

JOURNAL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

# JAMS

Special Issue on Arctic Security



JOURNAL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

# JAMS

**MCUP**

**MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY PRESS**

2044 Broadway Street | Quantico, VA 22134

MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY  
BGen Matthew Tracy, USMC  
President

Col Mark R. Reid, USMC  
Chief of Staff

SgtMaj Stephen J. Lutz, USMC  
Sergeant Major of MCU

#### EDITORIAL STAFF

Ms. Angela J. Anderson  
Director, MCU Press

Mr. Jason Gosnell  
Managing Editor

Ms. Stephani L. Miller  
Manuscript Editor

Mr. Christopher N. Blaker  
Manuscript Editor

#### ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Edward M. Sierra  
Deputy Chief of Staff  
Marine Corps University

Col Christopher Woodbridge, USMC  
(Ret)  
Editor, *Marine Corps Gazette*

Col Jon Sachrison, USMC (Ret)  
COO, MCU Foundation

SCHOOLHOUSE DIRECTORS  
Colonel Cornelius D. Hickey, USMC  
School of Advanced Warfare

Colonel Christopher Steele, USMC  
Expeditionary Warfare School

Colonel Andrew M. Kelley, USMC  
Marine Corps War College

Colonel Andrew R. Winthrop, USMC  
Command and Staff College

*Journal of Advanced Military Studies*

(Print) ISSN 2770-2596

(Online) ISSN 2770-260X

#### DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in the articles and reviews in this journal are solely those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the organizations for which they work, Marine Corps University, the U.S. Marine Corps, the Department of the Navy, or the U.S. government. When necessary, errata will be published immediately following the book reviews. MCUP products are published under a Creative Commons NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) license.

Established in 2008, MCU Press is an open access publisher that recognizes the importance of an open dialogue between scholars, policy makers, analysts, and military leaders and of crossing civilian-military boundaries to advance knowledge and solve problems. To that end, MCUP launched the *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* (JAMS) to provide a forum for interdisciplinary discussion of national security and international relations issues and how they have an impact on the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy, and the U.S. Marine Corps directly and indirectly. JAMS is published biannually, with occasional special issues that highlight key topics of interest.

#### ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

The editors are looking for academic articles in the areas of international relations, geopolitical issues, national security and policy, and cybersecurity. To submit an article or to learn more about our submission guidelines, please email [MCU\\_Press@usmcu.edu](mailto:MCU_Press@usmcu.edu).

#### BOOK REVIEWS

Send an email with a brief description of your interests to [MCU\\_Press@usmcu.edu](mailto:MCU_Press@usmcu.edu).

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions to JAMS are free. To join our subscription list or to obtain back issues of the journal, send your mailing address to [MCU\\_Press@usmcu.edu](mailto:MCU_Press@usmcu.edu).

#### ADDRESS CHANGE

Send address updates to [MCU\\_Press@usmcu.edu](mailto:MCU_Press@usmcu.edu) to maintain uninterrupted delivery.

#### INDEXING

The journal is indexed by ProjectMUSE, Scopus, ScienceOpen, EBSCO, ProQuest, Elsevier, OCLC ArticleFirst, Defense Technical Information Center, Journal Seek, IBZ Online, British Library System, Lancaster Index to Defense and International Security Literature, and AU Library Index to Military Periodicals.

**FREELY AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.USMCU.EDU/MCUPRESS](http://WWW.USMCU.EDU/MCUPRESS)**

Contents

Arctic Security

From the Editors	5
<b>SPECIAL ISSUE</b>	
The Russian Northern Fleet Bastion Revisited <i>Jonas Kjellén</i>	7
The Arctic as an Arena for Strategic Competition: Rivalry with Traditional and Irregular Levers of Power on NATO's Northern Flank <i>Njord Wegge, PhD</i>	28
The Arctic as a Periphery in U.S.-China Competition <i>Charlotte Hulme, PhD</i>	46
Chinese Arctic Expansion: How Beijing Benefits from Moscow's Isolation <i>Captain Mark Vicik, USA</i>	68
NATO's Long Cold Front: Why NATO Must Reorganize Its Approach to Defending the European High North <i>Major Ryan R. Duffy, USA (Ret); Lieutenant Colonel Jahara Matisek, USAF, PhD; Lieutenant Commander Jeremy M. McKenzie, USCG (Ret); and Colonel Chad M. Pillai</i>	78
Enhancing NATO's Naval Power in the High North <i>Gonzalo Vázquez III</i>	99

# The Arctic as an Arena for Strategic Competition

## Rivalry with Traditional and Irregular Levers of Power on NATO's Northern Flank

Njord Wegge, PhD

---

**Abstract:** This article investigates to what degree and through which fields and mechanisms strategic competition today plays out in the Arctic as well as how these questions align with international relations (IR) theory. Using rationalist approaches to the study of IR and the DIME model (diplomatic, informational, military, and economic) to structure the empirical investigation, this article finds that the strategic competition matches perspectives found in realism as well as liberalism. The article points out how states develop strategies to maximize security, wealth, power, and prosperity at the cost of others, while at the same time also identifies empirical evidence supporting liberal perspectives that stresses how unintended consequences of competition can be harnessed through institutions and international law. The competitive environment experienced in today's Arctic increasingly reflects an international society characterized by zero-sum thinking and a dynamic where the constraining role of institutions has diminished.

**Keywords:** strategic competition; Arctic; international relations theory; diplomatic, informational, military and economic model; DIME

International relations are today characterized by what has been labelled strategic competition. While the great powers are the key players in this competition, it also affects the smaller states and other actors on the interna-

---

Njord Wegge is a professor of political science and international relations at the Norwegian Military Academy/Norwegian Defence University College. He also holds a 20-percent position at the University of Tromsø, Norway's Arctic University. In 2022, Wegge was a visiting professor and chair of Arctic security at Marine Corps University, Quantico. He has published extensively on topics related to international relations and Arctic security, including the defense of NATO's northern flank, hybrid warfare, and democratic control of intelligence services.

*Journal of Advanced Military Studies* Arctic Security

Special Issue 2025

[www.usmcu.edu/mcupress](http://www.usmcu.edu/mcupress)

<https://doi.org/10.21140/mcu.j.2025SI002>

tional stage. The competition can be viewed as taking place in an international environment where the United States has a less dominant position than it held during the first decades after the end of the Cold War. This is an international arena increasingly characterized by multipolarity, even though the United States and gradually also China stand out as the most powerful actors. In this international climate, the importance of relative gains between states—at the cost of absolute gains—appears to have increased. This more competitive international environment is also reflected in the Arctic, a region of increased strategic importance.

This article investigates how strategic competition between Russia, China, and the West plays out in this northernmost part of the world, a region that geographically binds the European, Asian, and North American landmasses together, but which nevertheless stands out as being more politically divided than has been the case in some time.

When seeking to improve our understanding of how interstate competition plays out in the Arctic—and the consequences this rivalry has for the democratic states in this polar region—this article investigates the following research questions:

1. To what degree and through which fields and mechanisms does strategic competition today play out in the Arctic?
2. Given enhanced strategic competition in the Arctic—also involving nonmilitary levers of power—how does this competition correspond with theories on security, conflict, and competition from existing research within the field of international relations?

To address these questions, this article starts out by connecting the notion of *strategic competition* to international relations (IR) theory. Based on some general assumptions found in IR theory, a conceptual discussion on strategic competition will be put forward. Building on this conceptual outline, an empirical assessment of today's interstate competitive environment in the Arctic will be conducted. The article then displays how IR theory can provide an analytical framework improving understanding of how strategic competition today plays out in the northernmost region of the world. In conclusion, the article makes some reflections on how the Arctic NATO states should respond to the new challenges in the gray zone between peace and war in the north.

With respect to the delimitations of the region under scrutiny, this article applies the most common political characterization of the Arctic, which is defined as the area to the north of the Arctic Circle. This is the region north of the 66° 33' parallel north, where the sun never sets during the longest day of the summer, and similarly, never rises during the shortest day during winter, when observed at sea level.

## Analytical Framework

### The Idea of Competition in International Relations

Viewing the international system as an arena where competition between states prevails has a long tradition in the study of international relations (IR). With the two main rationalist approaches to IR—realism and liberalism—competition is assumed to be a basic feature of interstate interaction. These are approaches that, with some individual differences, assume that states develop more or less rational strategies to maximize goods such as security, power, wealth, and prosperity. This dynamic plays out in an interstate environment often described as an international anarchy.<sup>1</sup> However, while no supreme international “world government” exists, this anarchy is not equal to chaos but is rather structured by the states’ power capabilities and self-interests, as well as norms, international regimes, and laws.

Nevertheless, the two theoretical traditions that can be put under the umbrella of rationalist approaches—*realism* and *liberalism*—make quite different assumptions regarding the degree to which, and how, states can avoid or manage the risk of war. Differences are visible in issues such as in the view of the potential for states to learn to over time (e.g., to solve common problems) or the degree to which economic interdependence might lead utility-seeking state actors to solve conflicts by means other than war.<sup>2</sup>

The analytical roots of realism are often traced back to the Greek historian Thucydides and his assessment of the underlying causes of the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE).<sup>3</sup> As Thucydides in his account of the conflict tries to go beyond the apparent clashes of interest between Athens and Sparta, he points to the “real reasons” for the conflict, namely the fear of the opposite state’s growing power relative to one’s own.<sup>4</sup> During the twentieth century, realism gradually became the dominant theory of IR, reflecting the analytical fallout of the breakdown of the League of Nations, the lead-up to and devastation of World War II, as well as the tense security climate during the Cold War. Since becoming one of the key approaches to the study of international relations, the realist tradition’s focus on military security has been paramount.

Liberal approaches, conversely, often trace their roots to the European Enlightenment and philosophers like Immanuel Kant or John Locke, displaying faith in human reason and potential for human progress.<sup>5</sup> With liberal approaches, the potential of learning to cooperate, for example, by creating institutions, norms, and laws, combined with creating systems where self-interested behavior can be harnessed, stands out as a key belief.<sup>6</sup> In this view, competition does not by default lead states to go to war, as features such as economic interdependence might be mechanisms tying states together, moderating the security risks following the international anarchy.

When viewing rationalism as diverse while still united in its ontology and epistemology, one can point out how realists see a world where states care most about their gains relative to other states. Conversely, liberal scholars see a dynamic in international relations where states care most about their absolute gains, tolerating outcomes where other states win more.<sup>7</sup>

This article uses a rationalist understanding of international relations, an understanding of the international system informed both by realism and liberalism. This approach allows for a nuanced picture when seeking to understand strategic competition, war, and peace.

## Strategic Competition

*Strategic competition* is a term prominent in descriptions of the dynamics in today's international relations. However, the term is not always accurately defined in a precise fashion. When seeking to define the twin concept, *strategic competition*, a logical start is to address the first part of the term—*strategic*. This notion essentially refers to the level at which the competition takes place. In this respect, the strategic level can on the one side be characterized as an elevated, if not the highest, level of command, which also includes the political realm. This is the level where national planning and decision-making are done to reach what can be considered the most important combined national interest. The notion hence relates to the overall control of the course of military or political events within a state.<sup>8</sup>

The second part of the term—*competition*—refers to a race or rivalry for gain. This is a term that, when pertaining to relationships between states in the international system, most often relates to what can be characterized as a contesting relationship other than war, but where the characteristics and intentions of the race nevertheless can take different forms along a conflict continuum. In the *Competition Continuum* (Joint Doctrine Note 1-19), competition is described as “a fundamental aspect of international relations. As states and non-state actors seek to protect and advance their own interests, they continually compete for diplomatic, economic, and strategic advantage.”<sup>9</sup> Such a view of competition reflects a rationalist view of interstate relations as given by realist and liberal approaches to IR: “the competition continuum describes a world of enduring competition conducted through a mixture of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict.”<sup>10</sup>

When fusing the two terms *strategic* and *competition*, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff define the combined concept as follows: “Strategic competition is a persistent and long-term struggle that occurs between two or more adversaries seeking to pursue incompatible interests without necessarily engaging in armed conflict with each other.”<sup>11</sup> The concept document, *Joint Concept for Competing*,

of 10 February 2023, also specifies that strategic competition, as defined above, should not include “normal and peaceful competition among allies, strategic partners and other international actors who are not potentially hostile.”<sup>12</sup>

While the Joint Chiefs of Staff in their outline of the concepts are “adversary agnostic,” specifically stating that adversaries competing with the United States do not need to be great powers, there is little doubt that primarily China, but also Russia, are put forward as the most prominent strategic competitors.<sup>13</sup> This is also an understanding found in the previous U.S. *National Security Strategy* (NSS), but with one key linguistic difference, in that the strategic competition was instead labelled a long-term rivalry between powers on the global stage.<sup>14</sup>

This article applies the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s understanding of strategic competition when referring to this type of competition in the Arctic, where the phenomena implies the pursuit of incompatible interests among adversaries, hence not including “normal and peaceful competition among allies.”<sup>15</sup>

As strategic competition can play out in the *military* as well as in the *non-military* domains, this article addresses the phenomena in a comprehensive way, including both capability development in the armed forces as well as competition within aspects of civil society.

## **Empirical Investigation: Strategic Competition in the Arctic**

In President Joseph R. Biden’s 2022 *National Security Strategy*, as well as the *National Defense Strategy* (NDS), Russia is stated to pose an “acute threat” to its European neighbors as well as to the U.S. homeland.<sup>16</sup> China, on the other hand, is characterized as a “pacing challenge”:<sup>17</sup>

Russia and the PRC pose different challenges. Russia poses an immediate threat to the free and open international system, recklessly flouting the basic laws of the international order today, as its brutal war of aggression against Ukraine has shown. The PRC, by contrast, is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to advance that objective.<sup>18</sup>

The statement from the NSS pertains to the global security landscape characterizing international relations during the twenty-first century, reflecting Russia’s full-scale war on Ukraine and China’s increasingly global ambitions. This more competitive and grave security situation is today also found in the Arctic, a region that for a long period has been characterized by low tension.

When seeking to assess the fields in which the assumed strategic competition plays out today in the Arctic, the DIME model (diplomatic, informational,

military and economic) stands out as a relevant model structuring the investigation.<sup>19</sup> The DIME spectrum can hence help to identify different sides and facets of the ongoing competition, including irregular instruments of power, giving a holistic approach to the investigation.<sup>20</sup>

## **Diplomatic**

The Arctic has, since the end of the Cold War, been known to security scholars and politicians as a region of rather low tension.<sup>21</sup> This situation has prevailed in spite of the region's strategic importance and the fact that it is home to some of the most capable military forces globally (e.g., Russia's military complex on the Kola Peninsula), which directly borders the NATO country Norway.<sup>22</sup>

The “high north—low tension” slogan has been a reflection of this diplomatic situation, where intergovernmental forums and cooperative bodies such as the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), and the Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF) have promoted contact, cooperation, and dialogue across borders.<sup>23</sup> This situation has made the Arctic a region where diplomacy and cross-border contact have progressed, a dynamic not unlike the liberalist interpretations of international relations, where the binding effects of institutionalized cooperation is emphasized.<sup>24</sup> In addition, as issues of military security have been specifically excluded in the funding document of the Arctic Council, this high-level intergovernmental forum has thrived as a body where East–West dialogue on issues such as science cooperation, work on sustainability in the Arctic, or initiatives ensuring the well-being of indigenous peoples have flourished.<sup>25</sup>

With Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, the diplomatic tone quickly shifted, reducing international cooperation in the region. With the change, rivalry and strategic competition quickly gained the upper hand.<sup>26</sup> Following the 2022 Ukraine invasion, the development continued with a near-full freeze of circumpolar Arctic diplomacy between Russia and the seven other Arctic states.<sup>27</sup> Neither the Arctic Council, BEAC, nor the ACGF currently function as a consequence of the full-scale war on Ukraine. As the notion of Arctic exceptionalism has been debunked, descriptions of the political order in the Arctic can be interpreted to have become more in line with the realist understanding of international relations.<sup>28</sup> This is a situation where relative gains are becoming more important, where the balance of power creates an international structure that put limits to state actions, and where most sectors of governmental, as well as commercial, activities are interpreted to have a competitive security element.

Following the breakdown in circumpolar diplomacy, we can now see strategic competition through two competitive blocs in the Arctic. These blocs are led by the United States on the one side, and by a weakened Russia—increasingly dependent on China—on the other side. The western Arctic states have

also deepened their security cooperation, not the least illustrated by Sweden and Finland joining NATO. With the two Nordic states joining the military defense alliance, institutionalized security and defense cooperation in the high north has been strengthened, representing a key diplomatic tool in the security competition playing out in the Arctic.<sup>29</sup> With the second Donald J. Trump administration taking office in early 2025, one can observe new tensions within the western bloc, particularly related to the diplomacy on how to end the Ukraine war and restated demands for Europe to increasingly be responsible for its own security.

While the western and eastern blocs stand out as clear competitors, it should be noted that the Trump administration's mixed messages on territorial ambitions, versus some of its old NATO allies—Denmark and Canada—have shaken the western bloc.<sup>30</sup> The Russian-Sino bloc should also be described as unbalanced in their Arctic cooperation. While Russia and China are united in an anti-Western, authoritarian vision of governance, its internal dynamic can be interpreted as stressed, reflecting geographic absolutes, where China is dependent on Russia with respect to reliable access to the Arctic and natural resources from the region, while Russia is increasingly dependent on China's monetary and industrial capacity and strength.<sup>31</sup>

There are also strong indications of Russia currently exploring how to develop new alliances in the Arctic, seeking to include new non-Western states, carrying the logistical burden in new partnerships in its northern diplomacy. Russia has as an example reached out to all the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, plus five new members) in its adjusted Arctic diplomacy.<sup>32</sup> These efforts suggest competitive attempts to dam up and challenge Western dominance over Arctic governance, political agenda setting, and research activities in the region.<sup>33</sup>

Russia's attempt to establish an Arctic science center at Svalbard, inviting states such as China, Brazil, India, Turkey, and Thailand is also illustrative.<sup>34</sup> Another example of the change in which Russia is redefining its role as a balancing, anti-Western Arctic power, is the newly agreed memorandum of understanding with China on coast guard cooperation in the Arctic.<sup>35</sup> Held together, the political order of the Arctic continues to be complex, displaying features relevant to both realism and liberalism, where a search for relative gains might characterize the competitive behavior between the two blocs, while the intra-bloc dynamic rather might reflect the search for absolute rewards.

