

# **Canadian Approaches to Arctic Foreign Policy**

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## **Abstract**

Throughout the Cold War the Arctic was treated as an international 'no man's land'. The tension created by the proximity of the Soviet Union to the other Arctic states made the development of effective Arctic foreign policies within the Arctic states almost impossible. However, the end of the Cold War resulted in the opening of political space that enabled the 'lesser' Arctic states to begin to have influence in the region.

The Arctic states began to work together to develop forums for international cooperation on issues that impacted the Arctic region as a whole. This cooperation began with the implementation of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy aimed at controlling and monitoring the fragile Arctic environment. Arctic cooperation grew and evolved, and today we have the Arctic Council, a promising organization that most of the Arctic states treat as the primary Arctic intergovernmental body. The Arctic Council is a unique organization that has been lauded as a model upon which other international organizations would be wise to fashion themselves because of the status accorded the Indigenous Peoples' Organizations within the Council. While the Council is truly a type of 'soft law' body with no real power to regulate or enforce decisions, it seems to be in the process of evolving into something more.

This thesis will attempt to explain Canada's support for the creation and maintenance of the Arctic Council. It will attempt to explain how the Government of Canada has used multilateral Arctic organizations, and in particular the Arctic Council, to further Canadian interests in the Arctic and why the Government of Canada does not use the Arctic Council as its primary intergovernmental Arctic organization, preferring instead to involve a multitude of groupings of Arctic stakeholders in order to pursue Canadian Arctic interests. It will argue that Canada's involvement is best explained by using a modified liberal internationalism as the theoretical perspective that can best explain the development of the Arctic Council within Canada. This modified perspective also makes it possible to predict how the Arctic Council will develop in the future.

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## Dedication

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*For Dakota*

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## **List of Abbreviations**

A5: Arctic Five (the five Arctic Ocean coastal states)

AAC: Arctic Athabaskan Council

ACAP: Arctic Contaminants Action Program Working Group

AIA: Aleut International Association

AEPS: Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy

AMAP: Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme Working Group

ASIWG: Arctic Security Intergovernmental Working Group

CAFF: Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group

CIC: Canadian International Council

CIIA: Canadian Institute of International Affairs

EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone

EPPR: Emergency Preparedness, Prevention and Response Working Group

GCI: Gwich'in Council International

ICC: Inuit Circumpolar Council

IPO: Indigenous Peoples' Organization

IPS: Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat

NWFZ: Nuclear Weapons Free Zone

UNCLOS: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

PAME: Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group

RAIPON: Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North

SAO: Senior Arctic Official (of the Arctic Council)

SDWG: Sustainable Development Working Group

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Canadian social scientists who study the Arctic are often critical of the Government of Canada for failing to develop a clearly articulated foreign policy position regarding the Arctic. E.J. Dosman, a Canadian foreign policy scholar who concentrates on the Arctic, notes that although Ottawa policy-makers display an understanding of the importance of the Arctic as a key element of Canadian foreign policy, there has been a lack of clarity and purpose about Canada's Arctic foreign policy (Dosman 1976, 34). Similarly, Rob Huebert, a political scientist at the University of Calgary's Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, argues that in the past the Government of Canada has made a habit of promising specific policies in relation to the Canadian Arctic and then failing to implement them because of other political or economic pressures within the state (Huebert 2009, 35). Michael Byers, a Canada Research Chair in International Law and Politics, argues that the Government of Canada has missed out on past opportunities to clearly define the extent of Canadian Arctic territory and that defining our boundaries and building capacity to protect Canadian rights within that defined territory "is a national project for the twenty-first century" (Byers 2009, 9).

Foreign policy in the Arctic has been largely reactive, with the Government of Canada preferring to wait until it is absolutely crucial to respond to a challenge to Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic instead of developing a coherent policy in advance of a crisis. Particularly during the Cold War, Canada was reluctant to

develop and implement Arctic foreign policy. However, the creation of various Arctic governance institutions is changing how Canada approaches Arctic foreign policy.

Throughout the Cold War the Arctic had largely been treated as an international 'no man's land'. While there were indeed significant events in the Arctic during this time, they were mainly confined to issues of domestic policy such as the establishment of Greenland Home Rule in 1979 and the continued devolution of power from the federal to territorial governments in Canada. The tension created by the proximity of the Soviet Union to the other Arctic states made the development of effective Arctic foreign policies within the Arctic states almost impossible. However, by the late 1980s, the USSR was in decline and the Cold War was coming to an end. The relaxation of Soviet foreign policy resulted in the opening of political space that enabled the 'lesser' Arctic states to begin to have influence in the region. The Arctic states agreed that there was a need to cooperate in the Arctic to ensure that it could be turned into a peaceful, demilitarized region.

Gradually, Arctic cooperation grew and evolved, and today we have the Arctic Council, a promising organization that most of the Arctic states treat as the primary Arctic intergovernmental body. While the Council is truly a type of 'soft law' body with no real power to regulate or enforce decisions, it seems to be in the process of evolving into something more.

This thesis will attempt to explain Canada's support for the creation and maintenance of the Arctic Council. It will argue that Canada's involvement is best explained by using a modified liberal internationalism as the theoretical perspective that can best explain the development of the Arctic Council within Canada. This modified perspective also makes it possible to predict how the Arctic Council will develop in the future.

Chapter two discusses various theoretical perspectives that could help to explain how the Government of Canada uses multilateral Arctic governance institutions, and in particular the Arctic Council, to pursue Canadian interests in the Arctic. A hypothesis, based on modified liberal internationalism, is presented. This hypothesis clarifies and explains the changes in Canadian Arctic foreign policy that have been implemented by three distinct governments since the end of the Cold War. This chapter also details the methodology that has been used for this study.

Chapter three is comprised of a formal institutional analysis of the Arctic Council. It provides essential background information about the development of regional multilateralism in the Arctic and the creation of the Arctic Council. This chapter also includes a description of how the Arctic Council functions and an appraisal of the future prospects of the Council.

Chapters four, five, and six divide the time from the end of the Cold War until the present into three distinct periods based on changes in the way the Government of Canada has approached the development of Arctic foreign policy. These three periods roughly correspond with the changes in governing political party in Canada throughout this time.<sup>1</sup> Each chapter presents a traditional foreign policy analysis for a given period of time. Chapter four presents an analysis of the Mulroney Conservative period from 1987 to 1993. Chapter five presents an analysis of the Chrétien & Martin Liberal period from 1993 to 2006. Chapter six presents an analysis of the Harper Conservative period from 2006 to the present.

Chapter seven provides a conclusion to the study reiterating the thesis that Canada's involvement with the Arctic Council is best explained by its acceptance of a liberal internationalist framework in directing foreign policy. This chapter also provides some modest predictions about how the Arctic Council will develop in the future and how Canada will be involved in that development.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix D for a list of list of Canadian Prime Ministers and Foreign Affairs/External Affairs Ministers from 1984 to the Present.

## **2. METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Methodology**

Arctic cooperation is a very recent phenomenon, and the Arctic Council is even more recent. The Council has just celebrated its fifteenth year, and in 2011 the first legally binding agreement to be negotiated in the Arctic Council was signed. Because the Council is only beginning to enter its adolescence, there is a dearth of primary sources. Council Declarations are created at the end of each two-year Chairmanship rotation and hence there are only eight Arctic Council Declarations to date. This also means that a body of literature analyzing the Arctic Council has yet to develop. Furthermore, the literature that exists regarding Canadian Arctic policy lacks a thorough analysis of the relationship between the Arctic Council and Canadian Arctic foreign policy.

In order to better understand the relationship between the Arctic Council and Canadian Arctic foreign policy, this study conducts a formal institutional analysis of the Arctic Council to examine the Council's structure and organization as well as the way in which decisions are made. Formal institutional analysis is considered to be an important element of research into international organizations (Barkin 2006, 28). In order to accomplish this, the author consulted the limited number of primary sources and secondary sources written about the Council. Primary sources included Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy



(AEPS) and Arctic Council documents, while secondary sources relied heavily on the contributions to research on Arctic Governance made by Keskitalo, Koivurova, Nord, Young, and others (Keskitalo 2004; Koivurova 2010; Nord 2006; Nord 2010; Young and Cherkasov 1992; Young 1992; Young 2005; Young 2009).

The study also conducts a traditional foreign policy analysis of Canadian Arctic foreign policy from 1985 to the present to determine the history behind these policies as well as the interests that led to the articulation and implementation of Canadian Arctic foreign policy in this period. Foreign policy analysis is necessary to determine what theoretical perspectives can best explain Canadian Arctic foreign policy since the end of the Cold War (Jackson and Sørensen 2007, 223). This analysis identified three distinct periods of Canadian Arctic foreign policy since 1985. The first period corresponds with the term of office of the Conservatives under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and, albeit briefly, Prime Minister Kim Campbell. Although the Conservatives formed government in 1984, for the purposes of this foreign policy analysis of Arctic foreign policy this period stretches from 1987 to 1993. The second period corresponds with the term of office of the Liberals under Prime Minister Jean Chrétien from 1993 to 2003 and Prime Minister Paul Martin from 2003 to 2006. The third period corresponds with the term of office of the Conservatives under Prime Minister Stephen Harper from 2006 to the present.

In order to accomplish this foreign policy analysis, the author conducted interviews with key individuals and reviewed Government of Canada foreign policy statements, news releases, and Arctic and/or Northern policy statements. Cautioned by Kirton's discussion of the "rhetorical symbols emanating from the government," when reviewing these documents, the author made a conscious effort to ensure that the analysis would remain free from the influence of political framing (Kirton 2007, 29-30). The author also consulted the small body of secondary academic writings on Canadian foreign policy and to a lesser extent Canadian Arctic foreign policy that are available.

This thesis relies, in part, on interviews conducted with key individuals who are highly knowledgeable about the Arctic Council or Canadian Arctic policy. The interview process was approved by the University of Regina Research Ethics Board in September 2011, and the interviews were conducted in November 2011.<sup>2</sup>

Key individuals were identified on the basis of their past or current positions in one of three categories, namely, Arctic Council member state delegations, the Government of Canada, or Arctic Council Permanent Participants representing Canadian Indigenous peoples.<sup>3</sup> Informants who could comment on the nature of

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for the University of Regina Research Ethics Board approval memorandum.

<sup>3</sup> There are three Arctic Council Permanent Participants that represent Canadian Indigenous peoples: the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Arctic Athabaskan Council, and the Gwich'in Council International.

Arctic policy either now or in the past were selected. In total, six interviews were conducted.

Informants participated in semi-structured interviews where they were asked to comment broadly on the importance of the Arctic as a region and the usefulness of the Arctic Council as an intergovernmental Arctic forum. Interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Once the interview transcript was available, informants were invited to review the transcript and given the opportunity to clarify or expand on their original answers. The privacy of informants is respected in this thesis, except in those cases where informants have given their express consent to be named in this work.

## **2.2 Literature**

John Kirton, one of the preeminent scholars of Canadian foreign policy, argues that there are “three major competing theoretical perspectives on Canadian foreign policy” (Kirton 2007, 7). These three theoretical perspectives are liberal internationalism, peripheral dependence, and complex neo-realism (Kirton 2007, 7). Kirton acknowledges that these three theories have been the dominant lenses through which to view Canadian foreign policy for some time; however, he argues that they are still relevant in the 21st century (Kirton 2007, 12). Typically, one of these three perspectives can explain any given case study in Canadian foreign policy (Kirton 2007, 12).

### *2.2.1 Theories of foreign policy*

This thesis attempts to explain how the Arctic Council developed, from a Canadian perspective. Each of these three theories of Canadian foreign policy was assessed to determine whether the theory was capable of explaining and predicting the creation and development of the Arctic Council. To accomplish this, this thesis first outlines each of these three theories and then proposes that liberal internationalism, if modified to take into consideration factors not traditionally considered by this perspective, is consistently able to predict and explain the Arctic foreign policies of the Government of Canada regarding the creation and evolution of the Arctic Council.

#### *2.2.1.1 Liberal internationalism*

Liberal internationalism, as articulated by St. Laurent in the 1947 Gray Lecture, has five 'basic principles' (St Laurent 1947). The most significant feature of liberal internationalism is that foreign policies are created on the basis of a common set of values and morals that are respected within the state and which the state attempts to extend beyond the borders of the state (St Laurent 1947). The promotion of these common values requires that a state respect the rule of law and attempt to gain influence in the world through international organizations (St Laurent 1947). Also central to liberal internationalism is a desire not to rely on military power in the pursuit of common values but rather to work through

diplomacy and compromise to achieve desired ends (Kirton 2007, 36). Essentially liberal internationalism explains why a state would pursue an agenda of human security or 'low' politics (Hart 2008, 50).

Dewitt and Kirton describe liberal internationalism as being "less systematic theory than a collection of assumptions and descriptions" (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 17). Appel Molot describes liberal internationalism as being a construct of foreign policy makers, a method for practicing foreign affairs, which has since become a theoretical perspective that attempts to explain the driving forces behind Canadian foreign policy (Appel Molot 2007, 65). According to Appel Molot, this perspective emphasizes Canada's creation of specific foreign policy in order to have influence in world affairs (Appel Molot 2007, 65). Herein lies one of the fundamental problems with this theoretical perspective — it is so broad that it can be applied to vast periods of time by simply passing over the few examples that do not fit.

Kirton points out that there are some major flaws with liberal internationalism. First, the characteristics that describe liberal internationalism are far too broad to be useful in assessing foreign policy decisions as it is difficult to find case studies that do not fit the criteria (Kirton 2007, 36). Also, Kirton argues that liberal internationalism cannot fully explain all Canadian foreign policy because it cannot account for the changes that have occurred over time as a result of different

governments and individuals within government and their choices and preferences for certain issues (Kirton 2007, 36).

Nossal writes that liberal internationalism is the dominant theoretical perspective in explaining Canadian foreign policy from the end of the Second World War and through the Cold War (Nossal 1997, 158). However, he also argues that while the dominance of this perspective came to an end with the end of the Cold War, liberal internationalism can still be used to explain some of the foreign policy decisions taken by the Mulroney and Chrétien governments at the beginning of the post-Cold War period (Nossal 1997, 159-160).

#### *2.2.1.2 Peripheral dependence*

Peripheral dependence, according to Dewitt and Kirton, holds that since Canada received control over its own foreign policy from Westminster, it has been increasingly dominated both culturally and economically by the United States (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 30). This increasing domination has been leading to a dependency on the United States which, with respect to Canadian foreign policy, is characterized by Canada's ranking as "a small, penetrated power within the international hierarchy" (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 30). Peripheral dependency "leads to a degree of international activity characterized by low interaction with the outside world and the virtual absence of independent, direct contacts in world politics" (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 31).

Kirton further argues that peripheral dependencies are very predictable because a peripheral dependencies' foreign policies will necessarily always be the same as the foreign policies of the controlling state — in Canada's case, the United States (Kirton 2007, 59). Peripheral dependency also assumes that Canada's "international trajectory", its role and influence in the world, is permanently declining as Canada drifts more and more into US dependence (Kirton 2007, 67).

There are many problems with the peripheral dependency perspective. Appel Molot argues that this perspective "does not allow for the possibility of change in status over time" (Appel Molot 2007, 66). Also, Canada's relationship with the United States is such a central element of peripheral dependency that proponents of this theory often ignore Canada's relationships with other states, to say nothing of Canada's influence on global governance (Appel Molot 2007, 65).

### *2.2.2.3 Complex neo-realism*

Complex neo-realism was first described by Dewitt and Kirton in their 1983 book, *Canada as a Principal Power* (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 4). They argue that both liberal internationalism and peripheral dependency theory are imperfect theories that cannot explain how all foreign policy in Canada is created nor can they account for the significant changes that were occurring in the international system since the 1960s (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 3).

Complex neo-realism assumes, much like classical realism, that the international system is made up of states with many different interests and there are no common interests (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 38). This perspective “focuses on the role of hegemonic powers in ensuring, defining, and extending international order” (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 38). In the transition period between the rise and fall of hegemonic states, ‘principal powers’ have been able to define international order (Dewitt and Kirton 2007, 33). Dewitt and Kirton argue that in light of these features of the international system, we see the rise of ‘principal powers’ or states with the freedom from having to respond to security threats as well as the ability to determine what foreign policies to adopt by referring to the values and desires of the society (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 38).

One problem with complex neo-realism is that it does not allow for the benevolent actions of states. According to complex neo-realism, states “are autonomous actors, who behave according to their own interests and values through self-constructed calculations” (Kirton 2007, 82). This means that a state can never be an “honest broker”, negotiating relations between other principal states (Kirton 2007, 82). This fails to adequately explain Canada’s role in many international organizations. In many cases, including in the Arctic region, Canada has at times set aside national interest in the pursuit of common objectives.

Complex neo-realism is a variant of classical realism which starts from the premise that states always act to pursue their rational self interest defined as



power (Morgenthau 1967, 25). In other words, all states, no matter what their ultimate aim, will try to accumulate more power (Morgenthau 1967, 25). Domestically, the pursuit of power is restricted because the state establishes the terms of the legal use of power (Rittberger and Zangl 2006, 15). However, internationally there is no absolute authority greater than the sovereign state (Rittberger and Zangl 2006, 15). As a result, “this struggle for power can escalate into the threat and use of force” (Rittberger and Zangl 2006, 15).

### *2.2.2 Applying theories of foreign policy to the Arctic Council*

During the Mulroney government from 1987 to 1993, the Conservative government actively pursued foreign policy goals that had not previously been available to it at the height of the Cold War. With the easing of tensions between the US and the USSR in the late 1980s, political space was created in which non-superpower states could now make foreign policy and attempt to have some influence in the world (Karns and Mingst 2004, 152). Initially this meant the negotiation of bilateral agreements with both the US and the USSR. These agreements were negotiated in order to lay the groundwork for the promotion of a proposal to establish a new international Arctic organization, the Arctic Council. In order to gain support for this initiative, Canada needed to demonstrate that the two former superpowers also supported the proposal.

During the Liberal period from 1993 to 2006, the government continued to develop the Arctic Council proposal and began to develop diplomatic capability in order to convince all Arctic states to support the proposal. In 1994, a special Ambassadorship was created — the Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs — to spearhead the Arctic Council negotiations. The Liberals also worked hard to ensure that non-state actors, and in particular Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPOs), would have a place in the new Arctic Council. The establishment of the Arctic Council was the Liberals' primary objective during this period. After the establishment of the Council, the Liberals continued to work hard to support and build the foundation for the Council. In 2003, the Liberals ratified the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and thus began to expand Arctic cooperation.

During the Harper government, from 2006 to the present, the government has still used and supported the Arctic Council. However, the use and growth of this forum does not seem to be the government's primary objective. The Conservatives have also pursued intergovernmental Arctic relations in a much more traditional state-to-state forum known as the Arctic Five (A5) or Arctic Ocean coastal states. While many of these promises have yet to be implemented, this government has also emphasized the development of military capability in the Arctic region as an important goal. The maintenance of Canadian Arctic sovereignty can be seen as this government's main objective in the Arctic region.

The peripheral dependence theory is quite simply unable to explain Canadian Arctic foreign policy. Throughout all three periods, Canada can be seen to have actively pursued international foreign policy and engaged all of the Arctic states directly. During the Mulroney Conservative period, Canada's "international trajectory" in the Arctic was increasing as it went from virtually no Arctic foreign policy options being available to the significant project of developing the Arctic Council proposal in a very short period of time. The creation of the Arctic Council during the Liberal period required the development of diplomatic capabilities to ensure that Arctic Council negotiations would lead to the adoption of the Council proposal by all Arctic states. This shows a high level of independent, international diplomatic activity. While the Harper government has shifted focus slightly from the Arctic Council as the primary objective of Canadian Arctic foreign policy, international engagement remains high. Rather than a dependency, because of UNCLOS and the work being done to determine the delineation of the continental shelves in the Arctic region, Canada now finds itself in a position of power amongst the Arctic states. At no time since the end of the Cold War has Canada's Arctic foreign policy been dictated by the United States. Rather, Canada has consistently developed independent Arctic foreign policy that always relies significantly on international diplomacy.

Complex neo-realism does not provide a reasonable explanation of Canadian Arctic foreign policy during any of the three periods of government since the end

of the Cold War. The Mulroney conservatives can be shown to have been pursuing a foreign policy agenda that concentrated on the common values, issues, and goals of the eight Arctic states. Furthermore, Canada's position in the Arctic at this time cannot be described as that of a 'principal power.' Rather, during this time the US and USSR, though declining superpowers, remained the most powerful states in the region while the remaining six states were more or less on equal footing in terms of their ability to influence the politics of the region. The Liberal government's primary Arctic foreign policy objective was the establishment, and later the growth, of the Arctic Council. Because no other policies were implemented it is impossible to argue that the Liberals used the Council as a means of gaining information about other states in order to determine what policies Canada could pursue. Also, for much of this period and as the US and Russia continued to decline in terms of power in the region, Canada continued to be a state among many with no particular power over that of the other six Arctic states. Towards the end of this period the Liberals do begin to look at redeveloping Canada's military position in the Arctic. However, it could be argued that this was much more a domestic, rather than foreign, policy. Since the end of the Cold War, Canada's Arctic military operations had ceased and a redevelopment was seen as necessary domestically in order to ensure that the government could continue to provide citizens with services such as policing and search and rescue capabilities. After ratifying UNCLOS in 2003, Canada, as one of the five Arctic Ocean coastal states, will have an ability to shape the laws and rules that apply to the region. However, this change in the balance of power has

not come at the expense of a transition from one hegemonic state to another. The US and Russia have remained the major powers of the region since the end of the Cold War because of their relative military strength.

Liberal internationalism provides the best explanation and has the best predictive ability for the development of Arctic foreign policy after the Cold War. During the Mulroney period, Canada sought to establish an Arctic Council in order to pursue common, regional goals with the other Arctic states. Although there is no evidence that this government would have favoured the use of military power in the Arctic region at this point in time, the simple fact was that the Canadian military was no match for those of the US and USSR so it simply could not rely on military power in the pursuit of these objectives. Canada thus out of necessity had to rely on diplomacy in order to push the creation of the Arctic Council. The importance of the Arctic Council to the Government of Canada was a result of the Mulroney government's perceived need for an Arctic international organization as a way for Canada to have influence in a part of the world that had to this point in time been significantly restricted.

The Liberals used the Arctic Council as a way of promoting common values and issues in the Arctic region. They saw that the way to achieve the establishment of the Council was through vigorous diplomacy. It was also necessary to negotiate many compromises in order to get the US to support the establishment of the Council. During this period we see a priority being placed on the pursuit of

common goals through diplomacy rather than a reliance on military power. It is also in this period that we see the Liberals focus on reintroducing human security issues into the Arctic region. The tensions created by the Cold War ensured that military security was of singular importance in the region and by consequence matters of human security — social development, economic development, and environmental protection — were of little importance. The Liberals worked diligently to change that by promoting the importance of human security through the Arctic Council.

During the current period, the Harper government continues to use the Arctic Council, although it has also placed a great deal of importance in the A5 format. While the A5 has not yet been acknowledged by its participants as a permanent 'organization' and while it is indeed very different from the Arctic Council, it is nonetheless an example of the use of an international organization in the pursuit of foreign policy. It is clear that, in terms of Arctic foreign policy, the Harper government continues to rely on multilateral organizations as the primary component of its Arctic foreign policies. We are witnessing a greater emphasis on party ideology in this period than in previous periods. However, the Harper government remains confined in the options available to it when developing Arctic foreign policy. The reality is that in the Arctic region, as in the world, Canada is not a major power and as a result we have limited options available to us in terms of gaining influence in the region.

### *2.2.3 Adapting theory to account for political party variables*

As Kirton argues, one of the main flaws of liberal internationalism is that this perspective cannot account for the directions taken by different governments as a result of choices informed by ideology or preference for particular issues (Kirton 2007, 36). Liberal internationalism predicts that Canada will pursue certain foreign policies as a result of its status as a middle power. This perspective does not offer any insight into how different governments with different ideologies might have different goals or might be trying to achieve different results but still rely on diplomacy and international organizations as these are the only tools available to Canada given its position in the international arena.

Furthermore, liberal internationalism has no way of taking into account the preferences and values of individuals within government (Kirton 2007, 36). When analyzing foreign policy, it is tempting to attribute policy development to the particular government as a whole. However, to fully appreciate the subtle nuances of foreign policy, it is necessary to evaluate what personalities were behind the making of those policies. Different governments rely on the involvement of different individuals in the foreign policy-making process and every different individual brings his or her own values and interests into the discussion. Where one government may rely on the experience and institutional memory of the bureaucracy to assist in the development of foreign policy, another government may take direction from the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Prime

Minister. The involvement of different individuals in the crafting of foreign policy adds another dimension to the study of Canadian Arctic foreign policy. Liberal internationalism is not yet equipped to make predictions based on these additional variables.

It is entirely possible that liberal internationalism cannot account for such variables because it was never designed to do so. As discussed earlier in this chapter, liberal internationalism is both a theoretical perspective as well as being “a method for practicing foreign affairs” (Appel Molot 2007, 65). The earliest articulations of liberal internationalism insist that Canadian governments must be careful to develop foreign policy that has broad appeal to all Canadians “regardless of party affiliations at home” (St. Laurent 1947). This was a necessary prerequisite to the practice of liberal internationalism in Canadian foreign policy. One of the “basic principles” of liberal internationalism is that Canada should promote Canadian values abroad. In order to do this it was understood at the time that it was therefore necessary to develop foreign policy free from the particular ideology of the governing party and rather base foreign policy on a more broad set of human values that appealed to all Canadians. The reality today however, is that, for better or for worse, party ideology does inform the creation of foreign policy in Canada. This is particularly true regarding Arctic foreign policy.



#### 2.2.4 “Neo-liberal internationalism”

It is clear that, in the case of Canadian Arctic foreign policy, liberal internationalism has the best predictive ability of the three theoretical perspectives that are used to explain Canadian foreign policy. It is also clear that liberal internationalism may not be able to fully predict the nuances of Arctic foreign policy and how it changes along with changes in government. While it seems that since the end of the Cold War Canadian governments have crafted Arctic foreign policy that relies heavily on diplomacy and international organizations, liberal internationalism cannot adequately explain the subtle differences in approach throughout the three distinct periods identified in this thesis.

Therefore I suggest that in order to assess how government creates Arctic foreign policy and to determine how the Arctic Council may or may not have influenced Canadian Arctic foreign policy, we must employ a modified liberal internationalism that takes into account the differences in ideology between governments as well as the differences in values and interests of the individuals within government who are responsible for the development of Arctic foreign policy at various times.

The overarching goal of the Mulroney Conservatives was to implement policies that would be good for Canada in the long term (Plamondon 2009, 331). When

the Mulroney Conservatives came to power in 1984, they identified the damage to Canada's reputation abroad as representing a significant problem for Canada (Plamondon 2009, 331). The easing of Cold War tensions and the encouraging tone of Gorbachev's Murmansk Speech in 1987 led the Mulroney government to concentrate on the Arctic as a region where Canada could perhaps gain some influence in the world. Up until this time, the Arctic region had been closed off to all but the two superpowers. Essentially, the Cold War ensured that the Arctic region would be a no-man's land where military security for the two superpowers was the only form of security that was important. At the end of the Cold War however, political space began to open up to allow the 'lesser' Arctic states to play a much more significant role in the region and for these states to be able to gradually introduce other conceptions of security. Mulroney took advantage of these new possibilities for Canada and ensured that Canada would be an enthusiastic participant in the creation of this new region.

When the Liberals came to power in 1993, they inherited the trappings of a new international organization, the Arctic Council, and they saw an opportunity to use the Council to pursue a very traditional liberal internationalist set of policies. The Liberals believe that individual freedoms are of fundamental importance and that Canada must attempt to promote these values abroad. The Arctic Council presented the perfect opportunity to pursue these traditional liberal ideals.

The Harper Conservatives represent a very different type of conservative government for Canada. There are many differences between the Harper and Mulroney Conservatives, in particular the Harper Conservatives' belief in the need for a strong military force and their worldview, which assumes a fundamental disagreement between states (Martin 2010, 3). The most significant difference is in the Harper Conservatives' main objective, which is "to break the brand" of the Liberal Party in Canada (Martin 2010, 6). However, the desire to find new ways of developing policy cannot always be reconciled with the options that are available to the state. Despite the different goals of the Harper Conservatives, liberal internationalism remains, for the moment, the only way to have influence in the world. In the case of the Arctic, this seems to mean a slightly different focus through the fostering of the A5 format but still indicates a reliance on diplomacy and international organizations in order to gain influence in the Arctic region.

Adapting liberal internationalism in this way, to make room for different and competing party ideologies, allows for the application of this theory to the development of Canadian Arctic foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. Throughout three distinct periods of government since the end of the Cold War, diplomacy and the use of international organizations continues to be the most effective way of gaining influence in the Arctic region. While in general the goals have remained the same within each of these three period, each government has different approaches and seeks different end results. Sovereignty, economic

development, social development, and the environment have been the four essential goals throughout the three periods of government. A modified liberal internationalism is required to explain how party ideology is able to direct the approach and the desired outcome of Arctic foreign policy in Canada.

## **3. THE ARCTIC COUNCIL**

### **3.1 The Arctic during the Cold War**

By the end of the Second World War, the Arctic region was becoming increasingly important geopolitically. The development of air power during the war and the resulting use of Arctic airspace gave the Arctic region new strategic significance (Miller 1992, 211). The threat of long-range bombers making use of the most obvious and direct air routes made air defence necessary (Miller 1992, 211). The invention of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) made early warning absolutely necessary as deterrence was the only available defence (Skogan 1992, 253).

The development of nuclear submarines necessitated the construction of new naval bases by the USSR (Skogan 1992, 254). Effectively this meant the construction of new naval bases in the Arctic as the USSR had very limited access to the high seas due to their geography (Østreng 1992, 29). In the atmosphere of the Cold War, the possibility of submarines cruising under the ice, undetected, in turn necessitated the construction of naval bases by NATO countries throughout the rest of the Arctic (Skogan 1992, 254; Østreng 1992, 27-28).

Østreng argues that the relationship between three factors — the East-West conflict, the development of new military technology, and the geostrategic significance of the region — led to the militarization of the Arctic (Østreng 1992, 27). While the East-West conflict and technological development were necessary preconditions, Østreng argues that geography was the most important factor in the militarization of the region (Østreng 1992, 27). He argues that geography ensured that the mounting tension between the two superpowers would play out in the Arctic (Østreng 1992, 28-29). The fact that both the US and the USSR essentially shared a common border in the Arctic meant that the most direct bomber route was over the pole, and similarly ICBMs which use great circle routes would also be sent over the North Pole (Østreng 1992, 27-28). Furthermore, the USSR sought to be a naval power, and this required that the Soviets access the high seas through narrow straits in the Arctic region (Østreng 1992, 29).

During the same period in Canada, the US and USSR's large-scale investment in infrastructure in the Arctic presented another option. The Government of Canada preferred a 'scorched ice' approach whereby as little infrastructure as possible was built in the Arctic (Coates et al. 2008, 66). The Government of Canada believed that there was little purpose in building infrastructure in the North as it would be impossible to properly defend and would therefore lie waiting for enemy occupation (Coates et al. 2008, 66). Far better to simply leave the Canadian North as it was and allow the geographic and climatic realities to defend the

region as they had more or less successfully done to date (Coates et al. 2008, 66).

Skogan reminds us that an interesting feature of the militarization of the Arctic after the Second World War is that it did not occur as a result of territorial disputes in the area (Skogan 1992, 251). Instead improved military technology allowed for external conflicts to be brought to the region (Skogan 1992, 251). Furthermore, as Coates et al. illustrate, the militarization of the Arctic occurred disproportionately across the Arctic states. This feature is important to keep in mind as the large-scale development, or lack of development, of infrastructure in the Arctic occurred in spite of the local populations and not because of them (Skogan 1992, 251-252).

### **3.2 The Murmansk initiative**

Towards the end of the Cold War, the USSR in particular and the other Arctic states generally, were becoming more and more interested in cooperation (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 10-11). Already in the 1970s the USSR had been actively working on developing cooperative Arctic policies (Issraelian 1992, 269). On October 1, 1987, Mikhail Gorbachev delivered a speech in Murmansk on the highly militarized Kola Peninsula indicating the Soviet Union's desire to work towards cooperation and demilitarization in the Arctic region. This speech has been called a pivotal moment in the history of the Arctic (Atland 2008, 305;

Issraelian 1992, 276; Young and Cherkasov 1992, 11). It marked the beginning of the concept of cooperation between and among the Arctic states.

In the speech, Gorbachev outlined six proposals that addressed significant security issues in the Arctic and called on the other Arctic states to work together to find cooperative solutions to these issues (Gorbachev 1987). While some of the proposals dealt with military security issues, the emphasis was placed on the Soviet desire to cooperate in other, non-traditional areas of security. Only two of the six proposals dealt specifically with issues of military security. These two proposals, creating a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) and restricting naval activity in Northern Europe, were not only discussed in greater detail than the other, non-military issues, but Gorbachev also went to some length to convince listeners of the USSR's demonstrable good intent in these areas (Gorbachev 1987).

The Murmansk initiative, as the new Soviet policy presented in this speech has come to be called, was the result of a comprehensive review of the Arctic region in the 1980s and of the region's role in the world (Issraelian 1992, 269). Prior to the Murmansk initiative, military security had been the most important form of security in the Arctic while all other forms of security were downplayed (Atland 2008, 290). The initiative represented a new way of thinking about security in the Arctic that was political rather than strategic, and it emphasized cooperation rather than division (Issraelian 1992, 270). As Griffiths explains, the USSR was



now conceiving of security in the Arctic on two planes, political as well as technical (Griffiths 1992, 5). What is most remarkable about the new direction of Soviet Arctic foreign policy as illustrated in the Murmansk speech is that civil cooperation in areas such as the environment was not being viewed strictly as a confidence building measure; rather the USSR had fundamentally changed its definition of security (Griffiths 1992, 5). Far from being a means to an end, civil cooperation in the Arctic was seen as important in and of itself (Griffiths 1992, 5).

Atland notes that at the time Western scholars were critical of the Murmansk initiative and very quick to conclude that it had failed to influence the Arctic states to deal with security issues in the Arctic (Atland 2008, 290). However, Atland suggests that this viewpoint is short-sighted and that the Murmansk initiative was successful in two, perhaps subtle, ways (Atland 2008, 305-306). First, the USSR was successful in dividing military and non-military issues and moving non-military issues out of the umbrella of national security and back into “normal politics” (Atland 2008, 305). And second, while the Murmansk initiative may have failed to directly cause the Arctic states to cooperate on issues of military security, Atland argues that it has led to the gradual growth of cooperation in the Arctic (Atland 2008, 306).

Atland’s assessment of the success of the Murmansk initiative can be taken a step further. Whether or not Gorbachev actually hoped to inspire the Arctic states

to cooperate in the areas of military security that he proposed in the Murmansk speech, it was absolutely essential that he make the proposal. Although the Arctic states may have rejected the USSR's willingness to cooperate on issues of military security in 1987, by specifically proposing that this was something that ought to be considered, Gorbachev was setting the stage for the gradual growth of cooperation in the Arctic. Although the other Arctic states might not have been prepared to negotiate matters of military security together at the time, they were now aware that this was a potential direction for the future.

