

# Executive Summary Background

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## The New Cold War: Reviving the U.S. Presence in the Arctic

*Ariel Cohen, Ph.D., Lajos F. Szaszdi, Ph.D., and Jim Dolbow*

The Arctic is quickly reemerging as a strategic area where vital U.S. interests are at stake. The geopolitical and geo-economic importance of the Arctic region is rising rapidly, and its mineral wealth will likely transform the region into a booming economic frontier in the 21st century. The Arctic coasts and continental shelf are estimated to hold large deposits of oil, natural gas, methane hydrate (natural gas) clusters, and large quantities of valuable minerals.

With the shrinking of the polar ice cap, extended navigation through the Northwest Passage along the northern coast of North America may soon become possible with the help of icebreakers. Similarly, Russia is seeking to make the Northern Sea Route along the northern coast of Eurasia navigable for considerably longer periods of the year. Opening these shorter routes will significantly cut the time and costs of shipping.

Despite the Arctic's strategic location and vast resources, the U.S. has largely ignored this region. The United States needs to develop a comprehensive policy for the Arctic, including diplomatic, naval, military, and economic policy components. This should include swiftly mapping U.S. territorial claims to determine their extent and to defend against claims by other countries. With oil and gas prices recently at historic highs in a tight supply and demand environment, the rich hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic may bring some relief to consumers. These resources, especially the hydrocar-

bons, also have the potential to significantly enhance the economy and the energy security of North America and the world.

**Russian Ambitions.** Russia recognizes the multifaceted potential of the Arctic and is moving rapidly to assert its national interests. Moscow has submitted a claim to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea to an area of 460,000 square miles—the size of Germany, France, and Italy combined. The Kremlin is pursuing its interests by projecting military power into the region and by using diplomatic instruments such as the Law of the Sea Treaty. Russia made a show of planting its flag on the Arctic seabed in August 2007 and has resumed strategic bomber flights over the Arctic for the first time since the end of the Cold War.

While paying lip service to international law, Russia's ambitious actions hearken back to 19th-century statecraft rather than the 21st-century law-based policy and appear to indicate that the Kremlin believes that credible displays of power will settle conflicting territorial claims. By comparison, the

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West's posture toward the Arctic has been irresolute and inadequate. This needs to change.

**Reestablishing the U.S. Arctic Presence.** The United States should not rely on the findings of other nations that are mapping the Arctic floor. Timely mapping results are necessary to defending and asserting U.S. rights in bilateral and multilateral fora. The U.S. needs to increase its efforts to map the floor of the Arctic Ocean to determine the extent of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and ascertain the extent of legitimate U.S. claims to territory beyond its 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone. To accomplish this, the U.S. needs to upgrade its icebreaker fleet. The U.S. should also continue to cooperate and advance its interests with other Arctic nations through venues such as the recent Arctic Ocean Conference in Ilulissat, Greenland.

Specifically, the United States should:

- **Create an interagency task force on the Arctic** bringing together the Departments of Defense, State, Interior, and Energy to develop the overall U.S. policy toward the region. The U.S. should use diplomatic, military, and economic means to maintain its sovereignty in the Arctic, including establishing a Joint Task Force–Arctic Region Command, headed by a Coast Guard flag officer. The U.S. should also establish an Arctic Coast Guard Forum modeled after the successful Northern Pacific Coast Guard Forum.
- **Accelerate the acquisition of icebreakers** to support the timely mapping of the Arctic OCS and the Arctic in general to advance U.S. national interests. The U.S. needs to swiftly map U.S. claims on the OCS and areas adjacent to Alaska to preserve its sovereign territorial rights. Timely mapping will be important as the other Arctic nations submit their claims within the 10-year window. The U.S. should not rely on mapping from other countries to advance its claims or to defend against the claims of other countries.
- **Provide the U.S. Coast Guard with a sufficient operations and maintenance budget** to support an increased, regular, and influential presence in the Arctic.

- **Reach out to Canada, Norway, Denmark, and—wherever possible—Russia.** Diplomacy and cooperation with Canada and European allies with interests in the region will be required to prevent conflict with Russia and to maintain the special relationship with Canada. The U.S. needs to work with Canada to develop a mutually beneficial framework for the commercial exploitation of Arctic hydrocarbons.
- **Create a public–private Arctic task force** to provide a formal avenue for the private sector to advise the U.S. government on Arctic economic development. This task force should include representatives from the energy, natural resources, and shipping sectors.
- **Authorize oil exploration and production** in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other promising Arctic areas in order to expand domestic energy production. Congress should also streamline regulations for areas that it has already opened but heavily regulated.

**Conclusion.** As an Arctic nation, the United States has significant geopolitical and geo-economic interests in the High North. The U.S. should not only have a place at the table, but also a leadership role in navigating the nascent challenges and opportunities, such as disputes over the Outer Continental Shelf, the navigation of Arctic sea-lanes, and commercial development of natural resources and fisheries.

To play this role and to protect its interests, the U.S. needs to revitalize its Arctic policy and commit the necessary resources to sustain America's leadership role in the High North.

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With the shrinking of the polar ice cap, extended navigation through the Northwest Passage along the northern coast of North America may soon become possible with the help of icebreakers. Similarly, Russia is seeking to make the Northern Sea Route along the northern coast of Eurasia navigable for considerably longer periods of the year. Opening these shorter routes will significantly cut the time and costs of shipping. (See Map 1.)

In recent years, Russia has been particularly active in the Arctic, aggressively advancing its interests and claims by using international law and by projecting military might into the region.

Despite the Arctic's strategic location and vast resources, the U.S. has largely ignored this region. The United States needs to develop a comprehensive policy for the Arctic, including diplomatic, naval, military, and economic policy components. This should include swiftly mapping U.S. territorial claims to determine their extent and to defend against claims by other countries. With oil and gas prices recently at historic

### Talking Points

- U.S. Arctic policy is moribund and needs a comprehensive revival. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that the Arctic might hold up to 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil reserves and 30 percent of the world's undiscovered natural gas reserves.
- To protect U.S. rights, mapping is essential in determining the size of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf and the territory beyond its 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone.
- The U.S. icebreaker fleet is small and obsolescent and needs to be replaced with a modern flotilla of icebreakers.
- Russia takes its role as an Arctic power seriously. It has submitted a claim for a large swath of territory (1.2 million square kilometers) and is moving rapidly to establish a physical sea, ground, and air presence in the Arctic. Moscow appears to be taking the dual approach of projecting military might while invoking international law.

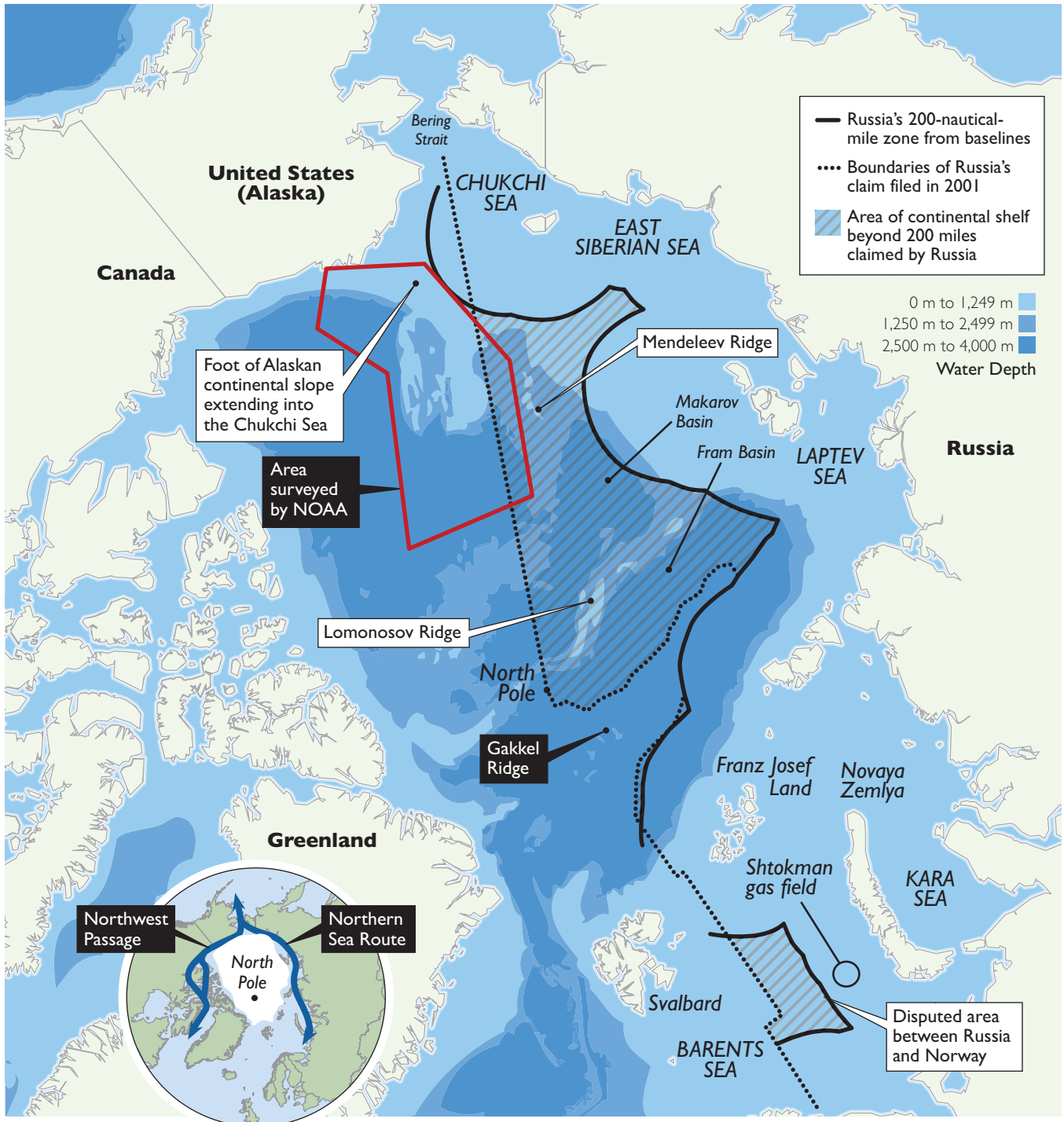
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## U.S. and Russian Interests in the Arctic



Source: Jeannette J. Lee, "New Seafloor Maps May Bolster U.S. Arctic Claims," *National Geographic News*, February 12, 2008, at <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/02/080212-AP-arctic-grab.html> (June 16, 2008).

Map 1 • B 2202 [heritage.org](http://heritage.org)

highs in a tight supply and demand environment, the rich hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic may bring some relief to consumers. These resources, especially the hydrocarbons, also have the potential to significantly enhance the economy and the energy security of North America and the world.

## The Arctic's Vast Untapped Resources

The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that the Arctic might hold as much as 90 billion barrels (13 percent) of the world's undiscovered oil reserves and 47.3 trillion cubic meters (tcm) (30 percent) of the world's undiscovered natural gas. At current consumption rates and assuming a 50 percent utilization rate of reserves, this is enough oil to meet glo-

bal demand for 1.4 years and U.S. demand for six years. Arctic natural gas reserves may equal Russia's proven reserves, the world's largest.<sup>1</sup> (See Table 1.)

The Russian Ministry of Natural Resources estimates that the underwater Arctic region claimed by Russia could hold as much as 586 billion barrels of unproven oil reserves.<sup>2</sup> The ministry estimates that proven oil deposits "in the Russian area of water proper" in the Barents, Pechora, Kara, East Siberian, Chukchi, and Laptev Seas could reach 418 million tons (3 billion barrels) and proven gas reserves could reach 7.7 tcm. Unexplored reserves could total 9.24 billion tons (67.7 billion barrels) of oil and 88.3 tcm of natural gas.<sup>3</sup> Overall, Russia estimates that these areas have up to 10 trillion tons of

## Estimated and Proven Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in the Arctic and Russia

bbo – billion barrels of oil    tcm – trillion cubic meters

Area	Source	Total Oil	Total Natural Gas	Years of Fuel Consumption (50% Recovery)					
				World Oil	U.S. Oil	World Gas	U.S. Gas	World Gas Hydrate	U.S. Gas Hydrate
Arctic region	U.S. Geological Survey	90 bbo (estimated)	47 tcm	1.4	6.0	8.0	36.0	–	–
Beaufort Sea	Canada's Northwest Territories government	–	99 tcm (estimated)	–	–	–	–	17.0	76.0
Russian Federation (all territories)	U.S. Energy Information Agency	60 bbo (proven)	47.5 tcm (proven)	1.0	4.0	8.0	36.0	–	–
Russian Arctic Ocean territories	Russian government	3 bbo (proven); 67.7 bbo (estimated)	7.7 tcm (proven); 88.3 tcm (estimated)	1.1	5.0	16.0	73.5	–	–
Arctic territory claimed by Russia	Russian government	586 bbo	–	9.0	40.0	–	–	–	–

Sources: U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Energy Information Agency, Government of the Northwest Territories of Canada, and the Russian Federation.

Table 1 • B 2202  heritage.org

1. Jad Mouawad, "Oil Survey Says Arctic Has Riches," *The New York Times*, July 24, 2008, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/24/business/24arctic.html> (July 24, 2008), and Joe Carroll, "Arctic May Hold 90 Billion Barrels of Oil, U.S. Says," Bloomberg.com, July 23, 2008, at <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601082> (October 14, 2008).
2. Scott G. Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2008, at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080301faessay87206/scott-g-borgerson/arctic-meltdown.html> (March 25, 2008).
3. Mikhail Krutikhin, "Arctic Ocean Prospects," *Kommersant*, May 30, 2008, at [http://www.kommersant.com/p897663/Expert\\_shares\\_his\\_view\\_of\\_possible\\_oil\\_mining\\_in\\_the\\_Arctic\\_zone](http://www.kommersant.com/p897663/Expert_shares_his_view_of_possible_oil_mining_in_the_Arctic_zone) (June 2, 2008).

hydrocarbon deposits, the equivalent of 73 trillion barrels of oil.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to oil and gas, the Arctic seabed may contain significant deposits of valuable metals and precious stones, such as gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, manganese, nickel, platinum, tin, zinc, and diamonds. The rise of China, India, and other developing countries has increased global demand for these commodities.<sup>5</sup>

**Alaska's North Slope.** Alaska's North Slope contributes significantly to U.S. oil production and could supply more. The North Slope is the region of Alaska from the Canadian border on the east to the Chukchi Sea Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) on the west. It includes the Chukchi Sea OCS, the Beaufort Sea OCS, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), the Central Arctic (the region between the Colville and Canning Rivers), and the National Petroleum Reserve, Alaska.<sup>6</sup> (See Map 2.)

Between 1977 and 2004, the Prudhoe Bay oil field on the North Slope produced more than 15 billion barrels of oil. By 1988, Prudhoe Bay was

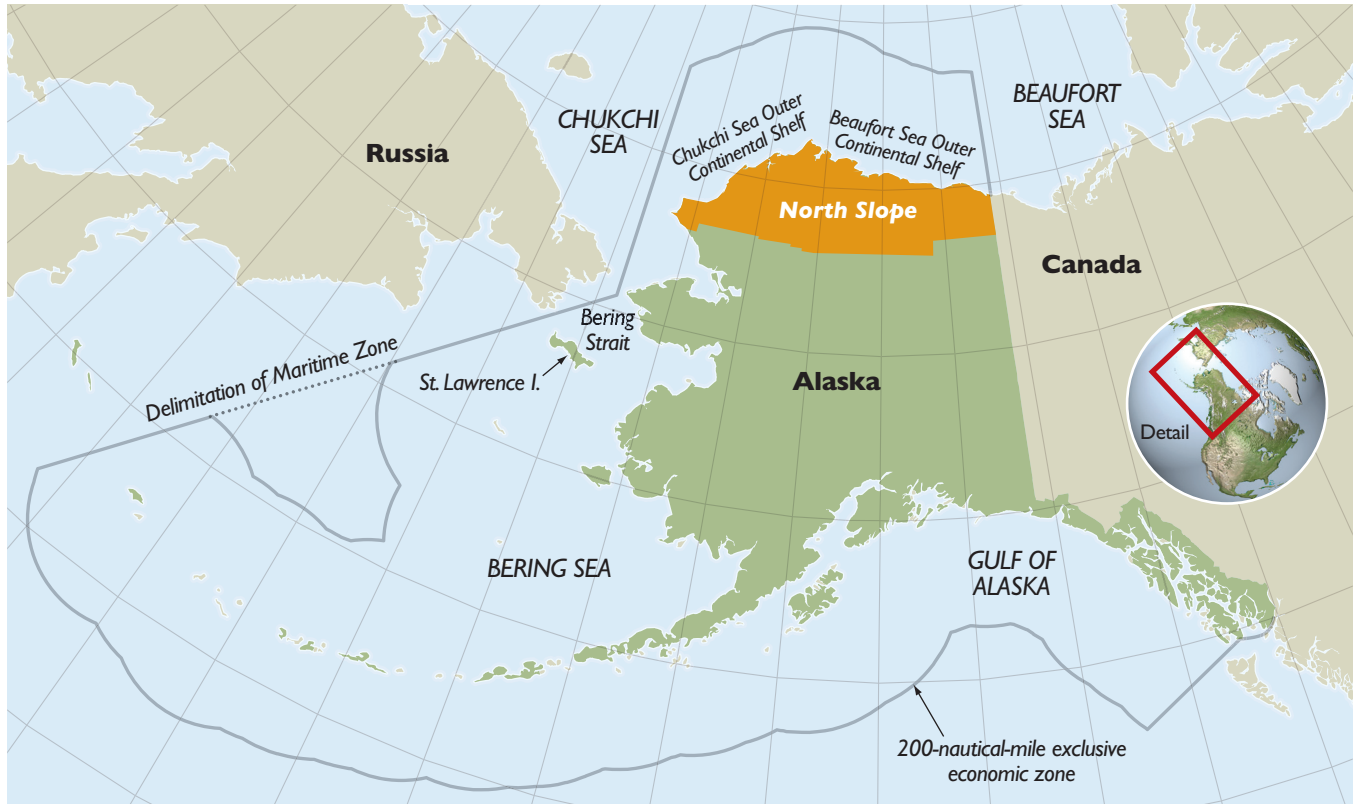
accounting for more than 25 percent of U.S. crude oil production. However, Prudhoe Bay oil field is currently in steep decline.<sup>7</sup> A U.S. Department of Energy report found that the North Slope has potentially 36 billion barrels of oil and 3.8 tcm of natural gas, close to Nigeria's proven reserves. The report also estimates that the Chukchi Sea OCS and the Beaufort Sea OCS hold combined energy reserves of 14 billion barrels of oil and about 2 tcm of natural gas.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, these reserves are even more attractive because their development is less limited by federal, state, and local legislation, as is the case with ANWR, and are thus more accessible to drilling.<sup>9</sup>

To enhance U.S. energy security, America should expand domestic oil production. America remains the only oil-producing nation on earth that has placed a significant amount of its reserves out of reach.<sup>10</sup> Until recently, potentially large U.S. natural gas deposits have been off limits.<sup>11</sup> For instance, ANWR holds potential reserves of about 10 billion barrels of petroleum.<sup>12</sup> Such reserves could lead to

