Institutions and stability: the Arctic case

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Abstract: Institutions can serve stability by what they are, as well as by what they do in various 'hard' and 'soft' security dimensions. A typical region today has a complex of institutions sharing burdens vertically and horizontally, and non-state actors may also play significant roles. The Arctic has enjoyed stability thanks to its natural conditions and overall strategic balance, but the Arctic Council and other groups – both larger and smaller – have helped by adopting an inclusive, low-key and non-constraining approach. As the region's underlying characteristics change through global warming, the question is how far existing institutions' roles can be expanded and what, if any, further inputs may be needed.

What role do international institutions play in creating and maintaining stability in a given region of the world? The question will be approached here by proposing an empirically based framework for the relationship between institutions, stability and security;[1] and then by applying it to the circumpolar Arctic zone. The present roles of institutions existing in or impacting on that region will be explored, and some questions raised about the future.

Roles of institutions

The term 'institution' is here applied to any grouping of more than (say) 2 or 3 states, which meets more or less regularly and has some kind of consistent title, agenda and identity. An entity of this kind can affect regional stability and security conditions in two basic ways: through the difference it makes simply by 'being', and what it achieves by 'doing'. The mere existence

of an institution has *process costs* and *process effects* defined by how it operates, but also by the difference its creation makes from conditions prevailing before. Even a 'light' institution with no permanent secretariat or central budget demands time, money and energy from those who attend its meetings. On the positive side, the mere fact of neighbouring nations joining together over previous barriers of ignorance, distrust or hostility can transform local relationships. It should help to dispel exaggerated 'enemy images' and to identify common ground, opening the way for common policies and actions.[2] Useful chances also arise in the 'corridors' of formal meetings, and at social events, for discreet exchanges that may in several ways promote understanding, defuse confrontations and thus reduce conflict risks. Last and not least, the chance for a state to hold a rotating chairmanship and host group meetings can help to build its self-confidence, diplomatic skills and prestige, bolstering a national identity that

allows pride without rejection of the 'other' (Gudjónsdóttir 2007).

What institutions actively 'do' for stability and security covers a huge range of variation, from those that (at best) produce fine-sounding declarations, to those (like the EU or NATO) that carry out large-scale, wide-ranging activities both within their own territory and beyond. The minimum level of value added by the institution itself starts when it has a chairperson or other central point to serve as coordinator and 'post-office'. Most institutions go at least some way further towards the pooling of funds, execution of projects or longer-term activity programmes, establishment of subordinate bodies, forums and networks, publications and information work, and/or dialogue and partnership with non-member states and other groupings. In an extreme case, the institution may acquire *supranational* elements with independent powers and budgets of their own, such as the Commission, Court of Justice, Court of Auditors and to a lesser degree the Parliament within the European Union (EU) system.

Even the most advanced institutional roles of course depend on nation-states to pay for them, and to pool the resources or competences they require. But transferring the point of action to the institutional level does make a practical difference. Most obviously, pooled efforts can have greater impact than any state could achieve on its own, under an international free-for-all. But the collective institutional 'label' also matters: making it less problematic (for instance) for beneficiaries to accept the institution's help than if it came from a single state that might expect allegiance or another *quid pro quo* in return.

Institutions and security

Agendas and motives

The analysis so far could cover any kind of institutional agenda; what specific functions and impacts may institutions have in the sphere of security as such? The answers cover a wide range (Bailes and Cottey 2006) but for convenience may be split into two categories: those concerning traditional military aspects of defence, armed conflict and weaponry (often called 'hard' security issues); and those dealing with threats and risks that arise in the civil sphere and/or are tackled primarily by non-military means. The summary in table 1 is tailored for Northern hemisphere conditions: a region of developing states could have quite different priorities.

All the items in table 1 are on the agendas of one or more European institutions, but given this paper's title, we may question how they relate to 'stability' as such. 'Hard' aspects of cooperation relate most directly to peace in the sense of conflict avoidance and management. Close alliances between states, and agreements among less friendly ones – including measures of self-restraint like arms control – reduce the risk that these states will fight each other, but also help the region to withstand external threats and to bargain with other (national or institutional) powers. Strong regional military groupings threaten stability only if and when they clash within the region; trigger violence

Table 1. Two areas for institutional action on security.

Defence- and Conflict-related
Defence alliance
Conflict prevention and avoidance
political: dispute resolution, mediation
material: arms control and disarmament, confidence and stability building measures (CSBMs)
Collective peace missions at home and/or abroad, from monitoring to combat-like 'peace enforcement' (including civilian elements)
Other military cooperation (eg reform, specialization) and armaments collaboration
Non-Military or Civil Security
Non-state threats: terror, crime, WMD proliferation, (non-state) cyber-attack, piracy, smuggling
Border protection and management, migration control (asylum-seekers, refugees, trafficking etc)
Internal law and order
Accident and disaster planning/response (natural and manmade events)
'Soft' security cooperation: economic and financial, energy, other vital supplies inc. food, transport security and other critical infrastructures, environment protection, climate change response, epidemics and public health, etc.

with outside forces; or – some might argue after the experiences of Iraq and Afghanistan – pursue foreign 'peace' missions too agressively. Why, however, should the matters in the *second* list be be linked with stability and security, when they arise in distinct areas of public policy and mostly have no link with deliberate violence, let alone the use of arms?

The answer is that they do not have to be. The question of why and how issues acquire a 'security' label has been explored by 'securitization' theorists, often also called the Copenhagen School (Emmers 2010). They argue that a phenomenon or policy field becomes defined as a security matter when someone in authority calls it so, and when the 'audience' agrees to allow security-style remedies, usually tougher than normal, to be applied.[3] Normally leaders make the definition and the people acquiesce; but the reverse is possible if grass-roots fears drive the authorities to act. Thus different 'security' agendas may be defined by different states, regions, and even sub-state comunities, while security priorities also evolve over time.

Applying this perspective to the second issue-list: challenges like terrorism, violent crime, or piracy are likely to be felt as security issues by most people. The violence and disruption they bring not only damages people but affects the state's ability to defend its borders and keep order at home. Large accidents and natural disasters can have similar effects if the state is weak – *vide* the Haiti earthquake. Issues like economic management, finance, energy or infrastructure, however, offer more choice in classification. They may remain areas of civil public policy in their own right, without security connotations. Alternatively, specific aspects within them may be singled out as security chellenges: e.g. hijacking within aviation safety, or money-laundering and terrorist financing within financial policy. Finally, a state or institution may define something like energy supplies or financial stability as a security issue per se because of the severity of damage if the system fails, and/or because they see some other actor deliberately threatening their interests in this sphere. A 'soft' issue can also be securitized when it affects 'harder' interests of the community: thus energy blackmail could damage national autonomy, an economic crash may decimate defence spending, etc.

It is important to stress, however, that securitizing an issue is not the same as 'militarizing' it. Even violent challenges like terrorism can be tackled with military force only to within strict limits, under specific conditions: most anti-terrorist work takes legal, political, economic and other 'civilian' forms. Military methods have similarly limited application for protecting economic, financial, energy or transport interests (eg freedom of shipping). On the other hand, military forces and assets may be brought in as a practical tool for purely 'civil' problems like natural disasters or search and rescue.

Further, states may select issues for institutional cooperation for reasons intimately linked with security, but without using that word to define the topics or to explain their rationale. This happens especially when security relations with the relevant cooperation partners have been tense, or domestic opinion is sensitive. Successful neighbourly cooperation in such cases still boosts stability, through the mere fact of dialogue as well as any concrete measures agreed. This deliberate hushing-up or sidelining of security implications is logically enough called 'de-securitization' by the Copenhagen School. Analysts have detected it in the story of North European cooperation with Russia, as also discussed below (Joenniemi 1999).

