SSOAR

Open Access Repository
www.ssoar.info

NATO Arctic policy in statu nascendi

Podvorna, Olena; Zhovtenko, Taras

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Podvorna, O., & Zhovtenko, T. (2019). NATO Arctic policy in statu nascendi. *Studia Politica: Romanian Political Science Review*, *19*(2), 163-186. https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-63164-3

Nutzungsbedingungen:
Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY-NC-ND Lizenz (Namensnennung-Nicht-kommerziell-Keine Bearbeitung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/1.0/deed.de

Terms of use:
This document is made available under a CC BY-NC-ND Licence (Attribution-Non Comercial-NoDerivatives). For more Information see:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/1.0

gesis
Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Mitglied der
Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

NATO Arctic Policy in Statu Nascendi

OLENA PODVORNA[*]
(National University of Ostroh Academy)

TARAS ZHOVTENKO[**]
(National University of Ostroh Academy)

Abstract

Having played a substantial role in the bipolar period, the Arctic has found itself at the "backyard" of international politics after the Cold War. During the last decade of the XXth century, the Arctic was the priority issue only for the littoral states. The Russian expedition to the North Pole in the so-called "last scramble" for energy resources drew regional interest of a wide range of international actors, including NATO. The Alliance faced a serious task of elaborating its policy in the Arctic to meet its member-states' and associated partners' modern-day reality expectations. NATO started close cooperation with Norway trying to shape a policy that could bring an added value to the region in terms of positive security thinking, largely dominating European agenda after the Cold War. However, a rapid change of the security situation since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has shifted the Alliance's agenda towards the continent and its relations with Moscow raising concerns about the revival of the traditional bipolar thinking about the security and prospective remilitarization of the Arctic. It is vital for the Alliance to shape its policy, both strategically and tactically, to face those security challenges and guarantee peace and stability in the Arctic.

Keywords: NATO, the Arctic, security, collective defense, Russian Federation.

Introduction

This article seeks to examine NATO's *in statu nascendi* policy in the Arctic in the post-bipolar period. To explore the issue, it uses the discussion on positive and negative security and its correspondence to the modern-day reality, which challenges the issue of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the revival of traditional politics of the Russian Federation. In particular, the research asks

[*] Olena Podvorna is Associate Professor at the Department of Country Studies, Faculty of International Relations (olena.podvorna@oa.edu.ua).

[**] Taras Zhovtenko is Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science and National Security, Faculty of Political Studies and Information Management (taras.zhovtenko@oa.edu.ua).

how both the security environment and thinking about security, theoretical and practical, have changed since the end of the Cold War. The article tries to analyze the influence of a positive security approach on the Arctic development and transformation of the Alliance in the 1990s. To answer the proposed question, the paper applies negative and positive security conceptions, since the discussions of security situation in the High North are usually held within the categories of the above-mentioned conceptions. Several theorists have made their contribution to the debate, as security is a key value to every state in the international arena. As Gunhild Hoogensen Gjorv noted, "notions of positive and negative security… relate to the way in which security has been conceptualized and how scholars and practitioners themselves place a 'value' on security."[1] To examine the whole Alliance's policy in the XXI[st] century and in particular in the Arctic, the article employs a synthetic analytical framework elaborated by Hoogensen.[2] She argues that developments in the Arctic, as well as its specifics, designate the concept of positive security accompanied by multi-actor security approach as the most relevant.[3] At her turn, Annika Bergman Rosamond underlines that the Arctic "is situated within a complex web of multilateral and bilateral networks, ranging from states to regional institutions."[4]

Since the end of the Cold War, the Arctic region has been left at the periphery of the international politics being placed on the domestic policy agenda of the Arctic littoral and non-littoral countries. Endeavors made by the Arctic states to attract attention of the US, European states, EU and NATO have not been very successful. However, the situation has begun to slightly change after the military operation in Iraq in 2003 and the subsequent rise in oil and gas prices in the world market. Being heated with globalization, world economy harshly needs new energy sources. The Arctic region appeared to be the most promising in this context. Basically, an increased interest towards the region was induced by the Russian expedition to the North Pole, which was quite provocative and aroused a range of negative and sharp reactions in the international arena, especially in the Arctic states. The problem of the Arctic became actual placing the region on the agenda of the modern international relations, and forcing countries and organizations engaged in the situation to formulate their policy towards the Arctic. In 2009, Scott Borgerson assumed that the Arctic could become territory "of a Hobbesian free-for-all with

[1] Gunhild Hoogensen Gjorv, "Security by any other name: negative security, positive security, and a multi-actor security approach," *Review of International Studies* 38, no. 04 (October 2012): 836, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210511000751.
[2] Gjorv, "Security," 835-859.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Annika Bergman Rosamond, *Perspectives on Security in the Arctic Area. DIIS Report* (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, DIIS, 2011), 7, http://pure.diis.dk/ws/files/61204/RP2011_09_Arctic_security_web.pdf.

dangerous potential for the conflict,"[5] whereas Margaret Blunden stated that the situation in the region is "more a revival of traditional power politics than a new Cold War."[6]

As the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization is the main security guarantor in the Euro-Atlantic region since the end of the World War II, it should react to the developments occurring in the Arctic. The debate about NATO's presence in the Arctic can be equated to the debate about what security concept is the most relevant to elaborate prospective policy upon it. Security is a dynamic phenomenon in its essence and it is evolving in line with the changes in the international environment. The more complex processes occur in the international arena reflecting growing interconnections and interdependencies between different international actors, the more complex security, both in theoretical and practical dimensions, becomes.

The main assumption, when speaking about the Alliance in the High North starts from the fact that four of five Arctic littoral states are NATO members. Therefore, one of the main questions pertains to the essence of NATO's policy in the Arctic. As widely known, ways of transformation of the Alliance and the Arctic in the 1990s, at least in the first half, went in parallel. The Arctic was not among the hottest issues on the international agenda, and its importance has declined since the end of bilateral confrontation. However, the region was not remarginalised as Palosaari and Möller have defined it.[7] New understandings of security, as well as new security paradigms, have dominated largely political elites' thinking in the West. Such approach has been especially welcomed in Norway and Denmark. In the large extent due to the transformed politics of Oslo, the Arctic has started its move towards demilitarization and desecuritisation. It was exactly the northern countries who did an extensive work to raise the awareness of the Alliance in the importance of the High North to Europe, NATO, and the whole international community.

This article raises a range of research questions in the context analyzed. Taking into account, that security approach results from the way security and national interests are being perceived within the state, not all NATO member-states share the same approach towards security in practice and not all of them are ready to discard their ambitions and interests with regard to the Arctic and

---

5 Scott G. Borgerson, *Statement of Scott G. Borgerson, Visiting Fellow for Ocean Governance at the Council on Foreign Relations, Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, US House of Representatives, Washington DC,* Council on Foreign Relations, March 25, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.cfr.org/report/us-national-security-interests-arctic.

