

NSDA Public Forum Debate (Fall 2023)

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PROS AND CONS OF ARCTIC MILITARIZATION (ARGUMENTS)

ARG-01 (PRO): Improving Security

Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic will... improve security

Because... it will help counter Russia's military expansion and will promote stability throughout the region.

For example...

1.) First... Countering Russian Military Expansion

S: According to... Georgetown Security Studies Review, November 11, 2022

<https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2022/11/11/combating-the-gray-zone-enhancing-americas-arctic-force-posture/>

F: It states... Recently, the Russian military reopened 50 military installations and invested in a growing array of Arctic capabilities, including hypersonic cruise missiles and nuclear-powered undersea drones.

C: This means... by increasing our military presence in the Arctic, we can counterbalance Russian military expansion and deter potential aggression, this enhances global security and protects millions of lives.

2.) Also... Maintaining Stability Against Security Threats

S: According to... India Quarterly, December 2021

<https://doi.org/10.1177/09749284211047721>

F: It states... Increased military presence can help to deter potential adversaries and maintain stability in the region. The Arctic is becoming increasingly important due to its strategic location and the abundance of resources, which has led to growing competition among Arctic states.

C: This means... By increasing its military presence, the US can signal its commitment to protecting its interests and those of its allies, due to deterring potential aggression and maintaining stability in the region.

The impacts are significant... hundreds of millions of lives will be better protected when the Arctic is better protected from potential aggression.

Therefore... Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic WILL improve security.

For Rejoinders... Arctic Rebalancing is Needed

S: According to... the Brookings Institution, May 2021

https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FP_20210520_arctic_defense.pdf

F: It states... As access to the arctic increases so will extracting resources, commerce, and tourism. Many countries such as Russia and China are developing critical infrastructure and a greater military presence. The US and its allies must do the same.

C: This means... If we increase our military presence, then millions of lives will be better protected; otherwise, our rivals will try to take over the arctic for themselves.

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ARG-02 (PRO): Improving the Economy

Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic will... improve the economy

Because... it will increase access to trillions of dollars in resources that are vital to our economy as well as opening and securing trade routes for billions of dollars of commerce.

For example...

1.) First... Access to Trillions in Resources

S: According to... Georgetown Security Studies Review, November 11, 2022

<https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2022/11/11/combating-the-gray-zone-enhancing-americas-arctic-force-posture/>

F: It states... In addition to vast reserves of hydrocarbons, the Arctic could potentially possess up to \$1 trillion worth of rare earth metals and abundant fisheries. Access to natural resources.

C: This means... we must increase our military presence in the Arctic, so we can improve the lives of hundreds of millions of people by gaining access to trillions of dollars in Arctic resources.

2.) Also... Ice-Breakers Necessary for Trade

S: According to... the American Security Project, December 10, 2021

<https://www.americansecurityproject.org/the-need-for-increased-u-s-presence-in-the-arctic/>

F: It states... Economic trade can create national security concerns due to the small number of U.S. ice breakers in the region and limited military presence, there are limited ways to protect the integrity of the shipping routes, which will continue to expand with the melting of the Arctic ice.

C: This means... we must increase our military presence with more ice breakers and more vessels that will protect hundreds of billions in trade and resources from security threats.

The impacts are significant... hundreds of millions of lives will be better when increase economic growth by billions of dollars.

Therefore... Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic WILL improve the economy.

For Rejoinders... Opening New Trade Routes

S: According to... The Center for International Maritime Security, April 13, 2023

<https://cimsec.org/why-the-us-is-losing-the-race-for-the-arctic-and-what-to-do-about-it/>

F: It states... Those who support the claim that the US is losing the race for the Arctic often highlight that the Arctic ice is melting and that this environmental change is opening up potential trade routes and making natural resources more ripe for exploitation.

C: This means... if we increase our military in the arctic, we can protect billions in trade and gain access to trillions of dollars in resources.

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Topic: Arctic Militarization

ARG-03 (PRO): Increasing Scientific Discoveries

Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic will... increase scientific discoveries

Because... there is a tremendous need for scientific infrastructure and there are dormant diseases which need to be discovered.

For example...

1.) First... Essential Need for Science Infrastructure

S: According to... Atlantic Council, November 19, 2020

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/how-critical-science-infrastructure-investments-help-put-arctic-security-challenges-on-ice/>

F: It states... Russia and China have both made significant investments in scientific research in the Arctic, yet the United States has not, and such infrastructure is considered essential for balancing with our rivals.

C: This means... if we increase our military presence, we also increase medical, technical, as well as other sciences in the region and make new discoveries possible.

2.) Also... Dormant Diseases Endangers Global Health

S: According to... CNN News, March 8, 2023

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/03/08/world/permafrost-virus-risk-climate-scn/index.html>

F: It states... Warmer temperatures in the Arctic are thawing the permafrost exposing viruses that, after lying dormant for thousands of years, could endanger animal and human health.

C: This means... we need to increase the security and safety for scientists to encourage them to travel to the Arctic and discover these dormant threats to create cures.

The impacts are significant... billions of lives are much safer when we make critical scientific discoveries.

Therefore... Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic WILL increase scientific discoveries.

For Rejoinders... Arctic Bioprospecting Helps with Medicines

S: According to... University of East Anglia, Oct 18, 2022

<https://www.labmanager.com/new-dataset-reveals-biological-treasure-trove-of-arctic-ocean-29033>

F: It states... a center for polar and marine research supports bioprospecting to tackle the shortage of antibiotics and antiviral medication, as well as reveal evidence that might influence our understanding of the evolution of life on Earth.

C: This means... by providing greater security and safety for scientists we can get access to new life-saving discoveries improving the lives of millions of people.

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Topic: Arctic Militarization

ARG-01 (CON): Threatening Security

Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic will... threaten security

Because... it will raise tensions in the region and one mistake or miscalculation could trigger a war.

For example...

First... Becoming Another “Area of Confrontation”

S: According to... the Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies, DW News, August 28, 2023

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxqQqfDJ1Bc>

F: She states... the strongest parts of Russia’s military are in the Arctic and the region plays a central role for Russia’s military. This has to do with nuclear deterrence and potential conflict with NATO (and the U.S.). This has become another area of confrontation between Russia and the West with security importance set to increase even further.

C: This means... increasing our military will increase security reactions from Russia’s military significantly increasing the risk of the kind of confrontation that could threaten billions of lives around the world.

Also... Military Buildup Seen as Provocation

S: According to... Responsible Statecraft, August 29, 2022

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/08/29/arctic-military-build-up-poses-new-geopolitical-and-climate-risks/>

F: It states... A U.S. build-up could fuel military competition with Russia. “There are certainly real consequences for the U.S.’s greater military presence in the Arctic,” and may “very well be treated as a military provocation by Russia and may result in increased Russian military exercises.”

C: This means... by increasing U.S. military presence in the Arctic, we risk escalating tensions with Russia, thereby potentially destabilizing the region and putting millions of lives at risk.

The impacts are significant... hundreds of millions, perhaps billions of lives will be put in danger when three nuclear powers compete over the Arctic; one accident or miscalculation is all it takes.

Therefore... Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic WILL threaten security.

For Rejoinders... Miscalculations Far More Likely (& Dangerous)

S: According to... CBC News, February 18, 2018

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/war-risk-blunder-1.4540790>

F: It states... Miscalculations, accidents, and human error combined with rising global instability led experts to believe accidents and missteps are more likely and far more dangerous than they were in the past.

C: This means... when we increase tension in the arctic, we are also increasing the risk of the kind of miscalculation that could trigger a war.

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ARG-02 (CON): Destroying the Environment

Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic will... harm the environment

Because... military operations are the world's largest cause of greenhouse gas emissions and this increases the threat of extinction from the worsening impacts of global warming.

For example...