### **3.3 The Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy**

The possibilities for Arctic cooperation created by the Murmansk initiative led Finland to invite the Arctic states to meet to discuss cooperation on environmental issues and other challenges facing the Arctic region. In 1989, representatives from the eight Arctic states with territory north of the Arctic Circle met in Rovaniemi, Finland. This and subsequent meetings in Yellowknife, Canada, and Kiruna, Sweden, would lay the foundation for the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) (Sale and Potapov 2010, 139). The AEPS was officially adopted at a meeting in Rovaniemi in 1991.

The AEPS was groundbreaking in its attempt to foster and encourage the development of Arctic cooperation. It also went a step further by creating a structure for Arctic cooperation and by getting the Arctic states to commit to this

structure (Bloom 1999, 712-713). However, the AEPS had three important limitations, as identified by Sale and Potapov (Sale and Potapov 2010, 140). First, while the AEPS was ostensibly concerned with the protection of the Arctic environment, the Strategy did not actually provide a definition of what is 'Arctic' (Sale and Potapov 2010, 140). Second, the Strategy did not set out any rights and obligations for the states that sign on to the Strategy as is customary in international treaties (Sale and Potapov 2010, 140). And lastly, the AEPS did not require that signatories ratify the agreement, a significant weakness in that the Arctic states were not legally bound by the Strategy (Sale and Potapov 2010, 140).

These weaknesses as well as the speed with which the AEPS was developed and the narrow focus on environmental issues have led some scholars to question Finland's reasons for suggesting the AEPS (Keskitalo 2004, 56). It has been speculated that Finland saw the opportunities created by the Murmansk initiative as a way to carve out a foreign policy niche for Finland (Keskitalo 2004, 56). At the end of the Cold War, Finland wanted to develop new and better relationships with the West but not at the expense of angering the East (Keskitalo 2004, 59). According to Keskitalo, "the possibilities of foreign policy development opened up by Gorbachev's Murmansk Speech were thus exploited: not only in the AEPS but to define Finland as a state relevant to larger powers and, perhaps, less generally "northern" than northern *European*, with a concomitant focus on the EU" (Keskitalo 2004, 61).

Keskitalo argues that these facts had some important effects on the development of the AEPS. In particular, she argues that because Finland was more concerned with developing policy, the Arctic was simply seen as one direction where there was potential to develop new foreign policy (Keskitalo 2004, 61). Because of this, it was possible for the design and structure of the AEPS to be largely developed by Canada and that state's "longstanding interest in the Arctic" (Keskitalo 2004, 62). As a result, although the AEPS was initially a Finnish suggestion, the final Strategy actually displays Canadian opinions (Keskitalo 2004, 62). According to Keskitalo, "The AEPS is therefore more of a compromise between the Finnish environment-centred approach and Canadian understandings of 'the Arctic' than the result of a coherent and systematic design" (Keskitalo 2004, 64). It is for this reason, argues Keskitalo, that the Arctic states were unable to agree to the terms that would make the AEPS a legally binding agreement rather than a voluntary strategy (Keskitalo 2004, 64-65).

However, whatever Finland's objectives in developing the AEPS, there are two important facets of Finland's initiative that should be noted. First, Finland was only able to suggest the AEPS in light of the new USSR foreign policy outlined in the Murmansk initiative (Keskitalo 2004, 4). Because of this, the Murmansk initiative can rightly be seen as a turning point in Arctic international relations. Second, the AEPS was the first formal multi-state agreement to cooperate in the Arctic following the Cold War. The Arctic Council cooperation grew out of and as

a result of the AEPS, and therefore its development, even if imperfect and too narrow in scope, is significant for Arctic international relations today.

### **3.4 Expanding Arctic cooperation**

As early as 1970, the idea of an Arctic intergovernmental body had been suggested in Canada (Keskitalo 2004, 66). Rather than originating with the Government, this concept was developed by a collective of academics, indigenous groups and other domestic Arctic stakeholders (Keskitalo 2004, 68-69). Two reports, written in 1987 and in early 1990, encouraged the development of Arctic foreign policy and suggested that the establishment of an Arctic intergovernmental organization could be an important component of a new Canadian Arctic foreign policy (Nord 2006, 297). The Government of Canada was eventually swayed and accepted the concept of an Arctic Council in 1990 (Keskitalo 2004, 67). On November 20, 1990, then Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark announced his government's intention to work to create an Arctic Council (Nord 2006, 298).

The Government of Canada chose the first meeting of the AEPS in Rovaniemi, Finland in June 1991 as the venue to announce Canada's proposal to create an Arctic Council. However, before negotiations could be initiated to discuss the Arctic Council proposal, the Government of Canada would have to work on the details of the proposal (Nord 2006, 299). Specifically, it was necessary to develop

the goals as well as to discuss the potential structure and function of the Arctic Council (Nord 2006, 299). The Government of Canada identified four goals for the Arctic Council proposal: “Expanding beneficial contact between the various peoples of the Circumpolar North; Improving environmental protection for the fragile ecosystems of the North; Reducing the overall military presence in the region, and; Securing broad recognition of the economic, political, and social rights of the aboriginal peoples of the area” (Nord 2006, 299).

However, Nord notes that in developing the goals of the Arctic Council proposal, the Government of Canada did not adequately take into consideration the attitudes, concerns, and desires of the other Arctic states (Nord 2006, 299). As a result, conflicting viewpoints would lead to a lengthy negotiation process before the Arctic Council finally came into being in 1996.

Late in 1991, after the development of the goals of the Arctic Council, Canada began to work to secure support for the Arctic Council proposal from the other seven Arctic states (Nord 2006, 300). Canada received early indications of support, notably from Russia in early 1992 and from the Nordic states in the spring of 1992 (Nord 2006, 300).<sup>4</sup> However, the Nordic states were reluctant to commit to joining a new multilateral Arctic institution that did not have the full support of the former Cold War superpowers, the US and Russia (Nord 2006, 300). While the US did not immediately dismiss the concept of an Arctic Council,

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<sup>4</sup> The Nordic states are Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland.

it had serious concerns about the existing Canadian proposal and indicated that US participation in the Arctic Council depended on the Canadian proposal being adjusted to meet the requirements of the US (Nord 2006, 301). The Government of Canada would eventually create a new ambassadorial position to aid in the Arctic Council negotiation process and in 1994 appointed Inuk leader Mary Simon as the first Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs (Nord 2006, 304).

The Arctic Council would develop alongside the AEPS and would eventually absorb the AEPS and expand the Strategy into other, non-environmental policy areas (Bloom 1999, 714 & Keskitalo 2004, 53). However, the Arctic Council, as established in 1996, was quite different from the original Canadian proposal. The changes that were necessary to ensure US participation had the effect of removing or altering many of the groundbreaking features of the original proposal and reverting back to many traditional elements of multilateral cooperation (Nord 2006, 307). As a result, the Arctic Council ended up looking a lot like the AEPS in terms of the scope of work of the organization (Koivurova 2010, 147). However, the Arctic Council did improve the participation of indigenous peoples (Koivurova 2010, 247).

### **3.5 Creating the Arctic Council**

In September 1996, representatives from the eight Arctic states met in Ottawa, Canada, to establish the Arctic Council. They were joined by representatives from

the Saami Council, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON), the first Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council.<sup>5</sup> The Council was formed as “a high level forum 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 issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic” (Arctic Council 1996, 1).

The Council has three categories of membership: the Member State category includes the eight sovereign states that make up the Arctic region; the Permanent Participant category is comprised of six Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations (IPOs) that represent indigenous Arctic peoples around the world; and the “Observer” category is reserved for non-Arctic states, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations that have an interest in or expertise in the Arctic.

The Arctic Council Member States are Canada, Denmark (Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and the United

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<sup>5</sup> In 1996 when the Ottawa Declaration was signed, the Inuit Circumpolar Council was known as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North was known as the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the Far North, Siberia, the Far East of the Russian Federation. This thesis refers to these organizations by their current names throughout. Also, there are multiple variations of the spelling of “Saami.” This thesis uses the Arctic Council spelling of “Saami” throughout.



States. These eight sovereign states possess territory that is above the Arctic Circle.<sup>6</sup>

The Permanent Participant category is unique to the Arctic Council. There are currently six Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPOs) that have achieved Permanent Participant status at the Arctic Council. The Ottawa Declaration sets out the criteria for IPOs seeking Permanent Participant status, and the Member States judge whether an IPO has met the criteria and can be admitted to the Council as a Permanent Participant (Arctic Council 1996, 2). Any IPO that has "majority Arctic indigenous constituency" and represents either "a single indigenous people resident in more than one Arctic state" or "more than one Arctic indigenous people resident in a single Arctic State" is eligible to be admitted to the Arctic Council as a Permanent Participant (Arctic Council 1996, 2). The Ottawa Declaration also explicitly states that "the number of Permanent Participants should at any time be less than the number of members" (Arctic Council 1996, 2).

Permanent Participants are supported by the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS), which provides information and resources to the IPOs to ensure their full participation in Arctic Council activities. The IPS was created by Denmark to provide assistance to IPOs involved with the AEPS. This

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<sup>6</sup> The Arctic Circle is a line of latitude approximately 66 north of the Equator. The area to the north of this line of latitude is referred to as the 'Arctic.'

organization was officially carried over into the Arctic Council from the outset (Arctic Council 1996, 2).

The existence of the Permanent Participant category and the accompanying Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat means that the Arctic Council is not only a forum for political decision-makers but also for the people directly affected by such decisions. This is a unique category of membership in intergovernmental organizations (Bloom 1999, 716). Because of this, the Arctic Council has been lauded as a new model upon which other intergovernmental organizations would be wise to fashion themselves (Young 2009, 48). The Permanent Participant category gives IPOs "the right to participate in all meetings and activities of the Council, and their representatives sit alongside Ministers and SAOs" (Bloom 1999, 716). This is a significant improvement over the AEPS cooperation, notes Koivurova (Koivurova 2010, 147). In the AEPS, IPOs were observers along with other non-Arctic states and organizations (Koivurova 2010, 148). The Permanent Participant category ensures that IPOs must be consulted before any Council decisions are made, and this makes it possible for the Council to keep focus "on the needs and views of the indigenous Arctic residents" (Koivurova 2010, 148 and Bloom 1999, 716). In particular, the Permanent Participant category can provide opportunities for IPOs and Member States to discuss sensitive issues in an open, international forum (Bloom 1999, 717). Removing sensitive issues from the domestic arena and elevating them to the status of international issues can

serve to make the lines of communication much more open between stakeholders.

The structure of the Arctic Council remains very similar to the structure of the AEPS although the Council structure was formalized in the Rules of Procedure adopted at the Iqaluit Ministerial Meeting in 1998 (Koivurova 2010, 147). The work of the Council is directed by Arctic Ministers and overseen by Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) (Arctic Council 1998b, 5). Arctic Ministers are representatives from the governments of the eight Arctic states. They are typically Ministers with Foreign Affairs portfolios or other portfolios that would cause them to be familiar with the Arctic and with their state's Arctic policy. Senior Arctic Officials are designated by the Arctic state and they carry on the work of the Arctic Council in between Ministerial meetings. Permanent Participants also designate a representative to attend SAO meetings and carry out the work of the Arctic Council (Arctic Council 1998b, 5).

The Arctic Council holds meetings at the Ministerial level at least biennially and meetings of Senior Arctic Officials at least twice per year (Arctic Council 1998b, 4-5). Decisions of the Council are made by consensus, and a quorum consists of six of the eight Arctic states (Arctic Council 1998b, 3). Following each Ministerial meeting, a Declaration, named after the city where the Ministerial meeting was held, is signed by the Arctic Ministers. At the conclusion of each Ministerial meeting, the Secretariat rotates from one Arctic state to another (Arctic Council

1998b, 4). However, at the most recent Ministerial meeting, held in Nuuk, Greenland in May 2011, the Arctic Ministers agreed to establish and support a permanent secretariat in Tromsø, Norway (Arctic Council 2011a, 2).

The Council adopted the working group format of the AEPS. Working Groups form the basis of the Arctic Council and are created in order to “prepare and carry out programs and projects” as determined by the Council and under the guidance of Senior Arctic Officials (Arctic Council 1998b, 6). The four Working Groups that existed under the AEPS — the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF), the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME), the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR), and the Arctic Monitoring Assessment Programme (AMAP) — were moved under the Arctic Council framework. The Council added a fifth Working Group, the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) at the Iqaluit Ministerial Meeting in 1998 and a sixth Working Group, the Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP), was created at the Salekhard Ministerial Meeting in 2006 (Arctic Council 1998a, 2 and Arctic Council 2006, 6). With the establishment of the SDWG, the Council sought to begin to expand Arctic cooperation beyond the limited environmental scope of the original AEPS Working Groups.

As noted previously, in order to ensure US participation, the original Arctic Council proposal had to be significantly modified. One important change was that the Council is specifically restricted from discussing “matters related to military

security” (Arctic Council 1996, 2). This severely limited the Council’s reach, particularly in the early days of the Council, and made it very difficult for the Council to grow beyond the original scope of the AEPS. Koivurova notes that the AEPS already had a task force to research and discuss issues of sustainable development (Koivurova 2010, 147). Accordingly, the addition of the SDWG to the Arctic Council was not a significant departure from the original scope of the AEPS (Koivurova 2010, 147).

### **3.6 The first round (1996 to 2013)**

Canada acted as the first Host Country of the Arctic Council from 1996 to 1998. During this time Canada worked hard to build the foundation of the Council (Nord 2006, 307). Canada was the principal architect of the Rules of Procedure that were adopted by the Council at the Iqaluit Ministerial Meeting in 1998 (Nord 2006, 307). Also, Canada took responsibility for bringing the four original AEPS Working Groups, AMAP, CAFF, EPPR, and PAME into the Arctic Council (Nord 2006, 307).

During this period, the Member States also worked to encourage more IPOs to participate in the Arctic Council (Nord 2006, 307). The Aleut International Association (AIA) was approved as a Permanent Participant at the Iqaluit Ministerial Meeting in 1998 (Arctic Council 1998a, 1). The 1998 Iqaluit Declaration also directed Senior Arctic Officials to continue to review and

recommend applications for Permanent Participant status (Arctic Council 1998a, 1). The Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC) and the Gwich'in Council International (GCI) were both approved as Permanent Participants at the Barrow Ministerial Meeting in 2000 (Arctic Council 2000, 6). There are now six Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council representing numerous IPOs across the Arctic region. This ensures that the Council will be able to incorporate the perspectives and knowledge of IPOs into Council decisions (Lackenbauer 2009, 48). The inclusion of the Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council is also having positive effects beyond the scope of the Arctic Council (Young 2009, 79). As Young notes, "the council has played a high profile role in amplifying the voice of the Arctic in a variety of global settings" (Young 2009, 79).

However, after the initial work involved in negotiating the Ottawa Declaration and subsequently establishing the Arctic Council's rules, procedures, and Working Groups, the Council was allowed to stagnate. The 2002 Inari Declaration, 2004 Reykjavik Declaration, and the 2006 Salekhard Declaration, are evidence of the fact that in the 2000 to 2006 period the Arctic Council concentrated mainly on research and reporting within the working groups (Arctic Council 2002, Arctic Council 2004, and Arctic Council 2006). This was important and scientifically useful work and it contributed to the development of Arctic policy (Young 2009, 79). However, it resulted in the Council being criticized as strictly a discussion forum that was unable to translate discussion into concrete policies within the Council itself (Koivurova 2010, 148). This in turn has led to questioning of the

Arctic Council's ability to provide solutions to arising issues of Arctic governance (Potts and Schofield 2008, 172).

The last three Host Countries in this first 'round' of Arctic Council chairmanship are Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. Together, these three Scandinavian states have created a joint chairmanship program. An important element of this program was the selection of Tromsø, Norway as the site of the Arctic Council Secretariat for the 7-year duration of the Scandinavian chairmanship.<sup>7</sup> The success of this initiative led to the decision at the Nuuk Ministerial Meeting in 2011 to establish a permanent Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø (Arctic Council 2011b). This will allow the Council to develop an institutional memory which will be increasingly valuable as the chairmanship begins its second sixteen-year rotation in the spring of 2013.

In May 2011, the members of the Arctic Council signed a legally binding agreement on search and rescue activities in the Arctic. The Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic was the first legally binding agreement to be negotiated through the Arctic Council (Arctic Council 2011a). This agreement marked the beginning of a greater role for the Arctic Council. The Council is currently working on recommendations for oil and gas exploration standards (Arctic Council 2011b, 4). This could lead to

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<sup>7</sup> From 1996 to 2006 the Arctic Council Ministerial Meetings were held in the fall. However, during the Norwegian Chairmanship it was determined that it would be more convenient for the Council to hold Ministerial Meetings in the spring. As a result, the Norwegian Chairmanship, which would normally have ended in the fall of 2008, was extended to the spring of 2009.

negotiations for an agreement on oil and gas exploration standards by the Arctic states in the future.

On this very encouraging note, the Arctic Council chairmanship rotated to Sweden in the spring of 2011. Sweden will chair the Council until the spring of 2013, at which point the first full chairmanship rotation will be complete. In less than six months after assuming the chairmanship, Sweden has significantly improved how the Council communicates with the public. They have directed the creation of a new and improved organization website that provides access to many of the Council's important documents. The website is updated frequently with information about what the Council is currently working on. This is in stark contrast to the early days of the Council where news on the work of the Council was only communicated in official Declarations (Bloom 1999, 721). This shows that the Council is evolving from the informal, purely consensus-based organization, to a more established organization with a more empowered Secretariat.

### **3.7 The second round (2013 to 2029)**

The Arctic Council faces several challenges in the next sixteen years. As the first to Chair the second chairmanship round in 2013, Canada will need to address many of these challenges in the near future. Of growing importance is the need to establish criteria for admitting observers to the Arctic Council. Griffiths



recommends that the Arctic Council allow more observers and create a 'third tier' to allow observer states to be able to have a voice at Council meetings (Griffiths 2009, 16-17). The challenge will be to ensure that the Permanent Participants do not lose their voice in an enlarged Council.

Of course Permanent Participants are concerned about enlargement for this very reason. While they currently enjoy a unique status within the Arctic Council, they view enlargement as a danger to them as more voices, and in particular more non-Arctic voices, have the potential to undermine the importance and the effectiveness of the Permanent Participant category (CBC 2012). However, there is also a concern that failing to admit more non-Arctic observers to the Council will have a detrimental effect on the Council itself when rejected would-be observers go elsewhere to be heard, thereby questioning the role of the Arctic Council as the primary forum for discussing Arctic issues (CBC 2012). As Shadian warns, "the Arctic players need to set the rules together or face the prospect of being on the sidelines of history as their political future and well-being is decided for them" (Shadian 2009, 75).

The Arctic Council was created in a spirit of collaborating for the greater good of the Arctic region, and states agreed to "avoid giving prominence to narrow national priorities" (Nord 2010, 827). Canada in particular must evaluate its position on the approval of new observers, as it blocked the EUs bid for Arctic Council membership over disagreement on EU legislation banning trade in seal

fur (CBC 2012). In the coming months Canada will need to find the balance between protecting national interests and the interests of non-Arctic stakeholders.

It will also be crucial to address the difficulties that exist with the Arctic Council's current voluntary contribution structure (Bloom 1999, 719). Griffiths argues that enlargement of the Arctic Council through the approval of new observers would be a particularly useful way of developing an 'Arctic Fund' to support the work of the Council (Griffiths 2009, 17). Griffiths points out that this 'Arctic Fund' could also be used to support the work of the Permanent Participants, thereby ensuring that their status is not diminished as a result of the inclusion of more observers (Griffiths 2009, 17).

## 4. CONSERVATIVES 1987 TO 1993

Although the Conservatives were elected in 1984 and the Cold War did not end until the collapse of the USSR in 1991, I have nonetheless chosen to begin this chapter on Arctic foreign policy in the post-Cold War period in 1987. For it was in 1987 that Mikhail Gorbachev delivered his speech at Murmansk calling for increased cooperation in the Arctic. This was the pivotal moment that truly marks the beginning of Arctic cooperation in the post-Cold War period (Nord 2006, 296).

### 4.1 Canadian Arctic policy at the end of the Cold War

At the time Canada was in the midst of dealing with the aftermath of the second sovereignty crisis in the Northwest Passage. In 1985 the US Coast Guard vessel *Polar Sea* transited the passage without obtaining Canada's permission to do so. The voyage of the *Polar Sea* exposed the fact that the Government of Canada still had no clear foreign policy position on the Arctic, despite having been similarly challenged in 1968 when the *Manhattan*, a US reinforced tanker investigating the feasibility of using the Northwest Passage as a shipping route, transited the passage twice with the assistance of both US and Canadian icebreakers.

After the *Manhattan* voyages, the Government of Canada introduced the *Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act*, which extended Canada's 'exclusive economic

zone' (EEZ) and ensured that any ships planning on transiting the passage would be required to conform with Canadian standards and regulations. When the *Polar Sea* transited the Northwest Passage without permission in 1985, it became clear to the Canadian public what academics had known for decades, that the Government of Canada did not have a clearly articulated foreign policy position regarding the Arctic (Huebert 2001, 85). Canadians were outraged and demanded that the Government of Canada do something to protect Canadian Arctic sovereignty (Huebert 2001, 85). In the end, the Government of Canada negotiated a very friendly agreement with the United States in which the two states essentially agreed to disagree on their respective positions on the status of the Northwest Passage.

Gorbachev's speech came at an opportune time for the Government of Canada as it was finalizing the Agreement on Arctic Cooperation with the US and at the same time searching for a lasting solution to its Arctic foreign policy. During the Cold War, Canada was somewhat awkwardly stuck between the US and the USSR. Any action that Canada might have wanted to take in the Arctic was tempered by the fact that this space was shared with two hostile superpowers. In 1985 this meant that the Mulroney government was restricted in the types of Arctic policies that it could pursue. This is reflected in the six policies that eventually formed the Mulroney government's northern policy.

In the fall of 1985, after the *Polar Sea* incident, the Mulroney government, eager to show Canadians that some concrete Arctic policies did in fact exist, outlined six Arctic policies (Huebert 2001, 86). Huebert argues that these six policies, although seemingly “an ad hoc combination of old and new” would form the basis of the Mulroney government’s Arctic policy (Huebert 2001, 94).

On September 10, 1985, Secretary of External Affairs Joe Clark announced his government’s plan for the Arctic. This plan included six policies, five of which were unilateral in their implementation, and all could be pursued by Canada without disrupting the fragile geopolitical balance in the Arctic:

The immediate adoption of an order-in-council establishing straight baselines around the Arctic archipelago as of 1 January 1986; a Canadian Laws Offshore Application Act; talks with the United States on cooperation in Arctic waters, “on the basis of full respect for Canadian sovereignty”; an increase of surveillance over-flights of Arctic waters by Canadian Forces aircraft; increased Canadian naval activity in the eastern Arctic in 1986; the withdrawal of the 1970s reservation to Canada’s acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ; and construction of a large icebreaker capable of polar operations (Huebert 2001, 86).

Only one, “talks with the United States on cooperation in Arctic waters” which led to the 1988 Agreement on Arctic Cooperation, sought to engage another Arctic state in the creation of Canadian Arctic policy.

No other Arctic states were likely to be concerned about Canada’s plans to build a new class of icebreaker to replace the aging Canadian fleet, nor were they worried about increased air and naval surveillance in the Canadian Arctic. While establishing straight baselines, passing legislation to ensure that Canadian laws

would apply and be enforceable off of the Arctic shore, and removing a prior reservation to the International Court of Justice certainly had international implications, these were not policies that challenged the existing status quo. The Mulroney government's plans to engage in talks with the US to discuss Arctic cooperation was the only Arctic policy that sought in particular to cooperate with another Arctic state.

The Soviet desire to establish common grounds for cooperation in the Arctic, as articulated by Gorbachev in October 1987, put Canada in a unique position to be able to create a new role for itself in the Arctic. This relaxation in the Arctic gave Canada the opportunity to pursue Arctic cooperation with other Arctic states. Suddenly Canada was able to pursue policy options that had previously been unavailable. Furthermore, Canada and the Nordic states, as smaller states, were uniquely placed to be able to negotiate the terms of Arctic cooperation between the two declining superpowers (Young 1992, 188).

#### **4.2 New opportunities for influence through cooperation**

However, forging a new path between suspicious superpowers was not a simple task. While the Murmansk speech opened up the possibility of cooperation in the Arctic, it also led to the creation of two different and competing approaches to Arctic cooperation. Young and Cherkasov call these the 'Western' and 'Soviet' approaches to Arctic cooperation (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22). They explain

that the 'Western' approach seeks to separate Arctic issues into sensitive and non-sensitive issues (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22). This allows states to cooperate on non-sensitive issues and over time to build the confidence and trust necessary for states to begin to tackle cooperation on sensitive issues as well (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22). By contrast the 'Soviet' approach considered Arctic issues to be thoroughly connected (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22). It was only by tackling the Arctic as a whole that states could begin to cooperate in ways that would be beneficial to the Arctic (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22).

In 1987 the Arctic was viewed on the one hand as a military theatre and on the other hand as a zone of potential cooperation (Young 1992, 175). As a result of these competing roles for the Arctic region and of the two competing approaches to Arctic cooperation, the US and the USSR remained skeptical about the possibilities for cooperation in the Arctic (Young 1992, 188). Young and Cherkasov argue that to transcend this skepticism and enable Arctic cooperation to develop, the role of 'political entrepreneurs' became increasingly important as they would be the people to find ways to get all Arctic states to agree to the terms of cooperation (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22).

During the Cold War the 'lesser' Arctic states of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden had little power in the Arctic and as a result, became the best positioned to lead the discussion on Arctic cooperation (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22). In 1987, any of these states would have been able to

pursue traditional “middle power” diplomacy to be able to broker agreements between the US and USSR.

For Canada, the role of the “middle power” came quite naturally and, according to Keskiitalo, “the motivation for Arctic cooperation was well established: Arctic ‘northernness’ had long been a factor whereby [Canada] had defined itself”(Keskiitalo 2004, 4). Furthermore, as Young argues, Canada was “in need of a coherent Arctic role to complement its northern political consciousness and to allow the country to transcend its awkward and often embarrassing relationship with the US in the region” (Young 1992, 203-204). In light of the 1985 *Polar Sea* incident, Canada found in Arctic cooperation a way to define a new and greater role for itself in the Arctic region.

#### **4.3 Strengthening bilateral ties**

In 1987, Arctic states also struggled with choosing between two conflicting perspectives on the Arctic. The Arctic states, as well as all other Arctic stakeholders, were able to choose either to view the Arctic as a distinctive region or to consider the Arctic as simply an extension of each state’s territory (Young 1992, 236). The Government of Canada in general favoured considering the Arctic as a distinct region as this would allow Canada to assert sovereignty over the north and more importantly, the Northwest Passage (Young 1992, 236-237). But this created a problem because the Government of Canada also wanted to



avoid treating the Arctic as distinct from other areas of the globe when it came to issues of military security (Canada 1992b, 49).

It is very clear that the Mulroney government preferred the 'Western' approach to Arctic cooperation. This Government was quite reluctant to pursue cooperation in military issues in the Arctic (Canada 1992b, 49-50). However, in keeping with the 'Western' approach, the Mulroney government believed that it was possible to cooperate in the Arctic in other areas (Canada 1992b, 50).

Accordingly, the Government of Canada started to work to negotiate agreements for Arctic cooperation with other states. Notably, this led to the signing of the Agreement on Arctic Cooperation with the US in 1988 and the Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Cooperation in the Arctic and the North in 1989 (Canada 1989). The 1988 agreement with the US was negotiated in reaction to the 1985 *Polar Sea* voyage through the Northwest Passage. Canada and the US agreed that this agreement would not affect either state's claims to Arctic waters; however, the US agreed to notify Canada before transiting the Northwest Passage (McRae 2003, 432). The 1989 agreement with the USSR establishes several areas in which the two states agreed to cooperate and sets out the terms under which cooperation will occur (Canada 1989).

At the end of the Cold War, Canada was what Young and Cherkasov describe as a 'lesser' power in the Arctic region (Young and Cherkasov 1992, 22). As a result, the only bilateral agreements that mattered at the time were agreements between Canada and the two Cold War superpowers, the US and the USSR. If Canada was going to attempt to carve out a new role for itself in the Arctic, it was essential to negotiate these two agreements early on. Although the tension of the Cold War was diminishing, the mindset of the Cold War persisted. In order to begin to overcome that mindset, it was necessary to demonstrate an ability to cooperate with both opposing superpowers. Furthermore, negotiating these two bilateral agreements was necessary as a precursor to establishing a new multilateral governance institution. In the late 1980s the Government of Canada grappled with two competing visions of the Arctic. On the one hand, the Government of Canada favoured considering the Arctic as a distinct region and the multilateral cooperation that would come from that conception. On the other hand, the Government of Canada was concerned with treating issues of military security in the Arctic as separate issues and accordingly, negotiating these two bilateral agreements laid a foundation on which to negotiate further multilateral cooperation in the Arctic without dealing with issues of military security.

#### **4.4 Participation in Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy**

Negotiating these two bilateral agreements was essentially a preliminary step necessary to achieve Canada's greater aspirations in creating a new role for itself in the Arctic region. The Government of Canada was interested in building circumpolar cooperation, and this would be done by negotiating multilateral arrangements between all the Arctic states (Nord 2006, 296). The Finnish suggestion for the establishment of an Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) provided the earliest opportunity for Canada to begin to work towards establishing Arctic cooperation.

While the AEPS was a Finnish initiative, the Government of Canada became quite active in negotiating the construction of this early Arctic cooperation (Keskitalo 2004, 62-64). In fact many scholars credit Canada with playing a key role in the creation of the AEPS (Keskitalo 2004). Keskitalo notes that the shape of the AEPS was particularly influenced by Canadian negotiators (Keskitalo 2004, 160). She argues that the emphasis on the importance of Indigenous peoples' as participants, the incorporation of a sustainable development element, and the inclusion of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group can all be directly attributed to Canadian involvement in the creation of the AEPS (Keskitalo 2004, 62). As a result of Canada's significant contribution to the development of the AEPS, the AEPS essentially ended up being a compromise between the Finnish and Canadian objectives (Keskitalo 2004, 64). The original

Finnish concept was to create a multilateral forum for discussing issues of importance to the Arctic environment. In contrast, Canada, wanting to expand on this narrow focus, attempted to incorporate other elements that were viewed to be important to Arctic cooperation. Significantly, the Government of Canada pushed for the inclusion of Indigenous peoples' as Arctic stakeholders (Keskitalo 2004, 64).

Keskitalo and others argue that the evidence seems to suggest that Canada used AEPS as 'stepping stone' to creating the Arctic Council (Keskitalo 2004, 159). She argues that the Canadian tendency to view the Arctic as a distinct region coloured Canada's participation in the AEPS and necessitated the push to expand the AEPS away from focusing strictly on environmental issues (Keskitalo 2004, 64). After Canada negotiated agreements with the US and the USSR that established non-military cooperation between Canada and the two Cold War superpowers, Canada was able to pursue the broader goal of establishing a new forum for international Arctic cooperation. While the AEPS was limited in scope, it did present a means for Canada to pursue more extensive non-military cooperation in the Arctic. It comes as no surprise then that the Government of Canada attempted to contribute so much to the creation and development of the AEPS.

The AEPS came into effect with the signing of the Rovaniemi Declaration in June 1991. The Rovaniemi Declaration establishes all four original AEPS working

groups (AMAP, CAFF, EPPR, and PAME) and also mentions the importance of cooperation with Indigenous peoples' groups (Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy 1991). The 1993 Nuuk Declaration expanded the AEPS to include a sustainable development task force (Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy 1993).

#### **4.5 The Arctic Council proposal**

The concept of an Arctic Council, which Nord suggests was casually suggested by then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney while visiting Russia in 1989, would become the vehicle for greater Canadian influence in Arctic foreign policy (Nord 2006, 297). Nord argues that as the Cold War came to an end, three 'strands of interest' converged and influenced the Government of Canada to look for international strategies worthy of pursuit (Nord 2006, 296).

It did so partly as a means to guarantee itself a place in the vanguard of reform-minded states. It also served as a means to place some of its outstanding bilateral problems with the United States — such as the Northwest Passage and acid rain — within an international arena. Canadian interest in supporting circumpolar discussion of native rights and economic development in the Arctic was also linked, in part, to important domestic political agendas within the country (Nord 2006, 296).

As a result of these three 'strands' coming together, Nord argues that the Government of Canada adopted a new approach to Arctic policy (Nord 2006, 296). The end of the Cold War provided the opportunity for the Government of

Canada to take this new approach. It was now possible for 'lesser states' to attempt to influence global Arctic policy.

The development of the Arctic Council proposal in Canada was led by academics, Indigenous peoples' groups, and other Arctic stakeholders many years before the Government of Canada decided to take up the proposal. A multilateral Arctic institution was first proposed by Professor Maxwell Cohen in 1971 (Chaturvedi 1996, 178). In the late 1980s, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA) began to further develop the concept of an Arctic Council and made specific policy recommendations to the Government of Canada (Chaturvedi 1996, 179).<sup>8</sup> After Prime Minister Mulroney's suggestion of a council of Arctic countries, an independent panel was formed to discuss the possibilities of such a council (Chaturvedi 1996, 179).

The recommendations of the Arctic Council Panel were well received by the Government of Canada, which saw in the Arctic Council a chance for Canada to develop a new and unique Arctic foreign policy (Nord 2006, 298). In 1990 and 1991, the Government of Canada, the CIIA, the Arctic Council Panel, and other Arctic stakeholders (in particular the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC)) worked out the details of an Arctic Council proposal (Nord 2006, 298-299).

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<sup>8</sup> The Canadian Institute of International Affairs became the Canadian International Council in 2007.

#### **4.6 Cultivating support for the Arctic Council proposal**

Once the Government of Canada had created a proposal for an Arctic Council it was necessary to build support for the proposal amongst the other Arctic states. As a first step, Canada negotiated a bilateral agreement on Arctic cooperation with Russia. This was essentially the same substance as the 1989 agreement with the USSR but with some important additions. The 1992 agreement specifically mentions the importance of multi-level participation including participation with Indigenous peoples' groups (Government of Canada 1992a). This agreement also allows for cooperation between Canada and Russia in any areas that the two parties agree is necessary, which effectively opened up the possibilities for cooperation between the two states, unlike the restricted list of areas for cooperation in the original 1989 agreement (Canada 1992a). Also in 1992, Canada began to approach the Nordic states. All of the Nordic states agreed with the Arctic Council proposal in principle but they all publicly stated "that their eventual membership in the Arctic Council would be dependent upon securing the full participation of the United States as well as Russia" (Nord 2006, 300).

Accordingly, the Government of Canada began to work to try to promote the Arctic Council proposal to the United States. However, the US was not happy with the proposal as drafted and refused to participate unless certain concessions were made for them (Nord 2006, 302). In particular, the US was

concerned with the inclusion of Indigenous peoples' groups in the Council and the possibility of unlimited cooperation as the US was unwilling to contemplate cooperation on issues of military security. Initially, the US saw no need for an Arctic Council as it believed that a Council would simply duplicate some of the work of the AEPS (Archer and Scrivener 2000, 613). The Mulroney Conservatives were unable to complete the negotiations to establish the Arctic Council before they were voted out of office in the 1993 federal election.

