

## **The emergence of Cold-War-like power relations in the post-Cold War era and their influence on sub-state actors in the Arctic: Thule Air Base as the study case**

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In the past social scientists such as Martin Pratt and others warned that we should be cautious in presenting interpretations that explain the political environment in the Arctic in terms of the new Cold War. They pointed out that the differences among the coastal states of the Arctic Ocean in their views regarding sovereignty and jurisdiction in that maritime area might be resolved in the future by peaceful means. However, to what extent is such an opinion justified when we look at the differing perceptions of threats and understandings of (maritime) order between the countries in the region today? For example, in recent years in the Arctic maritime area military activities, such as the dispatching and deployment of submarines and the building and refurbishment of naval bases by Russia, have been intensifying markedly. Also, in what may seem as a response to that, reshuffles and increases in the US defense budget aimed at countering Russia have been observed. That is, the budget intended for guarantying Europe's security (the European Reassurance Initiative) and the coordination between the United States and Europe have been reorganized and expanded, boosting the North Atlantic alliance. Although such activities by Russia and the U.S. will not instantly lead to an armed conflict, it is nonetheless undeniable that in the Arctic waters of today a "security dilemma" is present, embodied in the race by the two sides to strengthen their military assets and defense capabilities.

This security situation unfolding before our eyes indeed has a Cold War-like appearance. The above-mentioned security dilemma is not only creating tensions, but also providing a trigger for the securitization (the problematization of security) of the Arctic. Posing questions about subjects of national security, which in conventional logic tend to be only nation states, such as "Whose security is it?", and about objects of national security, such as "What is being secured?", from the viewpoint of a sub-state actor who is affected by national security, is, I believe, a significant contribution of this presentation.

In order to shed light on these themes, in this presentation I will take up the US Thule Air Base in Greenland as a case that shows that in the relationship between great powers, small countries and sub-state actors within them, it is possible for local actors (sub-state entities) to have an influence on higher-level actors, and will endeavor to elucidate political trends regarding security and autonomy in Greenland and Denmark.