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EU Member States' Perceptions of the Security Relevance of the High North

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Abstract: While developments in the Arctic offer huge economic opportunities, they also touch upon a number of different but interconnected security issues. The perception of these security challenges might lead to either more cooperation or confrontation among actors interested and involved in Arctic affairs. In recent years, the interest of the EU member states, France, Germany and the United Kingdom in the High North has increased. This paper explores the extent to which British, French and German positions on the High North have developed in recent years, how new priorities have been defined and implemented. More specifically, it investigates whether the potential for military conflict is the overarching narrative in policy-makers' perceptions and actions, and whether economic and environmental policies have gradually been securitized. In a first step, this paper approaches the concept of 'security' against the backdrop of recent changes in the Arctic region. It then analyses how different positions have been constructed in France, the UK and Germany – through discourse and the adoption of policies at both the national and EU levels. The last part compares national perceptions and actions in these three countries, and investigates whether a convergence can be observed and whether this may pave the way for a more coherent EU policy on the Arctic region. This part summarises the findings of the study and also illustrates the challenges and opportunities for closer inter-regional (Europe-Arctic) cooperation on security developments in the High North.

1. Introduction

Drastic changes in the Arctic region and their implications present an intriguing case for studying the perceptions and actions of policy-makers who are, or consider themselves, affected by the transformed environment. The effects of climate change in the High North have attracted much attention and speculation, most recently the simultaneous opening of two major Arctic shipping routes – the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route – as a result of this year’s increased ice melt. Climate change-related developments in the region are extremely dynamic and complex, and can be pursued from an economic, environmental, societal or military vantage point. The effects on these four areas are, however, closely interwoven. To start with, the current ice melt opens up new economic possibilities in the areas of resource exploration and management (natural gas and oil) as well as trade. These dynamics also bring unresolved territorial disputes ever closer to the spotlight. This may lead to enhanced cooperation or conflict – depending on whether states are willing to reconcile their competing or diverging interests. Furthermore, an exploration of the economic potential will have cascading effects on the fragile ecosystem in the region: a transformation or loss of flora and fauna – triggered by both global warming and increased economic activity – will compromise the livelihoods of the indigenous population and thus entail dramatic societal changes.

The pace, scope and interconnectedness of these developments necessitate a closer look at the securitization versus de-securitization debate. How are recent changes in the High North perceived? Do these perceptions lead to a construction or rather deconstruction of security threats and, subsequently, to the adoption of new policies and changed behaviour of policy-makers?

The perceptions and actions of many different players need to be taken into account – first and foremost the eight states which are members of the Arctic Council and as such directly affected and involved: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. But further actors take an eager interest and play an important role behind the scenes, in particular EU member states. France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, Spain and the Netherlands are the sole permanent observers in the Arctic Council whereas the EU as an organisation as well as China, Japan and South Korea have only been granted ad-hoc observer status. These EU member

states, above all the “Big Three”, have given important impetus to political developments and the securitization debate vis-à-vis the High North. Their perceptions and policies, however, have received scant attention. This paper seeks to contribute to filling this gap. It explores the extent to which British, French and German positions on the High North have developed in recent years, how new priorities have been defined and implemented. More specifically, it investigates whether the potential for military conflict is the overarching narrative in policy-makers’ perceptions and actions, and whether economic and environmental policies have gradually been securitized. In a first step, this paper approaches the concept of ‘security’ against the backdrop of recent changes in the Arctic region. It then analyses how different positions have been constructed in France, the UK and Germany – through discourse and the adoption of policies at both the national and EU level. The last part compares national perceptions and actions in these three countries, and investigates whether a convergence can be observed and whether this may pave the way for a more coherent EU policy on the Arctic region. This part summarises the findings of the study and also illustrates the challenges and opportunities for closer inter-regional (Europe-Arctic) cooperation on security developments in the High North.

2. Developments in the Arctic – An Arena for Securitization

The Arctic region has experienced the greatest rates of global warming worldwide, and the effects are easily observable. With rapidly rising permafrost temperatures, this year’s extent of sea ice and glaciers is likely to become the lowest since records started in 1979. As temperatures are to rise between four and seven degrees Celsius by the end of this century, climate models predict an ice-free Arctic Ocean during the summer months at least by 2040.¹

Global warming entails a chain of dramatic environmental developments which affect societal patterns and public safety. Ever more heat is being ab-

¹ Scott R. Stephenson/Laurence C. Smith/John A. Agnew, “Divergent Long-term Trajectories of Human Access to the Arctic”, *Nature Climate Change*, 1 (June 2011) 3, page 156; Antje Neumann, *The EU – A Relevant Actor in the Field of Climate Change in Respect to the Arctic?*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, July 2010 (Working Paper, FG 02, 2010/03), page 4

sorbed in dark open waters, river-ice in Alaska and other polar regions is becoming thinner, sea levels are rising, less driftwood is available and animals are moving further north. These changes do not take place in an isolated sphere but have wide-reaching effects on regional and global dynamics. As polar expert Walt Meier put it, “what happens in the Arctic doesn’t stay in the Arctic”.²

The High North has therefore become an area of huge geo-strategic relevance. This is also linked to the fact that an increasingly accessible Arctic offers many economic benefits. The recent simultaneous opening of the Northern Sea Route and the North West Passage facilitates trans-Arctic shipping activities. Both routes could become attractive alternatives to traditional maritime transport routes if navigable on a permanent basis. The shipping time from Europe towards Asia could be reduced by up to 40% when using the Northern Sea Route from Rotterdam to Yokohama instead of the Suez Canal or by up to 33% when using the North West Passage from St. Johns to Yokohama instead of the Panama Canal.³ Besides offering shorter shipping times, the Arctic is to date also virtually clear of strategic chokepoints that are targeted by pirates or other transnational criminal actors. In addition, huge untapped natural resources are now within easier reach. According to a 2008 US Geological Survey assessment, up to 30% of global undiscovered gas and 13% of global undiscovered oil resources could lie beneath the Arctic sea.⁴

This economic potential has sparked interest among Arctic and non-Arctic states alike. A large number of states are involved in the region and have

adopted different policies to respond to the transformed environment. Their policies are based on diverging national interests and perceptions. More specifically, these policies are shaped by the growing awareness that climate change and increased economic activities have an impact on security in the region and beyond. While states have developed different concepts of security, they have broadened their understanding of security in a similar fashion. Security is no longer perceived as being limited to traditional aspects (focusing on scenarios of military conflict and territorial defence) but has been expanded to include human, environmental and economic dimensions. These ‘soft’ security issues include further aspects such as health, energy, pollution and communication. States have identified more risks and threats in recent years, and consider themselves increasingly vulnerable. It is interesting to understand how concepts of security are being constructed. Nordic states, for instance, have developed similar perceptions of regional and global security dynamics and have coined the term ‘functional security’.⁵ In comparison, France, the United Kingdom and Germany have designed security concepts which are similar in scope and outlook but the differences in perceptions are more pronounced than among Nordic states.

Which factors influence the understanding of security and the adoption of policies? We argue that while material interests such as economic benefits play an important role, ideational factors are decisive. These factors can best be conceptualised as Strategic Culture, or “the socially transmitted, identity-derived norms, ideas, and habits that are shared among the most influential actors and social groups within a given political community, which help to shape a ranked set of options for a community’s pursuit of security and defense goals”.⁶ Strategic cultures are subjective and cannot easily be changed: they arise “gradually over time through a unique protracted historical process”.⁷

⁵ Alison J. K. Bailes, New Challenges to Human Security: How Relevant is the “Nordic Model”?, statement at the conference “Exploring Functional Security: National Responses And Prospects For Nordic And European Collaboration”, 24-25 October 2002, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm.

⁶ Christoph O. Meyer, The Purpose and Pitfalls of Constructivist Forecasting: Insights from Strategic Culture Research for the European Union’s Evolution as a Military Power”, *International Studies Quarterly*, 2011, volume 55, p. 9.

⁷ Kerry Longhurst, *Germany and the Use of Force: The Evolution of German Security Policy 1989-2003*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2004, p. 17.

² Bryan Walsh, Farewell to the Arctic – As We Know It, 27 September 2011, TIME <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,2095114,00.html>.

³ Miaojia Liu/Jacob Kronbak, “The Potential Economic Viability of Using the Northern Sea Route (NSR) as an Alternative Route between Asia and Europe”, *Journal of Transport Geography*, 18 (May 2010) 3, pages 345-494; Saran Somarathan/Peter Flyn/Josef Szymanski, “The North-west Passage. A Simulation”, *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 43 (February 2009) 2, pages 127-135; Arctic Council, *Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment 2009 Report*, <<http://arctic-council.org/filearchive/amsa2009report.pdf>>, pages 20-23

⁴ US Geological Survey, *90 Billion Barrels of Oil and 1,670 Trillion Cubic Feet of Natural Gas assessed in the Arctic*, <http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=1980&from=rss_home>; Donald L. Gautier et al., “Assessment of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle”, *Science Magazine*, 324 (May 2009) 5931, page 1175-1179

This explains why states respond differently to dynamics in the Arctic, for instance territorial disputes, resource exploration, increased maritime traffic and the emergence of regional governance structures.⁸

Whether states seek to reconcile their diverging perceptions and interests or steer towards confrontation depends on their specific strategic cultures. It is beyond the scope of this paper to immerse in strategic culture research in more detail and others have already added important value in this regard.⁹ The following part provides an overview of French, British and German perceptions and policies vis-à-vis the High North through the lens of economic, environmental and military security.

3. French, British and German Perceptions of the Security Relevance of the High North

France, the UK and Germany have closely followed dynamics in the Arctic and have adjusted their economic, environmental and military understandings of security. Official documents, national media coverage and think tank analyses attest to this link between perception of developments in the Arctic and national security concepts.

French officials have underlined on several occasions that France needs to better engage with geopolitical developments in the region.¹⁰ France is particularly interested in the security of energy supplies and the exploration as well as protection of alternative maritime transport routes towards Asia. The growing attention is underlined by the appointment of former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard as special am-

⁸ For a detailed overview see: Christoph Humrich and Klaus Dieter Wolf, *Vom Meltdown zum Showdown? Herausforderungen und Optionen für Governance in der Arktis*, HSFK-Report Nr. 4/2011, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.

⁹ See for instance: Emil J. Kirchner and James Sperling, *National Strategic Cultures: Patterns of Global Governance*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2010; Bastian Giegerich, *European Security and Strategic Culture*. Baden-Baden, Nomos, 2006.

¹⁰ Capitaine de vaisseau Guillaume Martin de Clausonne, *Les enjeux militaires de l'Arctique*, Bulletin d'études de la Marine, No. 47 (January 2010) <<http://www.cesm.marin.defense.gouv.fr/spip.php?article15>>, page 47; Michel Rocard, *Hearing of Michel Rocard at the Assemblée Nationale*, Compte rendu de reunion de la commission des affaires étrangères, No. 86, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/cr-cafe/09-10/c0910086.asp#P12_217>

bassador of the Arctic and Antarctica in April 2009, which constitutes a novelty in French politics.¹¹ During a meeting of the Arctic Council in May 2010, Mr. Rocard was accompanied by then State Secretary for European Affairs, Pierre Lellouche.¹² The involvement of high-ranking political officials underlines France's recognition of the growing strategic importance of the region.

The UK articulates clear interests vis-à-vis the Arctic and it seems likely that these will become even more pronounced in the years to come.¹³ This development is manifested in a number of policy changes such as the adoption of a National Arctic Strategy in 2008¹⁴ and the creation of an "Arctic Network" in the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The latter operates as a cross-departmental unit in order to guarantee coherent information sharing.¹⁵ Special emphasis is placed on securing energy supplies and safeguarding those maritime transport routes which link critical energy infrastructure.¹⁶

Being one of the most influential maritime trading nations, an economic actor that is heavily dependent on energy imports, and one of the main advocates of the global fight against climate change, Germany has a variety of multi-faceted interests in the Arctic. Similar to France and the United Kingdom, special empha-

¹¹ Jean-Marie Collin, "France preps for conflict in „Arctic Zone“", *Cold Weather Ops Journal*, 24.11.2010, <<http://cwojournal.wordpress.com/2010/11/24/france-preps-for-conflict-in-arctic-zone/>>; <http://www.ambafrance-ca.org/IMG/pdf/bios_Michel_Rocard_Daniel_Bouchard_07_06_10_en.pdf>

¹² Arctic Council, *Meeting of Deputy Ministers, Copenhagen, 27.05.2010, Final Report*, <<http://arctic-council.org/filearchive/DMM%2027%20May%202010%20%20Final%20Report.pdf>>

¹³ Clive Archer, *Security Prospects in the High North and the United Kingdom*, in: Sven G. Holtmark/Brooke A. Smith-Windsor (ed.), *Security prospects in the High North. Geostrategic Thaw or Freeze*, Rome 2009 (Nato Defence College Forum Paper 7), page 147

¹⁴ Clive Archer, *Security Prospects in the High North and the United Kingdom*, in: Sven G. Holtmark/Brooke A. Smith-Windsor (ed.), *Security prospects in the High North. Geostrategic Thaw or Freeze*, Rome 2009 (Nato Defence College Forum Paper 7), page 142

¹⁵ Duncan Depledge/Klaus Dodds, "The UK and the Arctic", *RUSI Journal*, 156 (June/July 2011) 3, pages 73-74

¹⁶ Liam Fox, *Sharing the Burden of Security in Northern Europe*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/Sofs/20101110SharingTheBurdenOfSecurityInNorthernEurope.htm>>

sis is placed on the protection of trade routes and energy supplies.

3.1 Scramble for Resources? Looking at the High North through the frame of economic security

EU member states' economies are highly dependent on the import of natural resources, with an expected growth in energy dependence from 50% in 2000 to 70% in 2030.¹⁷ Increasing demand for energy across the globe, combined with shrinking oil and gas reserves is leading to tense global competition for scarce resources. Energy security, referring to "the availability of sufficient supplies at affordable prices"¹⁸, has certainly become a crucial aspect of economic security. In addition to rising worldwide demand for oil and gas resources, experts fear an oil supply crunch due to insufficient financial investments in energy production infrastructure.¹⁹ Based on forecasts by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the global energy consumption in 2030 will be 40% higher than today.²⁰ More than 90% of this expected growth in the world's energy demand will come from non-OECD countries²¹, which might incite producer countries from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to shift their focus from the Western hemisphere to Asia.²² Against this

background, EU member states are seeking to diversify their energy supply and are increasingly looking towards the Arctic region. Due to its geographic proximity, the vast untapped resources, and the fact that already 24% of total exploited oil and gas resources in the Arctic are consumed by the EU²³, the High North could become a central energy hub for Europe. Russia and Norway account already for the majority of Europe's gas imports (40% and 25% respectively).²⁴

The Arctic also increases in importance when looking at other aspects of economic security. As export-oriented actors, EU member states are interested in shorter and secure shipping routes towards economic boom regions in Asia. Maritime trade between Europe and Asia accounts for roughly 26% of the total trans-continental container shipping traffic, which makes it today's most important trade route.²⁵ Maritime trade is dependent on secure and accessible Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC). A temporary disruption or closure of central transport routes and chokepoints would have devastating effects on the global economy. Yet in times of increased trade, entailing a higher degree of global interdependence, the danger of supply disruptions is growing due to an increasing reliance on only few supply routes.²⁶ The trans-Arctic maritime routes along the Canadian archipelago and along the Russian coast have great potential: if these routes become viable, they would bring traders in the Western and Eastern hemisphere closer together.²⁷

¹⁷ European Commission, *Green Paper: Towards a European Strategy for the Security of Energy Supply*, <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/green-paper-energy-supply/doc/green_paper_energy_supply_en.pdf>

¹⁸ Daniel Yergin, Ensuring Energy Security, *Foreign Affairs*, 85 (March/April 2006) 2; World Economic Forum, *The New Energy Security Paradigm*,

<<https://members.weforum.org/pdf/Energy.pdf>>, page 9

¹⁹ Paul Stevens, *The Coming Oil Supply Crunch*, London: Chatham House, May 2009 (Report), pages 7-8, <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/11937_0808oilcrunch.pdf>; Kirsten Westphal, *From the Financial Crisis to the Energy Crisis?*, in: Hanns Günther Hilpert/Stormy Mildner (eds.), *The Financial Crisis: Collateral Damage and Responses*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, May 2009 (Research Paper 6/2009)

²⁰ Nick Mabey/John Mitchell, *Investing for an uncertain Future. Priorities for UK Energy and Climate Security*, London: Chatham House, July 2010 (Briefing Paper), <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/17026_bp0710_mitchellmabey.pdf>, page 3

²¹ International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2010. Executive Summary*, <http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org/docs/weo2010/WEO2010_ES_English.pdf>

²² World Economic Forum, *The New Energy Security Para-*

digm, <<https://members.weforum.org/pdf/Energy.pdf>>, page 14; Nick Mabey/John Mitchell, *Investing for an Uncertain Future: Priorities for UK Energy and Climate Security*, London: Chatham House, July 2010 (Briefing Paper), <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/17026_bp0710_mitchellmabey.pdf>, pages 4-6

²³ Sandra Cavalieri et al., „Spurensuche. Der ökologische Fußabdruck der EU in der Arktis“, *Osteuropa*, 61 (February/March 2011) 2-3, page 217

²⁴ Sir Stephen Wall, *A British Agenda for Europe. Designing our own Future*, London: Chatham House, September 2008 (Commission Report), <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/12105_europe0908.pdf>, page 55

²⁵ James Rogers, *From Suez to Shanghai. The European Union and Eurasian Maritime Security*, Paris: EUISS, March 2009 (Occasional Paper No. 77), page 22

²⁶ International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2008*, <<http://www.iea.org/textbase/nppdf/free/2008/weo2008.pdf>>, page 106

²⁷ Arctic Council, *Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment 2009 Report*, <<http://arctic-council.org/filearchive/amsa2009report.pdf>> pages 20-23

Still, various obstacles need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, both routes are subject to contested sovereignty claims by Canada (Northwest Passage) and Russia (Northern Sea Route), whereas other states consider both passages part of international waters. The unresolved legal status could delay economic activities. Secondly, the harsh climatic conditions and the danger of drifting icebergs make it necessary for trade ships to be accompanied by icebreakers – particularly on the Northern Sea Route. Thirdly, the region lacks adequate support infrastructure (e.g. ports and surveillance) to accommodate increased maritime traffic. While Arctic Council member states recently agreed on the creation of an integrated search and rescue (SAR) system in the region, SAR capabilities and hubs do not yet exist in sufficient numbers.²⁸ A well-equipped security infrastructure is an absolute necessity in light of increased traffic and the danger of accidents (e.g. oil spills, cargo accidents) in Arctic waters and coastal areas.

France

France is a major oil importer (65% of total net imports are oil imports), with one of the key suppliers being Norway.²⁹ France's demand for gas has significantly increased in recent years, doubling its share between 1990 and 2004.³⁰ According to Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Store, France imports roughly 30% of its gas from Norway.³¹ The growing dependence on natural resource imports has led to a gradual securitization of economic policy: energy security found its way into the 2008 White Paper on Defence and National Security where it is

²⁸ Arctic Council, *Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic*, <<http://arctic-council.org/filearchive/Arctic%20SAR%20Agreement%20EN%20FINAL%20for%20signature%2021-Apr-2011.pdf>>; Helga Haftendorn, "Soft Solutions for Hard Problems", *International Journal*, 65 (September 2010) 4, page 820.

²⁹ European Commission, *France – Energy Mix Fact Sheet*, <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy_policy/doc/factsheets/mix/mix_fr_en.pdf>

³⁰ European Commission, *France – Energy Mix Fact Sheet*, <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy_policy/doc/factsheets/mix/mix_fr_en.pdf>

³¹ Jonas Gahr Store, *Open Hearing of the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Assemblée Nationale*, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/cr-cafe/09-10/c0910037.asp#P12_232>, page 3

identified as one of four priority areas for the protection of European citizens.³²

In addition to being concerned about the security of oil and gas supplies, the French government has a distinct interest in strategically placing French oil companies in the Arctic, which French officials perceive as one of the last regions worldwide where large oil fields are still untapped.³³ French oil companies, traditionally close to the government, have been present in Norway since the 1970s³⁴ and France is an important exporter of key technologies for natural resource extraction in the region.³⁵

Besides, French officials have repeatedly underlined the broader economic benefits and the associated risks resulting from an opening of the North West Passage and the Northern Sea Route.³⁶ Michel Rocard challenged Canadian claims that the Northwest Passage is part of Canadian territory, and thus supported EU and US positions.³⁷ It cannot be ruled out that this contentious issue might heighten tensions among stakeholders in the future.

As growing maritime traffic in harsh climate conditions increases the danger of accidents, French offi-

³² Présidence de la République, *The French White Paper on Defence and National Security*, <http://www.ambafrance-ca.org/IMG/pdf/Livre_blanco_Press_kit_english_version.pdf>, page 8

³³ Michel Rocard, *Hearing of Michel Rocard at the Assemblée Nationale*, *Compte rendu de reunion de la commission des affaires étrangères*, No. 86, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/cr-cafe/09-10/c0910086.asp#P12_217>, page 5

³⁴ Jonas Gahr Store, *Open Hearing of the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Assemblée Nationale*, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/cr-cafe/09-10/c0910037.asp#P12_232>, page 3

³⁵ Jonas Gahr Store, *Open Hearing of the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Assemblée Nationale*, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/cr-cafe/09-10/c0910037.asp#P12_232>, page 10

³⁶ Michel Rocard, "L'avenir de l'Arctique est l'affaire de tous se futurs usagers", *Le Monde*, 14.05.2011, <http://www.lemonde.fr/cgi-bin/ACHATS/acheter.cgi?offre=ARCHIVES&type_item=ART_ARCH_30J&objet_id=1156978>; Assemblée Nationale, *Réponse publiée à la question No43770*, <http://questions.assemblee-nationale.fr/q13/13-43770QE.htm>; Assemblée Nationale, *Réponse publiée à la question No 44812*, <<http://recherche.assemblee-nationale.fr/questions/out/S28/BNXUNKY95FC51B9IFPL.pdf>>.