## **Informational**

The information domain has emerged as a key arena of competition between hostile actors during the twenty-first century. Research has documented that false news tends to spread faster than authentic news, making this tool of influ-

ence attractive.<sup>36</sup> The challenging situation experienced in the global information domain is reinforced by the low cost of making and distributing false or manipulative news, compared to most other instruments of power.<sup>37</sup> This situation has in many cases made false, misleading, and manipulative information the preferred tool for hostile actors seeking to reach relative gains over an opponent. Not surprisingly, the cost efficiency of using information has been identified as a key instrument of power in what has been labeled hybrid warfare.<sup>38</sup>

There are several areas where hostile influence activities in the Arctic have been identified. It is, particularly, Russian proxy actors that have been active in this regard, spreading directly false narratives, while other news reports or campaigns tend to exploit existing tension or potential conflicts, aiming to amplify distrust and division. Examples of the former include the following fictional story concerning the Svalbard archipelago, where the narrative of a “secret agreement allowing the United States to build a military facility with a biological laboratory at Bear Island” was spread through pro-Kremlin outlets and put forward by authoritative individuals in the Russian science community.<sup>39</sup> Examples of the latter includes more subtle approaches, for example, where various false claims related to issues such as the Norwegian governance of Svalbard and breach of the Svalbard Treaty, or the use of “memory policy,” where the combined Norwegian–Russian fight against the Nazis during World War II has been used, as the basis for spreading pro-Kremlin agendas.<sup>40</sup>

Other illustrative examples of influence campaigns in the Arctic include the situation in Greenland. As Denmark has ruled the indigenous population of the island for centuries, issues of racism, marginalization, and colonialism has sowed division between Nuuk and Copenhagen. So too have conflicts concerning what has been perceived as the lack of legitimate representation by the indigenous people in decision-making related to Greenland’s foreign relations.<sup>41</sup> In this situation, foreign states have been identified as actors seeking to exploit and sow division between Copenhagen and Nuuk.<sup>42</sup>

Owing to the increased great power rivalry in the Arctic and North Atlantic regions, the Faroe Islands and Greenland may become the targets of Russian or Chinese influence activities. Therefore, PET [Danish Security Police] assesses that Russia and China may be interested in information that could be used for influence activities such as potential internal disagreements within the Danish Realm and the positions of the Faroe Islands and Greenland as regards military matters and sanctions against Russia.<sup>43</sup>

Hostile influence can be a powerful tool in strategic competition and can represent a subtle lever of power, quite different from more direct military capa-

bility tools and economic strength, which are typically addressed in rationalist IR theory. Nevertheless, information and control of narratives can create the basis for public opinion, indirectly affecting the willingness to compete. When seeking common features characterizing hostile influence activities, the tendency to exploit potential existing internal divisions in Arctic states is a recurring pattern.

China has also been identified as seeking to influence narratives and promoting its interest in the Arctic at the cost of the other Arctic states.<sup>44</sup> The focus has often centered on establishing the idea that China is a crucial stakeholder in the Arctic as a “near-Arctic” state.<sup>45</sup> In the Department of Defense’s *2024 Arctic Strategy*, this tendency is pointed out and acknowledged as a means for influence at the relative cost of other states: “Although the vast majority of the Arctic is under the jurisdiction of sovereign states, the PRC seeks to promote the Arctic region as a ‘global commons’ in order to shift Arctic governance in its favor.”<sup>46</sup> According to Danish intelligence, China is also recognized, alongside Russia, as an actor that seeks to exploit vulnerabilities pertaining to the Arctic in Western societies.<sup>47</sup>

## **Military**

While the Arctic was an important military theater during the Cold War, this situation gradually ended with the breakdown of the Soviet Union. However, in 2007, and particularly since the Russian war on Ukraine (2014 and 2022), the Arctic has been revitalized as a military–strategic theater.<sup>48</sup> Russia has today reestablished itself as a capable great power throughout the Arctic, where it has refurbished and built significant new military infrastructures such as the Nagurskoye Air Base on Franz Josef Land, establishing the “most developed regional military presence of all the Arctic Nations.”<sup>49</sup>

The Russian focus on improving their military capabilities in the Arctic can be interpreted as an attempt to dominate the Arctic militarily. Western NATO states, particularly represented by the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, in addition to the Nordic states, have sought to counter this situation, building its own cold weather capable forces able to conduct complex operations in the region.<sup>50</sup> In this ongoing competitive response, the emphasis has been on interoperability and power projection capabilities, where acquiring appropriate material to conduct and win high-intensity multidomain operations in the North Atlantic and the European Arctic theater, against a symmetric, peer, or near-peer competitor has been important.<sup>51</sup> This is an effort running parallel to conceptual and doctrinal initiatives pertaining to competitive high-intensity operations in the cold weather scenarios.<sup>52</sup>

In addition, one should point out how the United States and Canada increasingly have acknowledged the need to improve vigilance and situational

awareness in their own backyard, “cautioning that the United States and Canada have lost their long-standing military advantages in the Arctic to Russia.”<sup>53</sup> As a result, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) with its North Warning System has been modernized, where upgrades of early warning and antimissile capabilities designed for a peer-competitor situation has been conducted.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, U.S. Northern Command recently increased its focus on the defense of the North American Arctic, including the Canadian archipelago and the Arctic Ocean.<sup>55</sup>