#### **4.7 Summary**

During the Cold War, Canada (as well as other 'lesser' states) was forced to negotiate the narrow space between two superpowers. This necessarily restricted Canada's ability to act and confined policy options. As a result, Canada was unable to be proactive in the development of Arctic foreign policy and instead important policy development was limited to situations that demanded a reaction. The voyages of the *Manhattan* and the *Polar Sea* provide examples of the reactive nature of Canadian Arctic foreign policy during the Cold War.

However, as the Cold War came to an end, Canada was able to take on the role of bridging the gap between the US and the USSR. By negotiating bilateral agreements with both the US and the USSR, Canada was able lead the transition out of the Cold War mindset that viewed the Arctic as a military theatre where cooperation was impossible.



The end of the Cold War also presented Canada with the opportunity to develop a new and unique approach to Arctic foreign policy. Canada was uniquely placed to be able to lead the development of international cooperation in the Arctic. Initially, Canada used the newly developing AEPS to pursue these objectives. However, domestic events converged to make the establishment of an Arctic Council an attractive policy project.

## **5. LIBERALS 1993 TO 2006**

### **5.1 Adopting the Arctic Council proposal**

When the Liberals under Prime Minister Jean Chrétien came to power in 1993, the negotiations to establish an Arctic Council were already well underway. Although a Conservative Party initiative, the Arctic Council fit very well into the newly elected Liberal Party's agenda for Canadian Arctic policy.

The new Liberal Government of Canada was very quick to make the Arctic Council a foreign policy priority (Nord 2006, 303). The concept of an Arctic Council where all Arctic states could discuss common Arctic issues fit quite well with the Canadian reliance on multilateralism as a foreign policy tool (Huebert 1998, 56). Furthermore, the Arctic Council fit well with Canada's Arctic agenda at the time, which included an emphasis on defence, sovereignty, and the development of natural resources through sustainable means (Nord 2007, 213). Also, the Liberals were intent on addressing "the economic, social, and political needs of peoples who inhabit the North" (Nord 2007, 214).

Nord argues that to this point Canada had not been able to act as a major power (Nord 2007, 215). Accordingly, Canada has "tended to follow a foreign policy approach that has consistently given regional needs a high level of concern" (Nord 2007, 215-216). In this way, the Arctic was a suitable region in

which Canada could hope to develop new foreign policies (Nord 2007, 215-216). The Liberals saw in the Arctic Council proposal an opportunity to pursue the development of a new multilateral institution in a region that had been largely impenetrable by minor powers for decades.

## **5.2 Building diplomatic capacity**

By this point in time, the US was essentially the only barrier to establishing the Council. In the early 1990s, the US refused to negotiate the establishment of an Arctic Council (Reimer 2003, 445). It was crucial that Canada have the support of the US otherwise the Nordic states would not support the Arctic Council concept (Nord 2006, 300). When the US conducted an Arctic policy review in 1994, this position gradually began to shift as the US would become increasingly open to Arctic cooperation (Archer and Scrivener 2000, 614).

In 1994, Canada created a new ambassadorial position, the Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs, and appointed Mary Simon, a well-known and respected Inuk leader, to this position (Chaturvedi 1996, 183). The Government of Canada created this position specifically so that the new ambassador might oversee the negotiations to create an Arctic Council (Chaturvedi 1996, 183). It also hoped that the creation of this new position would help signal to the US that Canada was committed to seeing the Arctic Council through to the end (Nord 2006, 304).

By establishing the Ambassador of Circumpolar Affairs, the Government of Canada ensured that the diplomatic infrastructure necessary to create and implement the Arctic Council would be in place. By appointing Mary Simon as the first Ambassador, the Government of Canada was able to send the message that including Indigenous peoples in circumpolar diplomacy was of paramount importance to this Government.

The Liberal Government believed that the changing world order in the post-Cold War period allowed for foreign policy to be reinvented. This would later be described as 'new diplomacy' by the Liberals in a comprehensive foreign policy review released in 2005 (Canada 2005d, 1). In particular, this 'new diplomacy' involved cultivating relationships with state and non-state actors alike, and in the Arctic this meant engaging the Indigenous peoples of the region (Canada 2005d, 8).

### **5.3 Negotiating the Arctic Council**

In 1994, the Clinton Administration in the United States undertook a foreign policy review that would, among other things, evaluate US interests in the Arctic (Nord 2006, 303). As a result of this foreign policy review, the US attitude towards Arctic cooperation gradually began to change. The US now conceded that there were benefits to the development of regional Arctic strategies and stated that it would be willing to participate in international Arctic forums (Chaturvedi 1996, 183).

However, the US remained unconvinced of the necessity of a new Arctic Council in order to accomplish its new goals of negotiating Arctic policies with other Arctic states (Chaturvedi 1996, 183). Instead, the US was more interested in using the pre-existing AEPS rather than creating a new and separate Arctic organization (Archer and Scrivener 2000, 615). Despite the slight relaxation in the US conception of Arctic policy, the US remained extremely concerned about the possibility of expanding international discussion beyond the strictly environmental purview of the AEPS (Nord 2006, 304). “[The US] did not envision the Arctic Council becoming in any way a major multilateral organization with a permanent headquarters and staff. Instead it suggested that the Arctic Council should be envisioned more as a flexible forum at which like-minded states might share the ideas and views on issues related to the Arctic but not be formally bound by any collective decision” (Nord 2006, 304).

Given these two competing visions for an Arctic Council, the Government of Canada attempted to arrive at a compromise with the US. After lengthy discussions, the US finally agreed to commit itself to the concept of an Arctic Council at the 1995 Ottawa Summit between Canada and the US (Nord 2006, 305). Over the next year several meetings between Canada and the US were held and the Government of Canada continued to push the US to change its position (Nord 2006, 305). Eventually, in early 1996, the US drafted its own

version of a declaration to establish an Arctic Council and advised the Government of Canada to either accept this draft or move on (Nord 2006, 306).

The Ottawa Declaration as adopted and signed on September 19, 1996 ended up being a much more scaled down version of what the Government of Canada actually wanted (Nord 2006, 306). There are many features of the Ottawa Declaration that clearly show US influence (Nord 2006, 306). The Ottawa Declaration specifically states that “the Arctic Council should not deal with matters related to military security” (Arctic Council 1996, 2). The US believed it was necessary to ensure that the Arctic Council’s agenda be limited to issues that did not involve military security and insisted on the inclusion of this clause in the Ottawa Declaration (Nord 2006, 307). Also, the US insisted on the inclusion of the following clause related to the use of the term ‘indigenous peoples’ in the Ottawa Declaration: “the use of the term ‘peoples’ in this declaration shall not be construed as having any implications as regard the rights which may attach to the term under international law” (Arctic Council 1996, 2). All in all, the final version of the Ottawa Declaration is evidence that many of the issues that plagued the negotiation process were not successfully resolved by the time the Declaration was signed (Archer and Scrivener 2000, 613).

While the inclusion of this wording has indeed affected the growth and the relevance of the Arctic Council in many ways, there were nevertheless encouraging shifts in the attitude of the US by the time the Ottawa Declaration

was signed. The insistence on limiting the Arctic Council agenda to exclude discussions on military issues shows that there was again, after having disappeared during the Cold War, a clear difference between civil and military security (Chaturvedi 1996, 183). This difference has continued to grow along with the Arctic Council and, as will be discussed later in this work, this has led to an expansion of the Council agenda into areas that would not have been possible in 1996. Furthermore, although the US was very cautious about the inclusion of Arctic Indigenous peoples into the Arctic Council, the fact is that they did agree to the inclusion of the Permanent Participant category, which was created “to provide for active participation and full consultation with the Arctic indigenous representatives within the Arctic Council (Arctic Council 1996, 2).” This shows an acceptance of the importance of including local populations in the decision making process. Along with the agreement to include non-governmental observers to the Arctic Council, this also demonstrates a willingness to accept the changing distribution of power since the end of the Cold War in the world generally and in the Arctic in particular (Nuttall 2000, 633).

In the past few years the Arctic Council has often been criticized for its limited ability to effect change due to its informal legal status and specific exclusion of military issues from its agenda (Ronson 2011, 100; Griffiths 2009, 11; Koivurova 2010, 148). However, it must be remembered that in 1996, the Ottawa Declaration, though limited, was something of an achievement. While the Arctic Council that came to be was not the Arctic Council that the Government of

Canada had originally envisioned, this is not as important as the fact that it was created and that all Arctic states agreed to the terms of its creation.

#### **5.4 Operationalizing the Arctic Council (1996-1998)**

Leading up to the creation of the Arctic Council, Canada had been a very active and supportive participant in the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS). Canada had contributed resources in several important ways to the AEPS Working Groups. In the early 1990s, Canada chaired the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) Working Group, a position which involved giving considerable attention to the functioning of the Working Group (Huebert 1998, 45). Canada was very involved in the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) Working Group, being responsible for land-based investigations (Huebert 1998, 47). According to Huebert, the role that Canada played in the PAME Working Group was so influential and important that it became something of a co-chair with Norway (Huebert 1998, 47). Canada was also instrumental in both the creation of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group, including acting as the host for the Secretariat for several years, and in its involvement with many of the CAFF projects (Huebert 1998, 49-50). Canada also acted as the lead state on the Task Force on Sustainable Development and Utilization within the AEPS (Huebert 1998, 52).



Canada's leadership role in the AEPS was well established by the time the Arctic Council was created in 1996 and it would extend into the Council as well. Canada served as the Arctic Council's first Chair, from 1996 to 1998. The Government believed that Canada should play a leadership role in developing the Arctic Council in order to ensure that the region would come to be governed cooperatively (Canada 1998). The Liberal Government believed that this would safeguard Canada's interests in the Arctic region (Canada 1998). Due to the leadership that Canada had shown in the AEPS and the tremendous work that had been done to create the Arctic Council, continuing to play a leading role in the building of the Council was only logical. For these reasons, the Government of Canada worked diligently to build a solid foundation for the Council.

Because the Government of Canada had been the major driver behind the negotiations to create the Arctic Council, it was logical that Canada should act as the first Chair and therefore be the first state required to make more significant financial contributions to the operation of the new Council. Canada's Arctic Council Secretariat was supported jointly by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, with both departments providing staffing resources (Huebert 1998, 54). This interdepartmental sharing of responsibilities had been a normal course of Canadian involvement in the AEPS.<sup>9</sup> During its two-year Chairmanship, the Government of Canada assumed responsibility for bringing the four original

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<sup>9</sup> For a good overview of the interdepartmental nature of Canada's contributions to the AEPS see Huebert 1998.

AEPS Working Groups under the new Arctic Council framework (Nord 2006, 307). The Government of Canada also undertook the drafting of the Council's rules of procedure and terms of reference (Nord 2006, 307).

### **5.5 Nurturing the Arctic Council (1998-2006)**

The original AEPS Working Groups were successfully integrated into the Arctic Council and continued their work researching Arctic issues. From 1998 to 2006, the Arctic Council concentrated its efforts on strengthening the Working Groups. During this time, the Council prepared many important assessments and reports that presented research on the Arctic region and identified significant regional issues (Young 2005, 11). Significant reports were prepared and delivered by all of the Arctic Council Working Groups.

During this time, Canada contributed to the development of the Council in many ways but mostly behind the scenes by providing support for Working Groups and projects (Nord 2006, 308). These activities included chairing the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) Secretariat and contributing to the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat, chaired by Denmark (Arctic Council 2000, 6; Arctic Council 2002, 7; Arctic Council 2004, 7). During the Icelandic Chairmanship from 2002 to 2004, Canada supported a temporary Emergency Preparedness, Preparation and Response (EPPR) Working Group Secretariat (Arctic Council 2002, 7). Canada also encouraged the Council to take a capacity

building approach to its work during this period and hosted a capacity building workshop during the Finnish Chairmanship (Arctic Council 2000, 6). Between 2000 and 2006 Canada also contributed to several Arctic Council projects including health, sustainability, and environmental issues in the Arctic (Nord 2006, 308).

This focus on research and reporting of Arctic issues in part led to the characterization of the Council as a 'talk shop', a reputation that the Council is only now beginning to shake off (Young 2005, 11; Griffiths 2009, 11). However, this research was crucial to the evolution of the Arctic Council. These reports and assessments have served to translate hard scientific data into information that decision-makers can understand (Young 2005, 11).

## **5.6 Expanding circumpolar cooperation**

At the same time that the Government of Canada was working to build the Arctic Council, it was also trying to define Canadian Arctic policy and to expand circumpolar cooperation in other ways. The Liberal Government wanted to develop a new Northern foreign policy for Canada that would have an 'inside-out' approach, whereas during the Cold War, Canadian Arctic and Northern foreign policy had an 'outside-in' approach (Griffiths 2009, 29). The Liberal Government credits the ability to begin to craft a new Northern foreign policy with the end of the Cold War and the political space that opened up after the tension between

the US and USSR had subsided (Canada 1998). However, the direction that the Government of Canada planned to take was the result of two domestic changes in the years following the Cold War: the changing relations with Arctic Indigenous peoples and the new importance being placed on environmental issues with respect to policy (Canada 1998). Once the tension of the Cold War had disappeared, the way was clear to begin to assess “the importance of the Arctic environment to global survival, and the impact of Arctic environmental degradation on northern people, particularly Aboriginal peoples” (Canada 1998).

Recognizing the significant change that has been underway in the Arctic, the Liberal Government committed to an increased presence in the Canadian North in order to ensure that any increased activity in the region as a result of climate change would be monitored and controlled (Canada 2005d, 7). The Liberals also committed to engaging Indigenous Canadians and other northerners in the development of both domestic and international Arctic policies (Canada 2005d, 8).

But the Government of Canada, although trying to work on domestic issues when designing the new Northern policy, understood the importance of having a strong Arctic foreign policy as a central component of a new Northern policy. Canada’s commitment to the AEPS and to building the Arctic Council had shown that it was interested in developing multilateral Arctic cooperation. The Government of Canada understood the value of multilateral Arctic cooperation to be twofold: first,

cooperation was the only way to effectively address issues specific to the Arctic region as a whole; and second, cooperation allowed the cost of dealing with Arctic issues to be spread among several states (Canada 1998).

The Liberal Government was quite clear in its desire to pursue multilateralism as the preferred external relations strategy. The Liberals were cognisant of the fact that multilateral cooperation offers a means of influencing the development of “global rules that directly affect Canadians” (Canada 2005d, 26). Being involved in multilateral institutions also provided the opportunity to ensure that “international policy will be motivated by a broader set of interests and concerns — rather than a particular ideological agenda,” which meant international policy would be more legitimate and applicable around the world (Canada 2005d, 27). However, it was very conscious of the problems inherent to multilateralism that enable multilateral institutions to stagnate and become ineffective and even counterproductive (Canada 2005d, 1). The development of the Arctic Council was certainly in keeping with the Liberal understanding of the values of multilateralism. The successful integration of all the Arctic states into a functioning multilateral group would enable the development of relevant and useful international Arctic policy while at the same time ensuring that these policies would also be relevant and useful to the Canadian Arctic domestically.

At the same time, the Liberals were working to build a new form of multilateralism that included various non-state actors in addition to the traditional state in the

creation of multilateral agreements (Canada 2005d, 1). This attitude was articulated succinctly in the Overview section of the major 2005 foreign policy review, *Canada's International Policy Statement — A Role of Pride in the World*, where it was stated that multilateralism “must be more representative, so that nations with different cultures and capabilities can build mutually beneficial partnerships” (Canada 2005d, 1). This explains the Liberals’ focus on including Arctic IPOs in the Arctic Council negotiations and insisting on a greater role for IPOs in the Council.

In addition to expanding circumpolar cooperation through the development of the Arctic Council, the Liberal Government also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 2003 and immediately allocated funding for seabed mapping (Huebert 2009, 20). UNCLOS codifies the international laws that apply to oceans and seas. It sets out the criteria that are used to determine the extent of a coastal state’s continental shelf. All Arctic states with the exception of the US have ratified UNCLOS. After ratifying UNCLOS in 2003, Canada has until 2013 to submit its claim to the extent of the Canadian continental shelf. The ratification of UNCLOS was an important step in the development of increased international Arctic cooperation for Canada. The Liberals recognized that UNCLOS represented the existing international law and that ratifying the Convention would allow Canada to play a role in the evolution of UNCLOS.

## **5.7 The renewal of the Canadian Forces**

A common misconception of the Liberal Government's Arctic policies is that they were unwilling to strengthen Canada's military capabilities in the region. In fact, the decline in Canadian military presence in the Arctic began much earlier, during the Mulroney conservatives' time in office and towards the end of the Cold War (Huebert 2007, 11). Chaturvedi questions the need to maintain military presence in the Arctic in the post-Cold War period (Chaturvedi 1996, 183). However, military ability is necessary in a rapidly changing Arctic environment in order to ensure the region is protected. During the Liberals' time in office, the Canadian Forces actually expanded Arctic operations. In 1999, the Arctic Security Intergovernmental Working Group (ASIWG) was formed in order to facilitate the exchange of information between the federal and territorial governments (Huebert 2005, 29). According to Huebert, the ASIWG meetings have made an impact on Canadian Arctic security in three significant ways: fostering the development of relationships between the various sectors of government; improving coordination between sectors and orders of government; and providing a forum for the Canadian Forces to press for improvements to Canadian Arctic security (Huebert 2005, 23). Since 2002, the Canadian Forces have resumed training operations in the Canadian North (Huebert 2005, 29).

## **5.8 Summary**

During the Liberals' time in office from 1993 to 2005, they worked hard to improve Canadian involvement in the Arctic region. The creation of the Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs signaled to the world that Arctic foreign relations were important to Canada. Not only did they successfully complete the negotiations that would create the Arctic Council, but they also worked to expand circumpolar cooperation through UNCLOS. The renewal of the Canadian Forces ensured that Canada could begin to build a military presence in the Arctic. This was important to increased Arctic Cooperation in the long term because it improved Canada's ability to respond to environmental crises in the region.



