designed to solve boundary disputes make military conflict over Arctic issues unlikely. Nevertheless, Arctic states are to some extent now militarizing the region, and military activity occurs there on a regularbasis.

The Arctic consists predominantly of NATO states and Russia. Despite theend of the Cold War, relationships between these partners are easily strained due to geopolitical issues outside the region. Therefore, Arctic security dependson the stability of the broader NATO-Russia relationship. An organization that can deal with military affairs in the Arctic is needed to ensure transparencyand to prevent misunderstandings and crises between Russia and NATO states. The good news is that this organization already exists.

Created out of the Cold War, the OSCE—formerly the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE)—facilitates security through early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation. In addition to European membership, it includes all eight Arctic states,Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and the United States. The OSCE facilitates security in numerous ways: from providing a forum to discuss issues to building trust through tangible mesures such as confidence- and security-

1 Paul André Narvestad served previously in the Norwegian Armed Forces.

2 Mike Blanchfield, 'Harper wanted to pull out of European security organization, diplomats say', in CBC, 1 February 2016. Retrieved 15 February 2016. Available at: http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/harper-europe-security-agency-1.3428747.

3 Christian Le Mière and Jeffrey Mazo, Arctic Opening: Insecurity and Opportunity, Publishedby Routledge for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 2013, pp. 98.

building measures (CSBMS). Several CSBMS under the auspices of the OSCE are already in place north of the Arctic Circle—especially in the European Arctic, but also elsewhere in the region.

However, discussions about Arctic security usually downplay the role of the OSCE in Arctic affairs. The arms-control literature on the Arctic from the 1980s often references the CSCE as a possible but limited arena for security initiatives in the Arctic.[4] For example, Purver notes that, "measures of the typenegotiated in the… [CSCE] may be applicable to Northern Europe and its adjacent sea areas (as well as, possibly the Northern Pacific), but are less centralto the Polar Basin or to the security concerns of a country such as Canada".[5] More recently, the Arctic-security literature has dismissed the OSCE as a body that can deal with Arctic security. For example, Conley and Rohloff consider the OSCE unsuitable in the Arctic.[6] Aleksandrov claims that the, "OSCE seems to be the weakest candidate for a guarantor of security in the Arctic region".[7] Hilde similarly notes that the OSCE, though it, "could conceivably have constituted broad platforms for discussions of Arctic security issues", has neither engaged with them nor been engaged.[8] Given that all eight Arctic states aremembers of the OSCE, why is the OSCE not considered in the Arctic context?Why has discourse on the Arctic downplayed the OSCE's potential as a security organization in the Arctic?

This essay challenges the consensus in the literature and argues that theOSCE is the perfect organization to coordinate Arctic security because it wascreated to facilitate NATO-Russia relations in Europe, which is precisely thesame relationship that must be coordinated in the Arctic today. Furthermore, the article sheds light on existing OSCE CSBMS in the Arctic and on the absence of an alternative security organization—all of which makes the OSCEan invisible backbone of Arctic security. The article considers the possibility of expanding the OSCE's mandate to include naval CSBMS, which could enhance its role in the Arctic.

The Arctic Security Environment: History to Present-day

To this day, the Arctic has never been the focal point of an interstate war orarmed conflict. The Arctic unites Eurasia and North America, which meansthat it includes significant global actors from across the Northern Hemisphere.Consequently, Arctic security needs to be considered in the wider context of global security. History demonstrates that the region is not immune from global conflicts, geo-strategy and militarization.

During the Cold War, the Arctic would have been key in the event of armedconflict between the Soviet Union and NATO. In the case of nuclear war, theArctic airspace offered the shortest route for intercontinental ballistic missiles and aircraft bombers between the two continents. The Kola Peninsula was of high strategic importance to the Soviet Union because it provided the country's only year round ice-free port, which gave the Northern Fleet access to theAtlantic Ocean. For this reason, the Kola Peninsula became the most intenselymilitarized area in the world. The European Arctic and Greenland were alsoof strategic importance to NATO. The West's strategy during the Cold War wasbased on the classical geopolitical ideas of Mackinder: to contain the rimland around the Soviet Union by a

4 See for example, Kari Möttölä and Pertii Joenniemi, 'Arctic Security Challenges and Prospectsfor Arms Control', in ed. Kari Möttölä, The Arctic challenge: Nordic and Canadian Approaches to Security and Cooperation in an Emerging International Region, Westview Press, Boulder,1988, pp. 266.

5 Ronald, G. Purver, 'Arms Control in the North', National Security Series 5, no. 81, Centre forInternational Relations, Queen's University, Kingston, 1981.

6 Heather A. Conley, and Caroline Rohloff, The New Ice Curtain, Center for Strategic & International Studies, Washington D.C.: 2015, pp. 114.

7 Oleg Borisovich Aleksandrov, 'Who Will Provide Security for the Arctic?' in Journal of MGIMO-University, 2013, no. 1, pp. 97.

8 Paal Sigurd Hilde, 'Armed Forces and Security Challenges in the Arctic' in Geopolitics andSecurity in the Arctic: Regional Dynamics in a Global World, Routledge, Abingdon, 2014, pp. 158.

circle of military alliances surrounding the Eurasian heartland.[9] Norway, a NATO member, provided the alliance with the far north end of the rimland.

The post-Cold War period gave a new face to the region. The Arctic declinedin military significance, was significantly demilitarized, and cooperation began to flourish. However, Artur Chilingarov planted a titanium Russian flagat the North Pole in 2007, prompting a media frenzy over the likelihood of aconflict over natural resources. In response to claims of a "race for the North Pole", the five Arctic Ocean coastal states issued the 2008 Ilulissat Declaration,which states that disputes are to be solved peacefully through internationallaw.[10] This was validated two years later when Norway and Russia concludedthe 2010 Barents Sea Boundary Treaty, which settled a dispute over a resource-rich area. This development demonstrates how disagreements over Arctic issues between former Cold-War adversaries can be solved in a peaceful, lawfulmanner rather than by military strength.

Nonetheless, in recent years, all Arctic states have improved their military capabilities in the region, and the media continues to interpret every new military installation created in the Arctic as a hostile development. Hilde addresses this militarization, concluding that we are observing a, "modernization andlimited expansion of military installations"[11] in the Arctic. The militarization is largely meant to tackle issues of societal security such as illegal immigration, drug-trafficking and terrorism. This is a natural development in a region that isseeing an increase in activity. Furthermore, there is no homogenous perceptionof security in the Arctic. For example, the European Arctic is different from the North American Arctic. Hilde notes that militarization in the European Arcticlends itself to deterrence between Norway and Russia by providing a front linebetween NATO and Russia, while militarization in the North American Arctic is less intense because it is less accessible. However, it should be noted thatthe United States has been investing heavily in missile-defence installations inAlaska, thereby keeping the North-American sub-region militarily relevant inthe Arctic. Since militarization in the Arctic varies by sub-region and purpose,the intentions behind militarization are ambiguous and difficult to assess.

While politics in the Arctic may be relatively static and predictable, politicselsewhere are volatile. The NATO-Russia relationship has been gradually deteriorating since the 1990s. On the one hand, NATO states have been critical ofRussian intervention in Georgia, the annexation of Crimea and the fuelling ofconflict in Eastern Ukraine. On the other hand, Russia views NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe with suspicion and has been critical of NATO's intervention in the Middle East and North Africa. Scholars such as Hilde even claimthat conflicts outside the Arctic could spill over into the region.

The increased tensions and changed threat perceptions over non-Arctic issues may cause Arctic states to misinterpret military activity in the region. This can lead to a "security dilemma" in which states acquire military strengthto protect themselves, which paradoxically leads to more insecurity as other states respond with similar measures. This is precisely what Åtland argues:"Despite being a low-tension region…the Arctic is not devoid of security dilemma dynamics".[12] Åtland means that military build-up in the Arctic could result from increased threat perception. Even though the threshold for armed conflict is high in the Arctic, militarization could foster relations of higher tension, which would be disastrous for a relatively peaceful region.

9 Geir Hønneland and Øyvind Østerud, 'Geopolitics and International Governance in theArctic', in Arctic Review on Law and Politics, 2014, no. 5, pp. 172.

10 Michael Byers. International Law and the Arctic, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge,2013, pp. 93.

11 Hilde, 'Armed forces and security', pp. 155.

12 Kristian Åtland, 'Interstate Relations in the Arctic: An Emerging Security Dilemma?' in Comparative Strategy, 2014, no. 33, pp. 157. DOI: 10.1080/01495933.2014.897121.

Because military activity happens on a regular basis in the Arctic and giventhat relations between Russia and NATO are unstable, a multilateral forum isneeded to ensure dialogue on military activities and to thereby avoid crises over misconceptions. In the context of the Arctic, this would require that Arctic NATO states come together with Finland, Sweden and, most problematically, Russia. The question remains: Where can Arctic states discuss military security?

The Current Security Architecture in the Arctic

The main forum for discussing Arctic issues, the Arctic Council, has not addressed matters related to military security due to a footnote in its foundingdocument, the 1996 Ottawa Declaration, which reads as follows: "The Arctic Council should not deal with matters related to military security."[13] While thefootnote is not a prohibition, and though the Ottawa Declaration is not a binding legal instrument, the Arctic Council has shied away from military issues. Nevertheless, the Arctic Council did congregate parties to establish the ArcticSearch and Rescue Agreement (SAR). This treaty does not create any additionalobligations for the pre-existing non-Arctic SAR treaties, but it does open up theopportunity for Arctic governments to discuss military capabilities for search-and-rescue purposes together in the Arctic. Despite this effort, the Arctic Council still fails to address hard security. A similar scenario can be observed in theefforts of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), which has also organized cooperation between European Arctic states on SAR operations[14] but is nottransparent regarding hard security and lacks North American membership.In lieu of a recognized organization that can deal with Arctic military issues, amyriad of alliances, organizations and *ad hoc* forums have emerged, some of which overlap and cover only parts of the Arctic.

The United Nations (UN) has had a tacit influence on Arctic security. Numerous arms-control agreements are relevant to the Arctic, such as the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty and the 1971 Seabed Treaty. The latter treaty prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons on the seabed beyond twelve nautical miles from the shoreline. All Arctic states are parties to this agreement, whichis relevant to the region due to its nuclear-submarine history. Other agreements are strictly bilateral agreements between Russia and the United States, such as the 1972 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (salt i). Even though these agreements are important features of Arctic security, the UN does not actively facilitate dialogue on Arctic security. Nor does it have a specific agenda on hardmilitary security in the region. Furthermore, the prospect of limiting nuclear capabilities in the region even further does not seem likely, partly due to the Bush administration's withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treatyprior to the installation of ballistic-missile interceptors in Fort Greely, Alaska,in 2001.[15]

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) includes five Arctic states and has created the NATO-Russia Council to facilitate NATO-Russia relations.However, it is an ill-suited candidate for several reasons. Most notably, the NATO-Russia Council broke down after the Ukraine crisis, proving that it isunable to deal with this relationship in contentious times.[16] The alliance also lacks Finnish and Swedish membership, which, though perhaps not crucial, would strengthen an Arctic security regime.

The European Union (EU) is in an ambiguous position in relation to the Arctic. It includes the Arctic states Denmark, Finland and Sweden, but it lacksdirect access to the Arctic Ocean because Greenland, Iceland and Norway

13 Arctic Council, 'Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council', signed in Ottawa,September 19, 1996. Available at: http://www.international.gc.ca/arctic-arctique/ottdec-decott.aspx?lang=eng.

14 Byers, 'International Law', pp. 276–282.

15 Ibid, pp. 248–257.

16 NATO-Russia Council, 'Statement by NATO Foreign Ministers', 1 April 2014. Retrieved22 December 2015. Available at: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_108501.htm.

arenot part of the EU. Moreover, it struggled to obtain observer status in the ArcticCouncil due to a dispute with Canada on seal products before it was accepted conditionally in 2013. Nonetheless, the EU has been formulating official policies on the Arctic since 2008, including policies on the environment, energy, fisheries and security. The EU parliament even called for a demilitarizationtreaty for the Arctic that is similar to the Antarctic Treaty.[17] The EU is relevantto Arctic security, but it cannot be considered an arena for discussion on thetopic. Instead, the EU and especially NATO are the actors that should be included in cooperation on military security in the region.

At the sub-regional level, some Arctic states have formed their own securityinstitutions and initiatives. Despite different defence-policy alignments, Denmark, Norway and Sweden have cooperated informally on military issues—on intelligence and air operations in particular. Nordic defence cooperation has also been facilitated through the Nordic Council: a body that facilitatespractical partnership on issues like immigration, labour, education and security. Most notably, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have established the Nordic Defence Cooperation (Nordefco) to promote formal Nordic military cooperation.[18] This was established through a memorandum of understanding that was signed at the Nordic Council. The United States andCanada also cooperate closely on aerospace surveillance through the NorthAmerican Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).[19] In terms of providing security for the Arctic, these organizations cover only specific parts of the Arcticand, more importantly, lack Russian membership.

There have been two pan-Arctic *ad hoc* defence forums: the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable (ASFR) and the Northern Chiefs of Defence Forum. The ASFR is a semi-annual forum that gathers senior military officers from the eight Arctic countries and key allies to promote military cooperation, search and rescue and situational awareness, and to discuss collective security challenges in the Arctic. The Northern Chiefs of Defence Forum, similar tothe ASFR without selected allies, has gathered the top military leaders of theArctic states to discuss military cooperation and security. However, due to theUkraine crisis, both forums have either been cancelled or held without Russianparticipation.[20]

An organization that facilitates Arctic security requires two essential conditions. First, Russian membership is crucial. Military contention in the Arctic is not between NATO states; it is between NATO, Sweden and Finland on one side, and Russia on the other. One U.S. representative at the 2012 ASFR put itthis way: “Not to single one nation out, but having Russia at the table matters”.[21] Second, the regime needs to endure despite crises and strained relations. This is an essential function of a security organization: it needs to continue despitestrained relations because it is meant to deal with those contentious situations. The organizations examined above all fail in at least one aspect of thesepre-requisites. The OSCE, however, is the exception.

The OSCE’s Origins and Significance Today

The OSCE was born out of the tension of the Cold War. After two years of discussion, the idea was realized in 1975 through the Helsinki Final Act, which founded the CSCE as a forum to discuss security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

17 Andreas Østhagen, ‘The European Union – An Arctic Actor?’ Journal of Military and Strategic Studies 15, no. 2, 2013, pp. 71–79.

18 Håkon Lunde Saxi. ‘Nordic Defence Cooperation (Nordefco): Balancing efficiency and sovereignty, NATO and nonalignment‘, in Perspectives on European Security, 2014, pp. 68–69.

19 Hilde, ‘Armed forces and security’, 149.

20 Andreas Østhagen, ‘Arctic Security: Hype, Nuances and Dilemmas’ The Arctic Institute. 27May 2015. Available at: http://www.thearcticinstitute.org/2015/05/052715-Arctic-Security-Hype-Nuances-Dilemmas-Russia.html.

21 Hilde, ‘Armed forces and security’, pp. 160.

Thedemise of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Yugoslavia called for a reactive body that could deal with new urgent issues. This sparked the CSCE's path from forum to organization. The new issues of the post-Cold War periodmade the OSCE adapt from enhancing security between states to focusing onsecurity within states. The organization has been involved in numerous postconflict stabilization missions and has, since the Cold War, gained a new focusthat is often referred to as political reconciliation "east of Vienna".[22] Galbreathpoints out that other European security organizations lack two important factors: "inclusion and communication".[23] He points out how important it is to have communication between states from "Vancouver to Vladivostok" and notes that organizations such as NATO and the EU lack key members, such asRussia.

Some have called the current political climate the "New Cold War". Nonetheless, this new strained relationship between the West and Russia is slightlyunlike the old Cold War. Rojansky clarifies this: First, there is no ideological divide between the two blocs as there was during the Cold War. Second, the threat of imminent destruction is not a central element of the current relationship as it was during the Cold War. Third, since the Cold War, interdependent relationships have developed between the West and Russia, and these connections have a "moderating influence on these tensions".[24] Yet there are similarities: as in the Cold War, regional blocs have emerged, with the EU and NATOon one side and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) on the other. Furthermore, the two blocs are engaged in proxy wars in the post-Soviet Area and the Middle East. The currentdifficult relationship calls for the OSCE's original focus of security between states and regional blocs.

Although the OSCE changed during the post-Cold War period, it continues to serve its core mission from the Cold War by serving as a forum between NATOstates and Russia. Though the NATO-Russia Council broke down, the OSCE endured. Rojansky points out that the key values from the original HelsinkiFinal Act are needed to tame the Russia-NATO relationship today in situations like the Ukraine crisis. This is exactly what the OSCE has done by facilitating both Minsk Agreements and by sending a monitoring mission to the Ukraine. Therefore, the OSCE's original core function from the Cold War, which was to facilitate dialogue between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, is precisely what isneeded to facilitate NATO-Russia relations today.

Analysis: The OSCE and Arctic Security

Due to militarization and concurrent tensions between NATO and Russia, theArctic may fall victim to the security dilemma. As Åtland claims, "The underlying problem seems to be a persisting lack of certainty about other actors'peaceful intentions".[25] In other words, the key problem in this relationship is "predictability". To build trust and predictability, and to avoid the security dilemma, an organization is needed that can mediate Arctic NATO-Russia relations and thereby avoid misunderstandings over military activity. According to Åtland, "There is…no regional forum in which Russia and the Arctic NATO members can discuss matters of military security in the Arctic".[26] However, this statement is inaccurate.

Galbreath and other scholars have pointed to how the OSCE's focus on "comprehensive and cooperative"

22 Walter Kemp et al., OSCE Handbook. Published by the Secretariat of the Organization forSecurity and Cooperation in Europe, Vienna, 1999, pp. 65–66.

23 David J. Galbreath. The Organization for Security, pp. 128.

24 Matthew Rojansky, 'The Geopolitics of European Security and Cooperation', in Securityand Human Rights, 2015, no. 25, pp. 173. DOI: 10.1163/18750230-02502006.

25 Åtland, 'Interstate Relations', pp. 146.

26 Ibid, pp. 160.

security is useful in “Cold War-esque” conflicts even outside the Euro-Atlantic area.[27] For instance, Asada argues that arrangements similar to the OSCE were ideal for East Asia and that the“possibility and usefulness of applying CBMS to other regions has been raised ever since the adoption of the CSCE’s Final Act”.[28] The current Ukraine crisis is a Cold War-esque situation between Russia and NATO that has been dealtwith by the OSCE. Dealing with militarization in the Arctic requires coordinating the exact same relationship in a different region. Therefore, the Arctic does not require its own security organization. Arctic security is inevitablylinked to the global NATO-Russia relationship and European security. This isquintessentially the task of the OSCE; hence, the OSCE is already a key player in maintaining Arctic security. The OSCE should manage the NATO-Russia relationship independent of location, whether in Ukraine or in the Arctic.

As explained above, the Ukraine crisis has demonstrated how alternatives tothe OSCE fail during strained relations. Given that there is no other organization that can coordinate Arctic security, the OSCE is the only organization that includes full Arctic membership and can function during times of contention.In addition to full Arctic membership, the OSCE includes fifty-one other, non-Arctic states. Because the OSCE works on the basis of consensus, it couldbe argued that the OSCE should leave Arctic security issues to regional initiatives. However, its broad membership is in fact a strength. Canada, Iceland,Norway and the United States are all NATO members, which means that theirsecurity is linked to NATO and its twenty-four non-Arctic members. Norwayhas argued for greater NATO activity in the Arctic regarding societal securityand increased Russian assertiveness. Norway has hosted the NATO exercise“Cold Response” every other year since 2006, and in 2018 it will host “TridentJuncture”, which will be a major, high-visibility exercise in the Alliance’s northernmost area that includes 36,000 soldiers from thirty states. This means thatArctic military security already involves numerous non-Arctic states; hence,these states need to be part of the organization that coordinates Arctic security. Moreover, all NATO states are members of the OSCE, which means thatthe organization offers a forum in which all NATO states can engage to discuss security pertaining to the Arctic.

Russia is a member of CSTO: a defence alliance between Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Even though this alliance hasbeen less visible in the Arctic than NATO, Russia’s security is still bound to the organization with its non-Arctic members. CSTO has also had a minor presence in the region. In 2015 and 2016, the Collective Rapid Reaction Force of CSTO joined the Russian Air Force to perform large-scale landing operations on the sea ice close to the North Pole.[29] Nonetheless, non-Arctic NATO states have had a substantially larger presence in the Arctic compared to non-Arctic CSTO states. However, it would it would be wise to include these states in discussions on Arctic security, especially because the security of these states is inthe wider Russian strategic interest. Furthermore, all CSTO states are members of the OSCE. Therefore, the OSCE offers a platform in which the two alliances can coordinate security on a wider scale—even on a regional level, if necessary.

The key to an Arctic security regime is to build trust and predictability between states and to thereby avoid excessive militarization and exaggeratedthreat perception. This should be achieved on a wider level that goes beyond the Arctic to include discussions about where the root of distrust lies betweenNATO and Russia. Åtland suggests that, “to mitigate the security dilemma atthe regional level could be to devote more attention and

27 Galbreath, The Organization for Security, pp. 131.

28 Asada, Masahiko. ‘Confidence-building Measures in East Asia: A Japanese Perspective’, in Asian Survey, 1988, no. 5, pp. 500.

29 Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, ‘Russian Airborne Units SuccessfullyLanded on Drifting Ice near North Pole’, 9 September 2015. Retrieved 16 February 2016.Available at: http://eng.mil.ru/en/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12013394@egNews.

resources to regional [CSBMS], particularly within the maritime domain".[30] This strategy would create transparency and trust in each other's military activities and thereby avoidthe security dilemma. Despite having made a valid argument, Åtland misses one key fact: there are already CSBMS operating in the Arctic under the auspices of the OSCE.

OSCE Confidenceand Security-Building Measures (CSBMS) in theArctic

The OSCE has not been specifically designated under any official documentwith a mandate to manage the "Arctic" or the "Arctic region". Nevertheless, theOSCE spans Europe, Central Asia and North America with fifty-seven memberstates under the slogan of providing security from "Vancouver to Vladivostok".Despite its founding objective of facilitating European security, the OSCE has not been confined to Europe's borders. Its broad membership from the entire Northern Hemisphere has accordingly encompassed the Arctic in its operations without mentioning the region by name.

Though they are restricted to specific sub-regions and areas of operation,the OSCE's CSBMS are prime examples of how the OSCE is engaged in the Arctic. CSBMS are stipulations that require states to exchange information, allow verification of compliance, and engage in other forms of military cooperation to build trust, reduce the risk of conflict, and create openness in the field ofmilitary activity. Three CSBM agreements and treaties apply to the Arctic under the auspices of the OSCE: the Vienna Document of 2011, the Treaty on OpenSkies and the Global Exchange of Military Information. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe has in the past been applied to the Arctic, though its current status is questionable.

The Vienna Document of 2011 (VD 11) encourages states to provide each other with early warnings of military activities, to allow other states to observeexercises, and to arrange on-site inspections of military facilities to enhance transparency.[31] The "zone of application" is from "the Atlantic to the Urals",which means that it applies to the European Arctic in geographic scope. AllOSCE members are participants in this agreement and therefore take part inits operations, however—including all Arctic states. The scope of the treaty islimited to land and air forces, thus excluding naval forces. However, it is possible for this agreement to be extended to cover other areas of military activity,as it is reviewed and amended every five years. As stated earlier, the VD 11 covers the European Arctic, and there are numerous examples of Finland, Norwayand Russia inspecting each other's military bases in the Arctic, even after the Ukraine crisis. For example, in April of 2015, a Russian delegation inspected the garrisons in Heggelia and Skjold that belong to "Brigade Nord" in Northern Norway.[32] Another Russian delegation observed the NATO exercise *Cold Response* in 2014.[33] In October of 2015, Finland inspected Russia's new "Arctic Brigade" in Alakurtti, where the new Arctic Special Forces are based.[34] Mostrecently, in January of 2016, Norway inspected the Russian infantry

30 Åtland, 'Interstate Relations', pp. 159.

31 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Vienna Document 2011'. Reissuedaccording to the Forum for Security Co-operation Decision on Reissuing the Vienna Document (fsc.dec/14/11) and adopted at the 665th Special Meeting the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation in Vienna on 30 November 2011.

32 Trude Pettersen, 'Russian Officers Inspecting Norway's Armed Forces', in BarentsObserver, 9 April 2015. Retrieved 16 October 2015. Available at: http://barentsobserver.com/en/security/2015/04/russian-officers-inspecting-norways-armed-forces-09-04.

33 Trude Pettersen, 'Exercise Cold Response in final phase', in BarentsObserver, 21 March 2014.Retrieved 16 October 2015. Available at: http://barentsobserver.com/en/security/2014/03/exercise-cold-response-final-phase-21-03.

34 BarentsObserver, 'Finland inspects Russian Arctic Brigade', in BarentsObserver, 15 October 2015. Retrieved 17 November 2015. Available at: http://barentsobserver.com/en/ security/2015/10/finland-inspects-russian-arctic-brigade-13-10.

brigade inPetsjenga in the Russian Arctic county of the Murmansk Oblast.[35]

The Treaty on Open Skies (OS) promotes openness and transparency concerning military forces and capabilities though the concept of "mutualaerial observation". Established in 2002, the treaty provides a regime in whichmember states can conduct unarmed surveillance flights over the territoriesof other parties to the treaty. It specifies quotas over flights, the technologypermitted, and the notification required.[36] It includes all the Arctic states amongst the thirty-one member states of the OSCE. The idea of such a treatyhad been rejected by the Soviets, but it was popular among Western states.Notably, Canada suggested a trial regime in the Arctic in 1989.[37] In contrast to the Vienna Document, this CSBM applies to "territory": namely, to the land over which a state party exercises sovereignty, including islands and internal and territorial waters. This means that it applies to all land territories in theArctic. There are numerous examples of OS flights in both the European Arcticand in the North American Arctic. For example, Russia has conducted surveillance flights over Canada,[38] Alaska[39] and Greenland.[40]

The Global Exchange of Military Information (GEMI) was adopted in 1994 and stipulates that all parties annually exchange information on all conventional military capabilities in terms of geographic location, number of personnel, chains of command and categories of major weapons and equipment in all branches of the military.[41] The GEMI differs from all the other CSBMS in that it applies to all military forces "on their territory as well as worldwide",[42]which means that it incorporates the Arctic. While the agreement's primaryintent is global, it includes Arctic states that exchange information on Arctic military capabilities.

The 1990 Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (the CFE Treaty) wasaimed at limiting the number of conventional weapons held by states in Europe from "the Atlantic to the Urals". This means that it was limited to controlling equipment deployed in the European Arctic. All Arctic states apart from Finland and Sweden were parties to the treaty. The treaty worked through a quota system of five types of weapon systems: battle tanks, armoured combatvehicles (ACVS), large artillery pieces, combat aircraft and attack helicopters.[43]However, Russia withdrew in 2015 because NATO conventional forces had beenplaced in the Baltic countries, thereby rendering Norway the only party toadhere to the treaty in the Arctic.

These agreements make up a complex constellation of CSBMS in the Arctic that cover certain parts of the Arctic

35 Sveinung Berg Bentzrød, 'Norge kontrollerte russisk hærstyrke – oppmykning av kaldfront', in Aftenposten, 31 January 2016. Retrieved 1 February, 2016. Available at: http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Norge-kontrollerte-russisk-harstyrke---oppmykning-av-kaldfront-8335315.html.

36 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 'Treaty on Open Skies'. Signed inHelsinki, 24 March 1992.

37 Peter Jones, Open Skies: Transparency, Confidence-Building, and the End of the Cold War, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2014, pp. 14.

38 Kathryn Blaze Carlson, 'Russia Set to Conduct Surveillance Flyover to Inspect Canada'sMilitary, Industrial Infrastructure', in National Post, 26 June 2012. Retrieved 27 October2015. Available at: http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/russia-set-to-conduct-surveillance-flyover-to-inspect-canadas-military-industrial-infrastructure.

39 David Kashi, 'Russian Surveillance Planes Will Be Flying Over The US For A Week Under Open Skies Treaty', in International Business Times, 2 September 2013, Retrieved 27October 2015. Available at: http://www.ibtimes.com/russian-surveillance-planes-will-be-flying-over-us-week-under-open-skies-treaty-1402248.

40 Søren Lindhardt, 'Russisk fly fotograferer Danmark som aftalt', Danish Defence: VærnsfællesForsvarskommando, 10 September 2015. Retrieved October 16, 2015. Available at: http://forsvaret.dk/FST/Nyt%20og%20Presse/Pages/RussiskflyfotografererDanmarksomaftalt.aspx.

41 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. 'Global Exchange of Military Information'. Signed in Budapest, 28 November 1994.

42 Zdzislaw Lachowski, Confidence and Security Building Measures in the New Europe, OxfordUniversity Press, Oxford, 2004, pp. 105.

43 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, Signed in Paris, 19 November 1989.

and certain aspects of military power.Arguably, these regulations already provide security and trust in the Arctic—especially in the European Arctic, which currently sees the most military activity in the region. However, the Arctic is predominantly an ocean, and only oneCSBM covers naval activity. Because the sea ice is melting and cargo vessels are increasingly using the Northern Sea Route, naval activity is expected to increase. Therefore, more transparency regarding naval activities would enhancetrust in the region and is increasingly necessary.

Naval CSBMS in the Arctic: A Realistic Possibility?

The presence of naval CSBMS in the Arctic is not far-fetched. As a part of the Soviet Union's 1987 "Murmansk Initiatives" on disarmament in the Arctic, Mikhail Gorbachev suggested naval CSBMS in the form of limiting anti-submarine weapons, providing information about major naval exercises and inviting observers from the CSCE. He noted that these arrangements could be extended to include the entire Arctic and even the entire Northern Hemisphere.[44] More recently, during the last review of the Vienna Document in2008, the Russian delegation to the OSCE suggested extending the VD 11 to include naval activities.[45] The delegation proposed rules for prior notification of naval exercises and suggested the possibility of sending observers to each other's exercises. However, on both occasions, NATO states opposed the proposals from the Soviet Union and later Russia. NATO states view transparency regarding capabilities at sea as potentially hazardous to their security. NATOis a largely maritime alliance that depends on the ability to transfer military force from North America to Europe, thereby making trans-Atlantic navalcapabilities crucial. In contrast, the Warsaw Pact historically and Russia todayare less dependent on warfare at sea and more dependent on land forces. The asymmetry of naval strategic importance makes agreements concerning navalCSBMS between the two sides difficult to achieve.

However, agreements concerning naval CSBMS have already been achieved between NATO states and Russia, just not multilaterally. The 1972 U.S.-Russia Incidents at Sea and Dangerous Military Activities Agreement sets out,

(a) regulations on dangerous manoeuvres,

(b) restrictions on other forms ofharassment,

(c) increased communication at sea, and

(d) regular consultationsand exchanges of information.[46]

Norway and Russia concluded an equivalentbilateral treaty in 1990.[47] While these two agreements may have their merits interms of maritime security between the United States and Russia and betweenNorway and Russia, they are insufficient in a regional or Arctic perspectivedue to the lack of other states in similar regimes with Russia. Moreover, theseagreements lack provisions concerning naval-exercise notification and observers, which an extended version of the VD 11 would include.

44 Ronald G. Purver, 'Arctic Security: The Murmansk Initiative and its Impact', in CurrentResearch on Peace and Violence, 1988, no. 11, pp. 148.

45 Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Statement by Mikhail Ulyanov, the Leader of Russia's Delegation to the military Security and Arms Control Talks in Vienna, at the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna, 2008. Available at: http://www.osce.org/cio/32659?download=true.

46 Sean M. Lynn-Jones, 'Applying and Extending the USA-USSR Incidents at Sea Agreement',in Security at Sea: Naval Forces and Arms Control. RW. Fieldhouse (ed.), Oxford UniversityPress, Oxford, 1990, pp. 205.

47 Norwegian Government, Incident at Sea – møte i Russland, 2004, Retrieved 19 December2015. Available at: https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/incident_at_sea_-mote_i_russland/id234445/.

The extension of the OSCE's CSBMS is not unrealistic. In 1990, Howard concluded that three provisions of the 1986 Stockholm Document could be realistically extended to naval forces: (a) exchange of information on inventory, base facilities and command organization; (b) prior notifications of exercises,transits and deployments; and (c) constraints on exercise activities. Today, theformer provision has been applied to naval forces though the GEMI, while the two others are yet to be realized through an extension of the VD.

Obstacles to OSCE Engagement in the Arctic

If the OSCE is a strong candidate for coordinating Arctic security, then whatprevents it from becoming the Arctic's recognized security organization? Twoobvious obstacles are the mandate constraints "from the Atlantic to the Urals" and the exclusion of naval activity in the VD 11. There are four other possible obstacles to OSCE engagement in the Arctic.

First, objectives and responsibilities overlap between organizations. TheOSCE today deals not only with military security but also with environmental issues as a part of its three-dimensional approach to security. The question of whether the OSCE should engage in environmental affairs in the Arctic has been raised, and it was rejected by Canada.[48] There are already numerous organizations that deal with environmental issues in the Arctic, such as the United Nations Environment Programme and the Arctic Council. Thus, the OSCE would not have a role to play in these areas. The comprehensive activities of the OSCE make it a complex institution that is hard to extend into a region. Itmay be useful for providing measures to control hard security, but it falls shortwith respect to other issues due to other actors who are already active in theregion.

