**FORUM:** GA 4 – Special Political and Decolonization

**QUESTION OF:** Establishing protocols to prevent future territorial disputes in the Arctic Region

**MAIN-SUBMITTED BY:** France

**CO-SUBMITTERS:** Denmark, Norway, Chad, Slovakia, Mauritania, Honduras, Australia, United States of America, UNPBC, Hungary, UAE, UPEC, Japan, Italy, Sweden

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOURTH COMMITTEE,

*Aware* that the rising sea temperatures and the melting ice expose available resources, making the Arctic Region more economically interesting for nations,

*Alarmed* by the increase in territorial disputes over the Arctic Region,

*Underlining* that decisions regarding territorial claims in the Arctic Region are to be made solely in coherence with international law and based on geographical facts,

*Acknowledging* that the Arctic Region is a populated area and that indigenous people constitute an important part of the demography,

*Noting* that a resolution would have to take into account the demands of all five coastal States, Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America,

*Emphasizing* the importance of a peaceful negotiation process that also takes into account the views of the indigenous people inhabiting the Arctic Region,

*Convinced* that a possible solution places significant importance on the nations’ responsibility to use resources in a sustainable manner and work together in the Arctic Council to protect the environment,

*Recognizes* that the Arctic Region is to be used by States for peaceful purposes,

*Noting* that the melting ice opens up new sea lanes in environmentally vulnerable areas,

*Believing* that the Ilulissat Declaration is valuable in that it strengthens cooperation between the five coastal in the Arctic Region is by focusing on mutual trust and transparency,

1. Encourages the strengthening of the Arctic Council to further cooperation in the Arctic Region between Member States by urging them to:
   1. Share relevant information gathered through scientific research regarding environmental monitoring,
   2. Create a method to deal with accidents on the sea by improving search and rescue capacity,
   3. