

## 20 YEARS ARCTIC COUNCIL

### THE STATE AND FUTURE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND SECURITY AROUND THE NORTH POLE

**On 11-12 October 2016, the new research unit *RAS* at the Law Department of the University of Southern Denmark (SDU) will together with SDU's Centre for War Studies convene a 2-day conference to explore the future of the Arctic Council. *RAS* focuses on questions exploring the enforcement of international law in the Arctic and on the high seas. The four conference panels will address Arctic questions of international law, law of the sea, international politics and human rights seen from an Arctic Council perspective.**

#### CALL FOR PAPERS

On 19 September 1996, the governments of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the US agreed on the Ottawa Declaration in order to establish a high-level forum for the “cooperation, coordination and interaction (...) on common Arctic issues.” At the time, the establishment of this new body attracted interest mainly among Arctic specialists and scientists while the *Washington Post* reported on its back pages about the creation of an “international panel” to “protect native people [and] wildlife.”

Today, biennial meetings of the Council see political heavyweights such as the US Secretary of State and the Russian Foreign Minister travelling to far away places such as Iqaluit, Kiruna and Fairbanks. What is more, countries like China and Germany regularly attend these meetings while the European Union keeps hoping it will be awarded observer status. Back home, for Denmark and Greenland, there are very special interests and relations at stake.

This conference will take stock of the accomplishments, challenges and future prospects of the Arctic Council. With a particular focus on international legal aspects and political issues, academic experts and stakeholders will explore whether the Council has lived up to its commitment to the well-being of the inhabitants of the Arctic, the protection of the Arctic environment and sustainable development and whether it is ready to oversee and coordinate the consequences of climate change for the Arctic both when it comes to its people, wildlife, resources and security.

The discussions will be organized in four panels addressing different aspects of the Arctic Council's role and future. The conference will bring together Danish, Greenlandic and international researchers, government officials, policy makers and

civil society. We invite abstracts to address any of the following four topics which each will form the background for one conference panel:

- panel 1: the Arctic Council as soft law creation and creator: softly sledding towards solutions or disaster? What is the role of international law and enforcement of international law in the Arctic? What pressing needs continue to exist now that there will be no overall Arctic treaty?
- panel 2: the Arctic Council and the Arctic Ocean: heading for disaster or a bright and sustainable future? Do we need another Ilulissat Declaration or more law to address the Arctic challenges?
- panel 3: the Arctic Council as facilitator of Arctic cooperation: has it improved relations between Arctic states and non-state actors? Are the principles for membership still relevant and viable? And should the Council begin to play a role in security matters?
- panel 4: Arctic indigenous peoples and their role in the Arctic Council: do Permanent Participants have a special place or a real impact? Looking back at the Ottawa Declaration – what are the lessons learnt and the challenges ahead?

Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words and indicate which panel the presenter intends to join; the title of the presentation; the presenter's name, affiliation and email address. We also encourage PhD candidates and other early career researchers to apply.

Abstracts must be sent to Martin Mennecke ([AC20conference@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:AC20conference@sam.sdu.dk)) no later than 6 June 2016. The authors of successful abstracts will be contacted by the end of June and required to submit their paper of max. 8,000 words, footnotes included, by 26 September 2016. A selection of conference papers will be published in an edited volume or a special journal issue.

A limited number of funding grants to cover travel and accommodation expenses may be available in special circumstances.

For further information on the Centre for War Studies see: <http://www.sdu.dk/cws>.

