

CENTRE FOR MILITARY STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN



Keep Cool

Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen et al.

An aerial photograph of a vast, snow-covered mountain range. The terrain is rugged with numerous ridges and valleys, all blanketed in white snow. A narrow, winding path or road is visible, cutting through the snow. The lighting is bright, creating high contrast between the white snow and the dark shadows of the valleys.

Keep

Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen

Esben Salling Larsen

Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen

Henrik Jedig Jørgensen

Kristian Søby Kristensen

Lars Bangert Struwe

Rune Hoffmann

Jacob Petersen

Cool

If one phrase encapsulates the work done at the Centre for Military Studies on Greenland and the Arctic it is 'Keep Cool'. In the public debate as well as in the academic literature on the security consequences of climate change in the Arctic, much energy has been spent on discussing the potential conflicts arising from territorial claims of the Arctic states, as well as the growing interests in the region from outside powers. National debates and academic positions vary in their conclusions on the Arctic and the role played by Arctic developments in the national defence postures.

This brief summarizes the findings of a number of reports published in Danish by the Centre for Military Studies and its predecessor the Danish Institute for Military Studies. The findings of these reports have been used to provide advice to the Defence Command Denmark, the Danish Ministry of Defence and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Further, we have briefed the Danish Parliament on our findings and lectured extensively on these issues in Denmark and abroad.

The Centre for Military Studies has played an important role in setting the Danish agenda for handling the security consequences from climate change in the Arctic, for Greenland in particular and the Kingdom of Denmark in general. From our perspective climate change does not create conflict in and by itself. The changing geopolitical realities in the Arctic create a modest risk of conflict created by unresolved territorial claims, the opening of new sea routes and the competition for resources previously locked under ice, which can trigger security dilemmas. Trying to secure new territories, strategic resources and geopolitical positions, the Arctic powers might trigger a reaction from other powers which inadvertently can lead to a conflict which nobody in fact wants. Indeed, military conflict in the Arctic seems very unlikely as it is against the interests of all

actors in the region. In the light of this analysis, the best policy for the Kingdom of Denmark, as the Centre has concluded in a number of reports, is thus to 'keep cool'. We conclude this because the Arctic region stands as an unprecedented example of a newly opened region which is rich in resources but not rich in the conflict potential which history has often told us is the consequence of rich natural resources. On the contrary, the Arctic thus far has proven politically stable. This can without a doubt be attributed to the political framework in the region, the Arctic Council and the legal framework of the United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS). The five Arctic coastal states (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the United States) have all pledged to respect the rules set forth by UNCLOS. It is very unlikely that any of the Arctic coastal states would break that pledge. It is simply not in their interest.

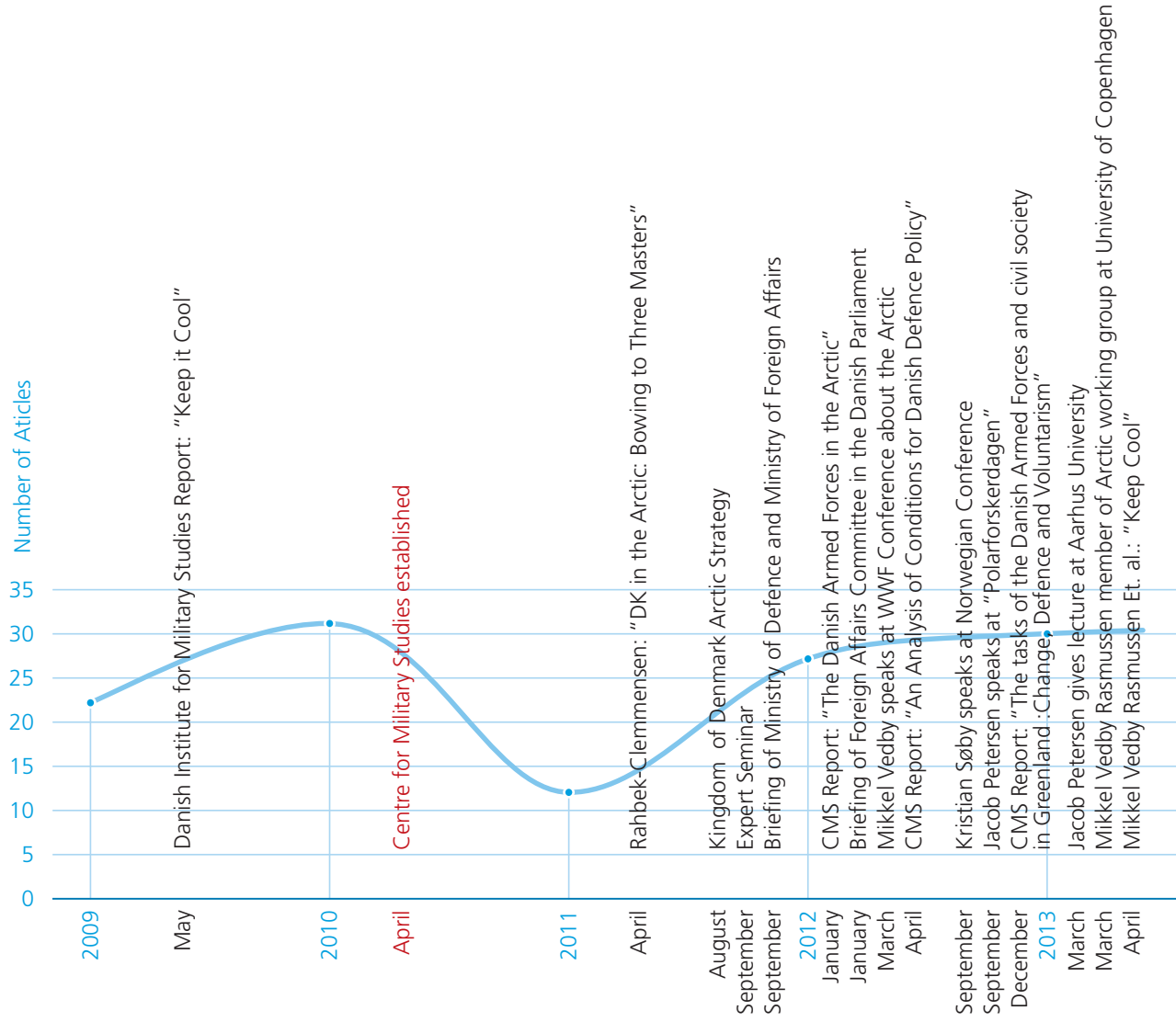
The Arctic question poses unique challenges for the Kingdom of Denmark because of Greenland's special status. Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Denmark are united in the Kingdom of Denmark. On 21 June 2009, the Act on Greenland Self-Government (the Self-Government Act) came into force. This act replaced the Greenland Home Rule Act of 1979. In short, the Self-Government Act provides Greenland the authority to decide to assume new fields of government responsibility from the state of Denmark. These include, but are not limited to, the administration of justice, including the establishment of courts of law, prison and probation services, police services, company law, accounting and auditing, mineral resource activities, aviation, family law, migration and border controls, labour law as well as financial regulation and supervision. Matters of the Constitution, i.e. nationality, the Supreme Court, foreign, defence and security policy as well as exchange rate and monetary policy, cannot be taken over by the Greenlandic

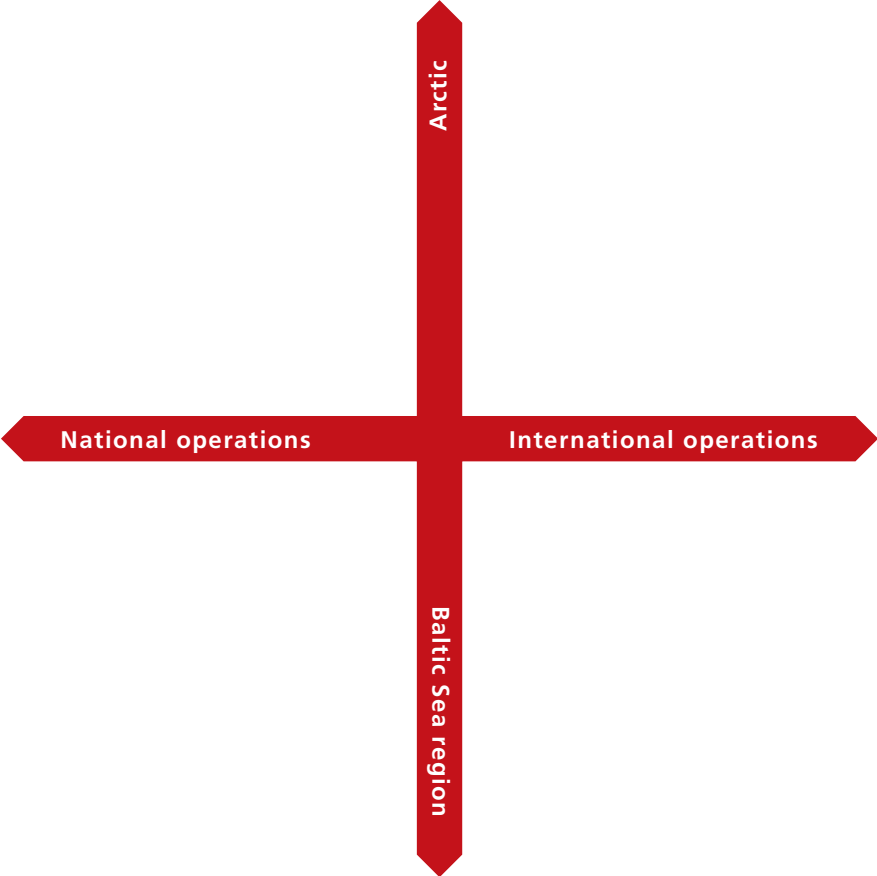
Self-Government and remain within the jurisdiction of the central authorities of the Realm (the Danish Government and Parliament).

Greenland faces radical change. Climate change, industrial exploitation of natural resources and potential political tension between the Arctic powers will alter the economic and political context of the region. This inevitably affects the role and responsibilities of the Danish Armed Forces in the region. Defence-related tasks in Greenland have long been important for the Danish Armed Forces. In the future, the Armed Forces will face an increase in demands concerning both existing tasks and new tasks and requirements. The Arctic is becoming one of the main priorities in Danish defence policy and planning.

The illustration on page 5 shows the media attention CMS has received in the Danish media regarding the Arctic, and a selection of when the centre has published reports, papers, conducted seminars etc. on the topic.

Media attention and CMS Activities





The illustration on page 6 is a continuum that shows the prioritisation Axes in Danish Defence Policy. It is the view of the Centre that Danish defence policy planning in the future will have an emphasis on a mix between focus on the Arctic region and participation in international operations.

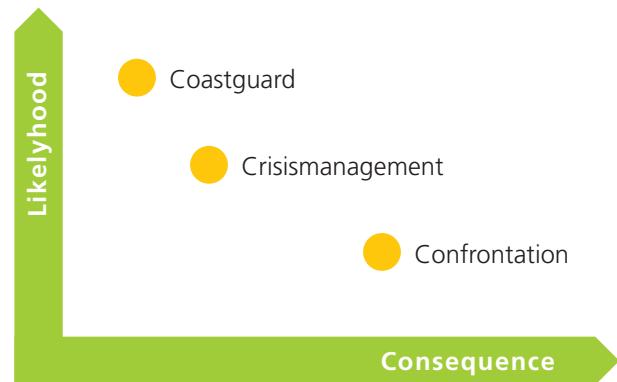
It is important to stress that by defence-related tasks we mean tasks which the Danish Armed Forces have traditionally performed in the Arctic. This includes maintaining the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark, coast guard tasks, such as maritime surveillance, environmental surveillance, conducting search and rescue operations and fishery inspections, as well as a number of civilian support functions. The Kingdom of Denmark will need more capabilities for search and rescue, surveillance, cooperation and coordination in the Arctic in order to live up to international obligations and secure the sovereignty and security of the Kingdom. Maintaining critical information as well as command and control is a key strategic challenge in a situation when Copenhagen and Nuuk may not always agree on political priorities even though Greenland for now remains heavily dependent on Danish resources. This issue has a prominent place on the agenda within the Kingdom.

