

Conflict Resolution in the Arctic

A case study of Arctic Council involvement



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Abstract

The Arctic is a region that is highly understudied when it comes to conflict studies. The region, although stable, hold several territorial and legal disputes between the 6 maritime nations, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Russia and the US. These conflicts are not just over delimitation and territory, but also over natural resources and open trade routes. In spite of this, the conflicts are contained and discussed constructively between the nations. In this era, where Russia has been very aggressive towards their border and hinterlands, it could be asked why conflicts are so contained in the Arctic, one of Russia main focuses. This could be because of the Arctic Council; an international organization created to govern and create cooperation in the region. This paper will, therefore, address what the arctic council has done to build the stable peace in the region and whether or not this peace is fragile or moving towards a durable peace.

This investigation will include a look at three separate yet connected conflicts in the Arctic through a focused structural analysis. These conflicts, the Lomonosov Ridge conflict, the Barents Sea conflict, and the resource conflict around the archipelago of Svalbard will show that the Arctic Council has built stable peace and might even show some hope for durable peace in the region.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Recently, the issue of whether or not conventional diplomacy and conflict prevention is sufficient to handle conflicts in the future has been discussed in several academic circles. There is a feeling that many up and coming conflicts will not be solvable with the current framework used by international organizations and state actors. A perfect case study for this is the conflicts that are ongoing in the Arctic region. The Arctic has long been an area of contention with several overlapping claims of territorial ownership and power struggles between the Arctic nations. This has created a unique conflict dynamic between highly developed states that is not seen in other conflicts. The primary governing body in the Arctic is the Arctic Council, which was created in 1996. The Arctic Council is an organization that specializes in cooperation and sustainability in the Arctic region. Furthermore, it has several observers and stakeholders involved in the process of creating and maintaining stability in the Arctic. The reason all these stakeholders are engaged in the region is that the Arctic is not just a region that is important for the states located above the polar line, but for the indigenous populations, the world community and several NGOs and private companies.

In the post-Cold War era, the Arctic has been a region in movement, not just because of the melting ice caps, but also because of the broad international interests in, on one side, preservation, and on the other side, in the extraction of natural resources and trade routes. Because of this uncertainty, the global dependence on petroleum and gas, and several overlapping claims of territorial ownership, the Arctic region is at a crossroads. Many scholars agree (Gunnarson and Chattey, 2007; Laurelle, 2011; Wegge, 2011) that it might only be a matter of time before a severe conflict will erupt, so why hasn't it yet? In spite of its lack of binding power, the Arctic Council has still managed to facilitate peace and reach several agreements between countries on cooperation. As a result of this, dialogue on Arctic matters are always open between the nations and more is at stake if a state should choose to escalate tensions in the region. From this, the primary research question of this paper is derived: What influence has the Arctic Council had on maintaining stable peace and what impact will it have on building towards durable peace in the Arctic region?

Currently, the Arctic Council has focused its energy towards environmental concerns even though there are several conflicts in the region. Out of these conflicts, three will be included as

the primary case study. These three cases will all show different conflicts, but with similar containment mechanisms from the Arctic Council. This will be investigated by looking at cooperation, confidence-building measures and how this led to stable peace. These three conflicts will be the grey zone agreement between Norway and Russia, the Lomonosov ridge conflict between Russia, Denmark and Canada, and the resource conflict in the sea outside of Svalbard. These all show different conflict based on different legal interpretations, but all show similar confidence-building measure and cooperation between the nations which has been instrumental to stable peace in the region.

In the current state of affairs, confidence-building measures on environmental affairs and shared responsibilities have worked to foster cooperation and stability in the region through a spillover effect on cooperation on other issues bilaterally. However, it could be argued that in the future, the rewards for armed conflict to access resources might become larger than the risks (Gunnarson and Chattey, 2007). Moreover, cooperation outside of the Arctic is not easily seen. An example is Russia, which has decided to return towards a Soviet mindset and is often turning away from the world community (Clifford, 2016). Although there are still several levels of cooperation between the rest of the countries, such as the Scandinavian economic partnership and the NAFTA where both the US and Canada participate, the cooperation is not as close as in the Arctic. Therefore, bonds outside of the Arctic are weaker. As a result, it is important to look at what the Arctic Council has done to facilitate cooperation and stability in order to understand how they can continue to do this in the future. The Arctic is an important region not just for the countries with direct stakes, but also for the rest of the world considering trade routes and climate change. To understand this conflict and how the prevention of violence can be fostered in the future is therefore of the utmost importance.

One initial thought is that in spite of embargoes being placed on Russia by all other Arctic Council members, Russia remains cooperative in the region. Outside of the region, these embargoes and the Russian blockade after the annexation of Crimea has caused Russia to become hostile and turn away from the world community, while in the Arctic it is still cooperating (Søby Kristiansen and Sakstrup, 2016). This is because the Arctic Council has chosen not to take a political stance, while Russia sees the UN as quite political. Therefore, Russia finds the Arctic Council easier to work through and values the neutrality that the Arctic Council offers (Søby Kristiansen and Sakstrup, 2016). This is of course constructed through the Russian rhetoric, but it still shows the Arctic Council has a uniting force, which will be seen throughout this paper. Because of the work the Arctic Council has conducted in the region, and

their work towards cooperation and how this has worked, already from the start it seems as if it is true that the Arctic Council has helped the region develop stable peace. However, what is still unclear is if the Arctic has reached, or ever will reach, durable peace with the structural conflict prevention methods that the Arctic Council use.

1.2 Relevance

Although there have been many studies conducted on the environmental change in the Arctic and how this affects world politics or on the legality of the claims in the Arctic Ocean (Koivurova and Vanderzwaag, 2007; Brosnan, Lechine and Miles, 2011; Pedersen, 2012), few have studied it from an institutional angle. Within conflict resolution, the Nordic model, which is based on active contributions to peacekeeping, high levels of development aid, and a continuous commitment to strengthen the international community, has long been regarded as a good model for conflict resolution (Wivel, 2017). In spite of the lack of studies made on the topic of conflict resolution in the Arctic Council, it has a hidden presence. In the Arctic Ocean both Norway, Denmark and Iceland are currently disputing claims with Russia, the US, and Canada. In spite of this, the countries manage to have a civil tone and cooperate in the region due to the commitment to strengthen the Arctic community. Therefore, looking at how they do not just govern the Arctic but how they work together to solve these conflicts is interesting (Wilson, 2015). This research will, therefore, seek to find how the Arctic Council, in spite of its lack of binding power, managed to foster cooperation and to avoid violent conflicts through soft power, which the Nordic nations are famous for achieving. Although soft power has often been attributed to states and states only, many IO's have been described as soft powers, such as the EU, which is derived from their member countries (Michalski, 2005)

Conflict resolution and preventative peacebuilding in the Arctic region is essential for several reasons. Arctic security has been on the agenda of policymakers around the world. Many of these policymakers agree that the Arctic Council should be in the forefront of this security initiative (Castro and Nielsen, 2001; Berkman, 2012; Åtland, 2014). The Arctic Council was initially created as a high-level forum for the Arctic nations to gather and discuss pressing matters in the region. Over the past 20 years, it has grown to become an organization with over 13 state observers, 6 indigenous group participants 26 NGO and IO observers, that wields immense soft power and influence in the region ("About Us - Arctic Council", 2017). Although the organization has a simple structure with ministerial meetings and a rotating chairmanship, it also has extensive working groups that advice on everything from the environment to

scientific exploration to indigenous rights ("About Us - Arctic Council", 2017). Because of this, the Arctic Council is moving into a new critical phase that includes comprehensive agreements. Moreover, the Arctic region is a highly contended region with several influential stakeholders. There are several delimitation disputes, such as between Norway and Russia in the Barents Sea, Denmark and Canada over the Hans Island and several states have overlapping claims of the North Pole itself (Brosnan, Lechine, and Miles, 2011). These conflicts have created tension in the region; however, they have also shown how the Arctic nations can cooperate in spite of these disagreements. Besides, there is substantial international pressure with trade routes opening up as the ice caps melt, tourism flourishing and natural resources being exposed. As a result, peace and stability in the Arctic region are essential; this is not just for the countries with direct stakes, but for the whole world population as a volatile conflict in the area can have significant consequences for both trade and petroleum in the rest of the world. An estimated 22% of the remaining oil and gas are located under the Arctic ("Olje og gass i Arktis", 2017). Moreover, there are over 40 groups of indigenous people that make up about 10% of the Arctic population. Further, there are several autonomous regions, such as Greenland and the Faroe Islands. These are seen as the loser if a conflict should erupt in the region as they are dependent on the land and sea in order to sustain their traditional way of life ("Arctic Indigenous Peoples", 2017).

Although disputes until now have been settled peacefully, there is more animosity between the Arctic countries now. External issues such as the sanctions against Russia and tensions due to the refugee crisis and other external issues have put cooperation in danger (Hovtun, 2015). In spite of this, a new comprehensive agreement on scientific exploration was signed and ratified in 2017, showing the willingness to cooperate in the region in spite of political turmoil outside of the Arctic ("Agreements - Arctic Council", 2017).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 International Organizations and Conflict Prevention

When addressing conflict prevention in the Arctic, one has to start with what is conflict prevention. Conflict prevention through international and regional organizations is nothing new and is something that stems back to the post WW1 era. The creation of the failed League of Nations was to maintain world peace; however, it failed as ideals and values were forced upon nations that did not necessarily want to adhere to these values (Jenne, 2015). Although this organization did not stand the test of time, it created the blueprint for the United Nations, formed in 1945 as a response to the WW2 with a mission to secure world peace, or to at least prevent a new world war. Subsequent organizations, such as the OSCE, the EU, and ASIAN, although different, all have similar goals. To create cooperation which in turn will foster peace. This is, in fact, the mission of the Arctic Council as well.

The difficulty with studying preventative conflict management is that it is hard to explore something that has not happened. In fact, when studying preventative mechanisms, one has to investigate why a conflict did not break out rather why it did. Moreover, one has to consider whether the steps are enough to contain the conflict in a changing geopolitical situation while still negating other factors that could influence why conflict did not break out. The Carnaby Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict has found that structural prevention, in other words, to address the root causes of a conflict before it turns violent, is the most effective way of prevention (Cortright, 1997). This is often seen as deep prevention, which is in contrast to light, or structural prevention. Light prevention is commonly used as a tool for the short term and will glaze over essential root causes for conflict, meaning it will often not work in the long term. The issue with this is that an IO will often use their influence to stop conflicts from escalating, however, as soon as the IO is gone, or another trigger arises, the conflict starts again. Moreover, light prevention is often indirect and through a layer of governance. Deep conflict prevention, on the other hand, tries to prevent from the bottom up through working with local communities and by instilling changes in attitudes towards the other party slowly and over time (Ackermann, 2003). This has been done in several brewing conflicts such as in El Salvador, Macedonia, Nicaragua and in Namibia (Tanner, 2000). In fact, in Macedonia peacekeeping forces were deployed before a conflict broke out and it deescalated the situation (Yamashita, 2017). This shows that structural prevention can effectively be done through IO's as they offer structural

governance and incentives towards cooperation. Moreover, it seems positive incentives, which is defined as rewards for specific actions is much more effective towards preventing violence than negative incentives such as sanctions (Carment and Fischer, 2011). The World Bank is an IO that is often accredited with successful conflict prevention tactics in third world countries because they give massive fiscal benefits to countries that demilitarize (Cortright, 1997). The UN and other IOs, on the other hand, create incentives through international participation. For some EU members and aspiring EU members, becoming an EU member and therefore be included in the single market and reap the benefits from this, is incentive enough to move towards a stable peace, and even durable peace (Carment and Fischer, 2011). What was seen in the Macedonian case was that the stability that the peacekeepers offered also disappeared when they left as they had not put in place a proper structure to gain durable peace.

One of the central debates within conflict prevention is the 'early warnings system' versus 'response' debate. Developing a proper early warning system is something that is very difficult and has been attempted by several scholars. Several studies (Lund, 1996; Nicholaïdis, 1996; Bellamy, 2008) have already investigated how the UN, through early warning signals and preventive diplomacy. Yet, some scholars (Tanner, 2000; Stedman, 1995; Björkdhal, 2007) argue that although these early warnings systems are in place, and people can recognize a brewing conflict, governments ignore the early warning signs. As a result, better response to humanitarian crises is needed for more effective conflict prevention. Although this might seem similar to the normative approach of responsibility to protect (R2P), it is actually entirely different. Whereas R2P is a legal concept that can be used to instate military or humanitarian aid in a country where the conflict that threatens human rights, preventive diplomacy is a political tool that has the goal to prevent such disputes from ever breaking out (Bellamy, 2008). However, this leaves the question open if it is an ad-hoc operation or long-term structural prevention that comes from the enabling of a stable and predictive international environment. A study on conflict prevention from a constructivist point of view saw that the framing of conflict prevention is ethical and from the framework of moral and normative ambitions (Björkdhal, 2007). The only country that has successfully adapted a conflict prevention platform according to the UN is Sweden. Sweden did this through rhetorically discussing buzzwords such as conflict prevention and peace, integrating the ideals and values into a policy framework and an action plan and by such institutionalized it (Björkdhal, 2007). Although several other countries hold the same rhetoric, such as Norway, they have not acted upon this with clear action plans.

This does not take away from the novelty of conflict prevention. If conflict prevention has worked, or if it was even there to begin with, is often a judgment call, which makes it a hard concept to thoroughly investigate (Stedman, 1995). Moreover, because if this, studies on it and early warning signals tend to differ from organization to organization. However, most IOs do have an action plan for preventative diplomacy and recognize its value on the international stage. More importantly, currently, there is no empirical evidence that it does not work, therefore, spending resources on preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention could save the substantial costs of a war on the international stage (Osler Hampson, 2002). Because of this, the UN and the World Bank have together launched a new report on preventive measures that handle how to better approach conflict prevention in the future through building more resilient communities (2018). Lund (1996) presented a diagram of peace, showing how a conflict could develop. What was important with these levels, was that stable peace, the second lowest on the conflict scale, could quickly develop into a conflict because no deep prevention had been done.

The issue with some of these organizations with conflict prevention action plans is that they are built around concepts that are western in nature, and therefore forced upon other non-western countries that wish to participate. Because of this, it becomes hard to build durable peace in countries that do not per se adhered to western standards. Consequently, it becomes much more inherent when an organization fails at conflict resolution rather than when they succeed. This was the case in conflicts such as the Rwandan genocide and during the Balkan wars. As a result, conflict prevention has become more normative rather than operational (Tanner, 2000). Currently, the OSCE is the only regional organization that holds both normative and operational powers within conflict prevention. The OSCE works hard on cooperation within Europe, and often offer their mediation services to countries in need. Because of this, we need to question whether regional organizations, in fact, hold the capacities to fully build and conduct conflict prevention. ASEAN has long tried to work on conflict prevention in Cambodia and in organizations such as the EU preventative diplomacy has recently become a hot topic, however, their focus still lays on short-term solution through cooperation with NATO and the UN, instead of long-term cooperation with organizations such as the OSCE which want to build durable peace (Steward, 2008).

2.2 Cooperation and Confidence Building on the International Stage

The three main concepts which will be explored in this paper is cooperation, confidence-building measures and stable peace. These will all be investigated in the analysis, as well as the possibility to build towards durable peace. These four are all interlinked and follow each other.

Confidence building measures are something that is put in place to build trust, and from trust comes cooperation, which in turn leads to the stable peace one sees today, and if possible, will lead to durable peace. Therefore, one cannot have one without the other. Therefore, if one of the steps is missing, it is hard to fulfil the circle. Because of this, investigating what these concepts are and how they affect conflict prevention is important.

As it has already been presented, cooperation and creation of confidence-building measures seem to be the main reason for why conflict is contained within the Arctic. Therefore, an investigation into a formal defection of cooperation is needed. Cooperation has several vital layers, and according to Hopmann (2010) cooperation leads to markets rather than hierarchy, which in turn replaces the anarchical world order. Further, Hopmann (2010) characterized this as two dimensions of interaction, the hierarchical and the conflict cooperation continuum. In the case of asymmetrical interactions, in order for cooperation to be present instead of conflict, there needs to be shared values and norms. Within the Arctic region, most of the countries share these norms and values, the exception being Russia. However, the power asymmetry is relatively small. Russia is trying to build itself back towards its old hegemonic state as seen in the Soviet Union, which is creating issues in the world order. It is therefore interesting to theorize why cooperation is still in place in the Arctic. The reason for this can also be found in Hopmann (2010) and his explanation of game theory. Within the Arctic, the Russians will lose if they do not cooperate, while in the world outside of the Arctic they have enough power that allows them to deviate from the world order. This interdependence was created through the Arctic Council. After the Arctic Council was established, there was a move from unilateral research towards multilateral and bilateral cooperation on several issues. Before, Russia had chosen to be independent also in the Arctic, but it became clear that with cooperation, exploiting and accessing the Arctic became easier and more beneficial than before creating Pareto Optimal solution through cooperation in the Arctic (Hopmann, 2010). Moreover, through constant systematic cooperation, a regime of cooperation can be created through interactive talks and by playing the “game” repeatedly with the same actors. The Arctic Council has exceeded at this and created a cooperative regime through creating a social structure and by emulating the shadow of the future (Hopmann, 2010). In fact, this shadow of the future is extremely important in international cooperation and negotiation as it dictates trust and future actions from a party. As previously explained most of the countries have similar backgrounds, ideals and values which makes cooperation and participation easier. The standout country of the Arctic grouping is Russia. Russia has long been an enigma on the international stage. Not just has Russia several

times been sponsors for mediation processes, such as in the case of Syria, it has also been very aggressive towards its own satellite states, Chechnya being the most obvious case, but also countries within its sphere of influence have felt Russia's tricky foreign policy. Russia has in the last 20 years moved from being a world power during its Soviet days to becoming rather docile during the 90s, before trying to re-establishing its hegemonic powers in the east during the 2000 and 2010s. This has created a shift in the security paradigm and made Russia an unstable and unpredictable partner. However, in the Arctic, the Russians have so far remained docile in their acts, but aggressive in their rhetoric. Because the US and Russia are so unreliable towards each other on the international stage, it becomes even more impressive that they have managed to remain relatively stable and predictable in the Arctic. This could be because of the shadow of the future and the systematic cooperation and cooperation regime created by the Arctic Council (Stranger, 2010).

Moreover, the confidence building in the region has led the other Arctic nations to trust Russia. Because in the Arctic Council all of the nation's sit on the same level with no elevation of power, like in the UN where the permanent 5 have more powers than the others, smaller states feel more confident in presenting their issues. Moreover, the organization handles conflicts through other means, such as creating bonds between the nations. This is what has led to the stable peace, as the states have confidence in the governance in the region. What is currently preventing the building of durable peace is that there is no full commitment to integration and no deep conflict prevention.

The concepts of stable and durable peace were presented by Michael Lund in 2009 when he presented his curve of conflict. According to Lund (2009) stable peace, or the base order, comes about when states are at peace. In this situation, the relationship between the states are of a nature where neither will consider using military force to solve a conflict (George, 1992) However, this peace is fragile, and can easily evolve into unstable peace, where the parties are suspicious of each other's moves and it caused political instability (Lund, 2009). One example from the Arctic is when Norway placed an oil platform close to Svalbard, which caused Russian concern, and in case of Norwegian suspicion of Russian military exercises. This is a fluent curve, however, once durable peace is reached. In order to reach durable peace from stable peace, deep prevention is needed, however, this is not seen in the Arctic, as will be discussed later. This will also be seen in the case studies that will be presented. Durable peace, on the other hand, is a peace that comes from deep conflict prevention and tackling the root causes of a conflict. Through reconciliation, integration and shared values, durable peace, or long-lasting

peace are reached (Mason et al, 2011). An example of durable peace is the peace that has emerged between European nations after the Second World War as even when there is instability, there is no political mistrust between the states. Because of this, we need to investigate the Arctic, and if these things are present there.

2.3 Conflict Prevention in the Arctic

In the Arctic there is no doubt that there is tension between the nations, however, this has yet to turn into a violent conflict. Why is this? The goal of this research is to make an analysis as to if and how the Arctic Council has helped in stabilizing the region through their agenda of peaceful cooperation. Here the aspect of future and past and potential triggers for conflict become more important as the discussion will revolve around how the council has worked towards containing conflicts in the region, and how successful, or unsuccessful they have been at addressing grievances between parties to stop any conflicts from emerging stronger in the future. As a result, the three main types of conflicts that will be explored, territorial, resource-based and based on status, also are tied with grievances and basic needs. As an example, the conflict for resources is based not just on economic gains but also traditional lifestyles and national pride.

Nevertheless, what makes conflict resolution through IO's interesting in the Arctic is the countries that are present in the Arctic Council. Typically, the disputing parties will need outside backing in order to reach the normative and moral understanding of the need for prevention, yet in the case of the Arctic, the countries involved are usually sponsoring other nations themselves for preventative work. The Nordic nations have long discussed conflict prevention as an integral part of conflict resolution as proactive means are more effective than retroactive means, and as mentioned before, Sweden is the only country in the world with a conflict prevention action plan (Björkdahl, 1999). Moreover, for many conflicts, these methods are outdated and new structures need to be implemented for conflicts that are more complex than before. One such conflict is in the Arctic.

Because of the wealth of resources that lay under the ice and the endless possibilities for the Arctic, multilateralism becomes important in order to reach solutions for the Arctic (Keskitalo, 2017). Currently, the Arctic states are trying to claim as much land as possible unilaterally, which is what is leading to conflict and a strain on the stable peace in the region. The scholar Page Wilson (2015) formulated three possible visions of the Council going forward which included several conflict prevention and conflict resolution models. Her focus is on the Arctic

Councils need to move towards a more security-oriented outlook in order to maintain its role in the region. This would be through region building and multilateralism. Although it might be hard to view the Arctic as a region apt for region building, it has been moving towards integration (Keskitalo, 2017). Regionalism can be put into three succinct categories, a minimal region, a coordinate region and an integrated region. Currently, the Arctic Council is a passive security provider in the region, letting the nations themselves decide how this is done, but it has several multilateral deals on environmental issues. Because of this, the Arctic can be seen as a coordinate region (Knecht, 2013). However, the Nordic coalition has spoken out that they wish for peacebuilding and security to be put on the agenda of the Arctic Council (Berkman, 2012). As the Arctic Council is so dependent on voluntary cooperation in order to build this cooperation one has to ask: is the Arctic Council enough to contain the conflict in the future?

Regionalism and multilateralism can be seen as the building block towards a durable peace in the Arctic. The Arctic territory might not classically be described as a region due to the lack of a common culture and shared norms between some of the countries, the vast territory the Arctic covers and the Arctic marine geography (Albert and Vasilache, 2017). Yet, it can be seen through the scope of new regionalism. The Arctic Council is creating knowledge and has operational capacities which give power to the Secretary-General of the Arctic Council (Knecht, 2013). Through this, the Arctic Council is building multilateralism. According to Keskelato (2017), the Arctic Council has been developing the Arctic region through conceptualizing the Arctic according to North American ideals. This has created some issues with long-term regime building as it is very much based on the UN ideals, which are short-term at best. In spite of this, the focus on cooperation has allowed the Arctic Council to build a regime of complex interdependence between the states. "State policies are not arranged in stable hierarchies, multiple channels of contact exist among societies, military force is largely irrelevant across a number of issue areas in the Arctic" (Byers, 2017, 379). However, the question remains of this is enough going forward. The annexation of Crimea caused issues in Arctic cooperation when Canada decided to boycott a meeting on black carbon as a protest towards Russia. This was only a wobble, and Arctic cooperation continued soon after, but it did show the weakness of the stable peace in the region (Byers, 2017).

Currently, the conflict in the Arctic is low intensity. Thus, cooperation and confidence-building measures have been fruitful (Jenne, 2015). However, when the need for natural resources becomes more apparent, and the costs of war start to become more attractive than the benefits of peace, the conflict could quickly develop into a high-intensity conflict where more measures

need to be implemented than just cooperative measures. Moreover, when it comes to multilateral talks and cooperation, most of the nations have other, more structured IOs to fall back on in the region. Currently, there is a Nordic Council consisting of the Nordic nations and there is the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) consisting of Norway, Russia, and Finland. The BEAC came after Norway and Russia finally agreed to a delimitation in the Barents Sea after over 40 years of disagreement. Moreover, there are several other international IOs that come into play, such as the EU, NATO, and the OECD. In spite of this, the Arctic nations have voiced that they would like to contain the regional issues to the region and do not wish to turn to Brussels to solve the problem (Bailes, 2014). On top of that, a study conducted by Emmers and Tang in 2011 depicted on the ASEAN regional forum showed that confidence-building measures do not always translate into preventative diplomacy. The study conducted on ASEAN might not translate to the Arctic, partly due to a substantial difference in members, but there are several similarities. One of these is the non-intervention approach of the Arctic Council when it comes to military means and the focus on sovereignty. However, the Arctic Council is more flexible in how it handles matters than the ASEAN regional forum.

It has also been theorized that because of the increase of conflict in the region, the Arctic Council has become a stage for power politics. This is because the two powerhouses of Russia and the US can, with few bystanders, discuss their policies and disagreements, while smaller nations, such as Denmark and Norway, can make broad claims (Knecht, 2017). This increase in conflict in the region can be attributed to the change in the political sphere. This change is in part due to the claims of the extended EEZ, made under the auspices of the UNCLOS agreement, and in part due to the tensions of the refugee crisis which decided the countries of the northern block (Wivel, 2017). However, it is also due to the aforementioned heavy sanctions towards Russia after the Crimean crisis. It could be that this alienation of Russia, and the international need for petroleum, will drive Russia towards conflict as the regime building in the Arctic has been focused towards stable peace, which is good right now. The downside is that stable peace is easy to unsettle (Lund, 1996). When the Arctic Council was founded in 1996, and complex interdependence was built, it was with a much more docile Russia than what we see on the international stage today. This has put the stable peace in the Arctic at risk. In order to reach durable peace, three layers are needed. Since these are not found in the Arctic, the peace is easy to unravel. Yet, currently, there is no system in place that can explain or predict how to prevent violent conflicts in the region as it is a unique case with several world powers,

several nations known for their efforts in conflict research and a region that is interesting for the whole world.

There has also been successful cooperation in the region. This has led to three comprehensive agreements in the past six years. These agreements have been on a common search and rescue policy, a common pollution response plan and a joint scientific exploration plan (“Agreements - Arctic Council”, 2017). Although these documents show progress towards cooperation, the Arctic Council has no mechanisms at its disposal to punish anyone not following the standards set by the Council. Valur Ingimundarson (2014) therefore argues that the Arctic nations, albeit the cooperation on certain issues through the Arctic Council, will never take disputes at the political level through the Arctic Council, meaning the Council has power on several societal issues, but not on political matters. The Arctic Council has therefore managed to build a regional regime through the building and sharing of knowledge between the countries (Byers, 2017)

In other words, the Arctic Councils influence over conflicts in the region is indirect rather than direct. It has certain limitations that hinder it from getting involved, but with its use of soft power, it manages to keep conflicts from turning violent. This is done through the fostering of long-term sustainable societies and conflict prevention in the form of confidence-building measure such as shared scientific exploration and shared search and rescue in the region (Heininen, 2007). Moreover, it has been found that a credible regional organization is vital in order to prevent conflicts from breaking out. A credible regional organization is one that is not just capable, but also willing to address challenges early to prevent conflict (Gunnarson and Chattey, 2007). This means that the IO needs to be willing and capable of preventive tactics.

However, there might be other mitigating factors that need to be accounted for, such as the fact that 5 of the six maritime nations are members of NATO. NATO might be an important organization for these Arctic nations, yet NATO's main counterpart has historically and currently is, Russia. It is therefore interesting to note that NATO does not have any significant interest in the Arctic (O'Dwyer, 2013). Moreover, NATO is a defensive organization, and therefore not actively working for conflict prevention, but rather steps in if a violent conflict ensues (Viggo Jakobsen and Lightburn, 2008). During a lecture and Q&A with the Secretary-General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, for Leiden University students, he touched upon the fact that the Arctic indeed is an area of concern, yet not directly for NATO at the moment. He also mentioned the Arctic Council and how they foster cooperation and help to lower the tensions between Norway and Russia. Furthermore, in an answer regarding the tensions between Turkey

and Greece, he reiterated that NATO needs full consensus to get involved in a conflict and that therefore conflicts between two or more member states cannot be solved through article 5 of NATO. It would, therefore, be difficult to involve NATO in an Arctic conflict (Stoltenberg, 19.04.2018; Consensus decision-making at NATO, 2016).

Lastly, some might argue legal norms and values hold the conflict in check. Although this is a valiant thought, the reality is that the US and Russia often breach international conventions. Russia has breached the territory of several other sovereign countries, such as Ukraine and Georgia. Moreover, recently it was suspected of having tampered with the US presidential election and having poisoned a diplomat in the UK (Walker, 2018). On the other side, the US has failed to ratify several important legal documents on the law of the seas and has been accused of violating human rights several times. Because of this, both countries cannot be seen as systematically following the rules of international norms. Further, Norway is disputing several treaties that involve resources in the Barents Sea, and Canada and Denmark are in disagreements over interpretations of several legal documents regarding maritime territory (Young, 2009). Although it is true that 7 of the 8 Arctic nations share universal values and cooperate on many issues, there is no getting around the fact that the Arctic is a particular case. As such, it needs to be looked upon outside of this scope of cooperation as it has and will continue to create friction between otherwise friendly countries, such as the heated court case between Norway and the EU on fishing rights around Svalbard, who normally share very friendly relations (Lieungh, 2018).

From this, the hypothesis below is established:

The Arctic Council has through structural conflict prevention and confidence-building measures created sustainable peace but not durable peace.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Operationalization of Variables and Concepts

Having introduced the puzzle and the debates regarding not just conflict in the Arctic, but also debates regarding international organizations and their roles in regards to preventative measures and conflict management it is clear that there is not just a gap in the literature, but also a strong debate surrounding the use and the integration of conflict prevention into international and regional organizations. Therefore, in order to complete this research on the Arctic and preventative conflict management, several things will need to be defined in more detail. As a result, this chapter serves to introduce the concepts and methods that will be used to test the hypothesis presented in the previous chapter. This research will consist of purely qualitative research into written sources and oral sources, such as public interviews, policy documents, agendas and newspaper articles and based on a comparison of these sources. What these sources are and how they were used are described below. Moreover, this comparison will focus on three specific conflicts to see if the preventative measures the Arctic Council currently deploy are enough to contain the conflict in the future as the stakes rise.

The Oxford dictionary defines conflict as “A serious incompatibility between two or more opinions, principles, or interests” (“conflict”, 2017). In this case, 'conflict' will include disputes over territorial integrity, disputes over natural resources, such as petroleum and fish, and conflicts concerning diplomatic incidences, such as the sanctions against the Russian Federation. The last point illustrates the importance of studying conflict prevention in the Arctic as it shows something about the dynamics between the countries on an international stage and how this can affect their relations in the Arctic. After all, everything is interconnected, especially when it comes to the diplomatic relations between the nations.

Prevention of violent conflict through cooperation in international organizations will be the focus. This has been described by several other studies (Lund, 1996; Jentleson, 2000; Piiparinen, 2003) as the IO creates ties and familiarity between the nations. Because of this, the countries become invested in each other and become interdependent. This means that violent conflict is the dependent variable while having a regional IO is the independent variable (Seawright, 2016). To be more specific, that structural effort and confidence-building measures by an IO is the independent variable, while prevention of violent conflict is the dependent variable. To define preventative diplomacy, or conflict prevention, we will use Lund's

definition: “actions taken in vulnerable places and times to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion by states or groups to settle the political disputes that can arise from the destabilizing effects of economic, social, political and international change.” (37, 1996) This can be carried out by many different actors, such as governments, regional organizations and international organizations, NGO’s and other interest groups. Lastly, the toolkit for preventative diplomacy and conflict prevention range from passive military means, economic means, political means and other instruments (Osler Hampson, 2002).

Other variables that are important to operationalize this effectiveness is Stable Peace looked upon under the auspices of no military interventions, cooperation in the region and confidence-building measures. In this case, confidence-building measures are easy to measure as they are the steps the arctic council has taken to build confidence, while cooperation is the amount of integration between the nations. Moreover, durable peace will be investigated through the amount of deep prevention vs light prevention, and if there are any typical signs of durable peace, such as no unsettling of the peace through external or internal events (Lund, 1996).

The operationalization of conflict has three different subsections. The first is territorial disputes, which is overlapping claims. The second is disagreement on natural resources such as fish and petroleum and trade routes. The third and last is diplomatic incidences, such as with the sanctions against the Russian Federation. For the independent variable, which is IOs influence, it is trickier to operationalize. In this case, the influence of the IO will depend on how active it is in creating cooperation and ties between the nations and how they frame the conflicts in the region and if the conflicts are discussed at a ministerial level. This does depend on a few factors, such as cooperation, which is found in the Arctic region through the comprehensive agreements, and also on the credibility of the IO. In the case of the Arctic Council, this can be seen through the movement and change of Arctic policy through the influence of the Arctic Council and the inclusion of indigenous peoples (Young, 2009).

3.2 Comparative Small-N Case Study

The primary methodology to see if the Arctic Council has stabilised the Arctic region, and if their strategies are effective in the current challenging political climate, is a qualitative small-N comparison between some of the conflicts in the Arctic Ocean and the policies of the maritime Arctic nations, Canada, Denmark, Iceland Norway, Russia and the US. The reason why Small-N comparison is chosen is that it offers in-depth analysis of the case. This research does not seek to be generalizable towards all IO’s, but rather to investigate if it is the case in

the Arctic that the Arctic Council has been the key towards stability. Therefore, external validity and a large N will be put aside in favour for the small-N comparison will give internal validity towards IO's affecting stability and conflict prevention in this particular case, and which will not overgeneralize the issue (Seawright, 2016; George and Bennett, 2004)

The method specifically used is focused structural comparison rather than a single case study. This is because the general common questions asked in a focused structural comparison offers a clearer outcome and policy related answers (George and Bennett, 2004). In this case, these variables and general questions are tied to cooperation, confidence building and structural peace. In other words, how has cooperation been developed? Are there confidence-building measures in place? What have these measures done to develop stable peace, or even move towards durable peace? The strength of this is method is because of this common focus within the case studies creates a clear focus, and therefore also support existing theories, and will help towards building new theories (George and Bennett, 2004).

To fully investigate how the Arctic Council facilitates peace, there needs to be an understanding of the structure of the organization itself. According to its web-page, the Arctic Council is an intergovernmental forum that meets at both a ministerial and at a lower level. These lower level meetings are done through six working groups that make analysis and advice for future agreements in the region ("About Us - Arctic Council", 2017). Currently, the focus on the Arctic Council is on environmental impacts and cooperation on risk management. Despite this focus away from the territorial claims, it could be argued that this cooperation has a spillover effect on other issues, such as the conflicts in the region, and causes the nations do not want to enter into armed conflicts over the resources and lands that are being exposed by the retreating ice. Amongst others, the Barents Sea dispute between Norway and Russia, which was solved in 2010 could be seen as a spillover effect from cooperating in the Arctic Council (Moe et al, 2011). In spite of this, the changing political environment between the Arctic nations means the Arctic Council's influence might not be enough as more resources are exposed, and the rewards become larger than the risks (Ingimundarson, 2014).

3.3 Case Selection and Data Collection

The primary case study of this research will be the Arctic Council itself and how it operates through its soft power and influence on its member states. The Arctic is a specific case which is unique in the world. It is a geopolitical hotspot for both climate policy, security policies, energy policies and trade policies not seen anywhere else in the world. Because of this, and as

mentioned above, it cannot be generalizable to other cases. Therefore, the Arctic Council, being the specific organization that influences the Arctic, is vital to understand the case (George and Bennett, 2004). The fact that the Arctic Council has no military capabilities does not mean that it is not a security provider. It provides security through cooperation and knowledge sharing, making it an important forum for discussion and to disarm any concerning disputes. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Arctic Council has helped to keep low regional tension compared to how many delimitation disputes and conflicts over resources there are. However, so far indications show that this is only stable peace and not durable peace, it is therefore essential to understand why this is.

The specific cases from the Arctic Council that are chosen for this research are divided into two parts. On the one hand, there are several ongoing conflicts, such as between Russia, Canada and Denmark over the Lomonosov Ridge, between Norway and Russia over the Barents Sea, and the Svalbard conflict. Further, the relations between the countries themselves, and their foreign policies will be examined inside the Arctic to see if it differs and whether cooperation between the nations. Moreover, a comparative analysis of the world order and the relations between the countries will be included. Several policy documents from Russia, Canada, the US, Norway and, Denmark will be used as the primary case studies for this section, and two periods, pre-Arctic Council but post-Cold War (1991-1996) and recent documents (younger than 2015) will be used. The analysis of the policy documents will be interwoven into the analysis of the conflicts to illustrate how policy has moved and been changed by the Arctic Council. This is especially important as several of the countries Arctic policy directly mentions the Arctic Council. The reason why this includes scopes outside of the Arctic is that it is important to understand the relations between the counties in the Arctic outside of the Arctic to see how artificial the low tension is and how international happenings affected the stable peace in the Arctic. This might be mostly relatable to the rising tension between Russia and the US. This does not mean all policy documents will be assessed, but it is an interesting comparison to see what happened pre-Crimea and post-Crimea to shift the stable peace in the Arctic. As selection bias often is an issue in Small-N comparisons, it should be noted that these cases were selected due to their difference in nature (Levy, 2008). The three conflicts that are going to get an in-depth analysis are all important conflicts which impact cooperation in the Arctic in different ways. Owning the North Pole has status, and there is a vast amount of natural resources under the ice, the Barents Sea conflict, which is solved, and the Svalbard resources rights case which is an international legal enigma that continues to cause controversy and is currently a court case

between Norway and the EU (Anderson, 2009). Although these cases are different, they all have certain things in common. The first is the presence of Russia in all of the cases. The second is that they are all contained with the same methods, confidence-building measures, structural peace and cooperation. Through all of these conflicts, and by using the central concepts, we can see and explore how the different comprehensive agreements have helped to keep them relatively low tension despite the high risk of conflict.

The information that will be used is a mix of official documents from the Arctic Council themselves, such as the comprehensive agreements and records of meetings. Also, national policy documents will be looked at to see the difference between Arctic policy and other international policy to see if there is any weight on Arctic cooperation. The focus will then be on the maritime Arctic nations who have claims in the Arctic Ocean. This might be difficult as 8 of the 9 nations are viewed as western and have close relationships and ties. Therefore, the outsider in the group, Russia, will be the most interesting case (Levy, 2008). Sjøby Kristiansen and Sakstrup (2016) has previously conducted research on how Russian policy changed in the Arctic after the Crimean crisis. They found that Russian policy in the Arctic has been highly pragmatic and, unlike other contemporary Russian foreign policy, has focused on cooperation. In spite of this, there has been a western blockade of Russia in the region, leading to military tensions along the Norwegian-Russian border (Hovtun, 2015). This indicates that the Russians are willing to cooperate in the maritime areas of the Arctic, but still, have tensions on mainland border and are asserting themselves. Because of this, there is both tentative evidence for better cooperation in the Arctic. However, considering the Arctic Council has focused on the maritime areas, it could indicate that the Arctic Council's facilitation of cooperation and complex interdependent has diminished the risk for a violent conflict right now. However, it is unstable and changing world politics can easily tip the peace between the Arctic nations.

The Arctic Council is an essential factor in order to secure the Arctic region as the icecaps melt. Because of its soft power and influence on the primary stakeholders in the Arctic, it is important that they take an active role to stabilize and create long-term cooperation which will deter the Arctic nations from acting forcefully towards other members of the Arctic Council. Because of this, the Arctic Council might not be directly involved in conflict resolution, but they are a peacebuilder through their preventive confidence-building measures. In spite of this, the stable peace that is the region is endangered by external international factors and unilateral actors taken by the Arctic nations. For the Arctic Council to move towards durable peace, it will need to build a stronger regional regime with more capacities as the old structures might not be

enough to contain and prevent conflicts from turning violent in the future. This paper will contain mainly qualitative research based on a small-N comparison of policies in the Arctic and conflict development. It will base itself on several different previous papers that have made an analysis of the role of IO's in building cooperation and preventing conflict but put in a new perspective of the often-overlooked Arctic Council as a key player in the Arctic region.

Chapter 4: Case Study and the Analysis

4.1 The Arctic Region and Conflict

By now, it is clear that the Arctic is, indeed, a region that needs more scholarly attention, especially when it comes to conflict resolution and prevention. This analysis will offer some more insight on how the Arctic Council has so far managed to sustain peace in the region. Moreover, as a by-product, insight into how the changing environment might move the Arctic countries away from cooperation and multilateral action and towards unilateral action in the future as the tensions rise might be provided. This will be done through an analysis of how the Arctic Council has reached stable peace. This analysis will revolve around three different conflicts and how the Arctic Council influenced these conflicts, not just directly, but also indirectly. The first conflict will be the territorial dispute for the North Pole between Russia, Denmark, and Canada. The second will be the conflict between Norway and Russia in the Barents Sea which gained an international following. The third will focus on the legal paradox of resources around Svalbard and who has the right to access them. This last conflict will also touch upon the issues of managing natural resources, international involvement and trade routes in the Arctic. Interwoven into the analysis will be Arctic Council involvement, but also national policies and circumstances that affect the conflict, such as relations outside of the Arctic. This will hopefully show why tensions are rising and may also show that the cooperation that is happening in the Arctic is unique. Through this, hopefully, a holistic picture of the conflict, and why cooperation still exists despite these issues and overlapping claims, will be presented.

As mentioned before, there are other mitigating factors and several other IOs will be mentioned. Most notably is the EU which has become increasingly involved in Arctic politics since the late 2000 and even carries its own Arctic policy (EEAS, 2017). This is not uncommon as several countries outside of the Arctic carry such a policy and is getting increasingly involved in everyday issues of the Arctic (Filimonova and Krivokhizh, 2016). When NATO secretary and former Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg addressed a question regarding NATO exercises in the high north; he expressed that the high north was a low-tension area between Norway and Russia through the cooperation in the Arctic Council and the common goals in the Barents Sea set by the BEAC. He was himself Prime Minister when the Barents Sea conflict was solved in 2010 (Delelinjeavtalen med Russland, 2014). In spite of this statement, he also issued a warning that conflicts could arise and that the Arctic region could become a threat

towards global security. Since this Q&A, several developments have happened in the Arctic region, showing that it is a region in movement. Amongst other, the US has re-established its second fleet, a fleet that could be used to securing US interests in the Arctic, which have further destabilized the region, and is a hint towards tensions rising in the future (Bredvei, 2018).

4.2 History and Function of the Arctic Council

The Arctic region, which includes all land mass located above the 66th latitude has seen many changes in the past decades since the formation of the Arctic Council. Although it was known in the 90's that there were petroleum and gas under the polar ice, it was not very cost efficient with the technology present to extract it. However, recently, the technology has become better and the possibilities larger with trade routes opening up making it easier to transport the extracted petroleum. Because of this, the political climate in the Arctic has changed immensely since the foundation of the Arctic Council. As a result, one has to look at the history of the Arctic and the functionality of the Arctic Council.

It is unknown for how long the Arctic has been populated, but archaeological findings suggest that the mainland Arctic has been inhabited by humans for at least 4000 years, spreading from Eurasia to northern America and Greenland (Nuttal, 2012). Later on, the Vikings colonized Iceland and Greenland before William Barentsz discovered the Spitsbergen archipelago in the 17th century (Nuttal, 2012). In other words, the Arctic is not a new region for settlement, but what is new is the discovery of the vast possibilities the region has. Before the realization that there were vast amounts of oil under the ice, the Arctic was seen as a region that was interesting for adventurers that travelled across the North Pole and scientists exploring the Arctic fauna. Even after the petroleum industry began to be the most profitable, extracting and shipping petroleum from the Arctic was costly and took time. Currently, the permafrost means that not just the worlds seed store, there to repopulate the earth with plants and fauna if a disaster should wipe them out, is present, but also several extinct bacteria and viruses lay dormant in the permafrost (Landbruks-og matdepartamentet, 2018). Besides, the region is full of animals, maritime life, and fauna that can only exist in cold weather and is therefore highly sensitive to environmental changes.

The Arctic Council was founded in 1996 as a response to this danger of environmental change. It could also be seen a typical post-Cold War era step as it included cooperation between Russia and the US with docile and peaceful nations backing them ("About Us - Arctic Council", 2018). During the Cold War, the Arctic was the platform of several strategic moves as the distance

between the Soviet Union and the US was smallest in the Arctic (Koivurova, 2009). As a result, no one imagined the region to be fit for intergovernmentalism and cooperation. In spite of this, the already mentioned new regionalism has grown in the region, creating multilateralism and knowledge sharing. The main issue within the Arctic, which the Arctic Council themselves have to contain is the Arctic Paradox. In order to see how successful the Arctic Council has been in solving conflicts and stabilizing the region through their influence, conceptualizing the 'Arctic paradox' will be important. The Arctic paradox is the paradox that although the Arctic Council, its member states, and the world community call for sustainability, there is still a race towards extracting resources and opening new trade routes. This research will rest upon the conceptualization used by Palosaari (2012), which is the 'Arctic race', or the race of the coastal Arctic states to gain access to as many natural resources as possible, thereby gaining an advantage from the melting polar caps. Previous research (Gunnarson and Chattey, 2007; Young, 2009; Keil, 2014) has suggested that the conflict in the Arctic is no longer sustainable and has suggested IO's are the solution. This paper will also base itself on this framework of sustainable peace through the facilitation of IOs. It will also take a side step from previous suggestions of the EU and the UN getting involved and suggest that there is already a regional IO that is more suited to tackle the issues in the Arctic, namely the Arctic Council itself.

Currently, the Arctic Council works with a rotating chairmanship and formal working groups. There is a clear coalition between the Scandinavian nations as Norway, Denmark and Sweden agreed on priorities for the chairman and had a shared secretariat from 2009 until 2013. The Council has semi-annual meetings every six months between high-level representatives, and every two years there is a ministerial meeting between the ministers of foreign affairs ("About Us - Arctic Council", 2018). This means that often the work and agreements happen at a policy level rather than at ministerial level.

The current major issue for the Arctic Council is that it holds very little power. It is up to the auspice of the chair to establish a secretariat. Most of the Arctic nations want to establish a permanent secretariat, however, the US has several times vetoed proposals of this nature. Because of this, it is hard to fully integrate intergovernmentalism as the regime changes completely every two years (Ingimundarson, 2013). Nevertheless, the Arctic Council and its secretariat hold powers and operational capacities which increases the importance for the Arctic nations, making it hard to leave the council (Koivurova, 2009). These capacities include things such as the aforementioned comprehensive agreements. What is currently lacking from the Arctic Council itself is a hands-on approach to deal with grievances and conflicts

(Ingimundarson, 2013). Currently, there is no mechanism in place to handle a conflict, therefore, it will be hard for the Arctic Council to govern the region as the stakes become larger and the countries become less inclined to cooperate on issues such as scientific research. This becomes problematic when it comes to territorial disputes. Currently, 7 of the 8 countries that are located in the Arctic have either presented or are preparing to present claims for an extended Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) based on Article 76 paragraph 8 of the UNCLOS treaty (1982). Of these claims, the most noteworthy is that of the North Pole itself. This is a conflict that might lead to major upheaval in the Arctic, especially once the decision of the UN has been made and the losing countries are not content. It, therefore, needs to be investigated whether the Arctic Council is equipped to handle this situation. Moreover, old conflicts, such as the Barents Sea conflict between Norway and Russia, which was solved in 2011, can provide insight into how exactly this passive mechanism of conflict prevention works within the Arctic Council. This conflict was solved after the Arctic Council was founded, and the Arctic Council has had an immense influence on the committee that was created to govern the Barents Sea, the Barents-Euro Arctic Committee.

4.3 The Lomonosov Ridge

In order to understand where tensions can arise, it is important to look at the most pressing conflicts. The Lomonosov Ridge, better known as the North Pole, is one of the two points where the earth rotates around its axis, and it is also, currently, no-man's land. Although it is true that the magnetic North Pole is situated somewhere on the Canadian continental shelf, the geographical North Pole, while established in coordinates, is still disputed when it comes to geographical ownership (Tarlach, 2014). Three countries have laid claim to the area. Two of the countries (Denmark and Russia) have officially presented their claim to the UN under the UNCLOS clause that allows countries to claim an extended EEZ outside of their 200 nautical mile limit within ten years of ratification (article 76, paragraph 8, 1982). While the last country, Canada, is preparing to present their claim later in 2018. However, before addressing each country and their claim, the most pressing question is: why do all of these countries want the North Pole in the first place? Currently, the North Pole is merely frozen water. There is no way of gaining access to what is under it, even with contemporary technology, both because of environmental concerns, but also because currently, the ice is too thick to penetrate adequately. Moreover, preliminary explorations show no reservoir of petroleum or gas, and there is no substantial amount of aqua-marine life that will be of benefit to their economy through fishing either. In other words, laying claim to the North Pole is about the status of owning it rather than

one of the resources. Therefore, understanding why someone would want to claim ownership of a barren land of ice needs to be understood before prevention of a conflict is discussed.

Ever since the first person reached the North Pole in the early 20th century, the status of being able to plant a flag in the ice is well known. Many people travel from far to attempt the feat, and many find ways of being the first to cross the North Pole in some shape or form (Henderson, 2009). Because of this, the North Pole, along with other monumental natural phenomena, such as the South Pole and Mount Everest, hold a sense of adventure and mythical existence in the mind of the population and politicians alike. It is not just where Santa lives, but also a legendary land of wonder (Godwin, 1996). When looking at countries that are claiming the North Pole, the interest for the status symbol becomes obvious.

The Claims

To start with the Russian claim. Russia claims that the Lomonosov ridge is, in fact, an underwater mountain range that is an extension of the Siberian continental shelf that connects with the geographical North Pole (Submission by the Russian Federation, 2009). Because of this, Russia is claiming ownership based on the clause for extended EEZs. Denmark is also claiming the North Pole based on the Lomonosov Ridge and its connection to the Greenland continental shelf. In addition to this, Denmark claims to be the closest in proximity to the North Pole based on geographical (Submission by the Kingdom of Denmark, 2015). Canada, similarly to Denmark, is claiming the North Pole based on proximity and therefore the extended EEZ again (Sevunts, 2016). Actually, Canada was the first country to claim the North Pole already in 1907 by the sector principle (Graff, 2007).

Cooperation

From these claims, it is clear that all of the nations are working under the same legal framework and are making claims based on slightly different interpretations of the UNCLOS framework. However, the Arctic Council has been successful in making the countries cooperate towards a solution. Cooperation when it comes to this conflict has happened, as is most usual in the Arctic, both bilaterally and multilateral through the Arctic Council. Canada and Denmark have worked together on mapping the seabed, and Russia has also committed to sharing every scientific finding they have from the region. In general, Russia realized that the Arctic, although very beneficial for the Russians, has a fragile eco-system, and if this is destroyed through conflict it might have severe consequences for Russia later. On the other hand, because of these scientific explorations, the Russians have invested large amounts of financial means into research and

maintenance of the Arctic region. This makes them more protective of their Arctic assets than other countries in the region. (Schiermeier, 2010). Because of this, cooperation to maintain their assets, and for help to develop the region is important. Therefore, Russia is committed to cooperation on the Scientific exploration of the Lomonosov Ridge. Denmark is also a compelling case within the Arctic Council. Like the other Scandinavian countries, it is known for its diplomacy and peace lobbying on the international stage (Rahbek-Clemmensen, 2016). Denmark is also known for being difficult towards the EU when it came to handing over sovereignty and for its refusal to instate the Euro (Sørensen, 2004). In the Arctic, Denmark has been pro-cooperation throughout the two first decades of the Arctic Councils existence. However, since 2016 a new policy emerged from the Danish state. This described building Denmark as a great Arctic Power and suggested Denmark take steps in the Arctic region towards securing Danish interests (Rahbek-Clemmensen, 2016). Because of this pivot, the claim of the North Pole to establish itself as an Arctic power might be crucial as currently, Denmark is becoming more belligerent. In fact, Denmark's Arctic policy does not mention the Arctic Council at all and instead focuses on Danish territories within the Arctic, which in turn takes away from the cooperative aspect, even if they still do cooperate in the region (Udenrigsministeriet, 2011). When it comes to the Canadian government, they are also committed to Arctic Council cooperation. The Canadian government has four main policy goals in the Arctic, of these, the most interesting is exercise Canadian sovereignty ("Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy", 2017). Canada is one of the Arctic Countries that have the most difficulties in managing its Arctic assets and with succeeding claims. This is because of the lack of population in the Arctic parts of Canada and the remoteness of it. Because of this, and their indigenous peoples, cooperation in the Arctic Council is important, also for them to gain legitimacy for their claims in the Arctic. The most substantial cooperation seen in this conflict is a commitment from all of the countries to shared scientific cooperation, which will be discussed below.

Confidence Building Measures

The confidence-building measures that helped towards the cooperation in the region, as discussed above, both have different origins. To start with the earliest meeting, the Ilulissat meeting of 2008. This meeting came as a response to the 2007 Arktika mission by the Russians. In fact, The Russian government has on three separate occasions launched unilateral explorations of the seabed under the polar ice, and in the aforementioned mission in 2007, they planted a Russian flag under the ice on the exact coordinates of the North Pole (Chiveres, 2007). Denmark called the high-level meeting and invited five of the coastal states of the Arctic as

Denmark was concerned by the move from Russia and was afraid it would escalate tensions. The result was a declaration made by the five coastal states of the Arctic dedicating themselves to the law of the seas and shared cooperation through the already established framework of the UN Law of the Seas and the Arctic Council (The Ilulissat declaration, 2008). How this affected the other nations in the Arctic Council will be discussed later on the side of stable peace. However, it can be said that although this declaration of peace was helpful for the nations that were present, even if Norway felt slightly offended as the chair of the Arctic Council, the other nations felt the move excluded them from the region and made them lose trust in the five nations that had become the A5 (Wegge, 2011).

Another useful confidence-building measure if the comprehensive agreements signed in the Arctic Council. In 2017 the Arctic Council launched their comprehensive agreement on shared scientific exploration, and as a part of this agreement, the exploration of the continental shelf, and possible landmasses under and on the North Pole were to be examined (Arctic Council, 2017). As a result, all of the aforementioned countries agreed to share the exploration of who has the strongest claim for the North Pole. Moreover, the countries have even started to discuss a shared solution, dividing the North Pole in three parts. Exactly how this would be done is still up for discussion, but it shows the parties are willing to cooperate, and that they use the Arctic Council as an essential forum to coordinate their efforts.