6 Margaret Blunden, "The New Problem of Arctic Stability," *Survival* 51, no. 5 (October-November 2009): 121, https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330903309899.

7 Teemu Palosaari and Frank Möller, "Security and Marginality: Arctic Europe after the Double Enlargement," *Cooperation and Conflict* 39, no. 3 (2004): 255, https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836704045203.

its believed riches. Therefore, is NATO an influential actor in the Arctic and what added value(s) can it bring to the region through its presence there? In this context, one should ask the question about what conception should become a baseline for the Alliance's policy towards the High North in the nearest future. NATO as an organization can create its own policy towards the region; alternatively NATO's policy can be elaborated on Norway's vision as a leading state in the development of the Arctic region.

A number of analysts, politicians and even academics when discussing the essence of the Alliance role in the High North and its prospective policy there relate to Article V of NATO's Treaty stating that the fundamental role of NATO in the Arctic is to provide collective defence for its member-states. Acknowledging that such point of view has a right to exist, one should ask whether such approach serves as masking of the lack of understanding of NATO's role in the region. Does it mean that traditional concept of security still prevails in the international arena and the Arctic region will be remilitarized again? Additionally, the Alliance will have to reestablish its relations with Russia in the region and find the best possible format of collaboration with Moscow.[8]

Undoubtedly, the Arctic influences international security. But does it produce rather threats, challenges and risks, or is the Arctic the place for cooperation and collaboration? Which dimension of broadly understood security refers to the Arctic the most?

To answer the above-mentioned research questions the proposed article advances from providing some background on the Alliance transformation in the post-bipolar period according to the changing security environment. NATO's transition into political-military organization directly resulted from new understanding of security in post-bipolar period, which is correspondingly reflected in Alliance's documents. Then the article explores the Alliance's attempts to shape its policy towards the Arctic. Further, the article continues with the examination of the Alliance's actual presence in the High North. The paper will show the difference between NATO's presence there and its member-states or associated partners which is often been misinterpreted in the international arena, and in the Russian Federation. Afterwards, the article shows the peculiarity of NATO-Russia relations in the Arctic, since this allows presenting a comprehensive context in which the Alliance tries to elaborate its Arctic policy. Finally, the article ends with outlining of the key security, political and military objectives of NATO's policy in the Arctic in the nearest future.

[8] On different approaches to prospective NATO-Russia relations in the region see: Todd L. Sharp, "The Implications of Ice Melt on Arctic Security," *Defence Studies* 11, no. 2 (June 2011): 297-322, https://doi.org/10.1080/14702436.2011.590318/312-314; Blunden, "The New Problem," 131-134, https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330903309899.

NATO's Basic Documents towards the Arctic

Until now, the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization has not elaborated its clear policy towards the region. Thus, the authors intend to formulate a conceptual basis of the Alliance's policy towards the region, based on its fundamental documents adopted after 1990 and statements of NATO's High Officials.

In the post-bipolar period, the Alliance has adopted its "Strategic Concepts" in 1991, 1999, and 2010. They clearly demonstrate the transformation of NATO, and its understanding of security in modern-day reality. "Concept 1991" was a slight, but significant move towards a new security environment that has aroused after the end of bipolar times. As it was stated in the document, "in contrast with the predominant threat of the past, the risks to Allied security that remain are multi-faceted in nature and multi-directional, which makes them hard to predict and assess."[9] However, the entire document puts major emphasis on the European region. What is important, is the understanding that "managing the diversity of challenges facing the Alliance requires a broad approach to security. This is reflected in three mutually reinforcing elements of Allied security policy; dialogue, co-operation, and the maintenance of a collective defense capability."[10]

Having analyzed the Strategic Concept 1999, one should admit that the Alliance has acknowledged operating within the "environment of continuing change," which generates situations when "security of the Alliance remains subject to a wide variety of military and non-military risks which are multi-directional and often difficult to predict."[11] However, NATO has indicated as major sources for prospective conflicts the following: ethnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes, inadequate or failed reforms, the abuse of human rights, and the dissolution of states. It is also noted in the document that "Alliance security interests can be affected by other risks of a wider nature, including acts of terrorism, sabotage and organized crime, and by the disruption

[9] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept agreed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council," November 7-8, 1991, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23847.htm?.

[10] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "New Strategic Concept." November 7-8, 1991.

[11] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The Alliance's Strategic Concept Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C.," April 24, 1999, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_27433.htm?mode=pressrelease.

of the flow of vital resources,"[12] though resources have not been defined clearly. Similarly to the Concept 1991, it is stated that NATO "is committed to a broad approach to security, which recognizes the importance of political, economic, social and environmental factors in addition to the indispensable defense dimension."[13] The whole document deals mainly with issues of disarmament and adherence to non-proliferation regime as well as strengthening cooperation across the Euro-Atlantic region.

Thus Strategic Concept 2010 from the very beginning claims, that it "will guide the next phase in the Alliance's evolution with the aim to be effective in a changing world, against new threats, with new capabilities and new partners."[14] The document has reaffirmed the essential mission of the Alliance to stay as "an unparalleled community of freedom, peace, security and shared values."[15] However, one should speak here both about the content of security and shared values, and about changed instruments required for their protection. Collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security are three major instruments. Though the Arctic region has not been mentioned in the Concept, extended explanation of prospective activities under crisis management and cooperative security could be applied to the High North if necessary. As it is stated in the document, "the Alliance is affected by, and can affect, political and security developments beyond its borders."[16] If such developments threaten international security and security of Allies, NATO will actively engage using the range of political and military means. At the same time, the Concept outlines that "the best way to manage conflicts is to prevent them from happening."[17] The document foresees that NATO will monitor the international environment on a regular basis and cooperate with non-member countries and international organizations not to miss the moment when the big conflict or even crisis can emerge.

European and international developments in 2013-2014 shifted the Alliance's attention directly towards to the core of Europe. The Arctic, on the contrary, has been moved out of the spotlight of the Alliance, which can be traced in the Warsaw Summit Communiqué adopted in 2016.[18] In particular,

---

[12] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The Alliance's Strategic Concept." April 24, 1999.

[13] Ibid.

[14] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Active Engagement, Modern Defence. Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation adopted by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon," November 19, 2010, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_68580.htm?.