Examples of strategic competition and balancing behavior can also be observed in the Arctic seas and oceans. The U.S. Navy, with their NATO allies, have started conducting “freedom of navigation operations” in the Barents Sea region, close to Russia.<sup>56</sup> The operational sailing pattern resembles the tense period of the Cold War. An illustrative example is that the two U.S. aircraft carriers, USS *Harry S Truman* (CVN 75) and USS *Gerald R Ford* (CVN 78), have in the last few years ventured far north into the Norwegian Sea, not different from operational patterns of the 1980s.<sup>57</sup> In addition, the most “conspicuous display of posturing” in the Arctic is probably represented by the increased flight of U.S. Bomber Task Force groups into the Barents Sea, close to the Kola Peninsula and its military installations.<sup>58</sup> The new patterns of air operations also illustrate the U.S. imperative to have access to the region for reasons of global power projection, an issue that has also been pointed out by the U.S. Air Force and academics.<sup>59</sup>

During the last decade, Russia has also sent a large number of bomber planes on flights along NATO countries’ coastlines. Russia has also started using “Notice to Airmen” warnings more frequently, conducting live-fire drills by air and naval assets, close to Norwegian waters.<sup>60</sup> This is a type of competitive behavior that should be interpreted as signaling discontent with NATO and the Western powers in the region.<sup>61</sup> While the Russian military activities overall have been centered on operations such as force posturing or signaling, it has also involved incidents of mapping of critical infrastructure and potential use of violent means.<sup>62</sup> In this respect, the damage of railway lines on the Ofoten line between Kiruna and Narvik, represent a case where intended sabotage is likely.<sup>63</sup> The cutting of the cable to northern Norway’s Evenes Air Station, hosting Norway’s Boeing P-8 Poseidon maritime surveillance planes, and being the northernmost location of Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning IIs in Europe, represents another case where the police explicitly have stated that intended sabotage is likely to have taken place.<sup>64</sup>

Great power competition also plays out under the sea in the Arctic, where in particular “seabed warfare ha[s] become a hot-button issue concerning grey zone operations and sub-threshold warfare against critical underwater infrastructure (CUI), notably from Russia and China.”<sup>65</sup> Well-known examples

where hostile intention has not been ruled out include cutting of communication cables to Svalbard in 2022, the damage of Baltic-connector gas pipeline in 2023, the *Newnew Polar Bear* damaging pipelines in the Baltic Sea in 2024, and the suspected sabotage of a telecoms cable in the Baltic Sea in February 2025.<sup>66</sup> Research has also, in parallel, documented how Russia built the capacity to target undersea infrastructure.<sup>67</sup> The development has caused NATO states to set up a hub to secure critical undersea infrastructure both in the Arctic and the Baltic Sea.<sup>68</sup>

The increased risk of sabotage in the Arctic is the result of strengthened irregular military capabilities that complements the conventional force buildup and is also in line with a greater trend across Europe. Today, there is evidence of Russia plotting “violent acts of sabotage across the continent as it commits to a course of permanent conflict with the west.”<sup>69</sup> This is a view also expressed in a recent official threat assessment from Oslo, bluntly warning “there is an increased likelihood that Russian intelligence services will try to carry out sabotage operations in Norway in 2025.”<sup>70</sup>

While less is known about long-term Chinese military ambitions in the Arctic region, new concern has surfaced. The increased civilian Chinese activities, and the potential for dual use infrastructure development that could be a part of irregular capability build up, has in this respect been pointed out.<sup>71</sup> The civilian Chinese activities at Svalbard has specifically been noted.<sup>72</sup>

## **Economic**

The economic potential of the Arctic region has long been a core element when media portray states’ jockeying for position in the Arctic.<sup>73</sup> This pertains not least to the economic potential that might follow future sailing routes across the Arctic Ocean, the Northern Sea Route, or the Northwest Passage, but also to economic interests related to natural resources that might become more accessible as the sea ice retreats. However, while the region is known to hold significant natural resources such as oil, gas, minerals, and natural resources, there are extended legal regimes regulating both ownership and economic activities, primarily in favor of the Arctic coastal states.<sup>74</sup>

From the perspective of strategic competition, there is an increased tendency to see China as a challenger to this established political order in the Arctic: “In the Arctic, the United States sees China as a potentially destabilizing force, with the economic and military power to try to bend the established order to its liking.”<sup>75</sup> There are also indications of China actively using its growing economic might to gain influence in the Arctic: “China actively uses the fields of economics, research and technology to further promote its interests and advance its foothold in the Arctic. . . . Chinese officials have repeatedly stated China’s objective of becoming a polar power and a maritime power in the coming years.”<sup>76</sup>

However, while China has showed significant interest in investing in industry and infrastructure in places like Greenland and Iceland, there are indications of a pendulum swing, with heightened skepticism given the geopolitical risk involved has become more clear in the West.<sup>77</sup>

Russia's economic policy in the Arctic has also gradually become more assertive.<sup>78</sup> With this perspective, Russia's extensive legal claims in the regulation of the NSR stand out, including warnings of using force against vessels that do not abide by Russian rules.<sup>79</sup> While Russia's legal approach to the status of the NSR is controversial, Moscow has to a greater extent been recognized to have followed the legal procedures of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, with respect to its documentation of the extended continental shelf in the central Arctic Ocean, hence giving a composite footprint in its legal approach to the Arctic.<sup>80</sup> The Russian approach to strategic competition in the Arctic can in this respect be interpreted to contain elements familiar to both realism—particularly with respect to control and dominance of its close Arctic waters—with Moscow's reasoning in its approach to the control of continental shelves beyond 200 nautical miles more in accordance with the logic put forward by liberalism.