## **6. CONSERVATIVES 2006 TO PRESENT**

The Conservative Government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper came to power in January 2006 and inherited a robust diplomatic infrastructure in support of Arctic cooperation. The Liberals had spent years building the foundation of the Arctic Council as well as the diplomatic capability within Canada to be able to contribute effectively to the Council and other developing Arctic multilateral initiatives such as the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The Liberals, under Prime Minister Paul Martin, had also begun to rebuild the Canadian military presence in the North. Regular training exercises in the Arctic had resumed in 2002 and the Canadian Forces along with other relevant departments had been actively engaged in intergovernmental discussions since 1999. Despite this, the Harper Conservatives ran on a platform that included significant defence spending to improve the Canadian military presence in the North (Coates et al. 2008, 173). The Conservative campaign featured the defence of Canada's Arctic sovereignty as a primary concern for a new Conservative Government (Coates et al. 2008, 172).

The Harper Government has approached Arctic foreign policy in a different way from the Liberals or the Mulroney Conservatives previously. The changing

geopolitics of the region has made it possible for the Harper Conservatives to pursue a more traditional military security agenda in the Arctic.

### **6.1 New opportunities for influence through UNCLOS**

During the Cold War, Canadian Arctic policy was constrained by the geographic realities of the Canadian North. Canada was literally caught in the middle of two hostile superpowers. At that time Arctic security meant military security, and Canada essentially relied on the harsh environment to keep foreign threats out. After the end of the Cold War, Canada welcomed a new era of Arctic cooperation that allowed it, for the first time, to begin to develop Canadian Arctic policy and to play a role in the development of international Arctic policy.

As the emphasis on military security declined and was replaced by a much greater emphasis on other forms of human and environmental security, Canada's ability to contribute to the development of Arctic cooperation was also in decline. Throughout the 1990s and the early part of the 21st century, the Government of Canada was able to become an important contributor to the Arctic Council and to circumpolar cooperation in general.

However, with the ratification of UNCLOS by Canada and all other Arctic coastal states with the exception of the US, Canada has now found itself in a position of power within the Arctic region. Canada, Denmark (Greenland and the Faroe

Islands), Norway, and Russia have all ratified this UN Convention that established the international laws surrounding territorial rights with respect to the world's oceans. With the ratification of UNCLOS, Canada's geography, in terms of its possessing lengthy Arctic Ocean coastline, has meant that Canada would become one of the more powerful states within the Arctic Council. The Arctic Council has specifically discouraged Arctic states from pursuing national interests yet UNCLOS has given the five Arctic Ocean coastal states a mechanism with which to act in their national interest in the Arctic region.

Although UNCLOS has been ratified by four of five Arctic Ocean coastal states, it has yet to be applied in the Arctic. The Arctic Ocean coastal states have to submit claims, supported by research, to establish the extent of their continental shelves. Until all the claims have been submitted and evaluated, the Arctic Ocean is in many ways a "legal no man's land," as Borgerson suggests (Borgerson 2008, 5). Because of this, Arctic Ocean coastal states are relatively free to pursue their own national interests in the Arctic (Borgerson 2008, 5).

In some ways, Canada is now enjoying more power than the three territorial Arctic states, Finland, Iceland, and Sweden. What is particularly interesting about this new found power is that it comes as a result of Canada's geography, a factor which has limited Canada's potential power in the Arctic region in the past. With the ratification of UNCLOS, Canada, by virtue of its coastline, has been accorded more influence in the Arctic region without having to invest in the military and

economic factors that have traditionally been the source of international power. Canada simply does not have the military or economic strength of many of the other Arctic Ocean coastal states (Lackenbauer 2009, 18). And until UNCLOS has been fully applied to the Arctic region, it seems that this might not limit Canada's power in the region.

Even the work of the Arctic Council itself may be helping to widen the cleavage between the Arctic Ocean coastal states on one side and Finland, Iceland, Sweden, and the Permanent Participants on the other side (Koivurova 2010, 150). Koivurova suggests that the scientific assessments that the Council requisitions are actually serving as a catalyst for the Arctic states (and non-Arctic states as well) to redefine their Arctic interests and how to pursue them (Koivurova 2010, 150). Arctic Council scientific reports are reinforcing the view that the Arctic is changing rapidly and this "has launched a type of pre negotiation period, in which the Arctic actors are defining the new parameters for Arctic governance" (Koivurova 2010, 150).

In 2008, the Harper Government applied Canada's new found power when it extended the jurisdiction of the *Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act* from 100 to 200 nautical miles (Rappaport 2011, 100). The Government of Canada also introduced legislation to make reporting mandatory for ships sailing within the extended territorial sea (Rappaport 2011, 100). While this extension of the territorial sea was in keeping with existing international conventions, it

nonetheless represented a singularly unilateral action on the part of the Government of Canada.

As the Arctic Ocean coastal states continue to conduct research and submit their claims for the delineation of their continental shelves, Canada will continue to be a major power in the Arctic region. During this time, Canada has the ability to act unilaterally, to a certain extent, even though it does not have the military capability necessary to truly monitor and defend Canada's Arctic sovereignty from traditional military threats.

## **6.2 Changing priorities**

The Conservative Government believes that significant military build-up is necessary in order to guarantee Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic, as evidenced by the many campaign promises that a Conservative Government would invest billions in various military infrastructure (Coates et al. 2008, 173). Since taking office, the Harper Conservatives have continued to promise a significant military build-up in the Arctic, including new patrol vessels and aircraft, a new icebreaker, and new deep-water ports and training bases (Huebert 2009, 18). These early commitments by the Harper Government have been criticized as resembling more of a 'shopping list' than a coherent Arctic policy (Lackenbauer 2009, 13). Furthermore, it is worth noting that many of these commitments have not yet been implemented (Huebert 2009, 18).

The Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, released on August 20, 2010, attempts to provide a clear and coherent statement of the Conservative Government's Arctic foreign policy. It states that "the first and most important pillar toward recognizing the potential of Canada's Arctic is the exercise of our sovereignty over the far North" (Canada 2010b, 5). The statement goes on to conclude that "Canada is in control of its Arctic lands and waters" and "Cooperation, diplomacy and respect for international law have always been Canada's preferred approach in the Arctic. At the same time, we will never waver in our commitment to protect our North" (Canada 2010b, 27).

Although the Harper Government has promised many improvements to the Canadian Forces and their presence in the Arctic, these military commitments alone have not signaled a departure from past practice under the Liberals. Where the Conservatives have made significant changes is in the framing of Canadian Arctic issues. It is clear that this Government is taking the approach that the key issues in the Canadian Arctic at present are issues of military security (Huebert 2009, 35). Accordingly, improving Canadian military defence capabilities is a high priority for this Government (Huebert 2009, 30). Indeed, other Arctic states are themselves improving their defence capabilities (Huebert 2009, 30). However, this does not mean that these states intend to act unilaterally to ensure their own sovereignty in the Arctic. Huebert argues that Canada too "cannot act in isolation in the Arctic" (Huebert 2009, 35).

Lackenbauer also argues that while the Government of Canada should be investing in defence capabilities for the Arctic, at the same time it will not be possible to act alone in the Arctic because “Canada cannot afford the suite of necessary capabilities to defend our Arctic from any *possible* aggressor (Lackenbauer 2009, 20).” Instead he argues that Canada should concentrate on building the military capability necessary to provide government services such as search and rescue or police throughout Canada (Lackenbauer 2009, 20).

While Canada’s foreign relations with the Arctic Ocean coastal states are now quite friendly and cooperative, the reality is that the agreement to be cooperative will only last as long as the other Arctic Ocean coastal states do not perceive that any one state is trying to upset the balance. For this reason, Canada should not pursue an aggressive, unilateral approach with respect to other Arctic states (Huebert 2009, 23).

For the Harper Conservatives, this renewed commitment to the revitalization of the Canadian Forces in the Arctic has led to a diminished importance for Arctic multilateralism. In 2006, shortly after first being elected, the Harper Conservatives removed the position of the Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs (Lackenbauer 2009, 52). This effort to cut spending meant that the functions of the Ambassador would now be carried out by senior bureaucrats (Lackenbauer 2009, 52). It also made a major diplomatic faux pas when it failed to send a

Minister to the 2006 Salekhard Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council (Arctic Council 2006). After receiving criticism for this oversight, the Harper Government clearly learned from its mistake when in 2011 Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health and Canada's first Inuk cabinet minister, was sent to represent Canada at the Nuuk Ministerial Meeting after Lawrence Cannon was defeated in his riding in the federal election only a few days prior, leaving that cabinet position vacant. In August 2012, in planning for the upcoming Canadian chairmanship of the Arctic Council starting in 2013, the Harper Government appointed Ms. Aglukkaq, still Minister of Health, to the position of Minister for the Arctic Council. Ms. Aglukkaq's appointment to this important portfolio marked a departure from tradition as in the past this responsibility has normally been given to the foreign affairs minister of the host country. This demonstrates that for the Conservatives, the Arctic Council is not the most important Arctic foreign policy issue. The appointment of the Canadian Minister of Health to effectively chair the Arctic Council has no doubt indicated as much to the other Arctic Council members and Permanent Participants.

However, the Harper Conservatives are currently stuck with the Arctic Council. They have inherited an organization that is not exactly what they want and most certainly not what they would have built themselves. Yet continuing to support the Arctic Council is crucial to Arctic foreign policy as abandoning the Council would effectively ruin foreign relations with all of the Arctic states, not to mention



damage the domestic relationships with the IPOs who sit as Permanent Participants on the Council.

### **6.3 The pursuit of other international forums**

In 2008, Canada participated in a meeting of the Arctic Ocean coastal states held in Ilulissat, Greenland. The five coastal states met to discuss issues related to the delineation of the continental shelves and the Ilulissat Declaration that came out of this meeting saw the coastal states agree to abide by existing international law, including UNCLOS, to determine and resolve state boundaries in the Arctic (Ilulissat Declaration 2008). This meeting was intentionally held outside of the Arctic Council, a fact that angered and caused concern for many of the Arctic Council members who found themselves left out (Nord 2010, 829). The other Council members were reassured that this meeting would not become a standing forum (Exner-Pirot 2010).

However, in 2010, Canada hosted a second meeting of Arctic Ocean coastal states. In the Conservative Government's 2010 Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy, the meeting was heralded as "an important step not only in advancing our collaboration on continental shelf delineation but also in encouraging forward thinking on the emerging issues in the region" (Government of Canada 2010, 10). It went on to state that "the meeting publicly demonstrated leadership and partnership by Canada and other coastal states on responsible

management of the Arctic Ocean” (Canada 2010b, 10). For its part, the Kingdom of Denmark also stated in its official Arctic policy that it found this particular meeting format, that is the five Arctic Ocean coastal states, to be useful “for issues primarily relevant for the five coastal states, currently the continental shelf issue” (Denmark 2011b, 52).

These meetings suggest that the Arctic littoral states are interested in pursuing more unilateral action or bilateral agreements rather than pan-Arctic cooperation to address some specific issues. Griffiths describes the littoral states as pursuing a ‘sub-regional approach’ where each of the Arctic Ocean coastal states “concentrates on the national domain and adjacent areas in pursuit of natural resources” (Griffiths 2009, 7). He further indicates that this approach has not to date found reason to engage non-littoral states because of a lack of concern for regional issues that transcend national borders (Griffiths 2009, 7).

Nord notes that unilateralism is consistently being proposed as a “legitimate alternative to collective action” (Nord 2010, 829). This is largely because the issues that are being addressed by these “Arctic Five” meetings, as they have now come to be known, are issues of traditional security and are related to sovereignty and military security (Nord 2010, 830). Of course, these are issue areas that are restricted from discussion within the Arctic Council by virtue of the Ottawa Declaration (Arctic Council 1996). However, in spite of the military build-up being undertaken, or at least promised, and the return to traditional military

security issues by the littoral states, this does not indicate that the Arctic region will move from cooperation towards aggressive competition in the near future (Heininen 2010).

It is also worth noting that although the Ilulissat Declaration very clearly stated the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of the littoral states, the Arctic Ocean coastal states did commit to “continue to contribute actively to the work of the Arctic Council and other relevant international fora” (Ilulissat Declaration 2008). The Harper Government has given assurances that it remains committed to the Arctic Council and in fact has suggested that the Arctic Ocean Coastal State meetings could “help to reinforce the work of the Arctic Council” (Meyer 2010). In the 2010 Statement on Canada’s Foreign Policy, the Harper Government confirmed that “the Arctic Council is the leading multilateral forum through which [the Canadian Government] advances [its] Arctic foreign policy and promotes Canadian Northern interests” (Canada 2010b, 24).

Aside from the Arctic Council and the Arctic Ocean Ministers’ Meetings, the Harper Government also indicated that it would also pursue bilateral agreements with Arctic states (Canada 2010b, 9). The Mulroney Conservatives also negotiated bilateral agreements with Arctic states (with the US in 1988, the USSR in 1989, and Russia in 1992); however, these agreements were negotiated as a means of establishing cooperation and good relationships with the two Cold-War superpowers in order to set the political stage for the development of the Arctic

Council. The Liberals under both Chrétien and Martin concentrated on building the Arctic Council rather than negotiating separate bilateral agreements. Recently, the Harper Conservatives seem to be using bilateral agreements as a means to further legitimize withdrawal from a predominantly multilateral Arctic foreign policy.

While the Harper Government does state that it believes the Arctic Council is the primary Arctic multilateral institution, its actions suggest that it is attempting to diversify the multilateral elements of Canadian Arctic foreign policy and diminish this primacy (Canada 2010b, 9). In addition, the new emphasis on sovereignty and national security as the principal issues needing to be addressed by Canadian Arctic foreign policy also helps to remove attention and resources away from the Arctic Council. While it is true that Canada should be reinvesting in the Arctic presence of the Canadian Forces in order to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of certain government services, such as search and rescue capabilities, Canada also “needs to work with its Arctic neighbours in order to develop the international framework that will provide both the international rules necessary to protect the Arctic as well as a spirit of cooperation in the region” (Huebert 2009, 35).

The geopolitical reality of the Arctic region requires that Canadian Arctic foreign policy strike a balance between military security, human security, and environmental security commitments. Furthermore, it is not possible for the Arctic

states to tackle these issues alone. The Arctic region already has a robust legal framework that can be used to settle any persistent territorial disputes in the region. As such, the defence of Canadian Arctic sovereignty as a policy concern is simply antiquated (Ronson 2011, 106).

#### **6.4 Destabilizing the primacy of the Arctic Council**

Despite the Harper Government's insistence on the primacy of the Arctic Council, the pursuit of the Arctic Five format does give cause for concern (Canada 2010b, 9). The actions of this Government clearly show an interest in diversifying Canada's multilateral Arctic foreign relations. The Harper Conservatives have actively promoted the past and continued use of the Arctic Five format (Canada 2010b, 10).

This format excludes Finland, Iceland, and Sweden — the three Arctic Council members with no Arctic Ocean coastline — as well as all of the Permanent Participants and Observers. However, the Arctic Council was formed on the basis that everyone with legitimate interest and/or expertise in the region should be able to participate in the discussions and decision-making that affects the Arctic region (Nord 2010, 827). As Nord argues, the promotion of the Arctic Five format is not at all in keeping with the value of inclusiveness promoted by the Arctic Council, but rather it “is based on the principle of exclusivity, unilateralism, traditionalism, uni-dimensionality, and diplomatic obscurity” (Nord 2010, 828).

With every meeting of the Arctic Ocean coastal states, the primacy of the Arctic Council continues to be challenged. The Arctic Five format has strength in having few members and a narrow focus (Koivurova 2010, 151). This contrasts with the Arctic Council “with its eight members, broad focus and soft work” and presents a potential challenge to the effectiveness of the Council (Koivurova 2010, 151). According to Koivurova, these challenges to the primacy of the Arctic Council “may mean that it is gradually being supplanted by sectoral governance regimes evolving in a piecemeal manner, or even by an Arctic framework convention” (Koivurova 2010, 153).

In pursuing the Arctic Five format, the Harper Government is continuing to undermine the legitimacy of the Arctic Council. The three non-coastal states have expressed their concern over the use of the Arctic Five format. Iceland and Finland, for example, both expressed fears that the 2010 Arctic Coastal Ministers’ Meeting held in Canada would damage circumpolar cooperation through the Arctic Council (Nord 2010, 832). In Sweden’s 2011 *Strategy for the Arctic region*, it explained that although Sweden has no Arctic Ocean coastline, it is nonetheless interested in the “establishment of the coastal states’ continental shelves in accordance with the Convention on the Law of the Sea” (Sweden 2011b, 22). Sweden also argues that all eight Arctic states should be a part of the decision-making process on issues relating to the Arctic region, and that requires

the maintenance of the status and importance of the Arctic Council (Sweden 2011b, 22).

Among Canadian academics there is both concern over and encouragement for the Harper Government's use of the Arctic Five or other multilateral formats in the Arctic region. On the one hand, Huebert argues that the Ilulissat meeting directly undermined the Arctic Council and that Canada, as a primary Arctic state, should have pressed for the meeting to be held within the Council (Huebert 2009, 37). He was writing prior to the Canadian Arctic Coastal Ministers' Meeting but presumably would have an identical or stronger reaction now. On the other hand, Lackenbauer argues that Canada should continue to pursue other multilateral formats in the Arctic region (Lackenbauer 2009, 50). He argues that because the Arctic Five meetings dealt with specific issues, and because the coastal states have agreed to adhere to existing international laws and conventions including UNCLOS, that these meetings do not detract from the primacy of the Arctic Council (Lackenbauer 2009, 50). Somewhere in the middle of these competing viewpoints, Nord argues that it is acceptable to Canada to continue to pursue a variety of multilateral options in the Arctic region, including the Arctic Five format, provided that the Harper Government recognizes that "effective Arctic diplomacy in the contemporary world must be oriented toward including all with demonstrable interest in the region — especially the representatives of the indigenous peoples of the north" (Nord 2010, 835). While supporting the A5 format will serve, at the very least, to undermine the primacy of the Arctic

Council, it may be possible to pursue the use of this format to address issues that are strictly related to UNCLOS and the delineation of continental shelves. As long as the A5 format is not used to tackle issues that are beyond the scope of UNCLOS, the Government of Canada may be able to assert the importance of the Arctic Council. However, if the Arctic Council is the Government of Canada's primary diplomatic vehicle in the Arctic region, as it suggests, it does beg the question of why bother with A5 meetings.