Stable Peace

Although there clearly are stakes for all countries in claiming the North Pole, and it holds deep values, so far there has been little to no animosity about the claim. One of the reasons for this is that the UN is slow in processing the extended EEZs, and so far in the Arctic, the only claims that have been approved are the claims submitted by Norway (Submission by the Kingdom of Norway, 2006). Because no one has been announced as the “winner”, the stakes have not been placed as it is without merit attacking someone when the UN can still weigh in on the matter. Because of this, the stable peace might be upset by the announcement of the deciding body. However, outside of this fact, the Arctic Council might have built a solid foundation to handle these things in the initial stages, and therefore the development of stable peace in the region can be seen through the actions of the countries. Russia wants nothing more than to be the greatest Arctic power, and many of their explorations have been seen as a way to exude this power, and the clearest way that this can be seen is through the planting of their flag. This is the most belligerent the Russians have been in any claim in the Arctic Ocean. In spite of this, and the significant military presence Russia carries on their mainland Arctic border, Russia’s largest

wish, according to their policy documents, is to have a peaceful and stable Arctic while still pursuing their goals of Arctic expansions (Devyatkin, 2018). This is in significant contrast with Russian policies elsewhere in the world towards their other border. As an example, Russia has no issues with threatening Georgia or invading Chechenia, but in the Arctic, they are relatively docile. Because of this, their claims are not backed by historical facts or a need to protect their people, but rather by science (Schiermeier, 2010). This is where international policies and actions outside of the Arctic help to illustrate that cooperation seems to be more present in the Arctic. Russia is very aggressive whenever it claims territory other places along its border (Russell, 2012). Considering the comprehensive agreement on shared scientific exploration came after the claims were made, it is clear this is something that was thought through and revised as a threat to the Arctic order from the Arctic Council.

However, there are substantial issues with the Arctic Council and this conflict. The aforementioned Ilulissat meeting in 2008 was seen as a massive undermining of the Arctic Council. Although the Council was explicitly mentioned in the declaration, it was called outside of the council, and three nations were left out of the meeting, Sweden, Finland and Iceland. Especially Iceland was disappointed by this as they are a coastal Arctic nation, and as such felt they belonged at the table when discussing peace in the Arctic Ocean. It was also widely seen as Denmark not trusting the Arctic Council to take swift action against the Russians planting their flag because of the light prevention. As a result, the Arctic Five, Denmark, Norway, Russia, The US and Canada, was formed to make a formal declaration, and as such root the peace in the Arctic. Although this move was seen as very political, it did, in fact, help towards governance of the region. The A5 did, in fact, strengthen the Arctic Council as they committed to cooperation under stricter frames than in the Arctic Council and they continue to actively work with and under Arctic Council and UN auspices. Because of this, indirectly, the relevance and influence of the Arctic Council, and their preventative power, deepened.

4.4 The Barents Sea Conflict

Considering the Lomonosov Ridge is an ongoing dispute about maritime delimitation, it would be nice to discuss the Arctic Council in context of a solved delimitation dispute. There are a few delimitation conflicts that have already been solved in the Arctic Ocean, but not many. One of the cases is the delimitation disputes between Norway, Denmark, and Iceland, where a shared solution was reached, however, the one that will be discussed here is the Barents Sea conflict between Norway and Russia (Delelinjeavtalen med Russland, 2014). The conflict, which encompassed 175 000 square meters of what would be called the Grey Zone between Russia

and Norway in the Barents Sea was contested from 1974 until 2011. Although the first claims were presented during the 60s, the conflict did not come to a head until the 70s. The dispute, which was both over significant fishing grounds, and over an estimated 30% of the worlds remaining oil and gas, came during a time when the Cold War was at its coldest (Moe et al, 2011). The territory in question is not just beneficial for the petroleum industry and for the fisheries, it can also serve as a way for Russia to access the Arctic ocean, and thus also the Atlantic Ocean, with submarines unnoticed (Witte, 2013).

The Claims

Initially, the dispute started before UNCLOS was drafted in 1982, and therefore the two countries based their claims on two different treaties, Norway on the Geneva Convention of 1958 and Russia on the Soviet Decree of 1926 (Dorè, 1995). Because of this, Norway wanted to draw the line based on a median principle and Russia on a meridian principle. Because of this, when UNCLOS was launched and both nations have signed and ratified it in the 90s, they stuck to their old ideas on how to draw the border according to the different principles (Moe et al, 2011). An interesting fact about this conflict and all Russian conflicts in the Arctic that originated before the end of the Cold War is that the Arctic was a crucial battleground during the Cold War. It was and still is, the closest point between the US and Russia, and as such, the most likely place for a conflict between the nations to play out. The Barents Sea was, therefore, an important strategical point for Russia, not just for the resources in the sea, but for the tactical location for national security. As a result, it also became important for the world community, who supported Norway in its claim (Moe et al, 2011). Because of this and combined with the Russian attitude on other conflicts along its border, the Russians are often labelled as the “bad guy” in the region, even though they are often doing less to provoke conflict than other countries in the region (Witte, 2013). The reason for this is that Russia knows the value of the strategic location of the Region. It could be because of this that Russia and Norway reached an agreement in 2010 which went into action in 2011 (Delelinjeavtalen med Russland, 2014).).

Cooperation

Cooperation in the Barents Sea, and in the old grey zone is inspiring and one to be followed by other nations. Even before the grey zone was divided between the countries, they established the BEAC as a governing body in the region. Russia’s Arctic policy has been previously discussed, and in the Barents Sea, it is not different. Vast amounts of money have been put into scientific exploration and military expansion (Devyatkin, 2018). As a result, the region is one

of the most important for Russian energy security. Considering how hard it is to drill for petroleum in the region, stability is needed to ensure energy security, while along with other parts of their border, it is easier to take power instead of fostering cooperation. The Norwegian policy for the Arctic is not much different from its international policy. Being known as one of the few countries that have successfully deployed public diplomacy, it has much soft power (Henrikson, 2015). In the Arctic, the Norwegian government claims that cooperation and building infrastructure, while still exploiting the natural resources in a sustainable fashion is their primary goal. As a result, both nations are very interested in cooperating in the region, which is why they have cooperated on scientific explorations, on military and on other issues in the region.

Although the UN tried to reach a solution between the parties, the mediation broke down several times as the geopolitical location was more important during the pressing times of the Cold War. It can, therefore, be argued that it was the end of the Cold War that brought upon a changing dynamic. Yet, the end of the Cold War in itself was the reason why the Arctic Council was created. All parties recognized that the Arctic had been a tense area, and there was a need for confidence-building measures. Some have also suggested that the 40 years of talks was beneficial towards the building trust between the two parties (Moe et al, 2011). In short, although this is true, the trust was boosted by the presence of the Arctic Council. The solution that was found was to divide the area into two and to develop strong cooperation between Norway and Russia in order to cooperate on the management of the previous Grey Zone (Delelinjeavtalen med Russland, 2014). Because of this, the cooperation runs very deep, yet, there is still distrust between the nations. Because of this distrust heavy confidence-building measures, designed to lead to cooperation is in place in the region.

Confidence Building Measures

In the Barents Sea, Norway and Russia, together with Finland, Created the BEAC that agree on fishing quota and cooperates on research (Vidal, 2016). Because of this, the Arctic Council is in itself a confidence-building mechanism between the countries as it allows better governance and helps structure the cooperation in the BEAC. Before the end of the Cold War, the region was significant for another reason, to better their rival, the US. During the 1970's Arctic expansion became necessary for the Russians as the Arctic is where Russia and the US meets. In fact, Russia and the US are closer in the Arctic than Cuba, the Russian ally in the Caribbean and the US, making it the perfect buffer zone between the countries (Friedman, 2014). What is interesting about the Norwegian Arctic policy is that they are not interested in Arctic

domination, this despite being the only country to have all their extended EEZs approved and owing a significant share of the Arctic Ocean (“Norges politikk i Arktis”, 2015). However, the Norwegian public diplomacy does not necessarily reflect their policies. In the Arctic, Norwegian rhetoric has been focused towards sovereignty and ownership of resources. The fact that the conflict arose in 1974 was no coincidence for Norway either. What is now known as the “Norwegian Oil Adventure” (olje eventyret) started during the 1970s. It was known that there might be large amounts of fossil fuels under the ice, therefore to secure Norwegian energy security, the area was important for the energy policies of Norway (“Norges politikk i Arktis”, 2015).

As a result of this drive for petroleum, the most important confidence-building measure put in place was shared management of the petroleum in the grey zone and shared mapping of the natural resources (Åtland, 2014). This happened even before the Arctic Council or the BEAC was introduced. These confidence building measures did become even more ingrained after the Arctic Council set frameworks for things such as shared scientific exploration and shared search and rescue. After the end of the Cold War, the region became important for energy security. However, it still remains an essential military hub for the Russians. The Northern Fleet is based in the Barents Sea, and with the recent tension with the West, this fleet has been expanded (Baev, 2012). Therefore, the most interesting confidence-building measure in place is shared military exercises between Norway and Russia. These military exercises are often joined by the US and Finland as well, showing the presence of security measures in the region. Further, because of these exercises, heads of defence of the Arctic nations sometimes also meet, under the framework of Arctic Council cooperation, to discuss strategies for the region (Lukovic et al, 2016)

Stable Peace

This case shows both the fragility and the strength of the stable peace in the region. On the one hand, after the Crimean crisis, all shared military efforts stopped in the region. Further, the growing hostility between NATO and Russia have pushed military cooperation aside. Yet, cooperation on other important issues such as natural resources is still very much in place and actively pursued. After the annexation of Crimea and the following sanctions against Russia, there was fear that the cooperation in the Arctic would fail. Instead, structural and operational cooperation has strengthened as all parties have worked hard to overcome such issues. The Arctic is Russia’s entry to the Atlantic Ocean; however, Russia does need friends in the region,

and therefore utilizes the Arctic Council as an important forum for their concerns and to listen to others concerns.

At this point, the Arctic Council comes into play. Although it is true that the end of the Cold War and a Russia willing to cooperate with the West influenced the agreement, it took 20 years to reach this agreement. It could have been the trust build throughout 40 years of negotiation. However, the Arctic Council always addressed the issues within the Barents Sea. In fact, mediation over the area fell dead several times after the Cold War ended. The first Barents Sea cooperation was established in 1993 before the Arctic Council was ever established. However, the successful framework for cooperation did not emerge until after the Arctic Council was established. In fact, it is the framework presented by the Arctic Council, have often echoed in the BEAC decisions, and work towards strengthening infrastructure and in governing the Barents Sea region (Vidal, 2016). Because of this, the Arctic Council is an important supporting actor in peace in the Barents Sea, although there is another governing body, because the Arctic Council, together with the Nordic Council, brings legitimacy to the BEAC.

