

# **Protect the Arctic by a Treaty establishing an Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone**

The icy high Arctic, isolated and inaccessible, is melting rapidly. Within a decade or two, in the summer months, goods will be carried in active shipping lanes using shorter routes through the ice-free waters of the Arctic Ocean. These changes are creating a new security environment, and even today, circumpolar nations are adding to their military capabilities for the new Arctic. The Arctic Ocean littoral states agreed under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on methodology for territorial claims to the coastlines and seabed. Joint protocols, both bilateral and multilateral, are being developed to protect indigenous populations, northern communities, and their environment, plan search-and-rescue operations, implement shipping regulations, and plan sustainable exploitation of fisheries and seabed hydrocarbon resources. A military presence under these circumstances would not be unusual. But this is the time to recognize that nuclear weapons must have no place in the Arctic. The peaceful collaboration now operating in many joint efforts is an example to be emulated in planning for an Arctic Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (ANWFZ), covering the portion of the globe north of the Arctic Circle. Implementing this security measure would be a giant move toward denuclearization, because it involves two nuclear weapon states - the United States and Russia, and it would build confidence toward the next reduction of nuclear weapons, beyond the New START treaty. The ANWFZ could be accomplished step by step over several years, synchronizing with international efforts on other facets of arms control and disarmament.

## **THE MAIN CHALLENGES**

- Many countries with sovereign territory in the Arctic are part of NATO, a nuclear alliance
- Arctic nations U.S. and Russia are nuclear weapon states and recognized as such under the Non-Proliferation Treaty
- Arctic territory (land) in the United States is free of nuclear weapons; the Russian Federation relies upon the Arctic region in basing, deployment and transit of nuclear weapons
- Modalities for establishing a nuclear-weapon-free Arctic are not yet in the security policy planning of the circumpolar states
- There will be no territorial claims beyond the UNCLOS exclusive economic zones. Denuclearization of the entire Arctic Ocean would require, at the least, an agreement between all nuclear weapon states, notwithstanding the UNCLOS requirement of preservation of the high seas for peaceful purposes

## **MEETING THE CHALLENGES**

Each nuclear-weapon-free zone is specific to the geography and politics of the participating sovereign states, e.g. rules for transit of nuclear weapons vary from zone to zone. Arctic peoples must be an integral part of the process of negotiation. Let nations proceed with urgency, being mindful of the need to assist the Arctic/High North peoples – indigenous and non-indigenous – for preservation of the environment, security from conflict, and adaptation to climate change.

## WE CALL UPON ARCTIC NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES – UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA:

- Decrease the role of nuclear weapons in military planning
- Require NATO, in their Strategic Concept, to accommodate the possibility of an ANWFZ
- Cooperate with the Arctic non-nuclear weapon states -Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden - to enable those states to establish a NWFZ in their own territories, as recommended in “Call for an Arctic Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, the declaration of a conference in Copenhagen, in August 2009” [ [www.diiis.dk](http://www.diiis.dk) ]
- Enable removal of Russian Federation and United States nuclear weapons from the Arctic by negotiating a significant, verifiable, nuclear arsenal reduction treaty that would result in strategic parity between Russia and the United States

## WE CALL UPON ARCTIC NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES – CANADA, DENMARK, FINLAND, ICELAND, NORWAY AND SWEDEN:

- Negotiate a nuclear-weapon-free zone to be established in their own territories north of the Arctic Circle; include the nuclear weapons states in these negotiations, as a prelude to these states including their own Arctic territories in the ANWFZ
- Actively promote a step-by-step approach; for example - involving at first the terrestrial territory, followed by negotiations for sea and airspace
- Require NATO to remove any restrictions on a NATO member country that would mitigate against establishing the ANWFZ , such as an agreement to station nuclear weapons on their territory in time of war

## WE CALL UPON INSTITUTIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY TO FOSTER THE IDEA OF AN ARCTIC NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE:

International treaties covering many issues relevant to the Arctic/High North are required in the near term. The Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the subject of a lengthy negotiation in itself, would not take precedence. The expectation of an ANWFZ must, however, be a background to each negotiation, and each international meeting on Arctic matters. Civil society groups and academia can contribute:

- Expertise and research, reporting findings to the circumpolar governments and making recommendations for action
- Connection with relevant reviews and conferences of the United Nations, and other international organizations. For example, the Non-Proliferation Treaty encourages any group of states to conclude regional agreements

Civil Society Goal: Keep the ANWFZ at the forefront of their interaction with all nuclear and Arctic non-nuclear governments until such time as these governments are committed to carrying the process forward

***Establishment of an Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone is a confidence building step toward nuclear disarmament***

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This is a statement of Canadian Pugwash, national affiliate of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs

Establishment of an Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone is endorsed by:

Leaders in the Pugwash national groups of the circumpolar Non Nuclear Weapon States:

- **John Scales Avery, Ph.D., Chairman, Danish National Group, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs**
- **Alexa McDonough, O.C., President, Mount St. Vincent University; formerly, Member of Parliament and leader of the NDP, a Canadian political party**
- **Prof. Walter Dorn, Chair, Canadian Pugwash Group; national affiliate of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs**
- **Jan Prawitz, Senior researcher (Em), Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm; Member, Swedish Pugwash Group since 1964**
- **Ulf Svensson and Per Larsson, Executive Committee of the Swedish Pugwash Group**
- **Prof. Bent Natvig, Ph.D., Professor University of Oslo, Chairman Norwegian National Group, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs**
- **Ernie Regehr, O.C., Co-Founder, Project Ploughshares; Director, Canadian Pugwash**
- **Stephen Leahey, Founder Pugwash Peace Exchange**

**AND ALSO:**

- **Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala, former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament; President of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs**
- **The Honourable Roméo Dallaire, Senate of Canada**

Peace Groups:

- **Physicians for Global Survival (Canada)**



[www.pgs.ca](http://www.pgs.ca)

- **Les Artistes pour la Paix**



Individuals:

**Arctic Security Working Group of Canadian Pugwash**

- **Dr. Adele Buckley, Pugwash Council; past-Chair and Director, Canadian Pugwash; formerly Vice-President OCETA (Ont.Ctr.Envirn.Tech.Adv.)**
  
- **Mr. Steven Staples, Director, Canadian Pugwash; President, The Rideau Institute on International Affairs;**
  
- Prof. Michael Wallace, Director, Canadian Pugwash Group; Professor (emeritus), Political Science, University of British Columbia;**

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