Multi-institutional patterns

The broader modern concept of security also widens the range of institutions that can be seen as having security effects, making it unlikely that any given region today will conduct all its security-related work in a single body. Typically, different parts of the security spectrum will be dealt with by a number of institutions relating to each other either *vertically* (smaller groupings within larger ones) or *horizontally* (undertaking different tasks in the same geographical space). Thus in Europe's case, some challenges still demand global cooperation – epidemic response is led by the WHO as a UN agency. *Vertically* below

the UN come the OSCE and Council of Europe, covering the continent in its widest definition across to Central Asia.[4] Below them come the EU, NATO and groups made up of Russia and its neighbours:[5] and finally come the 'sub-regional'[6] groups of neighbours like Benelux, Nordic Cooperation and the Council of Baltic Sea States. An issue like WMD smuggling or pollution control could be addressed at all these levels if it also demands different levels/intensities of cooperation. *Horizontal* division of labour occurs notably between NATO, dealing with joint military defence of its members' territory; and the EU, which began in the 1950s with predominantly economic competence but now covers all the rest of the security spectrum, from military peacekeeping through to health and consumer protection.

Thus far, the focus has been on multi-state (inter-governmental) institutions; but the modern division of labour on security and stability involves other types of actors too. First, cross-border cooperation between *local government* (provincial) authorities has been on the upswing in Europe since the Cold War, often involving more than two states where their borders converge.[7] It achieves 'process' effects for stability by building common interests and good-neighbourly feeling across borders, and may also address security-related issues like frontier management, infrastructure safety and environment protection. Secondly, *non-state actors* like private business enterprises, non-governmental institutions, social groupings, and the independent media play multiple roles both in shaping/influencing the actions of inter-governmental groups, and performing direct security functions.

The 'softer' the domain of security, the more likely that the private business sector and/or other non-state players will own or at least manage the assets and activities involved. Aside from maintaining services like public transport, communications, and water and food delivery, private actors can get involved in security by lending the state their hardware, software and human expertise; carrying out delegated tasks (eg in guarding, first aid and rescue); and cooperating directly with each other across borders on aspects under their own competence.

If this analysis is starting to sound over-complicated, it reflects problematic aspects of the reality too. The pattern of state and non-state institutions in any region is more like a messy, bottom-up-built shanty-town than an architect-designed model city. Only rarely do the designers/developers of different groupings bother to consult and de-conflict their efforts, even when the same nations are involved. The result can be confusion, overlap and duplication of effort, leading sometimes to outright competition between institutions claiming to serve similar values. EU-NATO tensions are a familiar problem, but the larger European institutions OSCE and Council of Europe have also quarreled about overlapping competences in the field of democracy and human rights.

Such problems may initially be traced to competing secretariats, but considering where the institutions' money and instructions come from, they also imply a certain schizophrenia in national capitals. Different national ministries and political groups may prefer different institutions (the Right being more pro-NATO, for instance); or the nation

itself may be 'acting out' different roles is institutional arenas that reflect still unreconciled facets of its own security culture and identity (Bailes 2009). Finally, it is remarkably hard to get rid of an institution that has exhausted its usefulness. The results of all these factors include not just institutional overlap and tension, but also illogical gaps in institutional coverage.

Assessing regional needs

It would be tempting but wrong to try to cut through the complexity by drawing a 'model' institutional design for regional stability. The diversity of regional institutional patterns world-wide is neither an accident nor a necessary sign of failure. It tells us rather that each regional family has its own needs, options, and cultural/political/ psychological preferences (Crocker *et al.* 2011). Institutions also take time to evolve: from the first cautious moves for dialogue, to permanent constructions, and later to enlargement or reshaping. The patterns that they form will be affected by states' own feelings on issues like the presence and nature of shared regional interests; whether diversity among (and within) states breeds tolerance or hostility; and how readily governments will cede part of their sovereign powers for greater collective efficiency. Macro-issues like the presence or absence of a single large regional power, the influence of an outside power, whether the region is basically self-sufficient in security, and indeed whether it can 'export' major security contributions also greatly affect both the shape of local institutions and their external standing.

Crude comparisons of regional 'progress' that ignore these factors are unfair, and trying to impose on a region more 'togetherness' than it can objectively and subjectively sustain is usually self-defeating. Care is thus needed in using words like 'strength' or 'weakness' about a given institution in its regional setting. An institution that controls armed forces is not necessarily 'stronger' than one that manages ('desecuritizes'?) inter-state relations so as to banish conflict, and/or successfully tackles non-military hazards affecting the daily lives of millions. Cooperation in the form of EU-style unitary, binding common regulations is not necessarily the 'strongest' model for purposes of peace and stability, even if it can be judged the most *intensive* or *advanced*. As the EU itself has learned more than once, pushing top-down integration too fast can provoke a bottom-up backlash that undermines the hopes of further progress.

Finally, simplicity in institutional patterns is not a virtue per se but depends on what the actual challenges are. If they demand different responses from different sub-sets of neighbours, adding a sub-regional tier of institutions makes sense.[8] If a state finds it easier to integrate in one domain (say economic security) than others (say military defence), it will be convenient to cover these functional agendas in different institutions. If cooperation is needed both with close friends and less friendly nations who share certain concerns, smaller deeply integrated groups can coexist with larger ones seeking stability in diversity. Lastly, a complex system creates multiple options

for developing institutions further, as security needs, perceptions, and outside relationships may dictate.

The Arctic case: characteristics

How can this analysis be applied in the Arctic? First of all, it immediately undercuts the argument that the region's security and/or governance is in trouble because it lacks a single treaty structure, or single omnicompetent institution. Antarctic comparisons are misleading here because the Arctic is an inhabited region with land territories under the long-standing sovereignty of nation states, whose oceans have been exploited for both defence and economic purposes at least since the fifteenth century. Each of the eight full member states of the Arctic Council[9] – Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the USA – belongs to at least four security-relevant institutions (on top of the UN), and is thus at home with the multi-institutional approach to security building. If for this and other practical or political reasons, local nations reject the idea of a new 'Arctic Treaty', it is difficult to see how anyone else could impose one upon them. Moreover, such a monolithic solution might not be ideal in objective analytical terms. Following the argument above, the diagnosis should rather start with *what kind of region this is*; what process needs and functional needs its existing institutions are designed to meet; whether they are fit for that purpose, and how well they can meet foreseeable new demands in future.

The feature of the Arctic most often stressed is its (relative) peacefulness, transparency and predictability over a long period – in a word, *stability*. This might not seem surprising in a region so thinly populated, with a limited range of economic activity, and whose remoteness and arduous conditions make it hard to imagine any outside power making a 'grab' for it. What makes Arctic stability a genuine achievement is the diversity, in every sense, of the nations surrounding the North Pole: ranging from two of the world's largest powers (USA and Russia), through a large state with modest population (Canada), to the small Norway and Denmark – the latter present by virtue of Greenland – and the very small Iceland, with less than a third of a million inhabitants. One of the things they do share, a keen sense of national identity and regard for sovereignty, makes them *a priori* difficult candidates for any deeply integrated venture.[10] Throughout the Cold War, Russia – then the Soviet Union – was the military and ideological foe of the remaining circumpolar states, all of them NATO members since 1949. Further, several maritime boundaries between Arctic neighbours (and the ownership of certain islands) have remained under dispute, although one uncertainty has been resolved with the Russian-Norwegian maritime demarcation agreement of September 2010 (see map by Durham University 2011). Elsewhere in the world such factors might well produce tense confrontations, efforts by the contenders to undermine each others' security in every dimension, and potentially, armed violence.