4.5 Resources and Arctic Management: A Look at the Waters Around Svalbard

Moving from lines drawn on a map towards what makes the area interesting: natural resources. Resources is in and of itself a massive cause for concern when it comes to conflicts. There is no doubt that in the Arctic there is no lack of resources. The more the ice melts, the more value the region has and the cheaper extraction of resources become, but at the same time the more danger there is to the eco-environment (Piiparinen, 2003). Moreover, it is because of these resources that the international community has become invested in the Arctic. It might not come as a shock that several voices on the international stage have called for an Antarctica solution, meaning the area should be governed by the world community to benefit research (Young, 2011). The main difference between Antarctica and the Arctic is that the amount of resources on Antarctica is less mapped and less established, this despite Antarctica being a landmass. There have been found traces of oil and coal, however, in much harder environments to reach and in less quantity as in the Arctic. Moreover, Antarctica is a solid landmass and a continent in itself further away from countries, while the Arctic is justice and in close proximity to populated parts of the world. Therefore, to illustrate why these resources have become an issue of contention, using the resource conflict around Svalbard as an example as to illustrate the issues an Antarctica solution would bring to the Arctic, but also the issues that arise when organizations outside of the Arctic Council gets involved in the region.

The Claims

Currently, the most influential conflict over resources lay around the Norwegian territory of Svalbard. Svalbard is located on the rim of the Barents Sea and is governed by slightly different rules than the rest of the Arctic region. The principal treaty that governs the area is the 1920 treaty of Spitsbergen, which states that although the territory is governed and owned by the Kingdom of Norway, it is to be used and shared among the world community in a non-discrimination way (article 1-3). This means anyone can travel there and settle down there. Moreover, it is exempt from Norwegian taxes and has its own tax system and it is a demilitarized zone, something that is followed up in most of the Arctic regions independent of any treaty (Article 1). This stipulation of all man right has created issues and controversy for the Norwegian government. Partly because of fellow Arctic nations, but mostly because of international pressure.

The conflict is surrounding the interpretation of the Spitsbergen Treaty. Norway holds that although there is a non-discrimination clause in the treaty, this clause only goes as far as 12 nautical miles into the sea, also known as territorial waters, everything outside of this and to the 200 nautical mile point is Norwegian EEZ (Spitsbergen Treaty, article 3, 1920). This claim this based on UNCLOS (1982). This has been contested by several countries, including fellow Arctic countries Iceland and Russia. Although Norway stand firm in its claim, instead of upholding this EEZ, in 1977 a temporary fisheries protection zone (FPZ) was created where Norway would hand out licenses to allow fishing and still protect the aqua-marine life around the island (Groenning, 2017). However, this did not help to ease the tensions, especially in recent years.

Another international actor that has involved itself in the fight for resources around Svalbard is the EU. A new species of crab discovered in the Barents Sea in 1996 was Snow Crab; a delicacy predicted to earn Norway billions (Groenning, 2017). As a result, the species was declared a sedentary species, meaning it has the same status as petroleum and other natural resources. This was done after discussion between Norway and Russia who cooperate on regulating natural resources in the Barents Sea (Groenning, 2017). However, in 2017, the EU decided to ignore Norwegian wishes and started to issue licenses for fishing snow crabs around Svalbard. All in all, 20 licenses were issues, leading to Norway arresting a Latvian boat. This is because Norway's view is that they have the right to fish and decide who gets to fish within the FPZ (Lieungh, 2018).

Cooperation

This conflict might, therefore, be the example of where the cooperation and trust created through the Arctic Council might fail. The Russians have claimed several times that the Norwegian Svalbard Policy of the FPZ violates the Spitsbergen Treaty. Moreover, they claim that the Svalbard policy, in general, generates conflict rather than cooperation (Groenning, 2017). Despite its rhetoric, Russia has also been open for dialogue until recently. This dialogue often happened through the Arctic Council and through the BEAC and resulted in many fishing licenses being issued to Russian and Icelandic ships (Grydehøj, 2013). However, recently Norway chose to erect oil platforms close to the disputed Svalbard sea area. Norway claims it is on the Norwegian continental shelf, while Russia claims it is on the Svalbard continental shelf. It might have just been a coincidence, or the escalation might have been the catalyst for Russia to start having military exercises to train an invasion of Svalbard (Lindi et al, 2017).

Before we go back to how this influences the Arctic Council, there is still an issue of the world community, particularly the EU. Although the Arctic Council is seen by most as being a very useful tool for the Arctic states, the non-Arctic states that do not have voting rights see it as a nuance because it created a club of who has access to the Arctic (Young, 2011). However, what does this have to do with the Arctic Council? This case shows how the Arctic nations, because of measures were taken towards cooperation, have managed to negotiate and reach agreements on fishing in the area. Although the situation is still tense with disagreements, it was contained up until recently.

It is well known that Norway and the EU have a close but issued relationship. On the one hand, Norway and the EU cooperate on several areas, and Norway is a part of the EEA, and therefore the single market. However, the EU has put in place regulation and high taxes on Norwegian export, such as salmon, as an anti-dumping measure (WTO Panel rules in favour of Norway in salmon case, 2007).

Confidence Building Measures

Again, we can see the shortcomings of the Arctic Council. Confidence measures between the Arctic nations, which also influence the relations on natural resources, are in place to govern and control the conflict over resources around Svalbard. The agreements on shared search and rescue, and the continuous dialogue regarding safe extraction of resources, be it petroleum or the quotas for fisheries in the region, creates a safe environment where the Arctic nations can communicate its frustration and come to agreements without involving courts. As a result, there

are very few incidents between the Arctic nations when it comes to illegal fishing, and when it does happen, it is often quickly resolved. However, this only works with the nations that have a voting right. The EU, although an observer in the Arctic Council, struggle with accepting Arctic Council authority in the region. Only one of the maritime Arctic nations is a member of the EU, Denmark, and Denmark has no stakes in the Barents Sea. There are a few observer members from the EU, such as the Netherlands and Spain, but they have no voting rights, meaning the EU voice is limited to Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, two of which are often seen as difficult within the Union (Lawler, 1997). The EU wants to extend their sphere of influence to include the high north, but do not know how to go about it, which might be why it is getting involved in the region where an international treaty might give them entry (Karijord, 2017). This is, however, working against the confidence-building measures that the Arctic Council has created between the regional actors and influences how Russia acts in the region.

Currently, several military experts in Norway are calling for more confidence building exercises in the high north, especially after the end of the bilateral military partnership with Russia ended in 2014 as a result of the Crimean crisis (Grønning, 2017). However, Russia and Norway, in the auspices of the Arctic Council, do still work together on search and rescue, and have in place a common fishing policy in the region, as regulated by the FPZ (Groenning, 2017). These measures, in part taken by the Arctic Council, has maintained trust, albeit, slightly more unstable than before because of the lack of confidence between Norway and the EU.

Stable Peace

Because of these incidences, this conflict threatens the stable peace. The involvement of a “foreign actor”, this being the EU, undermines the confidence and trust between the nations. As such, Russia has been accused by Norway of training an invasion of Svalbard as a response to how Norway has managed its resources in the contested area, and as a response to the EU court case. As a result, the limits of the Arctic Council in building durable peace is presented. The stable peace when it comes to Svalbard and its surrounding waters is, in fact, moving towards unstable peace with the fears of a Russian invasion, the arrestations made by the Norwegian state of fishing boats, and the legal move taken by the EU. This has caused political unrest and distrust in the region, which the Arctic Council has struggled to deal with.

Although it builds trust, when an issue becomes too large or too embedded, as is the case between Norway and Russia and the Spitsbergen Treaty, the Arctic Council do not pull enough weight to stop it, especially when the world community gets involved. In the case of Svalbard,

Fishing rights and quotas are something that has been heavily discussed in the auspices of environmental protection. Therefore it is easier for the Arctic nations to gather around this issue and come to a solution (Sevunts, 2017). What is concerning for the peace is the end of the joint military exercises between Norway and Russia, which is something that should be addressed in the forum of the Council. While when it comes to the oil platform, it touches a sore spot for Russia as Norway is a direct competitor when it comes to the petroleum industry. Moreover, countries within the Arctic Council still remains sovereign. Therefore, it is difficult for the Council to stop unwanted behaviour, especially towards outside actors, such as the EU. Because of the EU getting involved in the conflict, the region becomes more unstable, which shows that fragility of stable peace as the light prevention cannot take into account outside actors swaying the peace towards a more unstable peace.

4.6 The US, Iceland and the Arctic Council

Having discussed these conflicts and how the Arctic Council treats them in regards to cooperation, confidence-building measures and how it related to stable peace, it becomes clear that two of the maritime nations are hardly mentioned throughout. Therefore, a small presentation of these two countries is important. Iceland and the US and their Arctic policy and views of the Arctic Council might give even more insight into the durability of the Arctic Council itself.

The Claims

Neither Iceland nor the US have any significant legal claims in the Arctic. On the side of Iceland, this is because they lay isolated with a relatively small continental shelf, and therefore have little overlap with the other nations. Iceland has had the most issues with fishing and has often stood up for its right to fish, as this is one of Iceland's most important industries ("the Arctic region", 2018). The US has different reasons why they are not fully involved in the conflicts. Generally, if there is a conflict in the world, the US will be present as they are trying to cling to the American world order. Because of this, US presence in the South China Sea, in the Middle East, and even in Europe is apparent. The reason why the US is strangely absent on their own Arctic front is not that the US is very docile in the region, but because they are not claiming any territory. The US has not ratified UNCLOS and because of this cannot claim an extended EEZ. Moreover, the US is well known for claiming freedom of navigation, something that is reflected in their Arctic policy (Clinton, 2011). Canada has several times accused the US of crossing into Canadian Arctic waters, and when Norway and Russia came to an agreement

on the Barents Sea, Canada urged the US to take the lead from their fellow Arctic nations to end the dispute about open passage through Canadian waters (Young, 2009). As a result, the most important claim of the US in the region is open trade routes through the north-western passage.

Cooperation

Both Iceland and the US participate in cooperation through the Arctic Council. In fact, Iceland's main priority in the Arctic is actually strengthening cooperation through the Arctic Council. In fact, strengthen the Arctic Council has a whole seems to be their primary goal as they see this as the way towards governing the Arctic region ("the Arctic region", 2018). The notion of strengthening suggests that Iceland believes that the Arctic Council as it stands today is not enough, and it needs to develop. This is something that is illustrated by the last conflict as the Arctic Council so far has been unable to contain the escalation. Because of this, they wished all arctic cooperation to go through the Arctic Council and was not very happy with the creation of the A5 and its exclusion from this group. Yet, it is present in several confidence-building measures on fishing and contributes to cooperation and stable peace in the region.

Despite the fact that the US is showing a growing interest in military presence in the region, relaunching its second fleet which is to patrol and control the north as a response to Russia's actions in Syria, it is the arctic nation with the least involvement in the Arctic region (Bredvei, 2018). In contrast to Russia, the US military presence in the Arctic is limited. In fact, the US does not have any functioning icebreakers and often relay on icebreakers from other nations. Moreover, the recent regime change in the US might have an effect on Arctic involvement even more. Donald Trump wants to pursue a protectionist agenda, and therefore operations through an organization such as the Arctic Council, which focuses on environment, seems to be on the bottom of his wish list (Koivurova, 2016).