First... 'Climate Change' is Urgent Existential Threat

S: According to... Responsible Statecraft, August 29, 2022

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/08/29/arctic-military-build-up-poses-new-geopolitical-and-climate-risks/>

F: It states... Climate change is an existential threat, and a much more urgent threat than security. Instead of risking an escalation of conflict, we should instead use the arctic as an opportunity for cooperation.

C: This means... by increasing U.S. military presence in the Arctic, we make vital cooperation less likely and increase the risk of extinction of all life on Earth.

Also... Massively Increasing Carbon Emissions

S: According to... Responsible Statecraft, August 29, 2022

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/08/29/arctic-military-build-up-poses-new-geopolitical-and-climate-risks/>

F: It states... The U.S. military is the world's largest polluter of greenhouse gasses and increasing military activities in the Arctic will result in a significant increase in overall carbon emissions.

C: This means... by increasing U.S. military presence in the Arctic, we increase greenhouse gas emissions, thereby increasing the deadly impacts of climate change; putting hundreds of millions of lives at risk.

The impacts are significant... all life on Earth is put at risk when we increase the deadly impacts of climate change – there is no higher priority, not even nuclear war.

Therefore... Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic WILL harm the environment.

For Rejoinders... Exacerbating Climate Change

S: According to... Responsible Statecraft, August 29, 2022

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/08/29/arctic-military-build-up-poses-new-geopolitical-and-climate-risks/>

F: It states... A U.S. military build-up in the Arctic threatens to make the impacts of climate change significantly worse. A loophole in major climate treaties allows the military to withhold the truth about the damage they will be causing there. There is no plan to reduce emissions from their military operations.

C: This means... by increasing U.S. military presence in the Arctic, we contribute to climate change, thereby adding to a global crisis that threatens millions of lives – it is our most dangerous existential threat!

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ARG-03 (CON): Wasting Valuable Resources

Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic will... waste valuable resources

Because... the cost of militarizing the Arctic is way too high and should be spent on other more pressing matters such as preventing climate disasters.

For example...

First... Militarization is Incredibly Costly (& Costs Threaten Security)

S: According to... *The Center for International Maritime Security, April 13, 2023*

<https://cimsec.org/why-the-us-is-losing-the-race-for-the-arctic-and-what-to-do-about-it/>

F: It states... the costs of controlling the arctic will be significant and will weaken our ability to secure other areas of national interest. Working 'collectively' with allies would provide security without consuming resources needed in other areas.

C: This means... a substantial increase in military presence could waste billions of dollars and threaten the security of millions of people by weakening our defenses in other more vital areas around the world.

Also... Wasting Precious Resources (ex. Other Higher Priorities: Climate Change)

S: According to... *Responsible Statecraft, August 29, 2022*

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/08/29/arctic-military-build-up-poses-new-geopolitical-and-climate-risks/>

F: It states... Dr. Neta Crawford, of Brown University, sees the military's view towards competition and build-up in the Arctic as a poor use of resources. "We have a certain catastrophe on its way," Crawford said. The resources we put toward reducing emissions and adaptation are much better spent, in terms of saving lives.

C: This means... by increasing our military presence in the Arctic, we divert resources away from the greater threat of climate change, thereby failing to address imminent threats that could impact billions of lives!

The impacts are significant... by spending hundreds of billions per year on projects we don't need, we end up with less money available for the things we actually need such as better climate, schools, and healthcare.

Therefore... Increasing U.S. military presence in the arctic WILL be a waste of resources.

For Rejoinders... Resource Exploitation Still Cost Prohibitive

S: According to... *The Center for International Maritime Security, April 13, 2023*

<https://cimsec.org/why-the-us-is-losing-the-race-for-the-arctic-and-what-to-do-about-it/>

F: It states... The high costs of extracting resources and transporting them from the arctic, companies are still not going to pursue arctic resources unless something changes dramatically, which is unlikely.

C: This means... increasing our military presence in the arctic will not lead to greater economic resources for the economy and it will not be worth the hundreds of billions each year that we spend doing it.