Second, Arctic security may not appear to be an urgent issue. The OSCE hasin recent years specialized in crises and post-conflict rehabilitation. While theArctic does not face urgent conflicts, the OSCE should still be present in allparts of the "conflict cycle", even if the current military climate is characterizedmerely by suspicion rather than by outright conflict.

Third, the OSCE is currently occupied with several pressing issues. The OSCE is already involved with numerous pressing projects and crises, fromthe Ukraine crisis to the European migrant crisis. However, as argued earlier, the original function of the OSCE was to facilitate relations between Russia andNATO. Facilitating such relations should thus be an OSCE priority regardless of location.

Finally, some Arctic states may fear having their sovereignty undermined. Authorizing the OSCE to engage in Arctic security would mean that forty-nine non-Arctic states would be included in discussions pertaining to the Arctic. This might be a concern for Arctic states, such as Canada. Canada's relation toits Arctic has been characterized by some scholars as one of "sovereignty anxiety". In other words, some scholars believe that Canada is struggling to assertsovereignty in the Arctic.[49] However, the inclusion of non-Arctic states, especially NATO states, adds strength to the Arctic security regime. It is inefficient to discuss Arctic security on a pure regional approach, because five Arcticstates are allied with twenty-three non-Arctic states and because the NATORussia relationship is influenced by non-Arctic events.

48 Delegation of Canada to the OSCE, Delegation of Canada to the OSCE Closing statements at the 16th Meeting of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum 'Maritime and Inland Waterways Co-Operation in the OSCE Area: Increasing Security and Protecting the Environment', Prague 21 May 2008, Prague, 2008. Available at: http://www.osce.org/eea/32060?download=true.

49 Whitney P. Lackenbauer, 'Polar Race or Polar Saga? Canada and the Circumpolar World',in Arctic Security in an Age of Climate Change, James Kraska (ed.), pp. 218–43. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2011, pp. 219.

Conclusion

Russia has recently conducted military exercises close to the North Pole, and NATO states also conduct Arctic exercises there. There has also been anincrease in military investments in the Arctic from both sides, which demonstrates that military activity is a growing feature of the region. The mainsecurity concern in the Arctic is to prevent the threat perception from beingdistorted by non-Arctic issues. While Arctic disputes are usually settled in a peaceful manner, the NATO-Russia relationship is frequently strained outside the region. But though it is reminiscent of the Cold War, the current deadlockis quite different from that period.

One feature remains: there is tension between two blocs: NATO and Russia. The OSCE, which is often considered a "relic" of the Cold War, may offer the perfect remedy to this strained relationship, because its original purpose is to coordinate the NATO-Warsaw Pact relationship, which is largely the same NATO-Russia relationship today. These are the same military relations that need to be coordinated in the Arctic today because, ultimately, Arctic politics revolve around NATO-Russia relations.

Despite lacking an official policy on the Arctic, the OSCE already facilitates military security dialogue in the Arctic through CSBMS—especially inthe European Arctic. The VD 11 and Open Skies Treaty require military personnel from various Arctic states to cooperate with respect to on-site inspections or unarmed surveillance flights on an annual basis. In an interview with Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* on a Russian VD 11 inspection in Norway, Norwegian Colonel Lauglo stated that, "The inspection took place in a cordialatmosphere. The Russians were satisfied with what they saw. This is important.If they realize we have equipment and units we do not declare, then it willbe noted as a lack of transparency".[50] These sentiments are worth noting. TheOSCE may itself build trust between state officials in Vienna, but the process of conducting CSBMS creates channels of communication between Arctic military units. This personal interaction should not be underestimated. Whether or not academics and officials recognize it, the OSCE is an important organization in the Arctic just because it is responsible for making militaryunits in the Arctic communicate regularly. When the OSCE is weighed against its dysfunctional alternatives, it becomes evident that the OSCE is a cornerstone of Arctic security today.

This argument can be summed up with words the Norwegian Policy Director, Svein Efjestad, offered at the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in October of 2015:

Because of Norway's interests and responsibilities in the Arctic, it isessential for us to maintain a presence in the region and protect our rightsand fulfil our obligations. Norway is therefore increasing the Armed Forces' presence at sea, and improving our situational awareness. We do thisin a way which by no means can be interpreted as provocative or threatening. In fact, I believe that keeping fully informed about the ongoingactivities prevent us from misinterpretations or overreactions.[51]

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51 Ministry of Defence of Norway, Statement by Mr. Svein Efjestad, Policy Director, Ministry ofDefence of Norway, at the 800th meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation 21 October2015, Vienna. Confidence and Security Building – the Nordic perspective, Vienna, 2015. Retrieved 21 November 2015. Available at: http://www.osce.org/fsc/197996?download=true.

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