In the work done by the Centre for Military Studies regarding the Arctic it has become clear that developments in the region are shaped by technology, climate, the presence of natural resources, the global economy and the global balance of power. These factors shape the civilian and governmental activity in the region in various ways, but all require a well-established knowledge base, increased capabilities in the Danish Armed Forces and close political attention. In a report published in 2012, the Centre for Military Studies presents three different scenarios which we believe could be seen in the future: a coastguard scenario, a crisis management scenario and a confrontation scenario.

- In the coastguard scenario, the Danish Armed Forces will need to further their capabilities to conduct search and rescue operations as well as natural disaster management in order to meet the demands from more commercial activity in the area in the form of increased shipping through Arctic waters.
- In the crisis management scenario, the Danish Armed Forces will, apart from the coast guard duties, need to maintain sovereignty and manage crises resulting from the potential competition between the Arctic coastal states and other actors in the region.
- In the confrontation scenario, it is assumed that, in the unlikely event of a global confrontation between China and the United States, the Arctic may become a theatre of operations in a great power confrontation. In this scenario, the Danish Armed Forces will need to maintain sovereignty and security in cooperation with the NATO allies in the region.

The illustration below shows how CMS assesses the likelihood of the three scenarios and their consequences. Thus the likelihood of confrontation is low, but the consequences are considerable.

Arctic Scenarios



Political and economic developments in the Arctic increase the demands on the Danish Armed Forces in the region. The Centre for Military Studies has investigated how the Greenlandic civil society, on a voluntary basis, can support the Danish Armed Forces in their tasks in the Arctic, and thus secure the continued development of Greenlandic society. The conclusion is that opportunities are ripe for involving the Greenlandic civil society as a way to strengthen the capacity of the Armed Forces and simultaneously increase integration between the Greenlandic society and the Armed Forces. Many of the tasks conducted by the Armed Forces in the Arctic are related to general emergencies and contingencies. These tasks are also largely the ones to which the civil society can contribute. The Armed Forces conduct these tasks in a complicated, yet close relationship with many other actors, and consequently we conclude that the resources of the Greenlandic society should also, more than is the case today, be involved in developing the military capacities to secure its own future development.

The Arctic is becoming an increasingly important region, and the need for a constantly updated knowledge base on issues regarding the Arctic is vital, especially for the Arctic coastal states. The Centre for Military Studies has been involved in extensive research on security issues in the Arctic for several years and will continue to research into these issues in 2013. Among other things, the centre has undertaken two research projects. One is a comparative analysis of Canadian and Nordic models for Arctic emergency management with a focus on how civil society is engaged. The second project focuses on the rising interests in the region from non-Arctic state actors in Asia and what influence this external political and economic interest will have on the region. In addition to these two projects, the Centre will continue to conduct seminars and workshops on the changing Arctic, bringing together civil society, academia and policymakers to share and develop

knowledge on the challenges and opportunities on the global scene as well as for regional actors and institutions brought by the development in the Arctic.

The future development in the Arctic region is neither shrouded in mystery nor is it completely clear-cut what lies ahead. At the Centre for Military Studies, we have been working extensively with the topic for some years. The Arctic region as well as the relationship between Denmark and Greenland within the Danish Realm poses both political and military challenges, as the Danish Armed Forces are called upon to ensure the continued and peaceful, economic and political development of the Arctic. As this paper shows, we view the situation in the region as having great potential for economic development and cooperation rather than for conflict and crisis – provided that the involved parties keep cool.