4. Richard A. Lovett, "Russia's Arctic Claim Backed by Rocks, Officials Say," *National Geographic News*, September 21, 2007, at <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/pf/47871933.html> (March 31, 2008).
5. Kevin Krajick, "Race to Plumb the Frigid Depths," *Science*, Vol. 315, No. 5818 (March 16, 2007), pp. 1525–1528, and Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown."
6. U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, *Alaska North Slope Oil and Gas: A Promising Future or an Area in Decline?* August 2007, pp. vii, at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/technologies/oil-gas/publications/EPreports/ANSFullReportFinalAugust2007.pdf> (June 30, 2008). The only area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge where oil and gas prospecting and future production might take place is the 1002 Area, which has potentially large oil and gas deposits. The area consists of 1.5 million acres of coastal plain. Any oil or gas production in ANWR would require authorization by Congress. See U.S. Geological Survey, *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, 1002 Area, Petroleum Assessment, 1998, Including Economic Analysis*, April 2001, at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/fs-0028-01/fs-0028-01.pdf> (October 21, 2008), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Management of the 1002 Area Within the Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain," September 12, 2008, at <http://arctic.fws.gov/1002man.htm> (October 21, 2008).
7. U.S. Department of Energy, *Alaska North Slope Oil and Gas*, p. vii.
8. *Ibid.*, p. vii-viii. The report estimates that the Chukchi Sea OCS has 10 billion barrels of oil and 1.4 tcm of natural gas and that the Beaufort Sea OCS has 4 billion barrels of oil and 0.57 tcm of gas. Nigeria has proved oil reserves of 37.3 billion barrels. See Central Intelligence Agency, "Rank Order—Oil—Proved Reserves," *The World Factbook*, updated October 23, 2008, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2178rank.html> (July 11, 2008).
9. U.S. Department of Energy, *Alaska North Slope Oil and Gas*, p. vii. The Minerals Management Service defines the Outer Continental Shelf as "the submerged lands subsoil, and seabed, lying between the seaward extent of the State's jurisdiction and the seaward extent of Federal jurisdiction." U.S. Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service, "Outer Continental Shelf—Definition," at <http://www.mms.gov/aboutmms/ocsdef.htm> (July 14, 2008).
10. Ben Lieberman, "Falling Oil Prices: Useful Lessons from the Slump at the Pump," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 2106, October 17, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm2106.cfm>.
11. Ben Lieberman, "Lower Home Heating Bills by Increasing Domestic Energy Supplies," September 19, 2008, Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 2067, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm2067.cfm>.

## Alaska's Exclusive Economic Zone



Sources: National Geographic Society; Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Oil and Gas; U.S. Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service; and Russian Federation.

Map 2 • B 2202  heritage.org

an additional 1 million barrels per day in domestic production, which could be transported south through the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, which has a spare capacity of 1 million barrels per day. An additional 1 million barrels per day would save the U.S. \$123 billion in petroleum imports, create \$7.7 billion in new economic activity, and generate 128,000 new jobs.<sup>13</sup>

**Methane Hydrates.** Large methane hydrate deposits are located on the deep seabed of the Arctic Ocean.<sup>14</sup> Methane hydrates are a solid form of natural gas and have 3,000 times the concentration of methane found in the atmosphere.<sup>15</sup> While no technology currently exists to mine methane clusters, the capability appears to be just over the horizon. The U.S. and Japan have agreed to cooperate in

12. David W. Kreutzer, "The Economic Case for Drilling Oil Reserves," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 2093, October 1, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm2093.cfm>. Potential oil reserves in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge can be considerable. A U.S. Geological Survey report in 1998, updated in 2001, was based on "3 years of study" in the ANWR 1002 Area alone where "new field studies were conducted, new well and sample data were analyzed, and new geophysical data were acquired." The estimated reserves of technically recoverable oil range from 5.7 billion to 16 billion barrels in all of the ANWR 1002 Area, "with a mean value of 10.4 billion barrels." U.S. Geological Survey, *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, 1002 Area, Petroleum Assessment, 1998, Including Economic Analysis*.

13. Kreutzer, "The Economic Case for Drilling Oil Reserves."

14. Krajick, "Race to Plumb the Frigid Depths."

researching and developing commercial methane hydrate processing with the goal of selling gas from methane hydrates by 2018.<sup>16</sup> The South Korean Ministry of Energy has also announced that it will work with the U.S. in exploring and developing methane hydrate deposits to develop a commercially viable energy source. Seoul is also hoping to participate in the U.S.-sponsored Alaska North Slope project in 2009 to test the viability of using methane hydrates as an energy source.<sup>17</sup>

**Global Oil Supply and the Demand “Crunch.”** Arctic oil and gas resources have become increasingly important given the tight energy market. Escalating demand for energy in 2001–2008, stagnating supply, political instability, growing resource nationalism, terrorism, and ethnic conflict have combined into a perfect storm of a global supply and demand crunch.<sup>18</sup> This crunch has been reflected in high oil prices (\$147 per barrel in July). While oil prices have since retreated to less than \$70 per barrel due to the financial crisis, global energy markets are expected to remain tight for the long-term as the fundamentals remain largely the same (i.e., rising demand in emerging markets and flattening supply). While these trends bode ill for energy security, the resources in the Arctic offer a glimmer of hope.

**U.S. Energy Supplies.** Developing oil deposits in the Arctic is strategically important because the

region is not beset by religious, ethnic, or social strife and resource nationalism that plague oil-producing countries in the Middle East, West Africa, and Latin America. One way to reduce U.S. dependency on foreign oil is to develop Arctic oil fields. Such development would lower prices in the international oil market, even after accounting for the time lag for bringing new oil fields online. Moreover, the rich oil and gas deposits in Alaska’s North Slope and in the U.S. offshore Arctic territories could further increase U.S. energy supply by guaranteeing availability of additional domestic energy supplies in the time of a national emergency.<sup>19</sup>

**Liquefied Natural Gas.** U.S. demand for natural gas is growing because generating electric power using natural gas is cleaner and more efficient than with coal or oil. Natural gas production in the U.S. and Canada has not kept pace with the rising demand and is “flattening out” or declining.<sup>20</sup>

In 2004, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan saw increased imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) as a solution, or “price-pressure safety valve,” to reduce prices and fill the gap from diminishing North American gas supply.<sup>21</sup> However, LNG imports have so far proven expensive in meeting growing demand. The price of natural gas abroad is nearly double the price in the U.S., so

15. Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources, “Arctic,” updated October 18, 2004, at [http://www.bgr.de/ecord/index.html?ecord/polar\\_oceans/arctic\\_ocean.htm](http://www.bgr.de/ecord/index.html?ecord/polar_oceans/arctic_ocean.htm) (March 18, 2008); Michael D. Max, Jürgen Mienert, Karin Andreassen, and Christian Berndt, “Gas Hydrate in the Arctic and Northern North Atlantic Oceans,” in Michael D. Max, ed., *Natural Gas Hydrate in Oceanic and Permafrost Environments* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), pp. 175–176, 178, and 180–82; and N. N. Lebedeva-Ivanova and D. G. Gee, “Crustal Structure of the Podvodnikov Basin,” *Geophysical Research Abstracts*, Vol. 7 (2005).
16. “US and Japan Agree to Joint Methane Hydrate Study,” *Alexander’s Gas & Oil Connections*, June 16, 2008, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/news/ntn82505.htm> (June 16, 2008).
17. “South Korea and US Warm to Gas Hydrates,” *Alexander’s Gas & Oil Connections*, May 15, 2008, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/news/ntn82082.htm> (July 7, 2008).
18. Ariel Cohen and Owen Graham, “What Is Driving the High Oil Prices?” Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 1951, June 9, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm1951.cfm>.
19. Paul Ziff, “Cross-Border Regulatory Collaboration in Its Context: Energy Balances and Energy Policy,” Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Canada Institute *One Issue, Two Voices* No. 2 (September 2004), p. 12, at <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/ACF1D90.pdf> (October 16, 2008).
20. Daniel Yergin and Michael Zenker, “A New Challenge for the U.S.–Canadian Natural Gas Industry,” Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Canada Institute *One Issue, Two Voices* No. 2 (September 2004), p. 17, at <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/ACF1D90.pdf> (October 16, 2008).
21. Ann Davis and Russell Gold, “Surge in Natural-Gas Price Stoked by New Global Trade,” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 18, 2008, p. A1.



