
Centre for International
Governance Innovation

Conference Report – Ottawa, Canada, February 3, 2018

Energizing Regional Collaboration and Governance CIGI Summit of North American Arctic Leaders

John Higginbotham and Jennifer Spence



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About CIGI

We are the Centre for International Governance Innovation: an independent, non-partisan think tank with an objective and uniquely global perspective. Our research, opinions and public voice make a difference in today's world by bringing clarity and innovative thinking to global policy making. By working across disciplines and in partnership with the best peers and experts, we are the benchmark for influential research and trusted analysis.

Our research programs focus on governance of the global economy, global security and politics, and international law in collaboration with a range of strategic partners and support from the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, as well as founder Jim Balsillie.

À propos du CIGI

Au Centre pour l'innovation dans la gouvernance internationale (CIGI), nous formons un groupe de réflexion indépendant et non partisan doté d'un point de vue objectif et unique de portée mondiale. Nos recherches, nos avis et nos interventions publiques ont des effets réels sur le monde d'aujourd'hui car ils apportent de la clarté et une réflexion novatrice pour l'élaboration des politiques à l'échelle internationale. En raison des travaux accomplis en collaboration et en partenariat avec des pairs et des spécialistes interdisciplinaires des plus compétents, nous sommes devenus une référence grâce à l'influence de nos recherches et à la fiabilité de nos analyses.

Nos programmes de recherche ont trait à la gouvernance dans les domaines suivants : l'économie mondiale, la sécurité et les politiques mondiales, et le droit international, et nous les exécutons avec la collaboration de nombreux partenaires stratégiques et le soutien des gouvernements du Canada et de l'Ontario ainsi que du fondateur du CIGI, Jim Balsillie.

About the Global Security & Politics Program

The Global Security & Politics Program at CIGI focuses on a range of issues in global security, conflict management and international governance — a landscape that continues to change dramatically. Such changes are widely evident in the growing rivalry between China and the United States in the Asia-Pacific and the emergence of new economic powers in the region, such as Indonesia; the divergent ways Canada, Russia and the United States perceive Arctic security as melting ice opens up the Northwest Passage; continuing debates about the humanitarian imperative as the world confronts new crises in Africa and the Middle East; and new areas of concern such as cyber warfare and the security of the internet.

With experts from academia, national agencies, international institutions and the private sector, the Global Security & Politics Program supports research in the following areas: Arctic governance; Asia and the Pacific; fixing climate governance; governance of conflict management, with a focus on Africa; global politics and foreign policy; and internet governance.

About the Authors

John Higginbotham is a senior fellow at CIGI in Waterloo and the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University in Ottawa. John's research focuses on Arctic economic and governance development and international relations, Canada's ties with the United States and China in a global context, and North American Arctic marine transportation as the Arctic Ocean melts. John leads CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program's research project on the Arctic, including organizing action-oriented round tables and publications. John's previous work with the Government of Canada, including lengthy international assignments, spanned more than 30 years. He was an assistant deputy minister in three departments, including for policy development at Global Affairs Canada, and served at Canadian embassies in Washington, Beijing and Hong Kong.

Jennifer Spence is a CIGI fellow with the Global Security & Politics Program. An expert in international governance and public policy, Jennifer has a particular interest in the Arctic region, including infrastructure, transportation, local and regional development, and strengthened domestic and regional governance. She holds a Ph.D. in public policy from Carleton University and is currently a post-doctoral fellow and research associate at Carleton University's School of Public Policy and Administration. Previously, she held numerous senior positions with a variety of Government of Canada departments.

Introduction

The North American Arctic (NAA) is a distinct subregion of the Arctic, with vast territories, extreme environmental conditions, small and remote communities, complex governance and significant resource constraints. There is an urgent need for stronger east-to-west cooperation among regional and national governments, Indigenous organizations, business, academia and other stakeholders to build the region's prosperity.

The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), working closely with the Labrador North and Baffin Regional Chambers of Commerce, hosted the "CIGI Summit of North American Arctic Leaders" — two special panel discussions focused on strengthening dialogue and cooperation across the NAA — at the Northern Lights 2018 Business and Cultural Showcase. The showcase, a high-profile event running from January 31 to February 3, 2018, at the Shaw Centre in Ottawa, Canada, attracted more than 1,200 participants, attending from across the country and around the world.

The summit sessions took place on the final morning of the Northern Lights conference. The first panel featured the political leadership of the NAA and the second panel brought together experts in marine development and infrastructure. The panel discussions were open to all participants of Northern Lights 2018. They provided an opportunity for leaders and experts to openly discuss their ideas and publicly demonstrate their commitment to enhanced cooperation across the NAA. Their discussions built on a highly successful meeting of NAA leaders and experts that was facilitated by CIGI and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (the Wilson Center) in Washington, DC, a year earlier, in March 2017. The CIGI summit followed the release of a CIGI special report, *The North American Arctic: Energizing Regional Collaboration and Governance*,¹ which emphasized the urgency and importance of NAA regional governments' cooperation in addressing the many challenges shared by the region.

¹ The report is available at www.cigionline.org/arcticreport2018.

First Panel (Conference Session XII): Leading Development in the NAA

This session's panel was composed of political leaders from all the region's subnational governments — an unprecedented meeting of the senior political leadership of these five neighbouring jurisdictions.

After introductory remarks by John Higginbotham, Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski opened the session with a welcoming video. She provided her strong endorsement for efforts being made to strengthen east-to-west cooperation, and urged all subnational governments in the region to work together to ensure that the Arctic is a priority for their respective national governments.

The session was then turned over to chair Jennifer Spence, who introduced the panellists:

- Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott, Alaska;
- Premier Sandy Silver, Yukon;
- Premier Bob McLeod, Northwest Territories;
- Premier Paul Quassa, Nunavut; and
- Minister of Independence, Foreign Affairs and Agriculture Suka Frederiksen, Greenland.

These Arctic government leaders, representing regions from the Beaufort Sea through the Northwest Passage to Baffin Bay, each provided opening remarks focused on sharing their perspectives on the development opportunities and challenges facing the NAA. They also identified constructive opportunities for enhanced practical NAA cooperation on social and economic issues. The panellists were then invited to respond to a series of follow-up questions stemming from their introductory comments. In particular, leaders emphasized the following points:

- They often feel closer to each other than to their national capitals because of their common environmental, social and economic opportunities, challenges and experiences.
- Southerners need to be alerted to the rapid and historic changes taking place in the Arctic.

- Decisions affecting the North should be made with Northerners and recognize Northern views and interests.
- Subnational governments want to be real partners with federal governments in leading and planning long-term sustainable development in their jurisdictions, in particular, the development of regional core transport, energy and communications infrastructure.
- Stronger east-to-west linkages with each other, federal governments, Indigenous governments and organizations, communities, the private sector and other stakeholders are critical to effective responses to emerging opportunities and challenges in the NAA.
- Kells Boland, vice chair of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce and founding principal of PROLOG Canada Inc., who commented on what he describes as a haphazard and tight-fisted approach to funding infrastructure in the NAA, and who provided a detailed proposal for coordinated NAA transport corridors;
- Jeff Hutchinson, commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG), who spoke about the changing marine conditions in the NAA, the evolving role of the CCG in the North, and the CCG's approach to working with other levels of government and communities in the region; and
- Mike Sfraga, director of the Polar Initiative at the Wilson Center, who spoke about the value of a more coordinated approach to marine corridors and new ports in the NAA and proposed that the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, with its excellent record of Canada-US joint management, be used as a model that could inform the management of NAA shipping as it expands.

Second Panel (Conference Session XIV): NAA Marine Development and Infrastructure

The second panel brought together experts to discuss NAA marine development, infrastructure and investment issues in the context of an ice-diminishing Arctic environment. Chair John Higginbotham welcomed the panellists and invited them to share their ideas and perspectives on this important theme before opening the floor to questions from the audience:

- Okalik Egeesiak, international chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, who discussed how the NAA territories are linked by important east-to-west ties among Inuit, whose engagement is vital to the strengthening of regional intergovernmental and people-to-people cooperation;
- Tero Vauraste, chair of the Arctic Economic Council and the president and chief executive officer of Arctia Ltd., who spoke about the growing importance of the Arctic Economic Council and the need for more regulatory coordination among the jurisdictions in managing navigation in the Arctic Ocean as the ice melts;

Concluding Remarks

Throughout the discussions, these leaders and experts confirmed the urgent need both for closer regulatory and practical cooperation among all stakeholders in the region and for strategic partnerships that could contribute to sustainable development in the NAA and benefit Northerners.

The NAA leaders' expressed desire to establish stronger east-to-west connections should be taken as a call to action to all public and private institutions to continue to identify and develop opportunities for collaboration.

CIGI's Arctic project will continue to place its energy and attention on facilitating practical dialogue among NAA leaders and experts on specific core infrastructure issues that could benefit from regional cooperation, such as shipping regulation, transportation corridors and energy.