## **Strategic Competition in Today's Arctic**

Following the less tense decades after the end of the Cold War, great power rivalry and strategic competition have returned to global politics. While the shift might stand out as surprising to some scholars, the change could also be seen as a return to normalcy in the international system, a state of affairs much in line with a realist perspective on the role of power in international affairs.<sup>81</sup>

There are today clear indications of strategic competition in the Arctic. This competition is increasingly being played out between two more or less clearly defined blocs: A group of Western democratic states led by the United States, a fact continuing to be the case despite more intrabloc turbulence under the second Trump administration, and a group of more authoritarian states led by Russia. The western North Atlantic states constitute a large, more or less continuous, regional group of states, stretching from the Arctic Ocean to the North Sea and North America. In contrast, the Russian-led authoritarian-oriented bloc has many fewer regional partners. Moscow has instead resorted to a strategy of inviting states from faraway places, with the Sino–Russian relationship as the core.

In realism and liberalism, the key rationalist approaches to the study of IR, conflict, and competition are regarded as permanent features of the international system. This fits well with an understanding of strategic competition as a phenomenon that occurs across a competition continuum. This is a continuum where conflicts of interests could be managed and solved through finding mu-

tually acceptable solutions on the one end, to armed conflict on the other end of the continuum.<sup>82</sup>

When using wording from the *Joint Concept for Competing*, the “normal and peaceful competition among allies” should not be included in what many regard as strategic competition.<sup>83</sup> Following such a differentiation, this article has focused on strategic competition across the DIME spectrum between the above-mentioned blocs in the Arctic. This might be competition of a direct hostile or violent nature, as well as through more subtle nonviolent strategies.

Competitive hostile actions can involve sabotage and the use of physical means for destruction. Today, Russia has become emboldened and willing to take greater risks. There are several recent examples of physical destruction and likely sabotage against Western interests in Europe, including the Arctic. Communication cables and railway facilities have in this respect been noted as targets in the Nordic countries.

Conversely, strategic competition could also involve the use of malign but not kinetic instruments of power. Incidents where an opponent uses false or misleading narratives for the purpose of increased domination and political gain are illustrative. Such actions could be described as taking place in a gray zone between deep peace and a shooting war.

The empirical section of this article has also illustrated how strategic competition in the Arctic could be observed through the use of military buildup and more assertive force postures, including live-fire drills and provocative behavior. Certain types of scientific activities as well as civilian dual use capabilities in the Arctic could also be regarded as political and competitive in nature. Economic investments, civilian capability development, and various forms of scientific activity in the Arctic could, in this respect, together with military activity, all be interpreted as society wide, cross sector, balancing behavior.

Finally, strategic competition in the Arctic can also be observed through activities seeking to affect or influence the legitimacy of governance. There are clear indications of strategic competition in diplomatic activities, where the current breakdown in circumpolar institutions has led the two blocs to pursue different strategies for influence and ways to establish dominance. Note China’s ambitions in seeking to create new narratives aimed at pursuing greater access to and legitimacy in participating in Arctic governance and legal affairs.

Going back to the basic theories of IR, the strategic competition today playing out in the Arctic fits well into the rationalist view of how the international system works in an international dynamic characterized by strategic competition.

On the one hand, the competition matches a realist view of interstate rivalry, where states in the international system are assumed to develop strategies to maximize security, wealth, power, and prosperity at the cost of others. Similarly,

it also fits the assumption that this competition is a deeply inherited and lasting feature of the international system, where relative gains matter and where there is always a risk of armed conflict and war.

On the other hand, there is also an empirical basis to support liberal theories suggesting that negative unintended consequences of competition could be harnessed through institutions and international law. This dimension regulates several aspects of international affairs in the Arctic today. The role, and harnessing effects, of the regulations given by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, stands out as particularly visible in this respect. However, as many of the circumpolar institutions today appear to be paralyzed, or put on hold, mostly due to Russia's war on Ukraine, the competitive environment experienced in today's Arctic increasingly reflects an international society more characterized by zero-sum thinking, an international dynamic where the constraining role of institutions has diminished. This is a dynamic much in accordance with realism's view of the international system, where all dimensions of society tend to have a security-related component and where the emphasis is put on states' relative gains and the need to balance competitive powers.

## **The Way Forward**

Taking the current trends of international relations in the Arctic into account, the West needs to find ways to respond to the new challenges represented by a more unpredictable and competitive climate. In practice, greater consciousness should be given to issues found across the entire DIME spectrum. This includes acknowledging the competitive aspects of issues such as economic investments, infrastructure development, and scientific research. Similarly, this could also feature several aspects of international governance, including the setting of the agenda, and be regarded as tools in a competitive political rivalry. Such a reorientation could, at least in the short term, lead to less cooperation between East and West. While less cooperation such as through sharing of scientific data, slower development of infrastructure projects, or a delay in institutionalized cooperation might be a consequence, this might be the cost Western states should be willing to take in order to become less vulnerable and protect basic national and democratic interests in the long run.

While common solutions and agreements should be sought between East and West, there needs to be sober realism among Western stakeholders with respect to how activities traditionally not associated with security could be used for political gain, creating an unfavorable balance to the West in the long run. Developments within Arctic diplomacy, the information space, as well as economic development in the Arctic should hence be put under greater scrutiny, as these are all areas that could influence relative power-balancing in strategic competition in the Arctic in the years to come.