LNG flows to other buyers who are willing to pay higher prices, such as in Japan.

As Royal Dutch Shell's executive director of gas and power Linda Cook suggested, U.S. domestic production of natural gas could run 15–20 billion cubic feet per day below domestic demand by 2025.<sup>22</sup> However, augmented LNG production from the Arctic could help to meet future demand and to reduce gas prices in the domestic market, which would benefit industry and consumers.

### Opening the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf.

In a timely move prompted by the current demand, the Mineral Management Service in the U.S. Department of the Interior has started offering oil and gas lease sales for drilling rights in the Outer Continental Shelf in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. For example, the Chukchi Sea Lease Sale in February 2008 was the first OCS lease sale in 17 years.<sup>23</sup>

International corporations are now flocking to the High North. BP is developing a drilling project known as Liberty in the OCS. In February 2008, Royal Dutch Shell paid \$2.1 billion for 275 lease blocks in the Chukchi Sea Lease Sale 193. At the February 2008 lease sale, Norway's StatoilHydro and Italy's ENI were the high bidders on a number of blocks. In total, seven companies participated in the Chukchi Sea Lease Sale, which spanned an area covering 5,354 blocks.<sup>24</sup> In the future, these and other projects on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf could deliver gas to the lower 48 states through the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and the Canadian Mackenzie Valley Pipeline.

### U.S. Claims in the Arctic

The U.S. relies on its sovereign power and diplomacy when pursuing territorial claims in the Arctic. The United States is not a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty (LOST) and therefore is not bound by any procedures and determinations concluded through LOST instruments. Instead, the U.S. is pursuing its claims "as an independent, sovereign nation," relying in part on Harry S. Truman's Presidential Proclamation No. 2667, which declares that any hydrocarbon or other resources discovered beneath the U.S. continental shelf are the property of the United States.<sup>25</sup> The U.S. can defend its rights and claims through bilateral negotiations and in the multilateral venues such as through the Arctic Ocean Conference in May 2008, which met in Ilulissat, Greenland.

Many have argued, including the Bush Administration, that the U.S. will not have leverage or a "seat at the table" to pursue or defend its Arctic claims on condition that the U.S. is not a party to LOST. However, U.S. attendance at the conference in Ilulissat significantly weakened this argument. Even though the U.S. is not a LOST party, other Arctic nations "are unable to assert credible claims on U.S. territory in the Arctic or anywhere else in the world" because President Truman already secured U.S. rights to Arctic resources with his proclamation.<sup>26</sup>

Yet to protect its rights, the U.S. needs to know how far its claims stretch into the Arctic Ocean. The U.S. has been mapping the bottom of the Arctic Ocean and the Outer Continental Shelf since

22. *Ibid.*

23. "MMS Calls for Information and Nominations of Next Arctic Lease Sale," *Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections*, September 25, 2007, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/news/ntn73932.htm> (June 16, 2008), and "Alaskan Oil and Gas Blocks for Sale," *Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections*, February 4, 2008, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/news/ntn80617.htm> (June 16, 2008).

24. "Shell Bids for 275 Blocks Offshore Alaska," *Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections*, March 4, 2008, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/company/cnn81088.htm> (June 27, 2008); "StatoilHydro High Bidder on 16 Leases in Alaska Lease Sale," *Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections*, March 4, 2008, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/company/cnn81086.htm> (October 14, 2008); and "ENI Wins 18 Exploration Blocks in Alaskan Lease Sale," *Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections*, March 4, 2008, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/company/cnn81084.htm> (June 27, 2008).

25. Steve Groves, "LOST in the Arctic: The U.S. Need Not Ratify the Law of the Sea Treaty to Get a Seat at the Table," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 1957, June 16, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/InternationalLaw/wm1957.cfm>, and Harry S. Truman, "Policy of the United States with Respect to the Natural Resources of the Subsoil and Sea Bed of the Continental Shelf," Presidential Proclamation No. 2667, September 28, 1945, at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12332> (October 15, 2008).

26. Groves, "LOST in the Arctic."

2003.<sup>27</sup> Mapping is essential to determining the extent of the U.S. OCS and determining whether the U.S. has any legitimate claims to territory beyond its 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone. Despite ongoing U.S. efforts to chart the bottom of the Arctic Ocean, mapping efforts have been inadequate. According to a National Research Council report in 2007, the U.S. continental shelf and the Northwest Passage have not yet been entirely mapped.<sup>28</sup> Mapping is also important for disputing any conflicting claims by other Arctic nations. For example, the U.S. and Canada have likely claimed some of the same parts of the continental shelf.<sup>29</sup> Mapping data will also help to determine whether Russian claims conflict with U.S. and Canadian claims.

The expedition undertaken by the icebreaker USCGC *Healy* in the Chukchi Sea focused on surveying an area 400 to 600 miles north of Alaska and cost about \$1.2 million—a pittance compared to the billions of dollars of Arctic natural resources that are at stake. The survey indicated that the foot or lowest part of the Alaskan continental shelf stretches more than 100 miles beyond what was previously thought, thus expanding the U.S. claim.<sup>30</sup>

The U.S. requires a modern flotilla of icebreakers to conduct mapping and to sustain U.S. claims. The U.S. currently has only three icebreakers that

belong to the Coast Guard, of which only the *Healy* (commissioned in 2000) is relatively new. The other two icebreakers, while heavier than the *Healy* and thus capable of breaking through thicker ice, are at the end of their designed service life after operating for about 30 years. Yet even if the U.S. begins now, it will be eight to 10 years before a new icebreaker can enter service, and no money has been allocated to build a new-generation heavy icebreaker.<sup>31</sup>

## Russian Claims

After its invasion of Georgia, Russia has clearly hardened its international posture and is increasingly relying on power, not international law, to settle its claims. Moscow has also intensified its anti-American policies and rhetoric and is likely to challenge U.S. interests whenever and wherever it can, including in the High North.

Russia takes its role as an Arctic power seriously. In 2001, Russia submitted to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea a formal claim for an area of 1.2 million square kilometers (460,000 square miles) that runs from the undersea Lomonosov Ridge and Mendeleev Ridge to the North Pole. This is roughly the combined area of Germany, France, and Italy.<sup>32</sup> The U.N. commission did not accept the claim and requested “additional data and information.”<sup>33</sup> Russia responded by sending a scientific mission of a nuclear-powered icebreaker and two

27. Krajick, “Race to Plumb the Frigid Depths”; U.S. State Department, “Defining the Limits of the U.S. Continental Shelf,” at <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/continentalsshelf> (October 15, 2008).

28. U.S. State Department, “Defining the Limits of the U.S. Continental Shelf,” and Mark Galeotti, “Cold Calling,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, Vol. 20, No. 10 (October 2008), p. 9.

29. Jeannette J. Lee, “New Seafloor Maps May Bolster U.S. Arctic Claims,” *National Geographic News*, February 12, 2008, at <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/02/080212-AP-arctic-grab.html> (June 16, 2008).

30. *Ibid.*, and Nicholas Kralev, “U.S. Pursues Arctic Claim,” *The Washington Times*, May 13, 2008, at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/may/13/us-pursues-arctic-claim> (October 15, 2008).

31. Amy McCullough, “Coast Guard Gets \$30M to Overhaul Icebreaker,” *Navy Times*, October 17, 2008, at [http://www.navytimes.com/news/2008/10/cg\\_polarstar\\_101608w](http://www.navytimes.com/news/2008/10/cg_polarstar_101608w) (October 21, 2008); National Research Council of the National Academies, *Polar Icebreakers in a Changing World: An Assessment of U.S. Needs* (Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2007), p. 15; Borgerson, “Arctic Meltdown”; and Sandi Doughton, “Aging Fleet Slows U.S. in Arctic ‘Chess Game,’” *The Seattle Times*, September 20, 2007, at [http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2003893175\\_icebreakers20m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2003893175_icebreakers20m.html) (August 1, 2008).

32. Dave Sloggett, “Climate Change Offers Planners New Horizons,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, August 22, 2007, p. 23, and Lovett, “Russia’s Arctic Claim Backed by Rocks, Officials Say.”

33. U.N. Office of Legal Affairs, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, “Outer Limits of the Continental Shelf Beyond 200 Nautical Miles from the Baselines,” updated November 15, 2004, at [http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_rus.htm](http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_rus.htm) (August 5, 2008).

lously organized media event, the mission planted the Russian flag on the ocean's floor at the Lomonosov Ridge after collecting soil samples that supposedly prove that the ridge is part of the Eurasian landmass. During the mission, Deputy Chairman of the Russian Duma Artur Chilingarov, the veteran Soviet explorer heading the scientific expedition, declared, "The Arctic is ours and we should demonstrate our presence."<sup>34</sup> Such statements run counter to the spirit and potential of international cooperation and seem inappropriate for a scientific mission.

The U.S. has objected to these claims and stated that they have "major flaws." Professor Timo Koi-vurova of the University of Lapland in Finland stated that "oceanic ridges cannot be claimed as part of the state's continental shelf."<sup>35</sup> Russia intends to resubmit its claim by 2009.<sup>36</sup>

Russia is also moving rapidly to establish a physical sea, ground, and air presence in the Arctic. In August 2008, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed a law that allows "the government to allocate strategic oil and gas deposits on the continental shelf without auctions." The law restricts participation to companies with five years' experience in a region's continental shelf and in which the government holds at least a 50 percent share, effectively

allowing only state-controlled Gazprom and Rosneft to participate.<sup>37</sup> President Medvedev also featured the Arctic prominently in the new Russian Foreign Policy Concept, which states: "In accordance with the international law, Russia intends to establish the boundaries of its continental shelf, thus expanding opportunities for exploration and exploitation of its mineral resources."<sup>38</sup>

During 2008, Russian icebreakers have constantly patrolled in the Arctic. Russia has 18 operational icebreakers, the largest flotilla of icebreakers in the world.<sup>39</sup> Seven are nuclear, including the *50 Years of Victory*, the largest icebreaker in the world.<sup>40</sup> Russia is planning to build new nuclear-powered icebreakers starting in 2015. Experts estimate that Russia will need to build six to 10 nuclear icebreakers over the next 20 years to maintain and expand its current level of operations.<sup>41</sup> Russia's presence in the Arctic will allow the Kremlin to take de facto possession of the underwater territories currently in dispute.

In addition to icebreakers, Russia is constructing an Arctic oil rig in the northern shipbuilding center of Severodvinsk, which will be completed by 2010. The rig will be the first of its kind, capable of operating in temperatures as low as minus 50 degrees Celsius (minus 58 degrees Fahrenheit) and with-

34. Robert Amsterdam, "The Arctic Claim," August 3, 2007, at [http://www.robertamsterdam.com/2007/08/the\\_arctic\\_claim.htm](http://www.robertamsterdam.com/2007/08/the_arctic_claim.htm) (October 15, 2008), and Max Delany, "Gas and Glory Fuel Race for the North Pole," *The St. Petersburg Times*, July 31, 2007, at [http://www.sptimesrussia.com/index.php?action\\_id=2&story\\_id=22491](http://www.sptimesrussia.com/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=22491) (October 21, 2008).

35. Kraley, "U.S. Pursues Arctic Claim."

36. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russia to Submit Claim to Arctic Shelf to UN by 2009," July 8, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/world/20080708/113508863.html> (July 8, 2008).

37. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Medvedev Signs Law to Allot Off-Shore Deposits Without Auctions," August 18, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080718/114359207.html> (August 5, 2008).

38. Dmitry Medvedev, "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," Executive Office of the President of the Russian Federation, July 12, 2008, at <http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/docs/2008/07/204750.shtml> (September 4, 2008).

39. Galeotti, "Cold Calling," p. 12; Doughton, "Aging Fleet Slows U.S. in Arctic 'Chess Game.'" Another source reports that Russia has 20 icebreakers. See McCullough, "Coast Guard Gets \$30M to Overhaul Icebreaker."

40. BarentsObserver.com, "Russia to Build New Icebreakers," October 17, 2008, at <http://barentsobserver.com/russia-to-build-new-icebreakers.4519572.html> (October 21, 2008); Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russia Tests Nuclear Icebreaker on Open Sea," *Space War*, February 7, 2007, at [http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Russia\\_Tests\\_Nuclear\\_Icebreaker\\_On\\_Open\\_Sea\\_999.html](http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Russia_Tests_Nuclear_Icebreaker_On_Open_Sea_999.html) (July 16, 2008), and Nils Böhmer, Aleksandr Nikitin, Igor Kudrik, Thomas Nilsen, Michael H. McGovern, and Andrey Zolotkov, *The Arctic Nuclear Challenge*, Bellona Foundation (Oslo), 2001, p. 39, at [http://bellona.org/filearchive/fil\\_The\\_Arctic\\_Nuclear\\_Challenge.pdf](http://bellona.org/filearchive/fil_The_Arctic_Nuclear_Challenge.pdf) (October 15, 2008).

41. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russia Tests Nuclear Icebreaker on Open Sea," and "New Russian Nuclear Icebreaker 'Will Be Built by 2015,'" June 9, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080609/109670225.html> (June 12, 2008).

stand the impact of ice packs. The new rig was commissioned by the state-controlled Gazprom and demonstrates that Russia is serious about oil exploration in the Arctic.<sup>42</sup>

### Russia's Polar Saber Rattling

In August 2007, shortly after sending the scientific expedition to the Arctic ridge, then Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the resumption of regular air patrols over the Arctic Ocean. Strategic bombers including the turboprop Tu-95 (Bear), supersonic Tu-160 (Blackjack), and Tu-22M3 (Backfire) and the long-range anti-submarine warfare patrol aircraft Tu-142 have flown patrols since then.<sup>43</sup> According to the Russian Air Force, the Tu-95 bombers refueled in-flight to extend their operational patrol area.<sup>44</sup> Patrolling Russian bombers penetrated the 12-mile air defense identification zone surrounding Alaska 18 times during 2007.<sup>45</sup> Since August 2007, the Russian Air Force has flown more than 90 missions over the Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans.<sup>46</sup>

The Russian Navy is also expanding its presence in the Arctic for the first time since the end of the

Cold War.<sup>47</sup> Lieutenant General Vladimir Shamanov, head of the Defense Ministry's combat training department, said that the Russian Navy is increasing the operational radius of the Northern Fleet's submarines and that Russia's military strategy might be reoriented to meet threats to the country's interests in the Arctic, particularly with regard to its continental shelf. Shamanov said that "we have a number of highly-professional military units in the Leningrad, Siberian and Far Eastern military districts, which are specifically trained for combat in Arctic regions."<sup>48</sup>

On July 14, 2008, the Russian Navy announced that its fleet has "resumed a warship presence in the Arctic." These Arctic naval patrols include the area of the Spitsbergen archipelago that belongs to Norway, a NATO member. Russia refuses to recognize Norway's right to a 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone around Spitsbergen. Russia deployed an anti-submarine warfare destroyer followed by a guided-missile cruiser armed with 16 long-range anti-ship cruise missiles designed to destroy aircraft carriers.<sup>49</sup>

The resumption of Cold War-style patrols and increased naval presence in the Arctic is in keeping

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42. Agence France-Presse, "Russia's Putin Tours New Rig in Arctic Oil Drive," *Breitbart.com*, July 11, 2008, at <http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=080711175151.j2k3z1z7> (July 24, 2008).
43. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Four Russian Strategic Bombers Patrol Arctic, Atlantic Oceans," June 20, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080620/111462629.html> (June 20, 2008); "Russian Navy Planes Patrol the Arctic," June 11, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080611/110061305.html> (June 12, 2008); "Russian Tu-160 Bombers Continue Patrols over the Arctic," *RIA Novosti*, June 11, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080611/110039789.html> (June 12, 2008); and Interfax, "Russian Strategic Bombers Tracked by NATO Jets While on Mission over Arctic," June 10, 2008.
44. Interfax, "Russian Strategic Bombers Patrolling Arctic," June 9, 2008.
45. Rowan Scarborough, "Russian Flights Smack of Cold War," *The Washington Times*, June 26, 2008, pp. A1 and A17.
46. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russian Bombers Conduct Patrols Along South American Coast," September 16, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080916/116834364.html> (October 21, 2008); ITAR-TASS, "Four Russian Missile Carriers Patrolling Arctic, Atlantic Oceans," July 9, 2008, and "Russian Strategic Bombers Continue Arctic, Atlantic Patrols," Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, July 9, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080709/113588157.html> (July 9, 2008).
47. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russian Navy to Expand Presence in Arctic, Atlantic, Pacific," June 10, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080610/109836278.html> (June 10, 2008); Interfax, "Russian Navy to Increase Presence in Atlantic, Pacific, Northern Latitudes—Defense Ministry," June 10, 2008; and Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russia Prepares for Future Combat in the Arctic," June 24, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080624/111915879.html> (June 24, 2008).
48. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russian Navy to Expand Presence in Arctic, Atlantic, Pacific."
49. Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russian Navy Resumes Military Presence Near Spitsbergen," July 14, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/world/20080714/113914174.html> (July 14, 2008); ITAR-TASS, "Russia Warships Resume Presence in Arctic Areas," July 14, 2008; and Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, "Russian Warship Arrives in Norway for Northern Eagle 2008 Exercise," July 17, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080717/114226210.html> (July 17, 2008).

with Moscow's more forward posture and is intended to increase its leverage vis-à-vis territorial claims. Moscow is taking a dual approach of projecting military power while invoking international law. Regarding the naval deployments near Spitsbergen, the Russian Navy stated:

Sorties of warships of the Northern Fleet will be made periodically with a necessary regularity. All actions of the Russian warships are fulfilled strictly in accordance with the international maritime law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.<sup>50</sup>

At a meeting of the Russian government's Maritime Board in April 2008, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov backed a policy of settling territorial disputes in the region with the countries bordering the Arctic through cooperation. First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov, who is now deputy prime minister, stressed at the meeting that Russia observes the international law on the matter through adherence to "two international conventions": the 1958 Convention on the Continental Shelf, signed by Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the U.S., and the 1982 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea.<sup>51</sup>

While paying lip service to international law, Russia's ambitious actions hearken back to 19th-century statecraft rather than the 21st-century law-based policy and appear to indicate that the Kremlin believes that credible displays of power will settle the conflicting territorial claims. By comparison, the West's posture toward the Arctic has been irresolute and inadequate.

### Arctic Sea-Lanes

The Arctic Ocean has two main sea routes that are open to shipping for about five months of the

year with the help of icebreakers: the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage. (See Map 1.)

The Northern Sea Route links the Barents Sea in the west with the Chukchi Sea to the east and services isolated settlements along Russia's long Arctic coastline. If the Arctic ice cap continues to shrink, it will become a major route for international shipping.<sup>52</sup> A Northern Sea Route that is navigable longer would make the transportation of commodities to international markets easier and significantly reduce transportation costs between the Pacific Rim and Northern Europe (and Eurasia).

A Russian Information Agency Novosti political commentator argued:

The country that dominates this sea lane will dictate its terms to the developers of the shelf deposits and will see the biggest gains from the transportation of raw materials to the Pacific and the Atlantic. These include billions of tons of oil and trillions of cubic meters of gas, not to mention other minerals in which the local lands abound.<sup>53</sup>

Another Russian expert similarly lamented, "If we do not start immediately reviving the Arctic transportation system, voyages on the Northern Sea Route will be led by the Japanese or the Americans."<sup>54</sup>

The Northwest Passage runs through Canada's Arctic archipelago. If the polar ice cap continues to recede, the Northwest Passage will become a major shipping lane for international trade between Europe and Asia, cutting transit times substantially. Currently, navigation is possible along the Northwest Passage during a seven-week period with the use of icebreakers.<sup>55</sup>

According to a report by the U.S. Office of Naval Research, by 2050 "[t]he Northwest Passage through

50. *Ibid.*

51. ITAR-TASS, "Govt to Find One bln rbls to Substantiate Arctic Shelf Claim," April 18, 2008, and Convention on the Continental Shelf, 1958.

