

forces, and regular reviews of the implementation and modernization needs of the Arctic CSBM regime. These measures could even incorporate existing forums such as the (currently suspended) meetings of the Arctic Chiefs of Defence Staff, the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable (ASFR), and the recently established Arctic Coast Guard Forum.

Conclusion

While this contribution does not claim to be a full-fledged analysis of military security in the Arctic region, I hope to have shown why alarmism about an accelerating arms race and the increasing risk of military confrontation in the Arctic must be treated with some scepticism. The economic prospects in the region do not seem to justify such a pessimistic outlook, nor is it accounted for by current developments on the ground. In fact, the contrary is true. Military capabilities in the Arctic are often exaggerated, and many practical constraints are often overlooked, as is the fact that the harsh Arctic climate has always led to particularly close co-operation. As stated above, the Arctic states have far more to lose from military confrontation than they have to gain, as they need each other if they intend to benefit from the region's resource wealth.

As tensions between Russia and the West rise, well-established regional co-operation in the Arctic is coming under scrutiny. How should this co-operation be protected from negative spillover effects? I have shown how the broadening of the Arctic security agenda – and particularly an Arctic Confidence- and Security-Building regime – could help to increase military transparency and predictability in the High North and further reinforce the existing good level of regional co-operation. As well as being cost-effective, many of the proposals presented above would also contribute to addressing issues of non-military security in the High North (e.g. SAR, border security, oil spills). A regime of this kind would serve the common interests of major stakeholders, and a potential Arctic CSBM regime could even serve as an example for ongoing efforts to modernize the OSCE's arms control framework. To this end, it is important to broaden our understanding of CSBMs, which should be seen not merely as a reactive tool to counter immediate threats to peace and security, but rather as a proactive way to create and further strengthen the structural conditions for peace and stability among OSCE participating States.