## Endnotes

1. Joseph S. Nye Jr., “Is There an Enduring Logic of Conflict in World Politics?,” in *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History* (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2007), 1–7.
2. Charles L. Glaser, “Realism,” in Alan Collins, *Contemporary Security Studies*, 6th ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780198862192.003.0002>; and Nye Jr., *Understanding International Conflicts*, 1–7.
3. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009); Nye Jr., *Understanding International Conflicts*, 2–7; and Raino Malnes, *The Hobbesian Theory of International Conflict* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1997), 12.
4. Malnes, *The Hobbesian Theory of International Conflict*, 12–13.
5. Knud Erik Jørgensen, *International Relations Theory: A New Introduction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 57–77.
6. Graham Evans and Richard Newham, *Dictionary of International Relations* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 304–6.
7. Harald Müller, “Security Cooperation,” in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A Simmons, 2d ed. (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2013), 610, 615; and Jack Levy, “Interstate War and Peace,” in *Handbook of International Relations*, 357.
8. Wolfram F. Hanrieder and Larry V. Buel, *Words and Arms: A Dictionary of Security and Defence Terms with Supplementary Data* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 118.
9. *Competition Continuum*, Joint Doctrine Note 1-19 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2019), v.
10. *Competition Continuum*, v.
11. *Joint Concept for Competing* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2023), 1.
12. *Joint Concept for Competing*, 1.
13. *Joint Concept for Competing*, 3, 5–7.
14. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, 2017), 3.
15. *Joint Concept for Competing*, 1.
16. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, 2022), 5, 8, 12; and *2022 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2022).
17. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (2022), 12, 21.
18. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (2022), 8.
19. *Strategy*, Joint Doctrine Note 1-18 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2018), VII–I-2.
20. *Summary of the Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2020); and Alexandra Chinchilla et al., “Irregular Warfare in Strategic Competition,” *Defence Studies* 24, no. 1 (2024): 148–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14702436.2023.2279620>.
21. Njord Wegge, “Arctic Security Strategies and the North Atlantic States,” *Arctic Review on Law and Politics* 11 (2020): 360–82, 362, <https://doi.org/10.23865/arctic.v11.2401>.
22. Colin Wall and Njord Wegge, *The Russian Arctic Threat: Consequences of the Ukraine War* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2023).
23. Andreas Østhagen, “Norway’s Arctic Policy: Still High North, Low Tension?,” *Polar Journal* 11, no. 1 (2021): 75–94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2154896X.2021.1911043>; and Juha Kämpylä and Harri Mikkola, *On Arctic Exceptionalism: Critical Reflections in the Light of the Arctic Sunrise Case and the Crisis in Ukraine* (Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2015), 5–9.

24. Michael Byers, "Crises and International Cooperation: An Arctic Case Study," *International Relations* 31, no. 4 (2017): 375–402, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117817735680>.
25. "Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council," Arctic Council, Ottawa, Canada, 19 September 1996.
26. Mathieu Boulegue, *Russia's Military Posture in the Arctic: Managing Hard Power in a "Low Tension Environment"* (London: Chatham House, 2019).
27. Pavel Devyatkin, "Arctic Exceptionalism: A Narrative of Cooperation and Conflict from Gorbachev to Medvedev and Putin," *Polar Journal* 13, no. 2 (October 2023): 336–57, 344–45, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2154896X.2023.2258658>.
28. Torbjørn Pedersen and Beate Steinveg, "Russia's Clashing Ambitions: Arctic Status Quo and World-Order Revision," *Politics and Governance* 12 (2024): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.7311>.
29. Anna Wieslander, *How Sweden and Finland's Membership in NATO Affects the High North* (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, 2024).
30. Tamsin Paternoster, "Trump Repeats Musings about Taking Control of Canada and Greenland," Euronews, 7 January 2025; and Murray Brewster, "Allies Appear to Duck and Cover as Trump Threatens Canada and Greenland," CBS News, 15 February 2025.
31. Alexander Dalziel, *Eurasian North: The Geopolitics of Russia and China in the Arctic* (Ottawa, Canada: Macdonald-Laurier Institute, 2024).
32. Astri Edvardsen, "Chinese and Turkish Polar Researchers Explores Cooperation with Russia in Svalbard," *High North News*, 28 August 2024.
33. Astri Edvardsen, "Massive Russian Mobilization in the Arctic, High North News' Overview Shows," *High North News*, 1 September 2023.
34. Thomas Nilsen, "Moscow Continues to Push for BRICS Science Center at Svalbard," *Barents Observer*, 15 June 2024.
35. Meia Nouwens and Veerle Nouwens, "China-Russia Coast Guard Cooperation: A New Dimension of China-Russia Relations?," *China Power*, 16 October 2024.
36. Soroush Vosoughi, Deb Roy, and Sinan Aral, "The Spread of True and False News Online," *Science* 359, no. 6380 (2018): 1146–51, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aap9559>.
37. Esma Aïmeur, Sabine Amri, and Gilles Brassard, "Fake News, Disinformation and Misinformation in Social Media: A Review," *Social Network Analysis and Mining* 13, no. 30 (2023): <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13278-023-01028-5>.
38. Sean Monaghan, Patrick Cullen, and Njord Wegge, *MCDC Countering Hybrid Warfare Project: Countering Hybrid Warfare* (London: Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Ministry of Defence, 2019), 13–16.
39. Thomas Nilsen, "Isolated Russia Invites Faraway Countries to Upcoming Svalbard Science Center in Pyramiden," *Barents Observer*, 30 October 2023; and Karen-Anna Eggen, "Norway: Svalbard, the Arctic Forewarning of the Next Frontline," in *Tracking the Russian Hybrid Warfare: Cases from Nordic-Baltic Countries*, ed. Minna Ålander and Patrik Oksanen (Frivärld, Stockholm: Free World Forum, 2024).
40. Kari Aga Myklebost and Joakim Aalmen Markussen, "Norway under Russian Pressure: Memory Diplomacy as Security Policy," *Barents Observer*, 8 September 2023; Andreas Østhagen, "Myths of Svalbard Geopolitics Debunked by Researcher," *High North News*, 1 August 2024; and Eggen, "Norway."
41. Liselotte Odgaard, "A Kingdom Divided against Itself: The Kingdom of Denmark and the Rise of Arctic Security Dynamics," in *Defending NATO's Northern Flank: Power Projection and Military Operations*, ed. Lon Strauss and Njord Wegge (London: Routledge, 2024).