52. Thor Edward Jakobsson, "Climate Change and the Northern Sea Route: An Icelandic Perspective," in Myron H. Nordquist, John Norton Moore, and Alexander S. Skaridov, eds., *International Energy, Policy, the Arctic and the Law of the Sea* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2005), pp. 292–293.

53. Maxim Krans, "Russia's Northern Sea Route: Just a Dotted Line on the Map?" Russian News and Information Agency Novosti, May 23, 2007, at <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20070523/65989859.html> (July 10, 2008).

54. *Ibid.*

the Canadian Archipelago and along the coast of Alaska will be ice-free and navigable every summer by non-icebreaking ships.”<sup>56</sup>

Use of the Northwest Passage is a contentious issue between the United States and Canada. The U.S. argues that “it is a strait for international navigation” because it regards the Northwest Passage as international waters. Canada, on the other hand, claims that the straits of the sea route are “inland seas” falling under Canadian sovereignty.<sup>57</sup> Resolving this dispute amicably is essential for both countries to benefit from further economic and security cooperation.

### International Cooperation

The United States has a strong interest in cooperating with its Arctic neighbors, especially Canada, in developing offshore oil and gas fields and policing the region. Canada is a close NATO ally and a reliable oil and natural gas supplier to the United States. Canada also maintains a very friendly investment climate compared to other energy-producing nations. Opening the Arctic is a major opportunity for U.S. and Canadian companies to enhance the energy security of North America.

At a recent conference, Robert McLeod, former minister of energy of Canada’s Northwest Territories, said that exploitation of the oil and gas resources in the Arctic would improve North American energy security and that “[t]he combined northern gas reserves in Canada and the United States could supply southern markets in Canada and the United States with 8 billion cubic feet per day.”<sup>58</sup>

Opportunities also exist for cooperation in defense and national security. As during the Cold War, the U.S. could work with its NATO partners in the Arctic region. This is already taking place at the U.S. Air Force base in Thule, Greenland, under bilateral agreements between the U.S. and Denmark that facilitate this cooperation. The U.S. and Canadian Coast Guards resupply the Thule Air Base.<sup>59</sup> The most important example of U.S.–Canadian defense cooperation is the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). The Alaskan NORAD Region is regaining its former relevance with the Russian bomber incursions.<sup>60</sup>

Warmer ocean temperatures and a smaller ice cap would also provide increased opportunities for U.S.–Canadian maritime cooperation in combating potential terrorist operations and unlawful navigation. Moreover, warming of the northern portion of the Bering Sea may induce the migration of fish to the Arctic Ocean, opening opportunities for joint fishing regulation.<sup>61</sup> With the North Pacific already suffering from extensive poaching, unlawful fishing could become a problem. Joint law enforcement coordination for commercial fishing will be increasingly important.

### Reestablishing the U.S. Arctic Presence

The U.S. needs to revitalize its Arctic policy, beginning by elevating U.S. Arctic policy from its third-tier status. Specifically, the United States should:

- **Create an interagency task force on the Arctic** bringing together the Departments of Defense, State, Interior, and Energy to develop

55. Franklyn Griffiths, “New Illusions of a Northwest Passage,” in Myron H. Nordquist, John Norton Moore, and Alexander S. Skaridov, eds., *International Energy, Policy, the Arctic and the Law of the Sea* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2005), p. 304.

56. *Ibid.*

57. Associated Press, “Canada to Claim Arctic Passage,” *The Washington Times*, August 20, 2007, at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2007/aug/20/canada-to-claim-arctic-passage> (July 10, 2008), and Eric Posner, “The New Race for the Arctic,” *The Wall Street Journal*, August 3, 2007, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB118610915886687045.html> (July 10, 2008).

58. Robert McLeod, quoted in “Canadian and US Arctic Gas Resources to Improve Energy Security,” *Alexander’s Gas & Oil Connections*, June 3, 2008, at <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/news/ntn82388.htm> (June 16, 2008).

59. National Research Council, *Polar Icebreakers*, p. 23.

60. U.S. Department of Defense, North American Aerospace Defense Command, “About NORAD,” at <http://www.norad.mil/about/ANR.html> (July 17, 2008).

61. National Research Council, *Polar Icebreakers*, p. 50.

the overall U.S. policy toward the region. The U.S. should use diplomatic, military, and economic means to maintain its sovereignty in the Arctic. The U.S. should also establish a Joint Task Force–Arctic Region Command, headed by a Coast Guard flag officer. This joint task force would maintain U.S. sovereignty and have an interagency staff with representatives from relevant U.S. agencies and departments. The U.S. should also establish an Arctic Coast Guard Forum modeled after the highly successful Northern Pacific Coast Guard Forum.

- **Accelerate the acquisition of icebreakers** to support the timely mapping of the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf and the Arctic in general to advance U.S. national interests. The U.S. needs to swiftly map U.S. claims on the OCS and areas adjacent to Alaska to preserve its sovereign territorial rights. Timely mapping will be important as the other Arctic nations submit their claims within the 10-year window. The U.S. should not rely on mapping from other countries to advance its claims or to defend against the claims of other countries.
- **Provide the U.S. Coast Guard with a sufficient operations and maintenance budget** to support an increased, regular, and influential presence in the Arctic.
- **Reach out to Canada, Norway, Denmark, and—wherever possible—Russia.** Diplomacy and cooperation with Canada and European allies with interests in the region will be required to prevent conflict with Russia and to maintain the special relationship with Canada. The U.S. needs to work with Canada to develop a mutually beneficial framework for the commercial exploitation of Arctic hydrocarbons.

- **Create a public–private Arctic task force** to provide a formal avenue for the private sector to advise the U.S. government on Arctic economic development. This task force should include representatives from energy, natural resources, and shipping sectors among others.
- **Authorize oil exploration and production in ANWR and other promising Arctic areas** in order to expand domestic energy supply. Congress should also streamline regulations for areas that it has already opened but heavily regulated.

## Conclusion

As an Arctic nation, the United States has significant geopolitical and geo-economic interests in the High North. The U.S. should not only have a place at the table, but also seek a leadership role in navigating the nascent challenges and opportunities, such as disputes over the Outer Continental Shelf, the navigation of Arctic sea-lanes, and commercial development of natural resources and fisheries.

To play this role and to vindicate its interests, the U.S. needs to continue swiftly mapping the Arctic, build a modern U.S. icebreaker fleet, and work with its Arctic partners in bilateral and multilateral venues. The U.S. needs to revitalize its Arctic policy and commit the necessary resources to sustain America's leadership role in the High North.

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