[15] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Active Engagement, Modern Defence." November 19, 2010.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Warsaw Summit Communiqué. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in

while identifying security challenges and threats, the document refers only to the east and the south. However, it is stated that NATO, if necessary, will adequately react in the North Atlantic, prospective threats include actions against sea lines of communication and maritime approaches of NATO territory. Though the communiqué reaffirms statements from the previous fundamental documents, substantial changes have been introduced as a result of hostile actions of the Russian Federation which has violated provisions of the international law and the security demands of Allies. The document states that "renewed emphasis has been placed on deterrence and collective defense."[19]

The year 2009 happened to be one of the milestones for the Alliance in elaborating its policy towards the Arctic. On 28-29 January, 2009, NATO held a seminar "Security Prospects in the High North" to address the situation around the Arctic as the region heated extraordinary during 2008 and thereby posed some risks towards European security.[20] The high-level meeting could be characterized as an introductory to the situation in the region, since its main goal was to gather information and elaborate a better understanding of the changing Arctic. As it was agreed then, the Alliance is building its policy towards the Arctic as a part of "comprehensive approach," which foresees that NATO cooperates together with other institutions like the EU and the Arctic Council. Granting the High North with the strategic importance to the Alliance, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer admitted that NATO has equal interests in other parts of the world, labeling none of them as the most important avoiding in this way the path of regionalization and fragmentation, which could undermine the international and European security. The General Secretary said that the main task of NATO was to identify threats, challenges, and risks as well as prospects and possible gains in the Arctic to determine added value the Alliance could bring into the region.[21] Among the proposed contributions there are the following: relief operations, search and rescue operations, and disaster relief exercises, management capabilities in the energy and infrastructure domain. Speaking about normative dimension of the future of the Arctic, Secretary General stressed the importance of the Alliance as a prospective forum of dialogue, as four of five Arctic littoral states are members of NATO. At the same time, the need for closer cooperation with Russia in the region was stressed as an instrument for building mutually beneficial atmosphere in the

Warsaw 8-9 July 2016," July 9, 2016, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm?mode=pressrelease.

19 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Warsaw Summit Communiqué." July 9, 2016.

20 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO discusses security prospects in the High North," January 29, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_49745.htm.

21 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Speech by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer on security prospects in the High North," January 29, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_50077.htm?selectedLocale=en.

Arctic for better addressing common challenges. Special reference in the context was given to Norway, which was advocating for the increased role of the Arctic in the international agenda for decades. During the meeting the interests of non-Arctic actors in the region were emphasized.[22] As Brooke A. Smith-Windsor puts it, it was the first time when NATO's officials held a serious and solid debate about the Alliance's current and future policy in the region.[23]

At the weekly press briefing on January 28, 2009, James Appathurai, NATO Spokesman, talking about defense issues related to the North, announced that the Arctic region has not been an area of confrontation so far.[24] The Alliance did not notice any moves, also from the Russian side, towards worsening the situation, and accentuated the need to continue the dialogue to clarify any problematic issue that could have occurred. However, he emphasized the fact that the military build-up of the Arctic Rim countries became visible. A special reference was made towards Russian bomber flights. When speaking about the Alliance's interest in the Arctic, James Appathurai confirmed that NATO would engage more actively in the region in order to strengthen the existing spirit of cooperation.[25]

Later, in April 2009, at the Q&A session at the NATO Youth Forum, Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer added that the Alliance was emphasizing more its political compound rather than the military one, trying to enhance its preventive activities. Speaking on the Arctic, the Secretary General declared that NATO should not have a military presence in the region, contrary to the Russian claims.[26] At the same time, he stressed that NATO had been aware both of the climate change and prospective competition for the energy resources of the Arctic. Additional attention was given to the future accessibility of existing and potential transport routes in the High North and to the capabilities and knowledge the Alliance possesses in the sphere of search and rescue, supposing more active collaboration with Russia and other partners. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer stressed that NATO could bring added value to the High North and should be engaged in the debate about the development and future of the Arctic.[27] On May 18, 2009, giving a speech at NATO Headquarter to the

---

[22] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Speech by NATO Secretary." January 29, 2009.

[23] Brooke A. Smith-Windsor, *Putting the 'N' back into NATO: A High North policy framework for the Atlantic Alliance? Research Paper n 94,* NATO Defense College, 2013, July, 1-12, accessed September 17, 2018, http://www.ndc.nato.int/.

[24] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "*Weekly press briefing by NATO Spokesman, James Appathurai*," January 28, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_50117.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[25] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "*Weekly press briefing*." January 28, 2009.

[26] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Q&A session with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the NATO Youth Forum," April 2, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_52741.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[27] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Q&A session with NATO." April 2, 2009.

Inter-allied Confederation of Reserve Officers, Secretary General Scheffer declared that climate change in the Arctic had caused a debate over the development of search and rescue activities. As a result, NATO has decided to focus on the maritime security dimension.[28]

After 2009, one can notice kind of standstill in NATO's thinking about the Arctic. One can suppose that such a shift might be regarded as a sign of unwillingness for greater engagement in the region. On the other hand, the Alliance's agenda became preoccupied with other more urgent issues.

One might observe a return of the Arctic issues in NATO's agenda only in 2013. The most prominent declaration in this context was made by Secretary General Rasmussen, who stated that NATO had no intention to strengthen its presence in the High North despite acknowledging increased Russia's military build-up programs in the Arctic.[29] He also added that the region needs cooperation, not confrontation. Addressing the statement, Brooke A. Smith-Windsor stated that it reflected the consensual level of ambitions of the member-states.[30]

Taking into account that the year 2014 brought serious complications to NATO-Russia relations and European defense, one might recognize moderate changes in the rhetoric of NATO's High Officials. Thus, in his speech at the Marines' Memorial Club Hotel on July 9, 2014, Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen declared that increasing the accessibility of the Arctic would enhance the prospect of potential increased tensions there. At the same time, he did not speak out about militarization of the region and/or activities there. He stressed that the Arctic should remain a region of peace and stability. However, he underlined that Russia had started to strengthen its military presence in the Arctic which would be followed closely by NATO and its Allies.[31] Since the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has just started at the moment, the tone of NATO's statements was quite reserved, expressing hopes for a rapid improvement of the situation. These hopes, yet, appeared to be illusions. As conflict between Russia and Ukraine was swelling, the Alliance has suspended all practical civilian and military cooperation with Moscow, remaining open to

---

[28] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Speech by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to the Inter-allied Confederation of Reserve Officers at NATO HQ," May 18, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/ opinions_54796. htm?selectedLocale=en.

[29] Gerard O'Dwyer, "NATO Rejects Direct Arctic Presence," *Atlantic Council*, May 30, 2013, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ natosource/ nato-rejects-direct-arctic-presence.

[30] Smith-Windsor, *Putting the 'N' back.*

[31] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "America, Europe and the Pacific. Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Marines' Memorial Club Hotel in San Francisco," July 9, 2014, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/ natohq/opinions_111659.htm?selectedLocale=en.

political dialogue, which was not very successful in fact. In a two-year period, 2014-2015, attention of NATO was largely focused on Eastern Europe and Baltic states. In the context of the new political and security environment, the Alliance launched its adaptation process, strengthening its collected defense. Speaking at the session of questions and answers of the 174th Military Committee in Chiefs of Defense on January 21, 2016, General P. Breedlove stressed that NATO would continue upgrading its capabilities for better addressing all challenges in all regions of interest, including the Arctic.[32]

Adjusting to the adaptation process of the Alliance, the official rhetoric has correspondingly changed. In April 2016, Secretary General Stoltenberg, in his speech to the Atlantic Council, confirmed the presence of the Alliance in the Arctic underlying that Danish, Icelandic and Norwegian Forces are the main NATO forces in the region. He added that the Alliance should follow the developments in the region because of Russian military moves there. At the same time, Secretary General was advocating for continuation of collaboration between the Arctic littoral states in order not to increase the level of tensions.[33] Later this year, at the Plenary session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Secretary General admitted that the Alliance had noticed increased presence of Russia in the Arctic. However, Jens Stoltenberg stressed that the Arctic is the area of strong and mutually beneficial cooperation between all Arctic coastal states both within the Arctic Council and bilaterally. In his speech, he argued for decreasing tension level in the area with simultaneous rise in collaboration regardless to worsening relationship between Russia and its Western counterparts in other spheres, although he did not mention them.[34]

In his speech at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly session, delivered on the 29th of May, 2017, NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller stated that the Alliance count a lot on its Arctic members to help guide debate and discussion on the issue.[35] Rose Gottemoeller said the Alliance still needs to improve the level of knowledge about the processes occurring in the region. At

[32] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Questions and answers," January 21, 2016, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_127395.htm? selectedLocale=en.

[33] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "'Projecting Stability: Charting NATO's Future'. Speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to the Atlantic Council, Washington, D.C.," April 6, 2016, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohg/opinions 129758.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[34] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Address by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Plenary session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Fall session in Turkey," November 21, 2016, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_137787.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[35] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Speech by NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly session," May 29, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_144090.htm?selectedLocale=en.

the same time, NATO analyses information that comes from other sources, for instance from the Committee in NATO's Parliamentary Assembly. She also added that the Alliance was looking for the options to increase its activity in the area in certain respects. At the same time, Gottemoeller announced that real military challenges were present in the Arctic (for instance, the issue of submarines' incident provocation) and NATO had not paid enough attention to the problem for a long period of time. She said that the Alliance would make a revision of a military dimension of its presence in the Arctic. In her speech, two understandings of the Arctic prevail: environmental and strategic (military).

Having analyzed both the scope of basic NATO's documents and statements of the Alliance's High Officials, one might conclude that the Alliance consciously and successively tries to avoid producing of the comprehensive document on the region, acknowledging, from one side, interests and positions of its Arctic Allies, and from the other – attempting to avoid its engagement since it might endanger the situation in the region, launching securitization process once again there. In other words, one can assume that NATO strives to practice rather positive security, regardless the splash of activity in 2009.

NATO's Presence in the High North

Obviously, practical activity of the Alliance is strongly interwoven with conceptual documents and developments in the international arena. Similar to the theoretical dimension there, one can define certain periods which display NATO's approach to the region and its specifics. Practical dimension of NATO's presence reflects the importance of the threats and challenges the Alliance has identified in the region. Although the whole spectrum cannot be fully classified by the time, three dimensions are usually named: military, economy, and environment. When analyzing the practical dimension of NATO's presence in the Arctic, one should state that the Alliance takes some actions rather in social, societal, humanitarian, and ecological dimensions. As the comprehensive description of such actions is not the major goal of the article, the authors concentrate on the analysis of the trends in NATO's policy in the High North allowing to foresee the prospective ways of its development later.

Having analyzed NATO's activity in the region in the last decade, one can state that the Alliance pays considerable attention mainly to non-military threats trying to diminish the level of hostility and tensions contrary to the times of the Cold War. This is the major difference in the development of the region in post-bipolar times, regardless of the worsening of Russia-NATO relations because of the situation in Syria and Ukraine.

As the leading role in the region in the early 1990s belonged to the northern countries, they have influenced greatly the Arctic agenda in those times, which is reflected in NATO's activity in that period. Therefore, the main focus of the Alliance was drawn upon conjunction of the issues from spheres of defence, environmental protection, and foreign affairs. Correspondingly, the late 1990s are marked with activities aimed at reducing the risk for the environment both of the region as a whole and for littoral states in particular. Additionally, NATO has actively invested in such activities as emergency preparedness and response with all Arctic countries, but also with Russia as a sign of enhanced cooperation and future closer collaboration in the Arctic. As an example, one can name Exercise *Arctic-Sarex 96* that was announced as the first one in which military units from Russia, the USA and Canada had practiced cooperation in search and rescue activities.[36]

Still, nearly the decade until 2009, the Alliance kept a low profile in the Arctic. Its presence in the High North was evident mainly through the Integrated Air Defense System (NATINADS). In the context, one can speak about fighters on alert and airborne warning, and control surveillance flights. Following the famous Russian expedition in 2007 and anxieties of its member-states, NATO started thinking about transformation of its presence in the region. Among some introduced amendments, one can name Icelandic Air Policing operation when in 2008 NATO started patrolling Iceland's air space, although, the request by Iceland was sent earlier, in 2006.[37] Later, after Lisbon Summit in 2010, NATO has decided to develop NATINADS by adding BMD capability creating Integrated Air and Missile Defense System (NATINAMDS).[38]

On the other side, the practical presence of the Alliance is a subject to change, and NATO slowly but gradually expands its presence there, especially in the last couple of years. Bearing in mind that NATO is not the most influential player in the High North, one should note that a range of activities there is done by the Arctic countries, which are the Alliance's members, on bilateral or multilateral basis but without NATO auspices. Such activities correspond to their national interests and their understanding of the way the Arctic should be managed and developed. At the same time, in the last years, the Arctic Allies tried to intensify their cooperation with the Alliance. Thus, an

[36] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Pfp Exercise Arctic-sarex 96 Khabarovsk (Far Eastern Region of Russia) 16th to 20th September 1996," September 16, 1996, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_24865.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[37] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, "Iceland's 'Peacetime Preparedness Needs'" n.d., accessed September 17, 2018, https://shape.nato.int/icelands-peacetime-preparedness-needs.

[38] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence," February 9, 2016, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics 8206.htm?selectedLocale=en.

amount of the activities, mainly different types of trainings, are being conducted by the Arctic states in cooperation with NATO structures and Partnership for Peace (PfP) countries,[39] and there is a high probability that this trend will be strengthened. In this context, the most famous military exercise *Cold Response*, initiated by Oslo in 2006,[40] could serve as the best example. Meanwhile, it should be mentioned that Norway is the most active Alliance member in the region. As Luke Coffey put it, "Norway is a leader in promoting NATO's role in the Arctic."[41] Furthermore, in 2010, Norway became the first country to move its military headquarters above the Article Circle.[42] In addition, Joint Warfare Centre, which provides NATO's training focal point for full-spectrum joint operational-level warfare, was established in 2003 at Jåttå, Stavanger, Norway.[43] Oslo's policy aimed at the increase of NATO's engagement strives to unite military and non-military interests in the Arctic addressing a range of existing and prospective threats, challenges, and risks simultaneously keeping good relations with Moscow. It is only the Norway in the region whose approach is maximally close to the positive understanding of the security.