The Government of Sweden suggests that strengthening and expanding the Arctic Council may serve to "reduce the need for the coastal states to drive forward issues in the Arctic Five format" (Sweden 2011b, 22). It envisions a strengthened Arctic Council to consist of a broadened agenda that would "include other important strategic issues such as joint security, infrastructure and social and economic development" (Sweden 2011b, 19). At present, the Arctic coastal states appear to continue to be wary of expanding the Arctic Council's agenda as it would require that some sovereignty and control over domestic issues be given up (Potts and Schofield 2008, 175). However, Canada has simultaneously attempted to assert Canadian Arctic sovereignty and build circumpolar cooperation in the past, when working to establish the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy towards the end of the Cold War (Fenge and Penikett 2009, 67). It remains possible that the changing Arctic environment will eventually lead to the expansion of the Arctic Council's agenda as more and more frequently national interests are crossing borders and becoming transnational issues (Potts



and Schofield 2008, 175). Canada should be a leader in the Arctic region, pushing for the expansion of circumpolar cooperation because Arctic issues continue to become more and more regional and global as opposed to narrowly defined national interests (Coates et al. 2008, 206).

### **6.5 Continued Canadian support for the Arctic Council**

The Harper Government seems interested in finding new ways to pursue Canadian Arctic foreign policy rather than accepting the Arctic Council as the only option. However, Canada is still contributing to the work of the Arctic Council. The Harper Government has demonstrated a commitment to the Arctic and has identified the Arctic Council as an important forum (Interview with Government of Canada official, November 7, 2011). It maintains that cooperation is important “for certain objectives” and in this way the participation of non-state actors needs to be addressed and reviewed in each instance (Interview with Government of Canada official, November 7, 2011). The Government argues that while the Arctic Council is a useful forum, space must be maintained for state-to-state discussion because this type of discussion will happen anyway and if there is not legitimate space for it, the results will be less transparent (Interview with Government of Canada official, November 7, 2011).

As discussed previously, one of the most important features of the Arctic Council is the inclusion of Arctic Indigenous peoples through the creation of the

Permanent Participant category of membership. This category ensures that the Arctic Council is the most legitimate organization to represent the Arctic region (Montani 2011, 10-11). At the same time, the Permanent Participant category is somewhat threatening to the Arctic states for two reasons: it can “hinder the adoption of decisions which are favourable for Arctic States;” and it can also be perceived as requiring Arctic states to give up some of their sovereignty in the region (Montani 2011, 11). The Government of Canada seems to view the Permanent Participants as ‘experts’ akin to NGOs or non-Arctic states that have specific knowledge of Arctic issues (Interview with Government of Canada official, November 7, 2011). This would suggest that the Government has formed the opinion that there are two key stakeholders in the Arctic region, Arctic states and non-Arctic states (Ingenfeld 2010, 258). While there are other stakeholders in the region outside of the Arctic Council, they must “operate on a local and national level because the Arctic states are the main players at the higher levels” (Ingenfeld 2010, 259). This viewpoint would be in keeping with the Government’s increased desire to explore other multilateral forums, like the Arctic Five format, that emphasize more traditional state-to-state cooperation.

While Finland, Iceland, and Sweden worry about the legitimacy of the Arctic Council in light of the increasing use of the Arctic Five format, other coastal states see no problem with pursuing both. Denmark, for instance, does not believe that discussions between the coastal states jeopardize the Arctic Council (Interview with Kingdom of Denmark official, November 11, 2011). But the Permanent

Participants still fear that the Arctic Five meetings could challenge their unique status (Interview with Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat officials, November 11, 2011). The Permanent Participants argue that the region needs the Arctic Council in order to have at least one multilateral body that truly represents all stakeholders in the region (Interview with Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat officials, November 11, 2011).

At the moment, even if the Harper Conservatives use the Arctic Council more because it exists and less because they want to, the Council needs to be strengthened. If the Arctic Ocean coastal states continue to work to exclude other stakeholders they could find that new Arctic governance regimes will be set up in spite of them as the many non-coastal state and non-state stakeholders with legitimate interests in the region continue to be excluded (Shadian 2009, 75). Canada is an excellent example of how significantly the geopolitical landscape of the Arctic can change in a relatively short period of time. Thirty years ago, Canada was a minor power in the region, caught in between two superpowers and with little ability to pursue any meaningful Arctic policy of any kind. Today, Canada is a major power in the region as a result of the same geography. Canada's physical geography will never change but as the political, social, and economic geography changes around us, we must be ready for what those changes may bring. The Arctic Council represents the best way to ensure that Canada can adapt as quickly and effectively as possible to the changing Arctic

region. The Council must be strengthened and expanded in order to allow it to become a decision-making organization (Denmark 2011b, 58).

## 7. CONCLUSION

After the Second World War, Canada carved out a foreign policy niche for itself by adhering to and applying the principles articulated by Louis St. Laurent in his 1947 Grey Lecture. St. Laurent argued that Canada's physical characteristics indicated a particular path for external affairs. He argued that protecting the interests of Canada and Canadians would directly follow from protecting the interests of the world (St. Laurent 1947). St. Laurent identified five 'basic principles' which he argued should guide Canadian foreign policy. These 'basic principles' were premised on the idea that Canada did not have all the characteristics of a great power and thus was not able to act like a great power; however, Canada was not quite a small power either, because it was able to do influence world affairs in ways that small powers could not expect to.

Guided by these basic principles, Canada was able to create a significant role for itself in the world as a negotiator, mediator, peacekeeper, and honest broker. Canada was directly involved in the creation of many international organizations and worked to expand global governance.

However, this was not the case in the Arctic. The balance of power was much different in the Arctic in isolation than it was in the rest of the world. The geography, climate, population, and economy of the region resulted in extreme polarization. Not only was there polarization as a result of the differences

between the two superpowers, the US and the USSR, but also, because of the close proximity of the two superpowers in the region, the balance of power became such that there were either great powers or small powers. The polarization of the region meant that there was no middle ground, no room for middle powers to gain any level of influence in the region.

Accordingly, the Arctic region was largely neglected by Canadian foreign policy. The characteristics that indicated a certain path for Canada in the world were quite different in this region. Therefore the principles that were applied to Canada's external affairs in general in the years following the Second World War were not applicable in the Arctic. For much of the Cold War, Canadian Arctic foreign policy was very much a product of reaction to other events and policies rather than a result of deliberate attention.

This started to change as the Cold War receded. Canada, along with the other 'lesser' Arctic states, began to find opportunities to influence the development of Arctic governance. This led to increased attention to crafting Canadian Arctic foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. Perhaps the most significant change in Canadian Arctic foreign policy since the end of the Cold War has been Canada's involvement with the Arctic Council. This thesis has attempted to determine how the Arctic Council developed and how it will continue to develop. Liberal internationalism provides the best explanation because of this theory's ability to explain foreign policy activity based on the options that are available to

the state as a result of the state's particular characteristics. However, this theory must be refined in order to account for changes that have taken place in Canada and the world since the end of the Cold War.

### **7.1 Liberal internationalism**

St. Laurent originally intended his five 'basic principles' to be guidelines for how to conduct external affairs and craft foreign policy in Canada. These principles were based on Canada's physical characteristics and what those characteristics enabled the state to pursue in terms of foreign policy. However, because of its ability to predict behaviour resulting from the limiting factor of Canada's physical characteristics, liberal internationalism is also valuable as a theory to explain and predict Canadian foreign policy. This transformation from practice to theory is not without problems. One such difficulty is that liberal internationalism is in many ways "a collection of assumptions and descriptions" rather than a coherent theory (Kirton and Dewitt 1983, 17). As such it is difficult to be very precise in applying this theory as it is tempting to apply the theory to broad periods of time while overlooking anomalous episodes as exceptions.

Liberal internationalism holds that a state's foreign policies are limited by the physical characteristics of the state. In the case of Canada, this includes specifically geography, climate, and natural resources (St. Laurent 1947)." St. Laurent argued that these three factors have "so conditioned our economy that

the continued prosperity and well-being of [Canadians] can best be served by the prosperity and well-being of the whole world (St. Laurent 1947). Canada is limited in what role it can play in the world as a result of those three characteristics — geography, climate, and natural resources.

St. Laurent's five 'basic principles' outline what Canada is able to accomplish while recognizing that actions are limited by its geography, climate, and natural resources. While these principles were meant to be used as guidelines for the development of foreign policies, they are also central to liberal internationalism as a theory. Accordingly, there are five key elements that will factor into the development of Canadian foreign policy.

Liberal internationalism thus holds that as a result of the limitations placed on the state due to unalterable physical characteristics, Canada will develop foreign policies that maintain cohesion within Canada; protect political liberty in Canada and throughout the world; rely on diplomacy and the use of negotiation or compromise rather than on military power; protect human values in Canada and throughout the world; and emphasize the development of global governance through the maintenance and development of international organizations.

Liberal internationalism as a prescription rather than a theory was the dominant foreign policy model in Canada from the end of the Second World War to the end of the Cold War (Nossal 1997, 158). Throughout this time Canada worked to



build and strengthen international organizations, develop global governance, and generally build a peaceful, prosperous world (Cohen 2003, 164). While Nossal argues that liberal internationalism was also behind some of the foreign policy decisions made by the Mulroney and Chrétien governments, Welsh argues that by this time the changing world order was challenging the dominance of liberal internationalism as a foreign policy prescription in Canada (Nossal 1997, 159-160; Welsh 2004, 133).

Welsh and Cohen argue that liberal internationalism is no longer a useful prescription for the development of Canadian foreign policy (Cohen 2003, 169; Welsh 2004, 134-135). Welsh suggests that the changes brought about by the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the USSR have resulted in a new world order where there are no longer great, middle, and small powers (Welsh 2004, 134-135). Instead, she argues that there is now one dominant power – the United States – and contends that the dominance of the US renders the role of the middle power anachronistic and useless (Welsh 2004, 134-135). Furthermore, she suggests that in order for a state to be a middle power it is necessary to have great and small powers (Welsh 2004, 157). However, while the dominance of the United States is unquestionable, it does not automatically follow that because of the dominance of the US all other states are on an equal and inferior footing. Just because one great power is magnitudes greater than other great powers does not mean that the international system can be divided into the 'greatest' power and 'the rest'. Accordingly, it is premature to suggest that

liberal internationalism is no longer applicable in light of the changes in the international system following the end of the Cold War.

While its utility as a foreign policy prescription may have diminished as a result of the changing international order, liberal internationalism still has value as a theory because it is based on a set of physical characteristics that will never change. However, in order to refine this theory and make it more applicable, we must develop the theory to be able to stand alone and distinguish it from liberal internationalism as a prescription. In so doing, we must also recognize that liberal internationalism was originally conceived as being free from the influence of political party ideology (St. Laurent 1947). Indeed, St. Laurent argued that it was necessary that “Canadian policy in its external relations should not be allowed to become a matter of party political controversy at home” (St. Laurent 1947). This has changed since the end of the Cold War as successive Canadian governments have relied less and less on liberal internationalism as a foreign policy prescription. Today’s reality is that political party ideology plays a significant role in the development of foreign policy in Canada. Accordingly, a theory that adequately explains and predicts the development of Canadian Arctic foreign policy must take into account these changes and deal with the increasing role of ideology in the creation of foreign policy.

## **7.2 “Neo-liberal internationalism”**

An updated liberal internationalism would be able to explain how party ideology and the personalities of individuals in government influence the development of foreign policy in Canada. Liberal internationalism assumed that the creation of foreign policies would necessarily be free from influence by ideology and personal preferences. This was a result of the original articulation of liberal internationalism as a foreign policy prescription rather than a theory. Since liberal internationalism has become a theory, it has been limited by this assumption. However, the theory is still useful in predicting foreign policy creation because it is based on physical characteristics that cannot change. Accordingly, it is necessary to revise the theory to make it more applicable in the post-Cold War world and to give it more predictive capability.

A neo-liberal internationalism would retain many of the features of liberal internationalism. It would still start from the premise that Canada has certain unchanging physical characteristics that impose limitations on the state and its ability to craft foreign policies. Maintaining cohesion within Canada is still important but only so far as ensuring that the government will be able to be re-elected. Whereas traditional liberal internationalism assumes a certain altruism where governments would refrain from adopting policies that would fragment society along ideological or cultural lines, neo-liberal internationalism understands that modern governments in Canada are less concerned about

creating cleavages within Canadian society from a moral standpoint and instead worry about their ability to maintain a wide enough margin of public support. In this way, modern governments in Canada are only concerned about ideology informing policies insofar as it would divide Canadian society in a way that would reduce public support for the particular government.

The Arctic is certainly one area where the changes in the international system as a result of the end of the Cold War have opened up more foreign policy options for Canada. Because the governments of the Arctic states are stable and democratic, there is no need to protect political liberty in the Arctic region in order to protect Canadians. As a result, Canada is free to concentrate on other features of foreign policy in the Arctic. Essentially the general political stability that currently exists in the world has made space for Canada to broaden foreign policy objectives and accordingly this gives governments the ability to craft policy for ideological reasons if they so choose.

The use of diplomacy and other 'soft' powers rather than military power continues to be an important and central feature of neo-liberal internationalism. Canada's military power does not compare with that of other states. As a result, it is essential for Canada to continue to rely on negotiation and compromise to be able to gain any influence in the world or to achieve desired policy ends.

Again, with the international system being reasonably stable politically speaking, a neo-liberal internationalism would hold that it is not as important today to create foreign policies that protect and promote human values. This may still enter into foreign policy formation, but it is not as crucial today to protect human values as it once was. Accordingly, this is an essential feature of traditional liberal internationalism that is not necessary with a neo-liberal internationalism.

The development of global governance and the participation in and use of international organizations remains an essential part of post-Cold War foreign policy in Canada. Canada continues to be a middle power in the international system. As a result, neo-liberal internationalism would hold that the way to gain influence in the world and to achieve desired policy ends is to cooperate and work with other states. Unilateralism is not an option that is readily available for middle powers such as Canada. However, as a result of the changes to the balance of power in the post-Cold War period, it is now possible for Canadian governments to allow ideology to drive foreign policy development to some extent. While Canadian governments may still be constrained in their approach to foreign policy in the sense that multilateralism continues to be the most effective option, they are now more able to choose the international forum based on ideological preferences.

Since the end of the Cold War, we have moved beyond liberal internationalism as a policy prescription because these liberal values have not become firmly

entrenched within government in Canada. Somewhat counterintuitively, these values would still be likely to resonate with Canadians. While modern Canadian governments may wish to pursue other foreign policy options we still find that Canada is constrained by the unchangeable physical characteristics that led to the development of liberal internationalism as a foreign policy prescription. Accordingly, liberal internationalism as a theory modified to account for the changes that have taken place in Canada and the world since the end of the Cold War is still useful in explaining and predicting the development of Canadian foreign policy.

Neo-liberal internationalism thus differs from traditional liberal internationalism because it considers how political party ideology can influence the development of foreign policy in Canada. Neo-liberal internationalism holds that for modern governments, maintaining cohesion is only important at election time. Policies can be influenced by party ideology so long as this is done in such a way as to maintain a strong enough margin of public support to ensure that the government can be reelected. Neo-liberal internationalism also holds that as a result of the changed world order since the end of the Cold War, Canada's foreign policy choices are no longer limited by the political instability of the world. Now, governments are more free to pursue policies that align with party ideology because they have to worry less about developing broad policies that ensure the stability and promote human values abroad. Furthermore, neo-liberal internationalism holds that multilateralism and the use of diplomacy continues to

be the only viable option to gain influence in the world; however, it is now possible for governments to choose which international forums they will support and participate in based on ideological preferences.

### **7.3 “Neo-liberal internationalism” and Canadian Arctic foreign policy**

Towards the end of the Cold War, as the tension between East and West eased, the Arctic region began to undergo a transition from a region primarily of military importance to one with a focus on ‘low’ security issues. Gorbachev’s Murmansk Speech in 1987 led the Mulroney Government in Canada to look towards the Arctic region as an area of potential international cooperation. The 1985 transit of the Northwest Passage by the *Polar Sea* had caused significant panic in Canada and it necessitated a new approach to Canadian Arctic foreign policy. The changing international system allowed this new approach to develop.

The Mulroney Government was intent on developing policies that would serve the long term interests of Canada (Plamondon 2009, 331). Accordingly a liberal internationalist approach was chosen for developing Arctic foreign policy. This would be the first time that Canada would be able to pursue this approach in this region. The liberal internationalist approach offered the best chance for Canada to gain influence in the Arctic region. The Mulroney Government’s goals in the region were the safeguarding of Canadian Arctic sovereignty, economic development of the region, social development, and environmental protection.

The *Polar Sea* transit ensured that sovereignty would be an important issue, and the way to ensure Canadian Arctic sovereignty was to attempt to build the Arctic region and to gain influence in the region. Environmental protection and sustainable economic and social development represented the means to gain influence in the region. By using diplomacy and creating new international Arctic institutions in order to deal cooperatively with environmental and sustainable development issues, the Mulroney Government was able to gain influence in the region, thereby solidifying Canadian claims to Arctic territory and waters.

