

The analysis and recommendations presented here are based on the following assumptions and findings:

1. The Arctic is changing at an ever faster pace. As a result of climate change, water and landmass freezing periods are getting shorter and the marine and land environment are profoundly affected.
2. These changes (combined with other economic and technological factors) lead to greater human activity in the Arctic. There is increased tourism and a larger number of scientific expeditions, and eventually there will be more resource development and navigation. The extent of economic interests at play in this region is still difficult to determine, but the potential is high and should be taken seriously. One way or another, the northern economy will develop.
3. The Arctic is a major component of Canada's national and international identity. Protecting and promoting interests in the Arctic are a priority for a large majority of Canadians. Consequently, Canadian Forces (CF) activities in this region are among the most popular and valued among the general public.
4. There is no military threat to the Canadian Arctic, now or in the foreseeable future.
5. Disputes over sovereignty are not as urgent or serious as they are perceived by the public and the political class. Nevertheless, they are part of Canada's political landscape and need to be taken into account, not only because they are important, but also because we need to respond to the concerns and expectations of Canadians.
6. Initiatives involving acquisitions and capital assets to support the presence of the Canadian Forces in the North are very costly and time-consuming to carry out. They require more in-depth planning than other departmental projects.
7. Apart from the Coast Guard, the CF are the only government agency that is able to operate without restraint in this vast, remote environment, without a shred of infrastructure required for the normal operation of the machinery of government.

On the basis of these findings, we recommend the following:

1. *Focus Canadian Forces activities more explicitly on support for northern communities and on the delivery of government services* (maintaining relations with local communities, S&R, disaster or accident response, enforcement, platform for other departments, etc.). This recommendation is in keeping with all the above findings. It enables the Canadian government to adapt to changes in the region and to their social, political and economic impact; it provides a government presence to ensure stewardship responsibilities are met and sovereignty concerns are addressed; it

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gives an opportunity to recover the cost of expensive investments; finally, it enables the CF to fully play their support role as part of a pan-governmental approach to management of the North.

2. *Soften aggressive discourse and stop speaking in terms of “protecting sovereignty”.* This type of rhetoric tends to overshadow the real issues involved in managing the Canadian Arctic and circumpolar governance, fuels public fears and alarms representatives of other states, who are puzzled by Canadians’ fears.
3. To enable the CF to take on their role in the North, *we need to stay on course with capital asset projects.* Aside from existing projects (deep sea port, offshore patrol ships), we need to consider updating aerial surveillance systems. We should also continue our annual exercises to ensure we do not lose the expertise acquired by the CF (as was the case in 1990s) with respect to Arctic operations.
4. With regard to diplomacy and the military, it is also important to *maintain and enhance cooperation with other circumpolar states*, by implementing the search and rescue agreement and through joint exercises (bilateral and multinational), including with Russia. Canada has everything to gain by imposing itself as the regional leader, so as to promote peaceful governance and mutually beneficial development in the Arctic. In spite of tension over the crisis in Ukraine, the Canadian government must strive to maintain harmonious relations with Russia in the Arctic. With this in mind, it is in Canada’s interest to strengthen regional relations with respect to defence and promote the renewal of dialogue on circumpolar issues of common interest, such as through the annual meeting of Northern Chiefs of Defence, suspended since 2013 because of the Ukrainian conflict.
5. *Military relations with the United States in the Arctic*, as in all other aspects of defence policy, require special attention, not only because this country is Canada’s primary continental security partner, but also because of two pending disputes, one regarding the Northwest Passage and the other regarding the Beaufort Sea. The Canadian approach should have two components:
 - a. First, we have to avoid any initiatives that might revive, either politically or legally, the disagreement over the Northwest Passage. The Canadian government’s reaction to the actions of other states is also very important, as it conditions public opinion. We need to avoid fueling often baseless fears regarding Canada’s control over this body of water. It would be preferable if we operated within the spirit of the 1988 Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America on Arctic Cooperation and of the March 2016 US-Canada Joint Statement on Climate, Energy and Arctic Leadership.
 - b. Second, Canada’s policy in terms of the United States should consist of *enhancing the institutionalization of bilateral cooperation* in the Arctic. The Arctic Tri-Command Framework of December 2012 was an important step in

military cooperation. One way to expand this process would be to strike a committee inspired by the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD) model. This committee would deliberate over common issues and challenges and submit recommendations to both governments.

6. The policy of avoiding reigniting the conflict over the Northwest Passage does not mean that Canada should adopt a passive attitude. In fact, the government *should, rather, strengthen its long-term position in two ways*. First, the government should consider how it intends to *market the Northwest passage in the long term*. Should it take an approach based on maintaining the status quo? Should the approach be based on laissez-faire, which puts local communities and private enterprise in charge of development? Or should it take a proactive approach that puts infrastructure in place and takes initiatives that guide efforts in a given direction? What kind of governance and management would Canada like to see in the next 15 or 20 years? Second, with regard to the Northwest Passage, Canada should behave as if its claims were uncontested. This involves demonstrating a regular presence and implementing specific regulatory frameworks. In both cases, the Department of National Defence can be a catalyst in the government by taking the initiative to launch a pan-governmental discussion on these two matters.