As it was mentioned earlier, since 2009 the Alliance has started upgrading its presence in the Arctic. In the winter of 2009, NATO conducted a large-scale *Explosives Ordnance Disposal Exercise* outside the coast of

---

[39] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "*Exercises,"* October 25, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49285.htm?selectedLocale=en; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Education and training," January 18, 2018, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49206.htm; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, "Exercises & Training," n.d., accessed September 17, 2018, https://shape.nato.int/exercises.

[40] Norwegian Armed Forces, "Cold Response 2016," n.d., accessed September 17, 2018, https://forsvaret.no/en/exercise-and-operations/exercises/cold-response; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, "Exercise Cold Response 2016 wraps up in Norway," March 9, 2016, accessed September 17, 2018, https://shape.nato.int/2016/exercise-cold-response-2016-wraps-up-in-norway.

[41] Luke Coffey, *NATO in the Arctic: Challenges and Opportunities. Issue Brief. No. 3646*, The Heritage Foundation, 2012, June 22, accessed September 17, 2018, http://report.heritage.org/ib3646.

[42] Trude Pettersen, "Operations Center opened at NATO's first HQ above Arctic Circle," *Barents Observer*, November 10, 2010, accessed September 17, 2018, https://wayback.archiveit.org/10184/20180413103935/http://barentsobserver.com/en/sections/topics/operations-center-opened-natos-first-hq-above-arctic-circle; "First NATO headquarters in the Arctic as Norway moves it's military leadership into the Arctic Circle," *Arctic Portal*, November 10, 2010, accessed September 17, 2018, https://arcticportal.org/ap-library/news/266-first-nato-headquarters-in-the-arctic-as-norway-moves-its-military-leadership-to-the-arctic.

[43] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Joint Warfare Centre, "Joint Warfare Centre," n.d., accessed September 17, 2018, http://www.jwc.nato.int/.

Northern Norway.[44] Later this year, in June 2009, the Alliance conducted joint training exercise *Loyal Arrow* in Swedish Lapland for both NATO and non-NATO states.[45] This training became an outcome of the increased partnership between the Alliance, Sweden, and Finland. In this way, after years of relative absence in the region, NATO has decided to intensify its activities and the cooperation with Stockholm and Helsinki through the *2015 Arctic Challenge* exercise. Among other regular trainings one should pay attention to the *Dynamic Mongoose 2017* anti-submarine warfare exercise conducted off the coast of Iceland.[46] As it was stated in the announcement of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, such exercises had been previously conducted in Norwegian waters. Since the role of Iceland is rapidly increasing in complex security environment in the North-Atlantic, the location has been changed. Additionally, at the Icelandic Coast Guard facility in Keflavik in 2017, NATO conducted Multi-National Bomb Disposal Exercise *Northern Challenge*.[47] Besides, in November 2017, NATO held the exercise *Trident Javelin 2017* on the basis of the Article Five scenario to train and certify NATO's command and control abilities in a major conflict. The exercise was linked to the Norwegian National Exercise.[48]

Taking into account the gradual growth of NATO's presence in the Arctic, one should mention the scheduled by Sweden large-scale trainings *Viking 18*, which have been initially created in the spirit of NATO's PfP scheme to exercise competencies in the area of peace operations and international crisis management.[49] Meanwhile NATO organizes massive trainings *Trident Juncture 18*, which are to be the largest ones scheduled over several years. These exercises should ensure that the Alliance's "forces are able to operate together

---

[44] "NATO exercises outside Northern Norway," The Norwegian American, February 17, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.norwegianamerican.com/featured/nato-exercises-outside-northern-norway/.

[45] "Exercise Loyal Arrow Kicks Off," Swedish Armed Forces, Manfred Reudenbach June 8, 2009, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/news/ 2009/06/ exercise-loyal-arrow-kicks-off/.

[46] "Submarine surveillance exercise in Icelandic waters," Government Offices of Iceland. Ministry for Foreign Affairs, June 19, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.government.is/news/article/2017/06/19/Submarine-surveillance-exercise-in-Icelandic-waters/.

[47] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Centre of Excellence, Alexander Hugyar, "Northern Challenge Exercise Initial Planning Conference 2017 (NC IPC 2017)," n.d., accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.eodcoe.org/ en/news/ northern-challenge-exercise-initial-planning-conference-2017.html.

[48] NATO Command and Control Centre of Excellence, "TRIDENT JAVELIN 2017," n.d., accessed September 17, 2018, https://c2coe.org/exercises/trident-javelin-2017/.

[49] Swedish Armed Forces, "Viking 18," n.d., accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/activities/exercises/viking-18/; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Allied Command Transformation, "Exercise Viking 18," March 5, 2018, accessed September 17, 2018, http://www.act.nato.int/viking-18.

and ready to respond to a threat from any direction."[50] Additionally, a new facility to support NATO's capabilities for strengthening and enhancing the operational capability of the Alliance was established in February 2018 in Haderslev, Denmark. As it was stated, such an action should be regarded as adequate response to a changed security environment and the continuation of the Alliance's adaptation to current and prospective threats.[51]

Though the Alliance's presence in the High North becomes more visible, its Allies hold quite reserved position towards its deeper engagement. The only point the Arctic countries have agreed upon refers to Article V, recognizing NATO's importance for their security and defense at large.[52] One can admit that a kind of unspoken consensus about limited NATO's presence in the High North is established. In consequence, the Arctic has not been directly mentioned in any of NATO fundamental documents and it lacks solid presence there. As Brooke A. Smith-Windsor wrote in 2013, NATO has been largely excluded from the security initiatives in the region.[53] Till 2018, the situation has not substantially changed. However, the mantra "four of five Arctic states are NATO members" is often reproduced by NATO's officials and high representatives of the Arctic countries, especially littoral ones.

On the other hand, none of the Arctic countries, as well as the Alliance as a whole, is willing to transform the region into a new theater of prospective war. In the context, one can listen to another mantra "High North – low tensions," which is repeated by the Arctic states and the Alliance altogether. Last time at the high-level meeting this approach has been reaffirmed at the 2018 Munich Security Conference.[54] On the basis of the actual presence of NATO in the region, one can predict that the most possible prospective actions within the

---

[50] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Allied Joint Force Command, "Plans for massive NATO-Norway exercise underway," March 1, 2018, accessed September 17, 2018, https://jfcnaples.nato.int/newsroom/news/2018/plans-for-massive-natonorway-exercise-underway.

[51] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, "NATO CIS Group opens new facility in Denmark," February 22, 2018, accessed September 17, 2018, https://shape.nato.int/news-archive/2018/nato-cis-group-opens-new-facility-in-denmark.

[52] Irina Zhilina, "The Security Aspects in the Arctic: the Potential Role of NATO," *Nordicum-Mediterraneum. Icelandic E-Journal of Nordic and Mediterranean Studies* 8, no. 1 (2013), accessed September 17, 2018, https://nome.unak.is/wordpress/08-1/c48-article/the-security-aspects-in-the-arctic-the-potential-role-of-nato/; Smith-Windsor, *Putting the 'N' back.*

[53] Smith-Windsor, *Putting the 'N' back*.

[54] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Panel Discussion 'Defence Cooperation in the EU and NATO: More European, More Connected, More Capable?'' *at 2018 Munich Security Conference with participation of NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoelle*, February 16, 2018, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/ cps/en/natohq/ opinions_152237.htm?selectedLocale=en.

framework of increased engagement could be: a reaction to civil emergencies situations, large-scale search and rescue operations, ecological crises, and maritime security. Political and military dimensions are left for consideration of the littoral and non-littoral Arctic states.

Undoubtedly, the Alliance and the Arctic states try to create a territory of dialogue in the High North. However, the dialogue is not possible without the clarification of basic definitions, namely the definition of the notion of "security." Here, one can see how big the difference between the theoretical debates about security, and its positive and negative understanding, and the reality of its practicing is. However, NATO should practice security in the region based on its own understanding of the future of the region as a part of the comprehensive vision of the modern international arena. Having analyzed the practical presence of the Alliance in the High North, one can state that its policy is sometimes chaotical being kind of a supplement to the national policies of the Arctic members and sometimes a kind of reaction towards Russian engagement in the region. In 2015, Sally DeBoer wrote that Washington and Arctic Allies should encourage the Alliance to make the Arctic a higher priority.[55] In the authors' opinion, such a point of view still makes sense.

NATO and Russia in the High North

Basically, NATO-Russia relations as a whole influence their interactions in the Arctic. Being the biggest Arctic state, Russia cannot be excluded from cooperation in the region, including security one. Furthermore, the Arctic dimension of NATO-Russia relations for more than twenty years serve as an example of mutually beneficial cooperation that has a solid potential in the essence, though sometimes problematic. Referring to the positive and negative understanding of security and its practicing, one might say that a positive approach is highly desirable both for the Alliance and Moscow, especially taking into account their interdependencies in extremely harsh environment. Simultaneously, the Alliance itself is the major advocate in NATO-Russia relations for positive practicing of the security in the High North. Apart of interactions within the NATO-Russia framework, Moscow cooperates on the range of the issues with member-states of the Alliance on the bilateral ground.

In particular, such an approach has aroused from the meeting of the NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society held in April 1995

[55] Sally DeBoer, "Collective Defense in the High North: It's Time for NATO to Prioritize the Arctic," *Center for International Maritime Security*, July17, 2015, accessed September 17, 2018, http://cimsec.org/collective-defense-high-north-time-nato-prioritize-arctic/17437.

with its Cooperation Partners.[56] One can state that it was a beginning of the practical desecuritization of the region. Furthermore, such an approach was intertwined with the sustainable development of the Arctic since the Alliance had to address defense-related environmental issues such as radioactive pollution (utilization of spent fuel and other radioactive waste), decommissioning of nuclear submarines, and chemical munitions dumped at the Barents, the Kara, and the Baltic Sea. The above-mentioned threats and challenges demanded collaboration with Moscow, which appeared to be the practical implementation of the need to engage Russia in the Western community that was constantly articulated in the international arena. Thus, NATO has started an active cooperation with Moscow on addressing these issues.[57] When speaking of the bilateral cooperation in the area, the Russian-Norwegian cooperation should be recognized as the most expanded one in the High North. One of the best examples is the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation program established in 1996. On the basis of the Declaration on Arctic military environmental cooperation (AMEC Declaration) Norway, Russia and the US have been cooperating on the range of military and environmental issues threatening the Arctic ecosystem.[58] The program is recognized as one of the most successful in addressing new security challenges.

However, the beginning of the XXI century has brought substantial changes into Russia-NATO relations in the region. Parallel to the changes in Russian elites' thinking about the security in the modern world, approach to the cooperation has undergone transformation. Despite positive achievements in cooperation with NATO as the organization and its Arctic member-states, one should pay attention to those fundamental issues which hamper NATO-Russia relations and complicate elaboration and implementation of NATO's policy in the Arctic. Obviously, such issues relate directly to the military domain, which significance is strongly connected with the understanding of security. Prior to the serious transformation of Russia's politics in the international and particularly European arena, major tensions have constantly concerned areas of missile defense and strategic deterrence. The issue is quite painful and sore in the political discourse of the Russian Federation being treated as a direct threat to its national interests. One should also keep in mind that discussions on the

[56] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Meeting of NATO Committee on the challenges of modern society (Ccms) with Cooperation Partners," April 26, 1995, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_24654.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[57] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO advanced research workshop on nuclear submarine decommissioning and related problems 19-22 June in Moscow, Russia," June 15, 1995, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news 24618.htm?selctedLocale=en.

[58] Government of Norway, Brundtland's 3rd Government, "Declaration on Arctic military environmental cooperation," No.050/96, September 26, 1996, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/declaration_on_arctic_military/id236477/.

issue always correlate with periods of tensions in NATO-Russia relations and in US-Russia relations. Additionally, since the issue has a quite manipulative character, it has been often combined with discussions on prospective implementation of Article V by NATO. Therefore, one can admit that the main problem refers not to the area of collective defense, but rather to essence of NATO in post-bipolar world and its policy in the Arctic as well as the way it is viewed in Russia. In this context, special attention of Moscow is drawn upon joint Danish/American base in Thule and American base in Norway. Simultaneously, Russia constantly strengthens its missile defense capabilities, in particular in Olenogorsk and in the Komi Republic.

However, growing tensions between the West and Moscow since 2013 has largely complicated situation in the High North. Moscow's aggressive behavior has forced NATO officials to change their rhetoric. Thus, in 2014 in his speech at the Munich Security Conference, Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, still praising the amount and level of cooperation between Brussels and Moscow, noted that both parties have not found a common ground in several key areas. The major claim Secretary General made, referred not to the different understanding of security, stability, and peace in the Euro-Atlantic area but to the need to adhere to principles and guidelines of bilateral and multilateral documents signed by Moscow and the Western community. In other words, General Secretary supposed that Russia downplays the reached agreements leading to the worsening of atmosphere between partners. One of the basic principles Moscow decided to breach concerns deployment of offensive weapons systems by the Russian Federation, including military build-up in the Arctic.[59] Additionally, some observers, politicians, and academics have reacted quite emotionally trying to re-securitize Arctic issues and discussions about the future of the region yielded to a possible NATO-Russia confrontation in the region and speculations about its re-militarization. However, these speculations have been toned down rapidly. At the same time, Moscow was sanctioned because of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, and the Alliance suspended all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia,[60] which later was reaffirmed in the Wales Summit Declaration.[61]

---

[59] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO and Russia – Time to engage. Remarks by NATO Secretary General Anders fogh Rasmussen at the Munich Security Conference," February 1, 2014, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/ en/natohq/ opinions_106788.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[60] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Statement by NATO Foreign Ministers," April 1, 2014, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en /natohq/news_ 108501.htm.