When the Liberals under Chrétien took office in 1993, negotiations to create the Arctic Council were already well underway. The Council would serve to address the important goals of protecting Canadian Arctic sovereignty, developing the region both economically and socially, and protecting the fragile Arctic environment, but it also had the added benefit of providing the Liberals with the opportunity to pursue some traditionally liberal goals.

The Arctic Council presented a means of promoting Canadian values abroad. This was particularly possible as a result of the significant role that Canada played in the establishment of the Arctic Council. The success of the liberal internationalist approach is particularly evident in this period. The Liberals relied heavily on negotiation and compromise during the process of creating the Arctic Council. They even created a new diplomatic position to oversee the Arctic Council negotiation process.



The Harper Government, however, has pursued a somewhat different approach to developing Arctic foreign policy. While the goals of protecting Canadian Arctic sovereignty, economic development, social development, and environmental protection remain unchanged, the desired outcomes and thus the approach has changed.

In terms of safeguarding Canadian sovereignty, the Harper Government has shown that it would prefer to update and expand the Canadian military in order to have a force capable of protecting Canadian Arctic sovereignty from various security threats. While to date this has proven to be mostly rhetoric that has yet to be translated into concrete actions, this preference is significantly different from the approach of the Liberals and Mulroney Conservatives in the past. Furthermore, the Harper Conservatives are interested in reducing their reliance on diplomacy, as evidenced by their removal of the position of Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs and the assignment of Arctic external relations to senior bureaucrats.

However, although the Harper Government may desire to decrease its reliance on diplomacy, the fact is that its actions are limited by Canada's physical characteristics. As a result, diplomacy and participation in international organizations are the most successful approaches for gaining influence in the region. We are now beginning to see the results of changing approaches and the

influence of party ideology on the development of Canadian Arctic foreign policy. The Harper Government has shown that it is interested in pursuing a more traditional multi-state forum in addition to the inclusive format of the Arctic Council. This is evidenced by Canada's participation in the A5 meeting in Illulissat and Canada's hosting of another A5 meeting in Chelsea. Clearly the Harper Government recognizes that participation in international institutions is an important way of using the tools available to Canada. However, this government's ideology is now beginning to determine what direction Canadian Arctic foreign policy will take, within the limitations of the foreign policy options available to Canada. Neo-liberal internationalism can explain these changes and incorporation of party ideology in policy development in ways that traditional liberal internationalism cannot.

#### **7.4 Predictions for Canadian Arctic foreign policy**

As the first chairmanship round of the Arctic Council comes to a close, Canada is set to once again chair the Council, starting in 2013. Neo-liberal internationalism allows several predictions of what can be expected from Canada in terms of the continued development of the Arctic Council.

First and foremost, the Arctic Council will continue to be important. This organization is now over fifteen years old and recently has entered a new phase in its growth with the signing of the Agreement on Aeronautical Search and

Rescue in the Arctic. The Arctic Council is now making the transition from a report generating body to a policy developing body (Interview with Government of Canada official, November 7, 2011). The Council has also been strengthened by the establishment of a permanent secretariat. These features make the Arctic Council a body with longevity that will always stand up to competition (Interview with Kingdom of Denmark official, November 11, 2011). Furthermore, there are increasing numbers of non-Arctic states and organizations seeking Observer status in the Arctic Council. Because of the solid foundation of the Council, it can be said with some confidence that it is here to stay.

The Arctic Council also provides Canada with the best means of consulting and engaging the Indigenous peoples of the Canadian Arctic. The Permanent Participant category of membership in the Arctic Council ensures that in this one forum, if in no others, the perspectives and knowledge of the Arctic Indigenous peoples will be consulted (Interview with Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat officials, November 11, 2011). It is also important as a means of establishing mutual respect and understanding between Arctic Indigenous peoples and southern governments (Olsen 2011). Furthermore, the inclusion of Arctic Indigenous peoples in the Arctic Council allows Senior Arctic Officials to stay grounded in reality (Lind 2011).

The Government of Canada has identified that the Arctic Council is the primary forum for Arctic cooperation (Interview with Government of Canada official,

November 7, 2011). While it is likely that the Harper Government will continue to pursue other forms of Arctic cooperation rather than exclusively concentrate on the Arctic Council, it does seem clear that this government recognizes the value of the Council and intends to use the Council where it suits the particular objectives of the government (Interview with Government of Canada official, November 7, 2011). Neo-liberal internationalism would predict that the Harper Government will continue to use the Arctic Council because it represents the most effective way of gaining influence in the Arctic region. Neo-liberal internationalism would also predict that because of its particular ideology, the Harper Government will also continue to pursue other forms of Arctic cooperation, such as the A5 format, in order to meet its specific goals.

The Arctic Council will likely be addressing more and more issues of economic development as the Arctic Ocean coastal states settle the delineation of the continental shelves and begin to exploit more and more natural resources in the region. Economic development is becoming an important issue for all the Arctic states (Lind 2011; Interview with Government of Canada official, November 7, 2011; Interview with Government of Iceland official, November 8, 2011; Interview with Kingdom of Denmark official, November 11, 2011). The Arctic Council is already starting to accept that the interests of corporate stakeholders will need to be considered in order to ensure efficient and effective development in the region (Interview with Kingdom of Denmark official, November 11, 2011). Neo-liberal internationalism predicts that the Harper Government will continue to use the

Arctic Council to develop harmonized policies with the other Arctic states because the Council provides the most efficient way of developing the region.

The Government of Canada has been constrained by many factors in terms of the foreign policy options available to it in the Arctic region. While the shifting geopolitics of the region have certainly impacted the balance of power in the region such that Canada now finds itself in a more powerful position than in the past, this research suggests that the Government of Canada will continue to be constrained in the foreign policy approaches available to it. The power currently available to Canada as an Arctic Ocean coastal state will wane as UNCLOS is applied to the Arctic region and accordingly the more traditional measures of power such as military and economic strength will once again determine the balance of power. Canada will be left with diplomacy and multilateralism as the most effective means of influencing the Arctic region. As a result, the Government of Canada will continue to support multilateral Arctic organizations, no matter how reluctantly, because they will be the forum for diplomacy and compromise in the region. The Arctic Council is on track to become the primary Arctic multilateral organization and despite the Government of Canada's demonstrated aversion to it, the Council will be enlarged and its mandate expanded. Rather than merely putting up with the Arctic Council, the Government of Canada would be wise to make the most of its upcoming Arctic Council chairmanship by being a leader in the expansion and enlargement of the Arctic Council. The Arctic Council is here to stay. Canada played an incredibly significant and instrumental role in

establishing the Council and it is up to us to determine what kind of role we want to continue to play as the Council evolves into the primary and most important decision making forum in the Arctic region.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Leona Aglukkaq, Minister for the Arctic Council, has initiated a series of invitation-only consultation sessions to discuss what goals Canada should pursue upon taking over the chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2013. Suggestions and comments can be emailed to the Minister at [mda@international.gc.ca](mailto:mda@international.gc.ca).

## 8. EPILOGUE

Neo-liberal internationalism modernizes liberal internationalism by modifying this theory so that it considers the influence that political party ideology might have on foreign policy development. This thesis has assessed the value of neo-liberal internationalism as an explanatory and predictive theory with respect to the development of Arctic foreign policy in Canada since the end of the Cold War.

Of course, a useful foreign policy theory must be able to explain the development of foreign policy in other areas. Accordingly, studying Canada's participation in other international organizations such as the United Nations or NATO would be the next logical step in evaluating the value of neo-liberal internationalism.

Also, neo liberal internationalism has only been considered in the Canadian context. It could be particularly illuminating to test the value of both traditional liberal internationalism and neo-liberal internationalism by analysing the development of foreign policy in other states with similar characteristics as Canada. The Arctic region in particular would be a convenient case study for this line of inquiry because the region is mostly comprised of 'middle power' states similar to Canada.

Going forward, neo-liberal internationalism requires further investigation to determine if this theory has applicability beyond the confines of the Arctic region.

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# APPENDIX A

## Research Ethics Board Approval Memorandum



OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES  
MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 27, 2011

TO: Ciara Sebastian  
P.O. Box 815  
White City, SK S4L 5B1

FROM: Dr. Bruce Plouffe  
Chair, Research Ethics Board

Re: **Canadian Arctic Policy and the Arctic Council (File # 11S1112)**

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Please be advised that the University of Regina Research Ethics Board has reviewed your proposal and found it to be:

- 1. APPROVED AS SUBMITTED. Only applicants with this designation have ethical approval to proceed with their research as described in their applications. For research lasting more than one year (Section 1F). **ETHICAL APPROVAL MUST BE RENEWED BY SUBMITTING A BRIEF STATUS REPORT EVERY TWELVE MONTHS.** Approval will be revoked unless a satisfactory status report is received. Any substantive changes in methodology or instrumentation must also be approved prior to their implementation.
- 2. ACCEPTABLE SUBJECT TO MINOR CHANGES AND PRECAUTIONS (SEE ATTACHED). Changes must be submitted to the REB and approved prior to beginning research. Please submit a supplementary memo addressing the concerns to the Chair of the REB.\*\* Do not submit a new application. Once changes are deemed acceptable, ethical approval will be granted.
- 3. ACCEPTABLE SUBJECT TO CHANGES AND PRECAUTIONS (SEE ATTACHED). Changes must be submitted to the REB and approved prior to beginning research. Please submit a supplementary memo addressing the concerns to the Chair of the REB.\*\* Do not submit a new application. Once changes are deemed acceptable, ethical approval will be granted.
- 4. UNACCEPTABLE AS SUBMITTED. The proposal requires substantial additions or redesign. Please contact the Chair of the REB for advice on how the project proposal might be revised.

  
Dr. Bruce Plouffe

cc: Dr. Thomas McIntosh – Political Science

\*\* supplementary memo should be forwarded to the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at the Office of Research Services (Research and Innovation Centre, Room 109) or by e-mail to [research.ethics@uregina.ca](mailto:research.ethics@uregina.ca)

Phone: (306) 585-4775  
Fax: (306) 585-4893  
[www.uregina.ca/research](http://www.uregina.ca/research)

# APPENDIX B

## Arctic Projection Map

### Arctic administrative areas

compiled by  
Winfried K. Dallmann,  
Norwegian Polar Institute



## APPENDIX C

### Arctic Council Declaration Chart

<b>1996/09/19</b>  <b>Ottawa Declaration (Canada)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inuit Circumpolar Conference</li> <li>- Saami Council</li> <li>- Association of Indigenous Minorities of the Far North, Siberia, the Far East of the Russian Federation</li> </ul>
	<i>Observers added</i>	
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	all AEPS groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP)</li> <li>- Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)</li> <li>- Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)</li> <li>- Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPPR)</li> </ul>
	<i>Reports received</i>	

<b>1998/09/18</b>  <b>Iqaluit Declaration (Canada)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	- Aleut International Association
	<i>Observers added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Federal Republic of Germany</li> <li>- Kingdom of the Netherlands</li> <li>- Poland</li> <li>- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</li> <li>- Nordic Council</li> <li>- Northern Forum</li> <li>- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE)</li> <li>- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)</li> <li>- International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)</li> <li>- Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (SCPAR)</li> <li>- World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)</li> <li>- International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH)</li> </ul>
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	- Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)
	<i>Reports received</i>	- Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) Assessment Report: Arctic Pollution Issues

<b>2000/10/13</b> <b>Barrow Declaration (USA)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arctic Athabaskan Council</li> <li>- Gwich'in Council International</li> </ul>
	<i>Observers added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- France</li> <li>- North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)</li> <li>- Advisory Committee on the Protection of the Sea (ACOPS)</li> <li>- Association of World Reindeer Herders (AWRH)</li> <li>- Circumpolar Conservation Union (CCU)</li> <li>- International Arctic Social Science Association (IASSA)</li> <li>- International Federation of Red Cross &amp; Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)</li> <li>- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)</li> </ul>
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arctic Council Action Plan to Eliminate Pollution in the Arctic (ACAP)</li> </ul>
	<i>Reports received</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA)</li> <li>- AMAP Assessment Report</li> <li>- AMAP Report on Phase I of the Multilateral Co-operative Project for Phase-Out of PCB Use, and Management of PCB-Contaminated Waste in the Russian Federation</li> <li>- CAFF Report on Biodiversity Monitoring</li> <li>- CAFF Report on Legal Instruments for Marine Protection</li> <li>- CAFF Report on Circumpolar Marine Conservation</li> <li>- CAFF Report on Protected Area Needs in the Russian Arctic</li> <li>- CAFF Report on Rare Endemic Vascular Plants</li> <li>- CAFF Report on Seabird Harvest and Seabird Bycatch</li> <li>- CAFF Report on Arctic Flora and Fauna: Biodiversity, Status and Conservation</li> <li>- EPPR Report on Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements</li> </ul>

<b>2002/10/10</b> <b>Inari Declaration (Finland)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	
	<i>Observers added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- United Nations Development Program (UNDP)</li> <li>- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA)</li> <li>- University of the Arctic</li> </ul>
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	
	<i>Reports received</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AMAP Arctic Pollution 2002</li> <li>- CAFF Arctic Flora and Fauna, Status and Conservation</li> </ul>

<b>2004/11/24</b> <b>Reykjavik Declaration (Iceland)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	
	<i>Observers added</i>	- Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO) - Arctic Circumpolar Route (ACR)
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	
	<i>Reports received</i>	- Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) - Arctic Human Development Report - Arctic Waters Oil Transfer Guidelines - Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) Manual

<b>2006/10/26</b> <b>Salekhard Declaration (Russia)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	
	<i>Observers added</i>	- Spain
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	
	<i>Reports received</i>	- Assessment report on Acidifying Pollutants, Arctic Haze and Acidification in the Arctic (AAHA) - Progress report on the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA)

<b>2009/04/29</b> <b>Tromsø Declaration (Norway)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	
	<i>Observers added</i>	
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	
	<i>Reports received</i>	- The Greenland Ice Sheet in a Changing Climate - Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) - Arctic Council Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines - Report on Arctic Energy - Arctic Pollution 2009



<b>2011/05/12</b>  <b>Nuuk Declaration (Greenland/Denmark)</b>	<i>Permanent Participants added</i>	
	<i>Observers added</i>	
	<i>Working Groups added</i>	
	<i>Reports received</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA)</li> <li>- Arctic Council Report on Short-Lived Climate Forcers (SLCF)</li> <li>- Behaviour of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances in Arctic Waters (BoHaSa)</li> </ul>
	<i>Agreements signed</i>	- Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic

## APPENDIX D

### Key Government of Canada Ministers

Prime Minister			
Name	Political Party	Term of Office	
Stephen Harper	Conservative	Feb. 6, 2006	Present
Paul Martin	Liberal	Dec. 12, 2003	Feb. 6, 2006
Jean Chrétien	Liberal	Nov. 4, 1993	Dec. 12, 2003
Kim Campbell	Conservative	Jun. 25, 1993	Nov. 4, 1993
Brian Mulroney	Conservative	Sep. 17, 1984	Jun. 25, 1993

Minister of Foreign Affairs/Secretary of State for External Affairs (*)			
Name	Political Party	Term of Office	
John Baird	Conservative	May 18, 2011	Present
Lawrence Cannon	Conservative	Oct. 30, 2008	May 18, 2011
David Emerson	Conservative	May 26, 2008	Oct. 20, 2008
Maxime Bernier	Conservative	Aug. 14, 2007	May 26, 2008
Peter MacKay	Conservative	Feb. 6, 2006	Aug. 14, 2007
Pierre Pettigrew	Liberal	Jul. 20, 2004	Feb. 5, 2006
Bill Graham	Liberal	Jan. 15, 2002	Jul. 19, 2004
John Manley	Liberal	Oct. 17, 2000	Jan. 15, 2002
Lloyd Axworthy	Liberal	Jan. 25, 1996	Oct. 16, 2000
Andre Ouellet	Liberal	Nov. 4, 1993	Jan. 24, 1996
Perrin Beatty*	Conservative	Jun. 25, 1993	Nov. 3, 1993
Barbara McDougall*	Conservative	Apr. 21, 1991	Jun. 24, 1993
Joe Clark*	Conservative	Sep. 17, 1984	Apr. 20, 1991

# APPENDIX E

## Canadian Arctic Foreign Policy Timeline

<b>1987</b>	The beginning of Arctic cooperation - The Murmansk initiative
<b>1988</b>	Canada and the USA sign the <i>Agreement on Arctic Cooperation</i>
<b>1989</b>	Canada and the USSR sign the <i>Agreement on Cooperation in the Arctic and the North</i>
<b>1991</b>	Establishment of the AEPS  Canada proposes the creation of an Arctic Council  Dissolution of the USSR and end of the Cold War
<b>1992</b>	Canada and the Russian Federation sign the <i>Agreement on Cooperation in the Arctic and the North</i>
<b>1994</b>	Canada creates the position of Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs
<b>1995</b>	Canada releases <i>Canada in the World: Canadian Foreign Policy Review</i>
<b>1996</b>	Establishment of the Arctic Council
<b>2000</b>	Canada releases <i>The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy</i>
<b>2003</b>	Canada ratifies UNCLOS
<b>2005</b>	Canada releases <i>International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World</i>
<b>2006</b>	Canada cuts the Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs position
<b>2008</b>	Arctic Ocean Conference - The five Arctic Ocean coastal states sign the Illulisat Declaration
<b>2009</b>	Canada releases <i>Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future</i>  Canada and Nunavut sign MOU with Greenland on Shared Polar Bear Populations
<b>2010</b>	Canada signs MOU with the Kingdom of Denmark on Operational Cooperation in the Arctic  Canada releases <i>Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy</i>  Canada hosts an Arctic Ocean Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Chelsea, Quebec
<b>2011</b>	Arctic Council <i>Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic</i> is signed