Instead, the Arctic both before and since Russia's October Revolution has been a space where neighbourly cooperation is closer to the surface (literally!) than confrontation. There are long traditions of peaceful, collaborative scientific exploration and monitoring, with the focus on natural phenomena. The widespread exploitation of fisheries has not led to significant physical clashes (unless with outsiders – the British-Icelandic cod wars). One strategically located territory, the Norwegian-owned archipelago of Svalbard (Spitsbergen), is governed by a treaty regime preventing militarization and allowing all treaty parties an economic presence.[11] In terms of non-military security, modern nation-building and economic exploitation have carried a cost of cultural, social and even physical damage for the small indigenous populations: but since the late 20th century the norm has shifted in favour of protecting both the existence and the rights of the survivors. Regional institutions go unusually far in giving indigenous peoples direct representation and influence, and – in the West at least – there have been varying degrees of movement towards recognition of their land rights and political self-governance.[12]

Yet the Arctic as a whole is far from demilitarized. Nuclear-armed submarines patrol below the ice, while strategic nuclear weapons confront each other from US and Russian bases and all circumpolar states except Iceland maintain air and naval forces in the North.[13] Though tensions have eased since 1990, the region has seen a relatively smaller drop in military preparedness than – for instance – Central Europe or the Mediterranean. To understand how this factor can coexist with and perhaps even serve regional stability, four points seem crucial. First, given the limited relevance of ground force operations in the Arctic, there has never been a large-scale nose-to-nose confrontation with the linked risks of violent accidents and permanent burdens on front-line populations. Accidental collisions between air and naval assets may happen, as recently between a French and British submarine, but are typically small-scale, easy to diagnose and to isolate for crisis management purposes. Secondly, the traditional strategic value of the Arctic space has lain not in its contents but its use for transit in war, further reducing the motive for active contestation over territory and resources in peacetime.[14] Thirdly, the very fact that it is NATO and Russia who confront each other, i.a. with nuclear forces, raises the stakes exceptionally high: imposing a certain discipline and – at least so far - deterring any adventure that might escalate. Lastly, other actual and potential factors of violence are abnormally weak. Intra-state conflict or major civil disorder is virtually unknown, as are terrorism and violent organized crime – all things that may also breed inter-state tensions and start a slide towards war. In fact, the Arctic security spectrum has for long been largely 'empty in the middle' between the highly schematized military confrontation at one end, and challenges in the 'softest' dimensions of environmental security and economic/social welfare at the other.

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The Arctic case: institutions

If these factors on balance favour Arctic stability, what institutional regime might in principle best reinforce them? Three observations flow from the generic model above:

- closely integrated, homogenizing institutions of the EU type are ruled out both by local states' diversity in size, system, and (for Russia) arguably in norms, and also by national preferences;
- as 'hard' security postures are divisive and driven by motives, forces and alliances originating outside the Arctic, no regional arrangement can realistically be expected either to replace or override them. This calls for a 'de-securitizing' approach that sidesteps the military agenda to find security dimensions (without necessarily naming them as such) where neighbours have more common or compatible interests;
- institutional effects (through 'being' as well as 'doing') that help reduce tension and build understanding, also among non-state players, will be at a premium - including cross-border cooperation where applicable.

Sure enough, today's Arctic is occupied by notionally 'weaker' forms of sub-regional organization, none of which imposes intrusive harmonization or directly addresses military issues. The Arctic Council (AC) created in 1996 fits all these prescriptions. By its sheer existence and the informal 'corridors' it provides, it supports the peaceful coexistence of circumpolar nations and reinforces ties between them and its other members, Sweden and Finland. Its scientific and ecological work has always benefited environmental security; and more recently, it has started addressing issues of functional security and emergency management – shipping codes, search and rescue, oil spills – where Arctic nations' goals are both compatible and globally beneficial.

More specialized sub-regional needs are also catered for. In the European Arctic, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)[15] has since 1993 allowed Russia and its Nordic neighbours to work together, both at government and provincial level, on border management and cross-border cooperation. Like the AC, BEAC provides direct representation for indigenous peoples and consciously seeks to engage local administrations and relevant non-state actors. Since 1999 the EU has had its own Northern Dimension (ND)[16] scheme where the same nations take the lead, backed politically and financially by Brussels. BEAC and ND both address civil and human security issues like accident response, anti-smuggling or disease control, while tacitly helping to allay 'harder' tensions with Russia. A further sub-set of the AC consists of the five states describing themselves as 'littoral' (ie, having substantial land territories above the Arctic Circle), who held two Ministerial meetings in Greenland in 2008 and Canada in 2010. While Finland, Iceland and Sweden have condemned such moves as divisive,[17] the states concerned would argue that they are responsible both for the Arctic's best-known conflicting territorial claims and its navigable coastlines: making it particularly

desirable for them to reach some basic understandings. Their Ilulissat declaration (Ilulissat, 2008) expresses determination to resolve all disputes peacefully, protect the environment and local peoples, cooperate in maritime security and respect the UN Law of the Sea Convention (UNLOSC).[18] This is a rational prescription for Arctic stability, attuned to regional conditions both in content and in its purely political and voluntary character.

Mention of UNLOSC, however, underlines that conditions in the Arctic are not shaped only by its local institutions. Other UN agencies like the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) have relevant competences, as does the World Maritime Organization (WMO) - recognized by AC members as the best place to develop rules on safe and environment-friendly navigation. Europe's pan-continental organizations, OSCE and the Council of Europe, have not yet been active in the Arctic (Bailes, 2011), but NATO has substantial influence through 'over-the-horizon' deterrence and its own efforts to stabilize relations with Russia. The EU is present through the Northern Dimension, and has impact in several relevant fields of governance where Denmark, Sweden and Finland (though not Greenland)[19] observe its rules as full members, and Iceland and Norway observe those of the European Economic Area (EEA) and Schengen border control regime.[20] The USA and Canada are linked (for their whole territory) through the North American Free Trade Area, NAFTA, and joint air defences.

In sum: the Arctic is a space where local institutions play a positive and quite 'strong' role in stability, precisely through

what others might see as their 'weakness': their non-constraining, inclusive mode of governance, their accommodation of diversity, and their selective, 'de-securitizing' approach to strategic agendas. While suiting the region, they have also served the world – notably in terms of environmental security. The full explanation of Arctic stability, however, lies only partly in what these institutions are, do, and abstain from doing. Without UNLOSC and other specialized global norms, there would be no foundation for such diverse neighbours to agree on a regulatory framework. Without NATO – both its strength and its self-restraint – there would be no established military balance and deterrence. Without the economic benefits provided to various circumpolar states by the EU, EEA, NAFTA, Russia's regional and global trade partnerships, and arguably even membership in the G20 and international financial institutions, it is questionable whether local populations would enjoy the level of prosperity and access to global goods that they do, and whether central governments could sustain the level of subsidies that some communities need.

In conclusion: changes and consequences

Unique in many ways, the Arctic thus resembles other regions in having a complex, multi-institutional prescription for security. It is also not unusual in being exposed to change that could make its present stability unstable. Everywhere in the world, institutions both weak and strong are under pressure to evolve in face

of new conditions and challenges. The latter are, however, particularly formidable in the Arctic. The progressive opening of ice-free spaces will create possibilities – though exactly when is unknown – for exploitation of sea-bed hydrocarbon and mineral deposits, new fisheries, large-scale commercial transport along coastal routes and eventually across the Pole, and also tourism. Secondary effects imply the creation of large new infrastructures, population in-flows and major socio-economic and cultural changes for existing inhabitants. Permafrost melting could at the same time be disrupting extractive work on land and undermining (literally) existing infrastructures and communities. The security implications cover the whole spectrum: from man-made legal, political or even military clashes, through the possible rise of criminality and disorder, infrastructure failures and accidents, environmental damage and more frequent natural disasters, to aggravated pollution and disease risks and other hazards for human security. The governance framework is itself a variable, as new sets of official actors are bidding to join the game – most obviously the EU, China, Japan and South Korea[21] – and non-state actors both from private business and the NGO sphere will play perhaps equally critical roles.

At least two broader elements of stability could weaken in consequence. New resources will make the Arctic a prize and goal per se, not just a transit space; and scope for internal (possibly cross-border) violence and disorder will increase. The insertion of new, state and non-state players could also be destabilizing: but that depends on the nature of their engagement and behaviour,

and it is not excluded that they might even improve balance and settled governance. It would be difficult for any new power to 'invade' with a major military presence, and if NATO remains viable (admittedly, an issue in itself) some basic strategic restraint will continue. Further, two components of regional stability common elsewhere but so far alien to the Arctic might be introduced: direct economic interdependence (for example via shared investments in extraction and infrastructure), and explicit restraint regimes such as protected areas, military no-go zones and/or confidence-building measures.

Institutional responses will be shaped by the will of states (perhaps increasingly also outside ones) and the nature of concrete challenges, more than by any rules of theory. However, as a starting-point for further discussion five main options may be distinguished:

1. Strengthening of the Arctic Council and/or other intra-regional groups. This is already under way (Arctic Council 2011) but the question is how far it could be pushed without losing members' consensus and the benefits of 'weakness'. Another conundrum for the AC is whether stability profits more from keeping 'new powers' out or embracing them;

2. Strengthening of UN oversight going beyond the present significance of UNLOSC and IMO, possibly involving the Security Council;

3. Involvement of pan-European organizations, notably OSCE (for restraint measures, human security and rights etc);

4. Stronger EU involvement notably as an economic and environmental actor, and/or more explicit (not necessarily more aggressive or intrusive) NATO policies;
5. Extension of existing, or creation of new, purely political groupings to manage coexistence in an evolving group of key nations.

The Arctic states at present have diverging, often negative, attitudes to each of these paths. They all claim, however, to want a peaceful, stable, responsible future for the region; and given the magnitude of contextual changes, they cannot realistically expect to achieve that without some evolution also in institutional concepts and action. Time will tell: but experience suggests the banal conclusion that institutional adaptation will be belated, confused, and probably combine several solutions anticipated or not anticipated above.

End notes

[1] This paper adopts the wide definition of 'security' developed by institutions like the OSCE, NATO and EU and by individual European states since the 1990s. For an example see (OSCE 2003), and see the next section.

[2] In International Relations theory, the concept of Social Constructivism explores inter alia how the development of groups (including groups of states) comes to affect the subjective views and behaviour of their members – see (Baylis *et al.* 2011).

[3] Securitization theory perhaps over-plays this point, since modern policy-makers may choose to approach tough security problems with softer, indirect methods ('addressing the causes', etc). However, a security label almost invariably conveys higher priority for public spending.

[4] Websites at http://www.osce.org and http://www.coe.int respectively

[5] Notably the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) for military work, EURASEC for economic cooperation and the older, multi-functional Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

[6] The term 'sub-regional' is used here for neighbourhood groupings smaller than the EU and NATO, following the logic that (1) the OSCE uses the term this way and (2) the UN views OSCE as the recognized 'regional' organization for all Europe. See (Cottey 1999).

[7] Examples supported by the European Union include the Czech/Slovak/Austrian/Hungarian border region near Vienna, and the five-nation Trans-Carpathian area.

[8] This reasoning is accepted by the EU in the doctrine of 'subsidiarity', which posits that a task should be addressed at the lowest level that makes for efficiency.

[9] http://www.arctic-council.org

[10] Of this set of states only Denmark is in the EU (though Iceland has now applied), and it has four opt-outs from the Union's more intrusive policies.

[11] Spitzbergen Treaty 1920, at www.lovdata.no/traktater/texte/tre-19200209-001.html.

[12] For several relevant studies see (Alfredsson and Koivurova 2011).

[13] The US missile defence facility at Thule in Greenland may also be mentioned.

[14] WW2 hostilities by sea and land in the High North prove the rule, as they were a side-theatre of a conflict launched among non-Arctic powers.

[15] http://www.beac.st

[16] http://www.eeas.europa.eu/north_dim/index_en.htm

[17] Iceland also objects on the grounds that it too should be termed a 'littoral' state.

[18] The USA has not yet ratified UNSLOC but the Administration wishes to do so and has pledged to follow its relevant rules voluntarily.

[19] Greenland has opted out of Denmark's EU membership, as have the Faeroes.

[20] For more on this see (Bailes 2010).

[21] Another potential new element would be an independent Greenland.

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