[61] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales," September 5, 2014, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/ cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

Those developments in the international arena have accentuated other substantial issues referring to the Arctic and security practicing there by NATO and Moscow. While the Alliance took a momentum to redefine its policy as a whole trying to elaborate new mechanisms for securing its values and principles, as well as the security of its member-states, Moscow has turned back to its traditional security approach. In this context, one can observe that since 2014 Russia increased its military presence in the Arctic quite often conducting provocative activities.[62] However, the Alliance follows reserved politics towards such activity simultaneously articulating its concerns and calling Russia for changing its behavior. The main anxiety addressed by the Arctic states refers to the largest Russia's fleet, the Northern, stationed in the Arctic and equipped with the icebreaker vessels of all types, including nuclear-powered ones. Previously, Russia used its potential in peaceful aims, in particular in cooperation with Norwegian fleet and its armed forces at the Kola Peninsula when conducting a range of trainings, for instance the annual military Exercise POMOR and the annual Barents Exercise in the search and rescue domain.[63] Nevertheless, there are no current concerns that Moscow can use its undeniable advantage in prospective military maritime operations in the Arctic. The second fear shared by the Russia's Western partners deals with the renewal of its long-range bomber patrols, in particular in the Arctic. Though such patrolling was resumed in 2007, it reached its high point in 2014,[64] which can be undoubtedly explained by the developments in Eastern Ukraine and the Western reaction towards the conflict. Such a conduct of the Russian Federation has become "the new normal" since then. Obviously, such behavior by Russia should be regarded as a display of negative security practicing having its foundations in the Military Doctrine 2014.

---

[62] Atle Staalesen, "Russia builds Arctic air defense shield," *The Barents Observer*, February 20, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018, https://thebarentsobserver.com/ en/security/ 2017/02/russia-builds-arctic-missile-shield; Clifton B. Parker, "Russia's Arctic military build-up explained," Stanford University, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, January 30, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018, https://fsi.stanford.edu/ news/russias-arctic-military-build?fbclid=IwAR3pb98NlRC_DtM9cDQUVFfe6JxVEZYGr_QOOoyuyW7JFuC0ZDX1sJtzjcw; Robbie Gramer, "Here's What Russia's Military Build-Up in the Arctic Looks Like," *Foreign Policy*, January 25, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018, https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/25/heres-what-russias-military-build-up-in-the-arctic-looks-like-trump-oil-military-high-north-infographic-map/.

[63] NATO-Russia Council, "Russia and Norway military cooperation," June 27, 2013, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/nrc-website/en/articles/20130627-nrc-pomor-briefing/index.html.

[64] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO tracks large-scale Russian air activity in Europe," October 29, 2014, accessed September 17, 2018, https://www.nato.int/ cps/su/natohq/news_114274.htm.

One more point causing tensions between two parties refers to the so-called GIUK[65] problem. This is a geographical chokepoint providing the access to the Arctic Ocean from the North Atlantic. The Alliance lacks military presence there, which increases concerns that Russia could use this area on its prospective way to the North Atlantic in case of a conflict.[66]

Summing up, one can clearly see Russia's shift from positive security practicing towards the negative one in the Arctic, while the Alliance tries to preserve its positive security practicing simultaneously reacting to the developments in European and the international arena. NATO's approach towards the relationships with Moscow should be recognized as more balanced and strategic, taking into account the importance of the region and the mutual cooperation with Russia. Undoubtedly, the Alliance and the Russian Federation will develop their interactions in future, since Moscow cannot and should not be omitted in the Arctic, thus the framework of their cooperation becomes the main concern. Prospects of NATO's future policy in the Arctic, including partnership with Russia, are to be discovered in the last section of the article.

NATO's Prospective Policy in the High North

Considering the results of the conducted analysis of the Alliance's presence in the Arctic during the post-bipolar period, one might face considerable difficulties while trying to envisage NATO's prospective policy in the region even in the short-term perspective. The major problem corresponds to the fact that NATO does not clearly identify its interests in the region and cannot clearly frame its Arctic policy apart from general statements. At the same time, the authors try to present their vision of future NATO's policy in the Arctic for the next five years, complementing it with the recommendations.

Taking into account the position NATO has adhered to for nearly thirty years now, one might suppose that Brussels will try to keep it as long as possible not to provoke rapid and irreversible developments in the political and military spheres in the region. The major principle of NATO there – keeping the region peaceful – would be implemented at any expense since the Alliance recognizes potential losses military confrontation could bring. Furthermore, a change of NATO's behavior in the Arctic in the direction of increased military presence should be a continuation of its general policy in the international

[65] This is an acronym for area in the Northern Atlantic ocean between Greenland, Iceland and the United Kingdom.

[66] Paul Mcleary, "In Return to Cold War Posture, U.S. Sending Sub-Hunting Planes to Iceland," *Foreign Policy*, December 4, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018, https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/12/04/in-return-to-cold-war-posture-u-s-sending-sub-hunting-planes-to-iceland/.

arena, which currently seems to be completely impossible as the Alliance has chosen different from bipolar times way of guaranteeing and practicing security. In this context, one should expect that the Alliance will not strengthen its military presence in the region. However, the trend of enhancing military positions by its Arctic littoral and non-littoral states will be preserved. At the same time, NATO would rather be forced by its member-states to clarify its position in the issue of providing security guarantees to its Arctic member-states. One might expect that the Alliance will develop its standalone Arctic policy displayed in the official documents with interpretation of the possible implementation of Article V in the Arctic. Taking into consideration the prospective consequences for the whole humanity, the authors tend to believe that NATO would clearly disavow its introduction in the region, inasmuch as ecological concerns are of extreme importance for the mankind and are recognized by NATO to be considerable in the Arctic. One should expect that NATO's policy will be coordinated with its Arctic members, especially with the Norwegian one. This way, one might anticipate that NATO will amplify its efforts in tackling ecology challenges and risks in the Arctic.

In the above-mentioned context, one might expect that the Alliance can establish a new body within the organization responsible for the Arctic dimension. Such a department is to operate on the fundamental NATO's documents, monitor the situation in the region on the daily basis, analyze and define broadly-understood security challenges there. Additionally, the Alliance can initiate regular meetings of its Arctic member-states and Associated Allies in the Arctic to discuss urgent issues in the region. If needed, such format of cooperation could be enlarged including other member-states and non-NATO partners. The Mediterranean Dialogue could be taken as a prototype for such a format.

