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EDITOR'S NOTE

Historically, the Earth's polar regions have invited a high degree of international cooperation, exhibiting states' ability to work together to preserve unique public goods and further scientific exploration. The effects of climate change are, however, changing the dynamics of polar cooperation. The Arctic's retreating sea ice is revealing the underlying tensions among states of the High North seeking dominance of the seas, challenging traditional conceptions of growth and development, highlighting the need for continued and enhanced cooperation, and underscoring the importance of reinventing Arctic governance to be more conscientious and inclusive.

In an article for *The Fletcher Forum's* special edition 2013 (vol. 37:3), John Curtis Perry, Professor Emeritus of History at Fletcher, presented a conceptualization of the sea as an avenue for global trade and transport, an arena for conflict, and a source of human vitality. Inspired by this framing, this issue of *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* delves into the contours of the Arctic as an emerging arena, stretching the definition to include not only traditional armed conflicts but also trade competition, divergences on the balance between resource extraction and biodiversity conservation, and most importantly, differences over the future the global community envisages for the Arctic and the implications of a thawing Arctic for the world. The Arctic is no longer just a regional concern. It is this key takeaway that ties together this issue's nine articles on the Arctic, featuring fourteen authors.

In their biodiversity-focused case study, **MARGARET WILLIAMS**, **NADEZHDA FILIMONOVA**, **JENNIFER SPENCE**, and **FRAN ULMER** highlight Russia's important role in securing Arctic biodiversity and recommend several pathways through which Western institutions can sustain cooperation with Russia. **SUSANA HANCOCK** makes a compelling case for global leaders to pay more attention to the Arctic and for climate-

focused Arctic diplomacy. In her study of the Russia and China relationship, **NIVEDITA KAPOOR** highlights the role of the Arctic that drives the partners to strike a delicate balance between mutual reliance and strategic considerations.

While cooperation with Russia is necessary for Arctic diplomacy and biodiversity conservation, it raises challenges in the security sector, particularly for the United States. **THOMAS BOEHM**, **NATHAN CARDA**, and **PATRICK TOMASZEWSKI** highlight the shortfalls of the Army Special Operations Force and recommend the creation of an Arctic-focused National Guard Special Forces trained for the Arctic's harsh operational environment that can better meet threats. **NATHAN A. MOORE**, **DUSTIN R. WILLIAMS**, and **AMANDA L. HARRIS**, similarly, call for leveraging the U.S. Coast Guard's 150-year rich expertise to protect the interests of the United States and its partners in the Arctic.

Of course, a dynamically changing environment calls for adequately adapted institutions. Moving away from traditional discourse on the Arctic demands that attention is paid to the implications of states' decision-making on Indigenous communities who have suffered colonialism and subjugation to imperfect nation-states. With regard to this, **CORINE WOOD-DONNELLY** challenges decision-making processes in development that prioritize economic considerations over environmental ones and recommends the adoption of a 'thick sustainability' framework. **AMBASSADOR MORTEN HØGLUND** reflects on how these discussions feature among priorities in the Arctic Council and considers the role of Indigenous representatives in shaping them.

The Arctic's melting ice is making it possible for the region to be used as an avenue. While **SUMNER LEVENSON** and **CARSTEN KOWALCZYK** inspect the economic feasibility of the Northern Sea Route vis-a-vis the Suez Canal by conducting a sensitivity analysis, **TOMOHIKO KOBAYASHI** explores the role the World Trade Organization can play in alleviating the trust deficit that is plaguing Arctic forums due to wider political deadlocks.

Our last two pieces examine current issues in international affairs, specifically representing the global movement toward inclusivity in international organizations, regimes, and policies. **MICHAELA DRUCKER** and **CHIDI ANSELM ODINKALU** reflect on the seventy-five years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, contextualizing its negotiations and highlighting its focus on selective experiences. Finally, **KADDU SEBUNYA** underscores why addressing conservation and climate change must include Africa and align with the aspirations of its burgeoning population.

I hope readers benefit from this issue's diverse authorship that brings to attention the various ways the changing Arctic affects international institutions, trade, diplomacy, and conservation efforts. I am deeply grateful to all our contributing authors for trusting *The Forum* with their scholarship and contributing to the journal's mission of serving as a forum to initiate new conversations and encourage dialogue. I am also pleased to share that this issue features three current students of The Fletcher School. With the inclusion of their work, *The Forum* is retracing its origins as a platform for the voice of emerging leaders in global affairs.

To our readers and subscribers, thank you for supporting our work. I look forward to your reactions to this issue and the arguments presented therein.

As we wrap up work on the winter issue and dive into the summer edition, I want to thank my team of dynamic editors who have worked tirelessly through many difficult exam periods to deliver the articles in their current form. I am thankful for your dedication to *The Fletcher Forum*. It is your commitment and hard work that makes *The Forum* a true student-run foreign policy journal.

AARUSHI AGGARWAL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF