

concerns of indigenous peoples about the general level of militarization of their environment.

In sum, at least four specific proposals for Arctic arms control do appear to be desirable and to hold at least some promise of “negotiability” in the not-too-distant future: 1) a partial demilitarization of the Polar Basin; 2) a submarine stand-off zone; 3) an aerial stand-off zone; and 4) some kind of SSBN sanctuaries or “ASW-free zones,” if limited to the near-coastal waters of the states concerned. Traditionally, such proposals (with the possible exception of the first) have been thought to fall within the exclusive competence of the Superpowers. However, there may well be merit in a *circumpolar* approach to these questions, involving the so-called “lesser” states of the Arctic region as well. One method, of course, would be to convene a special conference of the circumpolar states to discuss such measures, as proposed by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in June 1982.¹⁷¹ A more indirect method — but possibly more fruitful, precisely because it would be less dramatic — would be to take advantage of the on-going discussions within the United Nations system on the subject of naval arms control. For example, an “Arctic sub-group” could be created at the upcoming Third Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament (UNSSOD III), where naval arms control is certain to be on the agenda.¹⁷² Canada, as the “big brother” among the “lesser” circumpolar states, might be expected to take the lead in such an initiative — focusing initially, perhaps, on the partial demilitarization of the Polar Basin, as this is likely to be a somewhat less sensitive subject for the Superpowers.

That the Soviet Union may be receptive to such proposals was clearly indicated in a speech by General Secretary Gorbachev in Murmansk, on 1 October 1987. In its arms control aspects, the speech focused primarily on Northern Europe, in particular calling for NATO-Warsaw Pact consultations on “the restriction of military activity and scaling down of the naval and airforce activities in the

171. CIIA, *op. cit.* note 114, p. 19.

172. I am indebted to Jan Prawitz for this idea.