³⁷ Michel Rocard, *Hearing of Michel Rocard at the Senat*, *Comptes rendus de la commission des affaires étrangères*, <<http://www.senat.fr/compte-rendu-commissions/20101122/etr.html#toc2>>

cials advocate an investment in new SAR installations and capabilities. While Michel Rocard welcomed the Arctic Council decision of May 2011 to create a system of SAR bases, he suggested that this should involve not only Arctic riparian states but all actors who are interested in using Arctic waters.³⁸

United Kingdom

As for France, energy security is central to British perceptions of security in the High North. In 2005, British oil and gas exploitations in the North Sea have passed their peak.³⁹ The UK will increasingly be reliant on fossil fuel imports.⁴⁰ Based on governmental calculations, the net imports of oil and gas could increase from approximately 50 million tons to approximately 130 million tons in 2025.⁴¹ As a result, the current government announced plans to deepen its cooperation with energy producing countries with the aim of improving the reliability of energy supplies.⁴²

³⁸ Michel Rocard, "L'avenir de l'Arctique est l'affaire de tous se futurs usagers", *Le Monde*, 14.05.2011, <http://www.lemonde.fr/cgi-bin/ACHATS/acheter.cgi?offre=ARCHIVES&type_item=ART_ARCH_30J&objet_id=1156978>; Arctic Council, *Meeting of Deputy Ministers, Copenhagen, 27.05.2010*, <http://arctic-council.org/index_html/search?query%3Austring%3Autf8=michel+rocard>

³⁹ Sir Stephen Wall, *A British Agenda for Europe. Designing our own Future*, London: Chatham House, September 2008 (Commission Report), <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/12105_europe0908.pdf>, page 52

⁴⁰ Ministry of Defence, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty. The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, <http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalas-sets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf?CID=PDF&PLA=furl&CRE=sdsr>, page 50

⁴¹ Ministry of Defence, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty. The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, <http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalas-sets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf?CID=PDF&PLA=furl&CRE=sdsr>, page 50

⁴² Ministry of Defence, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty. The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, <http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalas-sets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf?CID=PDF&PLA=furl&CRE=sdsr>, pages 50-51; BBC News, *Cameron calls for northern European alliance*, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-12233939>>

The relationship between the UK and Norway is of particular importance in this regard⁴³, with Norway being the seventh most important trading partner of the UK in terms of imports towards the UK.⁴⁴ In 2008, energy imports from Norway represented 51% of all oil imports to the UK and natural gas imports amounted to 70%. Since the 1980's, UK energy giant British Petroleum (BP) exploits oil and gas resources in Norwegian waters.⁴⁵ Additionally, BP tries to establish a presence in the Russian Arctic. However, this endeavour has not been successful to date.⁴⁶

The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) identifies various risks deriving from the UK's growing dependence on energy imports: "the UK faces a range of risks related to our ability to access secure, diverse and affordable supplies of energy, which are essential to economic stability and growth...these risks are likely to intensify over the coming years, due to our growing dependence on imports of fossil fuels at the same time that global demand and competition for energy is increasing".⁴⁷ This discourse can also be observed in the 2010 National Security Strategy, in which the disruption of oil and gas supplies are considered a major risk.⁴⁸ In seeking to minimise this risk, the UK announced to collaborate closer with the EU and other organisations. The

⁴³ British Ambassador David Powell, *Oil and Gas. Continued Growth but less Carbon*, <<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=5612069>>

⁴⁴ Sir Stephen Wall, *A British Agenda for Europe. Designing our own Future*, London: Chatham House, September 2008 (Commission Report), <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/12105_europe0908.pdf>, page 40

⁴⁵ British Petroleum Norway, *What We Do*, <<http://www.bp.com/subsection.do?categoryId=9003414&contentId=7008687>>

⁴⁶ Steve LeVine, *Is BP destined to blunder?*, Foreign Policy, <http://oilandglory.foreignpolicy.com/category/wordpress_tag/tnk_bp>

⁴⁷ Ministry of Defence, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty. The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, <http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalas-sets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf?CID=PDF&PLA=furl&CRE=sdsr>, page 50

⁴⁸ Ministry of Defence, *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy*, <http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalas-sets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191639.pdf?CID=PDF&PLA=furl&CRE=nationalsecuritystrategy>, page 27

launch of the EU Energy Strategy for Europe is one key priority in this regard.⁴⁹

The government is particularly concerned about the safety of maritime trade routes, as reflected in this statement by Defence Minister Liam Fox: "Already, more than 11 million tons of oil per year pass through the Barents Sea alone. Because ninety-two per cent of British international trade in goods travels by sea, we must maintain a strong maritime interest including in Arctic security matters".⁵⁰ The UK seeks to improve and protect the energy infrastructure in the Arctic in cooperation with other states. The Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Nick Harvey, made the following statement in this regard:

"As supply routes open through the Arctic, it is in our mutual interest to collaborate. Whether it be in energy security, protecting resources or maintaining the freedom of the seas (...), this group (the new Northern Grouping which includes Nordic and Baltic nations as well as Poland and Germany) has the potential to act as a clearing house for the capabilities which might be marshalled to address it".⁵¹

As part of this overarching strategy of close cooperation, UK officials have emphasised the need to create common search and rescue facilities in the region that are not only operated by Arctic rim states but include all interested actors.⁵²

Germany

Germany is extremely dependent on oil and gas imports. Russia and Norway alone are responsible for 58% of German oil and gas imports.⁵³ Germany im-

ports 44% of its gas from Russia and 32% from Norway.⁵⁴ Due to Germany's anticipated exit of nuclear energy production and its willingness to address global climate change, it seems very likely that Germany's gas imports will increase in the near future. This could lead to growing energy dependence from large gas producing countries such as Russia and Norway. Russia has already announced plans to invest further in German energy companies and to enhance an energy partnership.⁵⁵

Germany is also an important partner for Russian and Norwegian energy companies due to German know-how and technological capabilities for the exploitation of offshore resources in the Arctic.⁵⁶ German energy giant RWE is engaged in the Norwegian oil field Snohvit, Wintershall cooperates with Gazprom in the exploration of several gas fields in the region, E.ON Ruhrgas is strongly engaged in the gas field Yuzhno-Russkoye and holds a 3,5% share of Gazprom, and Linde AG and StatoilHydro cooperate on the largest LNG complex in Europe on the Norwegian island Melkoya.⁵⁷ Finally, Germany is directly linked to Arctic energy developments as the Nord Stream pipeline is planned to transport gas from the Shtokman field via Murmansk and Vyborg towards Greifswald.⁵⁸

For an export-oriented country like Germany maritime trade routes are of crucial importance. About 90% of external trade is transported via maritime trade routes. Non-European trade counts for about 30% of Germany's imports and exports. Of these, the trade with Asia accounts for 15% of exports and 20% of imports.⁵⁹ The possibility of open Arctic sea routes

⁴⁹ Ministry of Defence, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty. The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, <http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digit_alas-sets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf?CID=PDF&PLA=furl&CRE=sdsr>, page 51

⁵⁰ Liam Fox, *The EU should only act when NATO cannot*, <http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2010/02/Liam_Fox_EU_should_only_act_when_NATO_cannot.aspx>

⁵¹ Nick Harvey, *Denmark-UK Defence Co-operation*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/MinAF/20101214DenmarkukDefenceCooperation.htm>>

