

Preface

The October 2013 annual convention of the board of economic issues of the *Forum for 21st Century* has decided to focus on the development in the Arctic. This region has caused increased interest of the international community interrelating with abundance of natural resources, technological progress helping overcome the unfavourable natural conditions, and global climate change which will enable larger economic and transport utilization. Global threats such as environmental pollution, sea level rising, and endangering of flora and fauna, attract attention of increasing number of states, negotiating the territorial dividing of the North Polar Region. The Arctic area has the potential to become the centre of the developed world in few decades to come.

Forum for 21st Century regards this geopolitical issue of major significance, and therefore appeals the member states of the Arctic Council and permanent observers to join the negotiations concerning the utilization of the region. The negotiating parties are Canada, United States, Russia, Norway, and European Union (representing Denmark) which are states with dominant influence in the administration of the territory, and China with the observer status. Their united efforts are going to resolve peace and security in the Arctic area.

Notes

Arctic Council was established in 1996 on account of non-binding agreement of Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) as forum promoting cooperation, coordination, and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic Indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on issues such as sustainable development and environmental protection. Members include only states of the Arctic – their territory unfolds beyond 66°33'55'' North Latitude. However, the conflicting area comprises only of ca. 13 mil. km² of the Arctic Ocean.

The attempts to resolve the issue reach to 19th century when Arctic countries made their first territory claims. During the Cold War the North Polar Region became space for military bases, modern manufacturing activities, which led to transformation of autochthonous inhabitants' way of life, migration, and destroying of the environment. However, the intensive development of the region was hindered by the extreme climate conditions until the end of 20th century, but according to the statistics the situation changes; field ice in the period of 1979-2000 accounted for 7,04 mil. km² which has decreased to area of 4,9 mil. km². This determines, together with the technological progress, new perspectives in industrial extraction of mineral resources and intensification of transport which triggered political discussions on the territorial matter and attempts to stipulate it in the international law.

The main political disputes started in 2007 with Russian expedition. In 2008 the geological survey exposed possible reserves of natural resources; undersea crude oil deposits of 90 bn. barrels (13 % of world reserves) and natural gas of 47 bn. m³ (30 % of world reserves) could change world energetic balance which takes the focus of transnational corporations.

On the matter were signed several agreements, but most of them non-binding, such as the AEPS. The first binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council is the Agreement Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic (Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement – ASRA). The international treaty coordinates search and rescue coverage and response in the Arctic, and establishes the area of search and rescue responsibility of each state party. In view of the conflicting territorial claims in the Arctic, the treaty provides that the delimitation of search and rescue regions is not related to and shall not prejudice the delimitation of any boundary between states or their sovereignty, sovereign rights or jurisdiction.

Targets

The necessity of formal binding act of the Arctic issue is growing on importance together with global climate changes. Due to the recent environmental trend the new economic possibilities are emerging. Not only countries directly bordering the Arctic Ocean have the interest in economic utilization of the North Polar Region. *Forum for 21st Century* takes patronage over the political disputes among the members and permanent observers of the Arctic Council, and other interested parties to resolve the following issues:

1. Political division
 - Set criteria to division of the Arctic area.
 - Will be the aquatory in the property of the Arctic states or public property?
2. Security dimension
 - Are military actions in accordance with multilateral agreement permitted in the Arctic area?
 - Are military occupation (temporary, permanent) in accordance with multilateral agreement permitted in the Arctic area?
 - Is transit of military equipment and personnel in accordance with multilateral agreement permitted in the Arctic area?
3. Natural resources
 - In continuation of the political division set boundaries for the economic exploitation of the natural resources.
 - Agree upon the technical norms and the exploitation limitations taking into account environmental and energetic security.
4. Transport
 - Agree upon the tourism limitations in the Arctic area.
 - Agree upon the aerial traffic conditions in the Arctic area.
 - Agree upon the sea traffic conditions in the Arctic area.
5. Environmental issues
 - Set degree of protection of reserves of natural resources.
 - Is the Antarctica regime applicable?
 - Take into account exploitation of the natural resources and the effects of the traffic pollution and the tourism impacts.

6. Protection of autochthonous inhabitants

- Take into account the legal and human rights of autochthonous inhabitants.
- In continuation of Nuuk declaration enact the instruments to preserve the indigenous way of life of autochthonous inhabitants.

7. Establishment of legal binding agreement