Additionally, taking into account processes in the international arena, the Alliance will pay more attention to the economy and energy issues, considering that it has been already indicated in its official documents. Since the globalization is still accelerating and world's economy demands more resources, issues relating to new sources of resources, as well as their management, will be in the spotlight of the international community including NATO, especially taking into account that such issues influence directly security of modern states. When it comes to the prospective transport routes due to the ice melting in the Arctic, the authors doubt the issue can be managed by the Alliance. Such an issue would be a subject for the regulation by the provisions of the international law elaborated rather within the United Nations.

When it comes to the relations with Russia, one should acknowledge the importance of the development path to be chosen by Moscow. Currently, one must say that Russia keeps its traditional Cold War-oriented understanding of the security and means of its protection. Additionally, the outcome of the last presidential elections in March 2018 confirms that country moves on the way of authoritarianism, limiting partnership, and cooperation with the Western community. In this regard, one must state that Moscow would rather prefer to

develop its part of the Arctic on its own. Continuation of the military buildup is possible; however, the intensity and scale should not be overestimated since Russia lacks resources, especially financial. Economic sanctions, imposed on Moscow after its annexation of Ukrainian Crimea, inspiration and support of separatists on Ukrainian Donbas, continue to play a substantial role in slowing down, and in the longer run, halting such a buildup, forcing Russian elites to reconsider their confrontational strategies. In its turn, NATO should not disregard the process and should upgrade its own technologies and facilities, in particular in its Arctic member-states, in order to react adequately in case of potential conflict. However, such prospective NATO's policy should strictly correspond with its new understanding of security and aim at preservation of peace and stability in the region, as well as mutually beneficial cooperation of all interested actors in the Arctic. This is the major difference between Russian and NATO's approach to the development of the region in the modern-day reality. Prospects of multilateral cooperation in the region are likely to be conducted within the Arctic Council. Thus, cooperation between NATO and Moscow will not be restored during the new presidency of Vladimir Putin. In case of an emergency situation (for example, a large-scale search and rescue operation) in the region, NATO-Russia cooperation can be enacted for the defined period of time.

Overall, prospective and consistent NATO's policy in the High North should contribute to the enlarged space of freedom, stability, and peace, as well as a sustainable development and economic growth. In this context, the Alliance's policy should encompass the following strategic objectives: effective deterrence and credible collective defence, economic security and ecological security. In the case of the elaboration and implementation of such policy, NATO could fill the present security governance vacuum in the Arctic. The major point concerning prospective NATO's policy relates to the fact that the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization definitely should be present in the region applying its potential, knowledge, and facilities in order to strengthen security and create a space of prosperity and cooperation in the Arctic, since it can become a uniting point for different international actors, give the common ground and new (re)start for the civilization which way of modern development seems to come to a dead-end.

Conclusions

The article sought to examine the policy the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization should shape to meet security requirements of the post-bipolar period in the European and international arena addressing simultaneously expectations of its member-states. It has shown that regardless of its complicated path of development since the end of the Cold War, the Alliance firmly adheres to new political thinking about security as a phenomenon and

security environment in Euro-Atlantic region. Acknowledging the emergence of new threats, risks, and challenges in the last thirty years and their combination with the old ones, NATO emphasizes the importance of the dialogue addressing them. At the same time, the Alliance reserves the right to react under forced conditions. The actions towards the Russian Federation since the beginning of the conflict with Ukraine are the last example of such policy. This confirms that NATO's policy in the post-bipolar world is quite coherent and flexible, aimed at protection of its member-states. However, it remains comprehensive, complex and moderate, avoiding unnecessary confrontation. As the study has shown, the Alliance has chosen positive security practicing as the most relevant to the post-bipolar international order based on principles of liberal democracy, market economy and human rights. In this paradigm, NATO guarantees security to its member-states simultaneously deepening and expanding collaboration with them and its associated partners.

The need to elaborate the Arctic policy has become a natural continuation of NATO's transformation process, which is inherently linked with reshaping of the security space in the Euro-Atlantic zone. However, NATO has faced difficulties when trying to elaborate its Arctic policy since it has not been smooth evolution of its cooperation with Arctic countries with Norway in the first place but forced due to Russian aggressive moves in the North Pole in 2007. However, even then, NATO's officials have kept quite low and have had a reserved stance towards external pressure from some of its member-states and other actors accentuating the need for the enhanced research monitoring the situation and maintenance of the dialogue with all interested parties. As the paper has investigated, the Alliance has chosen the position of the compromise when addressing aspirations and fears of its member-states, and put the issue of prospective added value it can bring into the region in the future at the core of its emerging Arctic policy. As a result, such a stance has been both criticized and praised but it obviously proves that NATO adheres to positive security practicing trying to make use of every possibility available in the High North, taking into consideration an amount of factors, which require quite cautious and mature reaction. Such an attitude of the Alliance confirms that European countries fully understand the evolution of the security conception in the post-bipolar period considering the fact that ensuring security cannot be equated to the military domain. As it is shown, the Arctic countries play a considerable role in engaging NATO in the Arctic. However, even at the initial stage of its elaboration, NATO's Arctic policy cannot be treated as identical to Norway Arctic policy, for instance. The study confirms that the Alliance tries to balance negative and positive conceptions of security keeping in mind more complicated goals in a wider security context, while part of its member-states advocate for more liberal and cooperative approach towards the Arctic issues whereas others would like to act the way traditional power politics was conducted previously.

An additional and meaningful point in security discussions about NATO's presence in the High North refers to the relations with Russia, which simultaneously influence the Alliance transformation and the development of the Arctic. As this article has shown, NATO appeals for Moscow engagement in the region, as its comprehensive development is impossible without cooperation with Russia. However, such collaboration directly depends on Russian attitude towards security and its practicing. Since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, Moscow prefers the Cold-War rhetoric and actions using the Arctic as an element in its manipulative domestic and foreign policy. Nevertheless, such policy cannot prevent the Alliance from an elaboration on its own. At the same time, the study has confirmed that neither the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization nor Moscow plan to remilitarize the region as it was in bipolar times, what stipulates that NATO will rather concentrate on engaging other non-Arctic actors in the region trying to reach the goals which could have been reached with Moscow.

Summing up, the study assumes that the Alliance would undoubtedly become a more proactive player in the region. However, its presence in the High North will be maintained in different spheres ensuring security via diverse ways. Though, the military component will be preserved, and Article V will still possess its deterrent meaning. The article foresees the development of different forms of multilateral cooperation, which would include NATO or would be held under its auspices. The study envisages that as a cumulative effect, the prospective NATO's Arctic policy will bring an added value to the High North simultaneously increasing the level of international and European security.