The picture shows Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark opening the new Joint Arctic Command headquarters in Nuuk in Greenland.



LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Keep It Cool! May 2009.

Jørgensen, Jedig Henrik & Clemmensen, Rahbek Jon.

Forsvaret i Arktis: Suverænitæt, samarbejde og sikkerhed (*Danish Defence in the Arctic: Sovereignty, Cooperation and Security*) January 2012.

Rasmussen, Mikkel Vedby; Clemmensen, Rahbek Jon & Larsen, Esben Salling.

An Analysis of Conditions for Danish Defence Policy – Strategic Choices 2012

Rasmussen, Vedby Mikkel et al.

Samfundshåndhævelse i Grønland: Forandring, forsvar og frivillighed (*The tasks of the Danish Armed Forces and civil society in Greenland :Change, Defence and Voluntarism*) December 2012.

Kristensen, Søby Kristian; Hoffmann, Rune & Petersen, Jacob.

SELECTED LECTURES

Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen:

- Briefing for the Danish Parliament – January 6, 2012
- Briefing for the Danish Parliament – December 7, 2012
- Lecture at the World Wildlife Fund Denmark – March 16, 2012
- Lecture at the Danish Social-Liberal Party – January 23, 2013

Kristian Søby Kristensen:

- Briefing at the Danish Organisation for Reservist Personnel, Vordingborg, Denmark – October 5, 2012
- Briefing at the Security Conference, Bodø, Norway – October 25-26, 2012
- Arctic Stakeholder Briefing, Copenhagen – November 15, 2012
- Briefing for the Danish Ministry of Defence, Copenhagen – December 19, 2012



LIST OF EXPERTS AT THE CENTRE FOR MILITARY STUDIES

Lars Bangert Struwe:

- Briefing at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, Oslo – September 12-14, 2012
- Briefing for the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO), Copenhagen – September 25, 2012
- Briefing at Edinburgh University, Edinburgh – September 27-28, 2012

Rune Hoffmann:

- Arctic Stakeholder Briefing, Copenhagen – November 15, 2012

Jacob Petersen:

- Briefing for the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO), Ministry of Defence, Copenhagen – September 25, 2012
- Teaching at the Royal Danish Naval Academy – October, 2012
- Lecture at the People's University, Copenhagen – November 13, 2012
- Lecture at the Youth Atlantic Treaty Association – November 15, 2012
- Lecture at the People's University, Aarhus – March 15, 2013

EXPERT SEMINARS

- Arctic Scenarios, Copenhagen, September 6, 2011
- The tasks of the Danish Armed Forces and civil society in Greenland, Copenhagen, September 17, 2012
- The tasks of the Danish Armed Forces and civil society in Greenland, Nuuk, September 20, 2012

Professor Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen

mvr@ifs.ku.dk, +45 2548 2884

Geopolitics in the Arctic – Danish defence policy and Greenland – NATO and the Arctic – risk management and climate change

Dr. Kristian Søby Kristensen, Senior Researcher

ksk@ifs.ku.dk, +45 2872 9017

Danish defence and security policy in the Arctic – Danish/Greenlandic relations – Arctic geo and resource politics – Regional institutions and regional security – Sovereignty, sustainability and resilience

Dr. Lars Bangert Struwe, Researcher

lbs@ifs.ku.dk, +45 2548 9220

Geopolitics in the Arctic – The Kingdom of Denmark and sovereignty – Maritime strategy and the Arctic – Danish Armed Forces and Greenland – The history of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Arctic

Major Rune Hoffmann, Military Analyst

rh@ifs.ku.dk, +45 3532 2979

Danish defence and security policy in the Arctic – Danish/Greenlandic relations

MSc Jacob Petersen, Research Assistant

jp@ifs.ku.dk, +45 2361 7240.

Foreign and security politics in the Arctic – Danish defence policy in the Arctic – Arctic strategies of the Arctic coastal states – China in the Arctic



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