42. "Assessment of the Espionage Threat to Denmark, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland," Danish Security and Intelligence Service, accessed 29 August 2024.
43. "Assessment of the Espionage Threat to Denmark, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland," 33.
44. Troy Bouffard et al., *Arctic Narratives and Political Values: Arctic States, China, NATO, and the EU* (Riga, Latvia: NATO Strategic Communication Centre of Excellence, 2024), 60–64.
45. Capt Christopher Barich, "The Three-Fold Path of the Snow Dragon: China's Influence Operations in the Arctic," *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, 3 October 2022.
46. *2024 Arctic Strategy* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2024), 3.
47. "Assessment of the Espionage Threat to Denmark, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland," 33.
48. Rolf Tamnes, "NATO and the Northern Flank, 1949–2024," in *Routledge Handbook of NATO*, ed. John Andreas Olsen (New York: Routledge, 2024).
49. Wall and Wegge, "The Russian Arctic Threat"; and *2024 Arctic Strategy*, 3.
50. Tamnes, "NATO and the Northern Flank, 1949–2024," 285.
51. Lon Strauss and Njord Wegge, "The Strategic Challenge of Expeditionary Warfare and the Defence of NATO's Northern Flank," in *Defending NATO's Northern Flank*.
52. Palle Ydstebø, "NATO, Doctrines, and the Arctic," in *Defending NATO's Northern Flank*; and John Behrmann, Lon Strauss, and Njord Wegge, "Getting the Joint Force and NATO Ready to Defend the Arctic," *Insights* 2, no. 11 (December 2022).
53. Walter Berbrick, Gaëlle Rivard Piche, and Michal Zimmerman, *Newport Manual on Arctic Security* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2022), 127.
54. *2024 Arctic Strategy*, 2.
55. Strauss and Wegge, "Security and Defense of NATO's Northern Flank," in *Defending NATO's Northern Flank*, 5.
56. Katarzyna Zysk and Rebecca Pincus, "Getting Sporty in Russia's Arctic," *War on the Rocks*, 24 October 2023.
57. Tamnes, "NATO and the Northern Flank, 1949–2024," 282–86.
58. Tamnes, "NATO and the Northern Flank, 1949–2024," 285.
59. *Department of the Air Force Arctic Strategy* (Washington, DC: Department of the Air Force, 2020); and Wegge, "Arctic Security Strategies and the North Atlantic States," 360–82.
60. Kristin Åtland, Thomas Nilsen, and Torbjørn Pedersen, "Military Muscle-Flexing as Interstate Communication: Russian NOTAM Warnings off the Coast of Norway, 2015–2021," *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies* 5, no. 1 (2022): 63–78, <https://doi.org/10.31374/sjms.133>.
61. Åtland, Nilsen, and Pedersen, "Military Muscle-Flexing as Interstate Communication."
62. Christian Schaller, "Russia's Mapping of Critical Infrastructure in the North and Baltic Seas—International Law as an Impediment to Countering the Threat of Strategic Sabotage," *Nordic Journal of International Law* 93, no. 2 (May 2024): 202–36, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718107-bja10083>.
63. Hilde-Gunn Bye, "New Iron Ore Line Derailment: Cannot Rule out Sabotage," *High North News*, 27 February 2024.
64. Atle Stålesen, "Someone Cut a Key Communications Cable to Norwegian Air Force Base," *Barents Observer*, 23 August 2024.
65. Mathieu Boulegue, *Arctic Seabed Warfare Against Data Cables: Risks and Impact for U.S. Critical Undersea Infrastructure* (Washington, DC: Wilson Center, 2024), 1.
66. Mathieu Boulegue, *Up North: Confronting Arctic Insecurity* (Washington, DC: Center

- for European Policy Analysis, 2024), 20; and “Finland, Sweden Investigate Suspected Sabotage of Baltic Sea Telecoms Cable,” Reuters, 21 February 2025.
67. Sidharth Kaushal, “Stalking the Seabed: How Russia Targets Critical Undersea Infrastructure,” RUSI, 25 May 2023.
  68. Astri Edvardsen, “Norway Proposes a NATO Hub for Securing Critical Undersea Infrastructure in the High North,” *High North News*, 23 October 2024.
  69. Sam Jones, John Paul Rathbone, and Richard Milne, “Russia Plotting Sabotage across Europe, Intelligence Agencies Warn,” *Financial Times*, 5 May 2024.
  70. *National Threat Assessment 2025* (Oslo: Norwegian Police Security Service, 2025).
  71. Didi Kirsten Tatlow, “Exclusive: Act on ‘Problematic’ Chinese Arctic Research, U.S. Officials Urged,” *Newsweek*, 17 October 2024.
  72. Torbjørn Pedersen, “Polar Research and the Secrets of the Arctic,” *Arctic Review on Law and Politics* 10 (2019): 103–29, <https://doi.org/10.23865/arctic.v10.1501>; and John Moolenaar and Raja Krishnamoorthi, “Letter to Pentagon and State Department on Chinese Military Research in the Arctic,” letter, Select Committee on the CCP, 17 October 2024.
  73. Berbrick, Piche, and Zimmerman, *Newport Manual on Arctic Security*, 42–46.
  74. Njord Wegge, “The Political Order in the Arctic: Power Structures, Regimes Influence,” *Polar Record* 47, no. 241 (2011).
  75. Doug Irving, “What Does China’s Arctic Presence Mean to the United States?,” Rand, 29 December 2022.
  76. Sybille Reinke de Buitrago, “China’s Aspirations as a ‘Near Arctic State’: Growing Stakeholder or Growing Risk?,” in *Handbook on Geopolitics and Security in the Arctic: The High North Between Cooperation and Confrontation*, ed. Joachim Weber (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020), 100.
  77. Berbrick, Piche, and Zimmerman, *Newport Manual on Arctic Security*, 48–51; and Buitrago, “China’s Aspirations as a ‘Near Arctic State.’”
  78. Elana Wilson Rowe, “Afterword: The Intersection of Northern and National Policies,” in *Russia and the North*, ed. Elana Wilson Rowe (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2009), 203.
  79. Jørgen Staun, “A Two-Faced Russia?: Civilian Interests and Great Power Politics in the High North,” in *Handbook on Geopolitics and Security in the Arctic*, 16.
  80. Troy J. Bouffard, “National Security Interest of Russia’s Northern Sea Route: Additional Elements of Domestic and International Importance,” in *Defending NATO’s Northern Flank*; and Andrey Todorov, “Russia’s Arctic Shelf Bid and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, Explained,” Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2 March 2023.
  81. Robert Kagan, *The Jungle Grows Back* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018).
  82. *Joint Concept for Competing*, v.
  83. *Joint Concept for Competing*, 1.