⁵² Baroness Ann Tayler, *Speech delivered by the Minister for International Defence and Security, at the Joint NATO/Icelandic Government conference, Reykjavic, Iceland on 29 January 2009*,

<<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/MinISD/20090129JointNatoiclandicGovernmentConferencesecurityProspectsInHighNorthReykjavicIceland.htm>>

⁵³ Henning Rieke, *Die Arktis lockt – Deutsche Interessen im Hohen Norden*, in: Bernd Rill (ed.), *Die Arktis. Ressourcen,*

Interessen und Probleme,

<http://www.hss.de/uploads/tx_ddceventsbrowser/Berichte_und_Studien_91_Innetel.pdf>, page 101

⁵⁴ Kirsten Westphal, *Russisches Erdgas, ukrainische Röhren, europäische Versorgungssicherheit*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, (SWP-Studie 2009/S 18), page 24

⁵⁵ Kirsten Westphal, *Das neue Öl? Worauf beim Gas jetzt zu achten ist*, <<http://www.swp-berlin.org/de/kurz-gesagt/energiewende-und-gas.html>>

⁵⁶ Helga Haftendorn, *Zaungast in der Arktis*, <<http://www.internationalepolitik.de/2011/05/06/zaungast-in-der-arktis/>>

⁵⁷ Henning Rieke, *Die Arktis lockt – Deutsche Interessen im Hohen Norden*, in: Bernd Rill (ed.), *Die Arktis. Ressourcen, Interessen und Probleme,*

<http://www.hss.de/uploads/tx_ddceventsbrowser/Berichte_und_Studien_91_Innetel.pdf>, page 101

⁵⁸ Shtokman, *Here lives the Energy*,

<<http://www.shtokman.ru/en/>>

⁵⁹ Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, *Deutschlands wich-*

towards Asia is of special significance for Germany. In 2009, three German ice-breakers of the Beluga shipping company were the first non-Russian vessels to navigate along the Northern Sea Route.⁶⁰ So far Germany seems having a preference for the Northern Sea Route along the Russian coast.

The nexus of trade and security of SLOCs has become a key aspect in German security and defence discourse in recent years. In 2010, then Defence Minister zu Guttenberg made the following statement:

„The protection of trade routes and the energy infrastructure need to be seen from a military and global strategic viewpoint (...). The growing demand of emerging countries for natural resources comes into concurrence with our energy needs. This could lead to new frictions, crises and conflicts. Security policies need to consider these developments and develop answers“.⁶¹

Guttenberg's successor Thomas de Maizière reiterated this position when presenting the new Defence Policy Guidelines in May 2011:

„Free trade routes and a secure supply of raw materials are crucial for the future of Germany and Europe (...). Restricted access can trigger conflicts. Disruptions of transport routes and the flow of raw materials and commodities, e.g. by piracy or the sabotage of air transport, pose a threat to security and prosperity. This is why transport and energy security and related issues will play an increasingly important role for our security“.⁶²

tigste Handelspartner 2010,

<<http://www.destatis.de/jetspeed/portal/cms/Sites/destatis/Internet/DE/Navigation/Statistiken/Aussenhandel/Handelspartner/Handelspartner.psm1>>

⁶⁰ Helga Haftendorn, *Zaungast in der Arktis,*

<<http://www.internationalepolitik.de/2011/05/06/zaungast-in-der-arktis/>>

⁶¹ Nina Paulsen, „Guttenberg tritt in Köhlers Fußstapfen“, *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 10.11.2010,

<http://www.abendblatt.de/politik/deutschland/article1691013/Guttenberg-tritt-in-Koehlers-Fussstapfen.html>. See also

Berthold Kohler, „Guttenberg hat Recht“, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 09.11.2010,

<<http://www.faz.net/s/Rub7FC5BF30C45B402F96E964EF8CE790E1/Doc~E58252D1E3CCD4D7893CBCDB66573F62C~ATpl~Ecommon~Scontent.html>>; Gordon Repinski, „Guttenberg auf Köhlers Spuren“, *Die Tageszeitung*, 09.11.2010,

<http://www.taz.de/1/politik/deutschland/artikel/1/guttenberg-auf-koehlers-spuren/>>;

⁶² Ministry of Defence, *Defence Policy Guidelines,*

<http://www.bmvg.de/portal/a/bmvg/!ut/p/c4/LYsxEOAgDATf4gdIb-cv1MYBzcQbMDgQ8ftSONtssUsrddQ3iDdk9YlmWnaM4XXhauIq9pPLyB65wRDdF6FQzZ2R47PxdqtcTHGAXIU_q72byv9tgQFK91xGj6tRgx1/>

Based on the 2006 White Paper, Germany seeks to prepare its Navy for expeditionary tasks, as stated below:

“Given Germany's maritime dependency, it is additionally vital to make adequate provisions for Germany's security. A special responsibility falls to the Navy to protect the coastal waters and sea lines of communication of Germany and its allies. This means having capabilities for sea surveillance as well as for countering sea mines, submarines and terrorist threats to the maritime space”.⁶³

This trend of upgrading maritime capabilities is underlined by the fact that the least cuts of the overarching reform of the armed forces are foreseen for the Navy.⁶⁴ This could enable Germany to become more engaged in maritime security cooperation in the Arctic.

Germany has long advocated the establishment of a coherent SAR system. In the Arctic Council, Germany has offered to contribute to the formulation of a search and rescue treaty. This position has been shared with France and the UK, which have strongly advocated opening the planning process to non-Arctic actors.⁶⁵ The full members of the Arctic Council have, however, rejected this idea.⁶⁶

3.2 Environmental security: protecting a highly fragile ecosystem

EU member states take an eager interest in the environmental dimension of the Arctic. Environmental security can be defined as “protecting the environment and local ecology, and protecting local people and assets from the violence of nature itself”.⁶⁷ Due to

⁶³ Ministry of Defence, *White Paper 2006 on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr,* <http://www.london.diplo.de/contentblob/1549492/Daten/78110/German_security_defence_DownloadDatei.pdf> 95

⁶⁴ Stephan Löwenstein, „Nicht nur vom Einsatz her denken“, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14.05.2011, <<http://www.faz.net/artikel/C30923/bundeswehrreform-nicht-nur-vom-einsatz-her-denken-30336922.html>>

⁶⁵ Helga Haftendorn, *Zaungast in der Arktis,* <<http://www.internationalepolitik.de/2011/05/06/zaungast-in-der-arktis/>>

⁶⁷ Alyson J. K. Bailes, *Options for closer Cooperation in the High North: What is needed?*, in: Sven G. Holtmark/Brooke A. Smith-Windsor (ed.), *Security prospects in the High North. Geostrategic Thaw or Freeze*, Rome 2009 (Nato Defence College Forum Paper 7), page 37

growing economic activity in the region, the Arctic ecosystem is under increased stress. Europe's big CO₂ footprint in the Arctic largely stems from European imports of goods and services from the region.⁶⁸ In 2008, the 27 EU member states were responsible for 16% of total global greenhouse gas emissions. Greenhouse gases accelerate the melting rate of the ice. Scientific simulations suggest that EU member states might be responsible for about 60% of the soot (sediments) in the Arctic, which cause the greying of the icecap and its subsequent melting.⁶⁹ These developments have a dramatic effect on flora and fauna, and deprive indigenous people of their livelihood. Due to melting permafrost and resulting coastal erosion, villages might need to be relocated.⁷⁰ Climate change-related developments affect human security in the region: river-ice has become thinner in some parts which affects the living conditions of those people who hunt, fish and travel in the region.⁷¹ Also, climate change could lead to dangerous weather patterns in the Arctic.⁷² First signs of this can be witnessed today with more frequent storms, blizzards and new temperature extremes which will lead to more unpredictable weather in general and further affect human security in the Arctic.⁷³

Moreover, it is important to take the threat scenario of an oil spill or a tanker accident into account. Due to harsh weather conditions, the bacterial degradation would take more time and the ecosystem would be

⁶⁸ Sandra Cavalieri et al., „Spurensuche. Der ökologische Fußabdruck der EU in der Arktis“, *Osteuropa*, 61 (February/March 2011) 2-3, page 211

⁶⁹ Sandra Cavalieri et al., „Spurensuche. Der ökologische Fußabdruck der EU in der Arktis“, *Osteuropa*, 61 (February/March 2011) 2-3, pages 215-216

⁷⁰ Charles K. Ebinger/Evie Zambetakis, „The Geopolitics of Arctic Melt“, *International Affairs*, 85 (November 2009) 6, page 1215; Scott R. Stephenson/Laurence C. Smith/John A. Agnew, „Divergent Long-term Trajectories of Human Access to the Arctic“, *Nature Climate Change*, 1 (June 2011) 3, pages 156-160

⁷¹ Ned Rozell, Scientists Study Dangerously Thin River Ice, The Bristol Bay Times, 8 April 2011, http://www.thebristolbaytimes.com/article/1014scientists_study_dangerously_thin_river_ice.

⁷² Charles K. Ebinger/Evie Zambetakis, „The Geopolitics of Arctic Melt“, *International Affairs*, 85 (November 2009) 6, page 1222

⁷³ Alyson J. K. Bailes, *Options for closer Cooperation in the High North: What is needed?*, in: Sven G. Holtsmark/Brooke A. Smith-Windsor (ed.), *Security prospects in the High North. Geostrategic Thaw or Freeze*, Rome 2009 (Nato Defence College Forum Paper 7), pages 41-42

less able to recover from an oil spill. This would also reduce the effectiveness of recovery activities. Finally, clean-up technologies and capabilities for Arctic regions are not yet existent in sufficient numbers.⁷⁴

France

On numerous occasions, French officials underlined the relevance of environmental security in the Arctic. The discourse has focused on two main areas: firstly, the danger of pollution in general and oil spills in particular and, secondly, the protection of sensitive environmental zones.⁷⁵ Due to an anticipated increase in maritime traffic, France is aware of the growing danger of pollution (stemming from emissions and waste from ships) as well as oil spills caused by tanker accidents.

In addition, French officials have called for the establishment of special environmental zones. These zones shall protect those areas that are particular vulnerable to human activities. This should include the protection from regular and irregular fishing activities.⁷⁶ French ambassador Michel Rocard argued for the adoption of a treaty to guarantee the environmental security of the region.⁷⁷

United Kingdom

The UK has increasingly invested in climate change research in the past years and has launched a number of large research programmes. Amongst other projects, the National and Environmental Research Council (NERC) initiated a £ 15 million Arctic research program for the period 2010-2015.⁷⁸ In particular, two

⁷⁴ World Wildlife Fund, *Oil Spill Response Challenges in Arctic Waters*, http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/where_we_work/arctic/publications/?122240/Oil-Spill-Response-Challenges-in-Arctic-Waters, page 9

⁷⁵ Michel Rocard, „The North Pole in Peril“, *Project Syndicate*, 04.03.2009, <https://northslopeoil.wordpress.com/2009/03/04/the-north-pole-in-peril/>

⁷⁶ Capitaine de vaisseau Guillaume Martin de Clausonne, *Les enjeux militaires de l'Arctique*, Bulletin d'études de la Marine, No. 47 (January 2010) <http://www.cesm.marine.defense.gouv.fr/spip.php?article15>, pages 53-54

⁷⁷ Michel Rocard, „Un problème oublié: les poles“, *Project Syndicate*, 20.02.2009, <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/rocard24/French>

⁷⁸ National Environmental Research Council, *Arctic Re-*

dimensions of environmental security have been prominent in UK discourse vis-à-vis the Arctic: the creation of specially designed ecologic protection zones and the patrolling of fishing zones (with the aim of deterring unregulated, irregular and illegal fishing activities).⁷⁹ In 2009, the former UK minister for International Defence and Security sought to raise awareness for the dramatic consequences of climate change in the High North:

„In the coming decades, climate change will devastate communities across the world. In the Polar Regions there are opportunities, but these must not veil the seriousness of the global threat. We must be clear: any benefit gained from exploiting the Arctic, cooperatively or not, may be outweighed many times over by the global damage a changing climate will bring“.⁸⁰

Germany

Germany is heavily investing in polar research programs which analyse climate change and its implications in the regional and global context.⁸¹ The German government emphasised in a response to the German parliament “that climate-change related developments entail the possibilities of political and security risks which could touch upon European interests.”⁸² These risks

search Programme,

<<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/programmes/arctic/>>

⁷⁹Baroness Ann Tayler, *Speech delivered by the Minister for International Defence and Security, at the Joint NATO/Icelandic Government conference, Reykjavic, Iceland on 29 January 2009,*

<<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/MinISD/20090129JointNatoicelandicGovernmentConferencesecurityProspectsInHighNorthReykjavicIceland.htm>>

⁸⁰Baroness Ann Tayler, *Speech delivered by the Minister for International Defence and Security, at the Joint NATO/Icelandic Government conference, Reykjavic, Iceland on 29 January 2009,*

<<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/MinISD/20090129JointNatoicelandicGovernmentConferencesecurityProspectsInHighNorthReykjavicIceland.htm>>

⁸¹ Helga Haftendorn, *Zaungast in der Arktis,*

<<http://www.internationalepolitik.de/2011/05/06/zaungast-in-der-arktis/>>

⁸² Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Alexander Ulrich, Monika Knoche, Dr. Lothar Bisky, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion DIE LINKE – Drucksache 16/8804 -, *Klimawandel und Sicherheit, Deutscher Bundestag, 16. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 16/9136, 07.05.2008, page 1*

were identified as resource conflicts, food shortage and legal disputes over boundaries.⁸³

German foreign minister Guido Westerwelle mentioned in his speech at the International Conference on “Climate Change, International Law and Arctic Research” two aspects which are of particular importance for Germany’s perception of environmental security. These are to ensure “that the strictest environmental standards are observed“ and „that responsibility is taken for any environmental damage that occurs“.⁸⁴ In addition, he underlined the importance of open and free research activities in the region, as “the challenges of climate change affect us all”.⁸⁵ He also stated that, in the past, too much emphasis had been placed on “Arctic rights’ and not enough on ‘Arctic duties’”.⁸⁶ He concluded with an appeal to keep the doors of the Arctic Council open to non-Arctic members, which corresponds largely to Michel Rocard’s argument.⁸⁷

⁸³ Deutscher Bundestag, *Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Alexander Ulrich, Monika Knoche, Dr. Lothar Bisky, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion DIE LINKE – Drucksache 16/8804 -, Klimawandel und Sicherheit, Deutscher Bundestag, 16. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 16/9136, 07.05.2008, page 2*

⁸⁴ Guido Westerwelle, *Speech by Guido Westerwelle at the Opening Session of the International Conference on “Climate Change, International Law and Arctic Research – Legal Aspects of Marine Research in the Arctic Ocean”,* <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/arktis/en/Speech__Federal-Minister.html>

⁸⁵ Guido Westerwelle, *Speech by Guido Westerwelle at the Opening Session of the International Conference on “Climate Change, International Law and Arctic Research – Legal Aspects of Marine Research in the Arctic Ocean”,* <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/arktis/en/Speech__Federal-Minister.html>

⁸⁶ Guido Westerwelle, *Speech by Guido Westerwelle at the Opening Session of the International Conference on “Climate Change, International Law and Arctic Research – Legal Aspects of Marine Research in the Arctic Ocean”,* <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/arktis/en/Speech__Federal-Minister.html>

⁸⁷ Guido Westerwelle, *Speech by Guido Westerwelle at the Opening Session of the International Conference on “Climate Change, International Law and Arctic Research – Legal Aspects of Marine Research in the Arctic Ocean”,* <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/arktis/en/Speech__Federal-Minister.html>

3.3 Military Security: heading towards military confrontation?

Developments in the Arctic – particular unresolved territorial claims and the exploration of resources – have the potential to challenge peace and stability in the region and beyond. In the event of a military conflict, those who are members of the EU or NATO would be urged to fulfil their treaty obligations and participate in collective defence. While tensions have eased among Arctic states since the end of the Cold War and while a direct military confrontation is rather improbable,⁸⁸ recent trends have sensitized European officials to possible security implications for Europe. One example is a joint statement in 2008 by then High Representative, Javier Solana, and EU Commissioner for External Relations, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. Solana and Ferrero-Waldner perceive developments in the Arctic as follows: “a further dimension of competition for energy resources lies in potential conflict over resources in Polar regions which will become exploitable as a consequence of global warming”.⁸⁹ They assume that “the scramble for resources will intensify”⁹⁰ and they close with the following statement: “In addition, the increased accessibility of the enormous hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic region is changing the geo-strategic dynamics of the region with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests”.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Alyson J. K. Bailes, *Options for closer Cooperation in the High North: What is needed?*, in: Sven G. Holtsmark/Brooke A. Smith-Windsor (ed.), *Security prospects in the High North. Geostrategic Thaw or Freeze*, Rome 2009 (Nato Defence College Forum Paper 7), page 33

⁸⁹ Javier Solana/Benita Ferrero-Waldner, *Climate Change and International Security. Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council*, S113/08,

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/99387.pdf>, page 4

⁹⁰ Javier Solana/Benita Ferrero-Waldner, *Climate Change and International Security. Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council*, S113/08,

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/99387.pdf>, page 5

⁹¹ Javier Solana/Benita Ferrero-Waldner, *Climate Change and International Security. Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council*, S113/08,

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/99387.pdf>, page 8

France

French officials take the possibility of military confrontation in the Arctic into account and are aware of the potential implications for European security. According to former French Minister of Defence, Hervé Morin, the government seeks to defend its interests in the region and considers the scenario of becoming “indirectly involved in crises in the High North”.⁹² Under its solidarity obligations in NATO, France could be pushed into a conventional conflict between those Arctic states that are members of the Alliance (Norway, Denmark, Canada, the United States) and Russia. The fact that Russia resumed strategic bomber patrol flight over the Arctic and re-established a regular naval presence was followed with suspicion.⁹³ France also holds responsibilities under the EU’s Lisbon Treaty: if implemented, the new solidarity clause foresees mutual support in the event of natural or man-made disasters in EU member states.

France, a nuclear power with second strike capacity, could also be drawn into a nuclear conflict. The Arctic has high strategic significance for nuclear powers in the Western hemisphere, being the shortest route for ballistic missiles towards Russia and China.⁹⁴ France continues to deploy its submarines, equipped with nuclear ballistic missiles, into Arctic waters.⁹⁵

The French awareness of security dynamics in the High North is also reflected in the development of French military capabilities that can be used in Arctic operations. The French White Paper states that France possesses military capabilities that function in extreme climatic zones. This underlines France’s preparedness for a potential deployment of troops and capabilities to the Arctic. In responding to an enquiry in parliament, the French Ministry of Defence illustrated the availability of substantial military capabilities for

⁹² Assemblée Nationale, *Réponse publiée à la question No 77341*, <<http://questions.assemblee-nationale.fr/q13/13-77341QE.htm>>

⁹³ Jean-Marie Collin, *Arctique, la France prend position*, 26 September 2010, <<http://www.diploweb.com/Arctique-la-France-prend-position.html>>.

⁹⁴ Capitaine de vaisseau Guillaume Martin de Clausonne, *Les enjeux militaires de l’Arctique*, Bulletin d’études de la Marine, No. 47 (January 2010)

<<http://www.cesm.marine.defense.gouv.fr/spip.php?article15>>, pages 47-56

⁹⁵ Assemblée Nationale, *Written Answer by the Ministry of Defence*, <<http://questions.assemblee-nationale.fr/q13/13-77341QE.htm>>

operations in polar areas, amongst others a 6000-men strong brigade of the mountain infantry. In addition, the French Navy deploys its nuclear submarines to Arctic waters in order to train and ensure the readiness of its nuclear deterrent (“Force de Frappe”).⁹⁶ In May 2011, France took command of NATO’s policing mission in the Icelandic and Baltic air spaces.⁹⁷ In addition, the French Armed Forces participate on a regular basis in military exercises in the Arctic region. The Air Force participated alongside the US and Canada in the exercise “Red Flag” in 2008 and 2009 in Canada. A detachment of French ground forces took part in the exercise “Nordic Warrior” in Canada.

The United Kingdom

During the Cold War, the Arctic and North Atlantic were of high strategic relevance for the UK. The “Greenland-Iceland-UK (GIUK) gap” in particular was considered an area for potential military confrontation with the USSR.⁹⁸ After the end of the Cold War, the UK reduced its involvement in the region. Nevertheless, as in the case of France, the UK still has second strike nuclear capabilities and continues to patrol Arctic waters with nuclear armed submarines. This underlines the perception of ongoing strategic relevance of the Arctic for the UK.

In the latest Future Maritime Operational Concept (2007), the Polar regions are described as areas of potentially increasing competition for natural resource exploitation and commercial interests.⁹⁹ Being a key

⁹⁶ Capitaine de vaisseau Guillaume Martin de Clausonne, *Les enjeux militaires de l’Arctique*, Bulletin d’études de la Marine, No. 47 (January 2010) <<http://www.cesm.marine.defense.gouv.fr/spip.php?article15>>, page 54; Assemblée Nationale, *Written Answer by the Ministry of Defence*, <<http://questions.assemblee-nationale.fr/q13/13-77341QE.htm>>

⁹⁷ Atlantic Council, *Germany Takes a Turn at Guarding Icelandic Airspace*, <<http://www.acus.org/natosource/germany-takes-turn-guarding-icelandic-airspace>>; Atlantic Council, *French Airforce Takes Command of NATO’s Baltic Air Policing Mission*, <<http://www.acus.org/natosource/french-airforce-takes-command-natos-baltic-air-policing-mission>>

⁹⁸ Duncan Depledge/Klaus Dodds, “The UK and the Arctic”, *RUSI Journal*, 156 (June/July 2011) 3, page 74; Lee Willet, *Shaping the International Maritime Discourse. The Royal Navy’s Role*,

⁹⁹ Ministry of Defence, *Future Maritime Operational Concept 2007*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/MicroSite/DCDC/OurPublications/Concepts/FutureMaritimeOperationalConcept2007.htm>>

member of NATO and the EU, the UK takes its solidarity obligations in the event of an armed conflict into considerations. UK Defence Minister Liam Fox underlined this in November 2010:

*“Britain’s national interests are directly affected by the security and defence challenges in this region – not only through our shared belief in liberal democracy and the rule of law – not only because of our treaty obligations in NATO and the European Union – but because even in this era of globalization, the cold, hard realities of geography exert an overwhelming influence on our defence and our national interests”.*¹⁰⁰

A key security aspect according to Liam Fox is to keep Arctic trade routes safe and open. The UK prioritises a strengthening of bi-lateral and multi-lateral relationships and advocates the creation of an open network which facilitates closer cooperation between NATO and non-NATO member states.¹⁰¹ The UK has recently pushed for closer cooperation with Nordic countries. With new initiatives for bilateral (e.g. with Norway) and regional (Nordic-Baltic) cooperation in security and defence affairs, the UK seeks to meet this objective. More specifically, Liam Fox suggested enhancing the interoperability of the Nordic and UK-Sweden Battlegroups.¹⁰² He explained:

*“Notwithstanding widespread global interests in a multi-polar world, we cannot forget that geographically we are a Northern European country (...). Here in the Northern European neighbourhood it makes sense to work together to secure our own region, to keep our trade routes open, to exploit together new opportunities and to face together threats as they arise”.*¹⁰³

Finally, the UK underlines its recognition of the security relevance of the Arctic by participating in mili-

¹⁰⁰ Liam Fox, *Sharing the Burden of Security in Northern Europe*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/SofS/20101110SharingTheBurdenOfSecurityInNorthernEurope.htm>>

¹⁰¹ Liam Fox, *Sharing the Burden of Security in Northern Europe*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/SofS/20101110SharingTheBurdenOfSecurityInNorthernEurope.htm>>

¹⁰² Liam Fox, *Sharing the Burden of Security in Northern Europe*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/SofS/20101110SharingTheBurdenOfSecurityInNorthernEurope.htm>>

¹⁰³ Liam Fox, *Sharing the Burden of Security in Northern Europe*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/SofS/20101110SharingTheBurdenOfSecurityInNorthernEurope.htm>>

tary exercises on Arctic soil. The Royal Navy's amphibious task group took part in exercise Cold Response in Norway in 2010. The MoD announced that the exercise was vital to ensure that the Navy strengthens its capacities and capabilities for traditional sea-fighting whilst undertaking amphibious warfare in a cold weather environment.¹⁰⁴

Germany

In a debate in parliament, the German government supported the conclusions of a research report of the German Advisory Council on Global Change that the geostrategic environment of the Arctic region is in flux. This was considered a result of the increased accessibility of natural resources.¹⁰⁵ On the question "which European security interests are influenced by the changing geostrategic environment?" the government underlined the importance of economic interests. On the question of potential alliances, the government suggested that the EU should establish closer cooperation with Arctic coastal states which are not EU member states and those countries with a particular interest in Arctic affairs. Also, the government stated that European trade interests could be affected if the reliability of new SLOC's and the legal certainty of investment projects and procurement contracts would suffer from territorial disputes.¹⁰⁶

The branch "Future Analysis" of the Bundeswehr Transformation Centre, a research agency affiliated with the German Armed Forces, indicated in a study that Germany might be forced to clearly explain its position in the event of growing tensions between Russia and other Arctic states, which are all NATO members.¹⁰⁷ Germany advocates a peaceful settle-

ment of conflict and the use of civilian crisis management tools and appears to reject the scenario of military intervention in the Arctic. Nevertheless it might one day position itself differently if developments lead to conflict instead of cooperation.

Even though Germany does not seem to develop capabilities for use in specific Arctic military scenarios (as France and the UK do) it nevertheless participated in military exercises in the region. In 2009 and 2010, it contributed helicopters and cargo planes to the Exercise Cold Response in Norway. But this light foot print disappointed Norway.¹⁰⁸ Germany's reluctance to make a fully-fledged contribution to military exercises in the Arctic certainly is a sign of its preference for a non-military approach to potential conflicts.

4. Conclusions

These preliminary observations indicate a clear trend: we can observe an increasing awareness of the strategic relevance of Arctic developments for British, French and German security interests. It appears that France and the United Kingdom, with the establishment of new key positions and units as well as the adoption of strategic documents, have better defined interests than Germany. These differences can be traced back to the strategic cultures of these three states. Germany continues to follow its 'culture of restraint', whereas the French and British approaches are linked to the traditions or ideas of 'grandeur', exceptionalism and the willingness to assume responsibility and project force.¹⁰⁹ Yet despite these national differences, a convergence of interests can be observed. For all three countries, energy security and the protection of maritime transport routes are of utmost importance. In addition, they are all concerned about environmental developments and have called for a coherent strategy to address the root causes and im-

¹⁰⁴ Ministry of Defence, *Navy's Amphibious Task Group Heads to Norway*, <<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/TrainingAndAdventure/NavysAmphibiousTaskGroupHeadsToNorway.htm>>

¹⁰⁵ Deutscher Bundestag, *Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Alexander Ulrich, Monika Knoche, Dr. Lothar Bisky, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion DIE LINKE – Drucksache 16/8804 -, Klimawandel und Sicherheit, Deutscher Bundestag, 16. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 16/9136, 07.05.2008, page 8*

¹⁰⁶ Deutscher Bundestag, *Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Alexander Ulrich, Monika Knoche, Dr. Lothar Bisky, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion DIE LINKE – Drucksache 16/8804 -, Klimawandel und Sicherheit, Deutscher Bundestag, 16. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 16/9136, 07.05.2008, page 10*

¹⁰⁷ Zentrum für Transformation der Bundeswehr – Dezernat

Zukunftsanalyse, *Teilstudie 1: Peak Oil. Sicherheitspolitische Implikationen knapper Ressourcen*, <<http://www.peak-oil.com/download/Peak%20Oil.%20Sicherheitspolitische%20Implikationen%20knapper%20Ressourcen%2011082010.pdf>>, page 64

¹⁰⁸ Norwegen. Die offizielle Seite in Deutschland, *Cold Response*, <http://www.norwegen.no/News_and_events/germany/policy/humanitarian/coldresponse/>

¹⁰⁹ Emil J. Kirchner and James Sperling, *National Strategic Cultures: Patterns of Global Governance*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2010; Bastian Giegerich, *European Security and Strategic Culture*. Baden-Baden, Nomos, 2006.

plications of climate change. All three states share the perception that the importance of these security dimensions will grow over the coming decades. Against this background, they support the development of long-term perspectives, which would also include a stipulation of legal, political and operational procedures. The French, British and German understanding of security dynamics and their initiatives – for instance their suggestion to allow for a participation of non-Arctic states in Arctic Council affairs with broader implications such as the SAR system – prepare the ground for a more coherent EU position on the High North. While the EU seeks to obtain permanent observer status in the Arctic Council and while the European Commission and the European Parliament have published communiqués on the EU’s role and interest in the Arctic,¹¹⁰ little direct engagement with Arctic security affairs could be observed to date. France, the United Kingdom and Germany could engage in confidence-building measures with Arctic states, provide further impetus to debates in the Arctic Council and gradually develop more concrete EU policies in cooperation with other EU member states and institutions. Enhanced information-sharing, joint scenario-building and the pooling of resources would add important value to inter-regional cooperation in light of significant challenges.

¹¹⁰ See amongst others: European Commission, *The European Union and the Arctic Region*, <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0763:FIN:EN:PDF>>; European Parliament, *Arctic Governance*, <<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P6-TA-2008-0474>>