Keynote Address

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It is very appropriate for me to begin today with a few words of thanks for those who have worked so hard to make this Conference possible. I am grateful to Simon Fraser University and its School for International Studies for recognizing the vital importance of the subject of this Conference on Problems of Arctic Security in the 21st Century, and for hosting this event. I also wish to thank Dr. Jennifer Simons and her colleagues at the Simons Foundation for the support that they have generously provided over so many years to advance disarmament and human security goals. I was very pleased to learn that my friend and colleague of many years, Jayantha Dhanapala, had been appointed as the current Simons Visiting Chair in International Law and Human Security. While pleased, I was not surprised, given the fine record of this University, this Foundation, and indeed this country in the field of disarmament.

Perhaps one of the wisest decisions made by the organizers of this event was the decision to frame it as a Dialogue, involving an exchange of views among a wide variety of individuals and groups that have particular interests in Arctic security issues. Thus we have amongst us today representatives of indigenous peoples of the Arctic, academia, the policy research community, international organizations, and the news media.

With respect to the issue of Arctic security, we have an extraordinary blend of the global and the local. Global climate changes are having profound effects upon the natural environment throughout this region, which in turn are gradually producing new environmental impacts around the world, some potentially catastrophic. While global in scope, the costs and consequences of these developments are decidedly local, affecting the daily lives – and future prospects – of countless human beings, numbering potentially in the billions, not to mention their implications for our other fellow living creatures and plant life throughout this region.

Of course, global climate change is only one of many issues on the international agenda – an agenda that is actually filled with a wide variety of issues that deserve to be treated as high priorities – issues that defy solution by any one state acting alone, and that require cooperative responses. While this is readily apparent with respect to our global environment, it also applies to numerous other threats to human security, including chronic poverty, human rights abuses, the spread of contagious diseases, illicit trafficking in drugs and weaponry, and persistent dangers from the deadliest weapons on earth, in particular nuclear weapons.

It is completely beyond dispute that the global scope of such security challenges is presenting new challenges to our existing governmental and intergovernmental institutions. But how new are these challenges? Consider for a moment a quote on this subject, which I think you will find interesting:

> *We have entered a new era, the era of interdependence; and this interdependent world is threatened with chaos because it has not learnt how to adjust its institutions and its traditions of government to the new conditions.*

That quote was from Ramsay Muir, and it appears in his book The Interdependent World and Its Problems, which was published in 1931.[1] In the same year, the great scholar of the League of Nations, Alfred Zimmern, wrote "An inexorable law … has made us members of the body politic of the world. Interdependence is the rule of modern life."[2] Much earlier, in 1916, Leonard Wolf wrote that "The world is so closely knit together now that it is no longer possible for a nation to run amok on one frontier while her neighbor on the other is hardly aware of it. We are so linked to our neighbors by the gold and silver wires of commerce – not to speak of telegraph wires and steel rails – that … every war threatens to become a world war."[3]

Yet despite this very early awareness of international interdependence, the need for cooperative and multilateral approaches to security persists. Lacking in particular are the organizational mechanisms needed to make the best of this interdependence, while avoiding its worst possible consequences. I do not believe we will find the solution to these challenges in a full-fledged "world government". I do believe, however, that several existing international legal instruments offer some attractive building blocks that can apply directly to enhancing peace and security in the Arctic region. So I would now like to outline briefly some basic elements of a constructive, multilateral approach to address this challenge. My approach relies on the common sense principle of building upon what is already agreed.

The starting point, of course, is the UN Charter. Any effective security regime in this region must embrace the fundamental norms of the Charter, in particular its prohibition on the threat or use of force, its requirement for the peaceful settlement of disputes, its affirmation of the sovereign equality of states, and its respect for the principle of non-interference in affairs within the domestic jurisdiction of states. Article 52 of the Charter specifically recognizes the legitimacy of regional arrangements to address international peace and security issues, consistent with these fundamental norms. I must note here that Article VII of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty – to which all Arctic states are party – also affirms the right of "any group of States" to conclude regional treaties "to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons from their respective territories."

The next step is to identify some areas where armed conflicts could potentially occur in the region, as well as circumstances that could lead to the worst nightmare of all, the use of a nuclear weapon, the deadliest and most indiscriminate of all weapons of mass destruction.

Here I think we need to examine some precedents – first, the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, which provided that the world's southernmost continent would "be used exclusively for peaceful purposes". That seems to me to qualify as a fundamental norm for any security regime that may come into existence in the Arctic region. Another interesting feature of that treaty might also be relevant in any future Arctic security regime. Many countries – including my own country of Brazil – have civilian bases in Antarctica. Under the Antarctic Treaty, each Contracting Party has the right

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[1] The Interdependent World and Its Problems (1931), p. vii.
[2] The Study of International Relations (1931), p. 14-15.
[3] International Government (1916), p. 128.

to send observers to every base of any country in that region. This is a very powerful confidence-building measure for ensuring full compliance.

The second precedent would be the Seabed Treaty of 1971, which requires its States Parties – including all eight states in the Arctic region that are party to this treaty – not to place on the seabed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof, any nuclear weapons or any other types of weapons of mass destruction as well as structures, launching installations or any other facilities specifically designed for storing, testing or using such weapons. I would like to note here that this treaty also states that it is intended as a step to advance the goal of "general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control". In short, it seeks to advance the longer-term goals of eliminating weapons of mass destruction, as well as reducing or limiting conventional arms. This last point is especially important, since the melting of Arctic ice may well open the way for the increased presence in the region of military naval vessels from several countries. We are already witnessing increased interest in the economic possibilities opened up by the changing environment in the region.

The third precedent consists of a family of treaties that have established regional nuclear-weapon free zones, specifically in Latin America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Central Asia. In 1999, the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) adopted by consensus a set of guidelines for the establishment of such zones and I believe that many of these criteria are also worthy goals to pursue in the Arctic region. The guidelines are above all flexible, given that they recognize the "diversity of circumstances" of each region – and we all know that the Arctic offers plenty of these.

Under these guidelines, such zones must be established only on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the states of the region, which guarantees every concerned state the right to participate in the developing the zone, whose primary purpose is to strengthen regional peace and security. The fundamental prohibition on the stationing of nuclear weapons anywhere in the region, of course, is a key *raison d'être* for establishing any such zone, which would also exclude the testing of any nuclear weapons in the region. On this last point, I note that all states in the region have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty except the United States, which is maintaining a moratorium on further tests. The UNDC guidelines also provide that the nuclear-weapon-states would provide assurances against the threat or use of nuclear weapons against the states parties. In addition, the guidelines allow for the zone to include environmental standards to prevent pollution from radioactive wastes and other radioactive substances, including standards dealing with the transportation of such materials.

Finally, these guidelines not only endorse, but call for "vigorous efforts" to promote cooperation between all states that are parties to such zones worldwide. This is an intriguing criterion, given that two of the states in the Arctic region have nuclear weapons and several others belong to a nuclear alliance, NATO. Can a new regional nuclear-weapon-free zone encompass only parts of countries? If this can be agreed, it could have implications well outside the region.

Beyond these multilateral or plurilateral undertakings, it may well be worthwhile to examine certain bilateral agreements between the United States and the Russian Federation (and Soviet Union) to see if they can be adapted to address broader security concerns in the Arctic region. One candidate would be the Incidents at Sea Agreement of 1972, which outlines a series of confidence-building measures intended to reduce the possibility of armed conflict by accident.

Quite clearly, the solution to new and emerging security challenges in the Arctic will not be found in any single initiative. The problems are too complex for a quick fix and no single legal instrument will likely be able to resolve all the legitimate security concerns of each country. I see instead the gradual emergence of an eclectic Arctic security regime, consisting of various elements derived or adapted from other multilateral arrangements, and applied to the specific conditions of the Arctic region.

The regime could, and I believe should, incorporate the basic goals of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. After all, the Seabed Treaty has already established what might be called a one-dimensional nuclear-weapon-free zone on the Arctic seabed and its subsoil. A prohibition on the stationing of nuclear weapons anywhere else in the region would seem a logical next step in the evolution of this regime.

An Arctic security regime should also address some additional issues. It should provide for confidence-building measures to prevent the occurrence of armed conflicts involving conventional forces. It should include provisions to meet basic human security needs of communities throughout the region. It should provide a common mechanism for the peaceful resolution of disputes. It should embody commitments of cooperation and mutual assistance in the field of disaster relief. It should promote cooperation in the area of scientific research and the development of technology to protect the environment and to improve the living conditions of all who live in the region. It should provide a clearinghouse for the exchange of information about security and environmental conditions in the region. And it should also provide for a mechanism to ensure the participation and active involvement of local communities and groups in the process of promoting cooperation in the region.

I believe that "common cooperative security" is an apt term to summarize what all these various measures seek to advance.

Sometimes when the sheer complexity of international responsibilities becomes overwhelming and its burdens too difficult to manage, it is worth recalling the efforts of those before us who have faced such obstacles, overcome them, and left a better world behind. One such individual is the great Norwegian Arctic explorer, Fridtjof Nansen, who in 1895 extended human knowledge of the Arctic to higher latitudes than ever before. He went on to win a Nobel Peace Prize in 1922 for his work in caring for refugees after World War I. Here is what Philip Noel-Baker said about Nansen in his own Nobel Peace Lecture of 1959:

> *Nansen was the first to say what others have repeated, that 'the difficult is what takes a little while; the impossible is what takes a little longer'. If politics is the art of the possible, statesmanship is the art, in Nansen's sense, of the impossible; and it is statesmanship that our perplexed and tortured humanity requires today.*

So I will conclude my remarks today by invoking the spirit that guided the work of Fridtjof Nansen, Philip Noel-Baker and countless other nameless individuals who have devoted their lives to the improvement of the human condition and the service of international peace and security. As you consider the many problems of Arctic security in the 21st century, in all their complexity, I urge you to consider solutions that embody this profound commitment to statesmanship, in service of the common interest.

Please accept my very best wishes for a successful conference.