Postscript

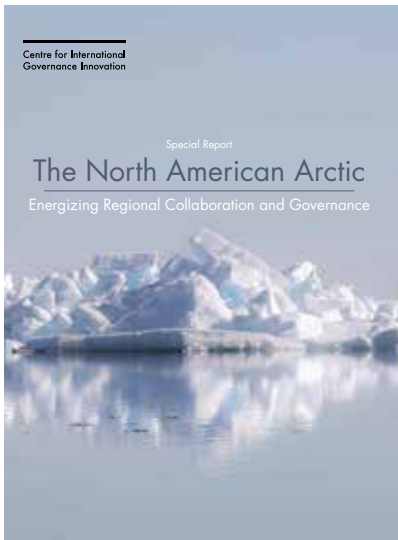
To maintain the momentum of the leaders' summit, CIGI sponsored two expert NAA round tables in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, on June 13, 2018, as part of Inuvik's Arctic Energy and Emerging Technologies Trade Show and Conference. Detailed discussions confirmed the directions set by the leaders' summit.

Participants discussed global forces affecting the Western Arctic, including the opening of the Arctic Ocean and ambitious Arctic economic developments in Alaska, Russia, Norway and China.

Questions were raised about the federal Arctic Policy Framework. The blanket federal moratorium on Arctic Ocean petrochemical activity and lack of core infrastructure were described as fundamental obstacles to regional economic development.

The Barents Council was identified as a possible model for more intensive marine and energy collaboration in the Beaufort region with Alaska. There was spirited discussion about the need to exploit the vast stranded gas deposits in the Mackenzie Delta, possibly based on unblocking Chinese investment.

Further action-oriented CIGI round tables are planned.



The North American Arctic: Energizing Regional Collaboration and Governance

Special Report

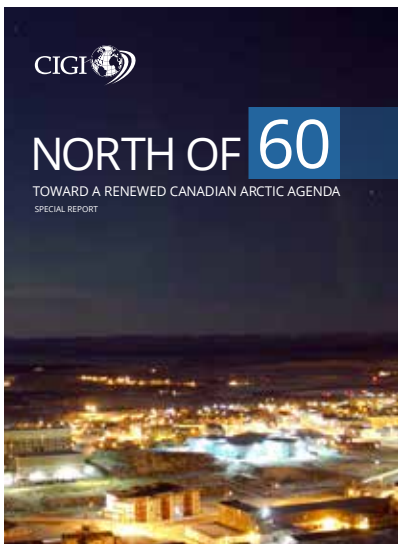
John Higginbotham and Jennifer Spence

The opening of the Arctic Ocean and the forces of globalization it will unleash pose both pressing challenges and exciting opportunities for the largest and most autonomous of the Arctic regions, the North American Arctic (NAA) — Greenland, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Alaska. However, broad pan-Arctic cooperation is not always the best approach to address these issues; neither are international interests always well aligned with the priorities of Northerners.

In March 2017, CIGI and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars hosted an inaugural summit in Washington, DC, to stimulate discussion about ways to enhance east-to-west collaboration and partnerships among leaders in the NAA — from subnational, Indigenous and local governments — in addressing issues of common concern, including infrastructure planning.

This special report delivers key points from the meeting, which focused on finding practical initiatives to meet the particular needs of this distinct subregion and those who live there.

Available for download at
www.cigionline.org/arcticreport2018



North of 60: Toward a Renewed Canadian Arctic Agenda

Special Report

Edited by John Higginbotham and Jennifer Spence

Although Canadians embrace their Northernness with pride, this sense of identity has not always translated into focused attention by their leaders on the unique issues facing the region or on the needs of Northerners.

The essays and interviews collected in this special report provide thoughtful commentary on a diverse array of policy issues at a time when there is growing appetite in Ottawa for a serious discussion about Canada's Arctic policies. The economic, social and diplomatic issues brought to the fore by climate change in the Arctic are drawing additional attention to Canada's North. *North of 60's* contributors urge us to consider the complex social, environmental, economic and political circumstances that Northerners face. Their insights provide a solid basis for further discussion in the North and across Canada for those ready to engage in shaping Canada's future Arctic agenda.

Contributors:

Frances Abele, Kells Boland, Chris Burn, Michael Byers, Andrea Charron, Heather Exner-Pirot, Rob Huebert, P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Heather E. McGregor, Heather Nicol, Natan Obed, Joël Plouffe and Duane Smith.

Available for download at
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