Confidence Building Measures

Both states are involved in confidence building. As mentioned, the US and Russia used to have shared military exercises in the Arctic, and the US and Canada often share Icebreakers and work together for a safer north-western passage (Lukovic et al, 2016). Iceland cooperates in several fishery agreements, and both nations follow the comprehensive agreements as laid forward by the Arctic Council (Lukovic et al, 2016).

Despite these initiatives, the US seems to be distancing itself from the rest of the region, while Iceland has issues fully incorporating itself. This is mainly because both of them are so distant from conflicts, and especially Iceland, who is a smaller nation, is often overlooked in the region. The US was, however, a part of the A5 initiative to reiterate peace in the region (The Ilulissat declaration, 2008)

Stable Peace

What all of these policies and conflicts show is that the Arctic is a complicated network of interests and needs that cross over several cultures, including indigenous cultures. What this exactly means for the Arctic Council will be discussed in the next chapter, however, the analysis has shown that there are limits to the capabilities of the Arctic Council. Even though it has successfully created a regime of cooperation, it does not go deep enough to prevent conflicts when the needs become too large. Yet, the Arctic nations are cooperating and building more profound interdependence, although in varying degrees, through confidence measures. Because of this, stable peace between the nations is in place. However, is there durable peace?

Chapter 5: Results and Conclusion

5.1 Results

Although there is substantial evidence of deeper and more successful cooperation between the Arctic nations after the Arctic Council was created, it is hard to determine whether this actually is because of the Arctic Council, or because of the end of the Cold War. What can be said is that the current light prevention that is taking place in the Arctic Council, is, in fact, deepened by the Arctic nations themselves. This is strikingly seen through Russia's willingness to cooperate in the region. Even after the other Arctic countries instated sanctions towards Russia for the annexation of Crimea, and in an environment being described as the road towards a second Cold War with NATO stationing troops in the Balkans, Russia has been cooperative towards the other Arctic Nations (Søby Kristiansen and Sakstrup, 2016). However, other states remain sceptic and cautious, especially towards Russia.

Because of this, it is difficult to say for sure if the Arctic Councils strategy has been successful in preventing conflicts from escalating currently or in the future, as it seems accidental and anecdotal rather than factual. As mentioned, there is increasing cooperation and Russia, which is seen as the most challenging country in the area, is acting slightly different in the Arctic than in the rest of the world (Baev, 2014). This is interesting as the Arctic is a high stakes region for Russia. Moreover, what has been found is that the Arctic is a high stakes area for all of the maritime nations. Most of the nations have become increasingly aggressive as the ice has decreased. Yet, it seems as if the Arctic Council has been able to provide support and a framework for the nations to build cooperation amongst themselves, not just inside the Council, but also outside of it, as was the case in the Barents Sea (Åtland, 2012). Even though Denmark chose to go outside of the Arctic Council to create the A5 when the conflict over the Lomonosov Ridge tightened, it was still done with the help of Arctic Council framework and was worked into the Arctic Council as a subgroup (The Ilulissat declaration, 2008).

To make this point clear, the Arctic Council has never been opposed to other governing bodies in the region. What makes the Arctic Council important is that all of them, such as the BEAC and the A5 is based on the governing frameworks of the Arctic Council and that they will often echo the Arctic Council in its decisions (Wegge, 2011). Therefore, the Arctic seems unified under the banner of the Council as the nations in the region view it as the highest governing body and therefore hold a strong sphere of influence over the Arctic nations (Wegge, 2011).

The Arctic is not just high stakes for the Arctic nations, but also for other nations. The example, in this case, was the EU's involvement in fishery issues around Svalbard, but there are plenty of other examples of international pressure forming the situation in the Arctic (Palosaari, 2012). What this thesis uncovered is that the Arctic Council is ill-equipped to deal with this pressure and that this type of pressure from non-voting actors can cause it to lose its legitimacy among member states (Karijord, 2017). Furthermore, because actors such as the EU want to join the Arctic Council as observers, it shows the importance the organization holds. Large actors have realized that if they want to have a stake in the region, they need to be in the Arctic Council as this is where the discussions about the region happen.

Although we can conclude that the Arctic Council has created cooperation between the states in the region, there is no denying it is limited in its approach. This is partly because the Arctic Council is built on a platform of climate change and environmental protection, which gives it limited access to security measures, but it is mainly because of how the Arctic Council functions. It might be true that the Arctic Council is valued by its members, as reflected in almost all of their Arctic policies, yet the member countries do not trust the Arctic Council to act upon threats to stability in the region. This was exemplified by Denmark calling the Ilulissat meeting and arguably make the situation worse before it got better as several Arctic states and indigenous groups felt like they have been excluded and was seen as secondary actors in the region. However, what can also be learned from the Ilulissat Declaration of Peace is that the Arctic nations do use the frameworks provided by the Arctic Council (The Ilulissat declaration, 2008). This, does, however, show that the Arctic Council, although succeeding in creating cooperation and governance in the Arctic, might not be able to handle conflicts that will become sensitive. In future, as more opportunities will present itself in the Arctic, it might be difficult for the Arctic Council to contain cooperation through confidence building and environmental protection.

However, moving on to answering the hypothesis: *The Arctic Council has through structural conflict prevention and confidence-building measures created sustainable peace but not durable peace.* From the analysis above, it is clear that the Arctic Council has contributed much to the region through its commitment to cooperation and by building trust between the nations. In spite of this, the evidence of it being specifically their conflict prevention. This prevention is highly indirect and based solely on building rapport between the nations, is the reason why the region is in stable peace currently. It could be that the end of the Cold War or the presence of similar norms and values influences this cooperation, yet the fact that Russia is playing ball in

the region, as opposed to in other regions, might suggest there is something different in the Arctic (Søby Kristiansen and Sakstrup, 2016). This something different could definitively be the Arctic Council. Moreover, what is interesting when determining durable peace is to look at the actions of Russia. As mentioned several times throughout this thesis, Russia has surprisingly deviated from their normal aggression in the Arctic. Although they still show some tendencies towards protectionism and expansionism, they are relatively cooperative and interested in finding solutions that will benefit everyone in the region. Because of this, it is hard to determine that the Arctic Council does not help towards durable peace. In spite of this possible slow move towards durable peace, the region is, without doubt, in stable peace. This is highlighted by the Russian military presence, the protest against Norwegian policies around Svalbard from several international actors and the Ilulissat meeting, all of which the Arctic Council have found hard to handle (The Ilulissat Declaration, 2008). Because of this, the catalyst for a more intense conflict could come at any second. This does not mean a conflict cannot be avoided if the Arctic Council continues to work towards cooperation and interdependence in the region.

5.2 Thoughts for the Future

As a first note, this thesis has been discussing conflict prevention in the Arctic and has used some legal documents to look at the claims of each country. However, it has purposefully chosen to not take a stance or do a legal analysis of who has the strongest claim. This is because who has the strongest claim is redundant for answering the hypothesis and might, in fact, get in the way of answering it as the question does not revolve around who is right, but rather how to prevent the conflict from escalating. Instead, what it has done is analyse the conflicts from the point of view of the countries and seeing how the Arctic Council has had an effect on the conflict. Because of this, there has been no speculation as to who is right or who is wrong in the conflict as this is a very complex issue with no easy answer. It is also in the spirit of the council to remain neutral in conflicts. In fact, the legal aspect of the law of the seas and international waters have been in many instances ignored as the scope of this thesis was not large enough to fully investigate how legal documents interfere with the Arctic. As a result, only relevant legal texts have been taken into account as a descriptive rather than as an analytical tool.

Further, several things are missing from this thesis that could be interesting to investigate in the future. This thesis has revolved around mainly three conflicts and how the Arctic Council has been involved in stabilizing and containing these conflicts. In the future, it would be interesting to delve deeper into outside interventions in the Arctic. This was shortly touched upon with the

EU issuing fishing licenses around Svalbard, however, several other countries are getting involved. One example is China who has developed icebreakers to pass through the North-Eastern passage and has significant benefits from both the North-Eastern and the North-Western passages opening up for trade (Shi and Lanteigne, 2018). Moreover, most of the observers in the Arctic Council have alternative motives for why they want to be involved, such as the Netherlands and the UK who wish to develop petroleum in the region (Mathiesen, 2013). This thesis did not have the scope to fully investigate these actors and how they affect peace in the region. It is true that these actors being there can escalate the conflict, especially actors such as China who has no intent nor will to hide their agenda of trade in the region. Because of this, it could be a very interesting topic to delve deeper into in the future as the presence of these actors could, in fact, be a contributor towards why durable peace has not been reached yet.

Another ignored group is the indigenous groups and the Danish territories of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. These influence Arctic Council policy and are valuable members. They also contribute to cooperation, and the Arctic Council is one of the few organizations where groups like this get a voice without having to go through the country they reside in ("Arctic Indigenous Peoples ", 2017). How their presence has helped towards peace and stability is essential, however, it also a side step of this thesis which always had a goal to focus on sovereign states and their conflicts in the Arctic. This is because the Arctic is one of the few places left where the borders are not set and are very fluent. Because the indigenous peoples cannot, and often will not, claim territory as far out in the ocean as we are discussing, their situation is hardly mentioned. In fact, most of the indigenous peoples believe the people belong to the land, rather than the land belongs to the people and therefore in very few cases want to secede. This does not mean there is no conflict between the indigenous of the Arctic and their governments. The Canadian intuits have long fought for equal rights, and in Norway, the Sami people have been awarded recognized hunting and fishing areas that are protected (Eythorsson and Nilsen, 2006). This is indeed an interesting study of conflict in the Arctic that can be seen as helped through the cooperation the Arctic council created. Yet, it is not a conflict that could shake the whole world order and therefore is better left to future research.

5.3 Conclusion

To conclude, this thesis has investigated whether or not the Arctic Council has created stable peace instead of durable peace. The initial conclusion is that yes, indirectly the framework and presence of the Arctic Council has created stable peace. However, a caveat to this is that the region might even be moving towards durable peace. However, the Arctic has not reached

durable peace yet, and in fact, stable peace might be in danger considering recent events. Although it might be a loose connection between the Arctic Council and this stable peace, there is enough evidence to point towards the Arctic Council having helped avoid conflicts through its initiatives for cooperation. Having a common forum means that the Arctic nations can discuss and build trust. Thus, it does not matter that the Arctic Council is not a security-oriented organization as it helps build trust between the nations and the agreements reached are essential confidence-building measures for future bilateral and multilateral agreements. What is problematic is that the Arctic countries, especially the big maritime countries, sometimes go outside of the Arctic Council, such as in the case of the A5, and create their own agreements. Although this is possible because of the Arctic Council as it builds alliances with the other countries and groups in the region that have voting rights in the Arctic Council.

Because of this, the Arctic is a region that currently is contained, but might not be as an easy to contain in the future. With growing interests and countries that are becoming more aggressive towards their rights in the region, there is only a question before the conflicts become tenser as more of the sea gets claimed by the nations. What is relieving being that the nations themselves understand how fragile their region is, and therefore try to work towards deeper integration and interdependence to ensure further cooperation. This is why the Arctic Council is such an important factor in the Arctic, as it helps bring the nations together and builds governance in the region.

Chapter 6: Bibliography

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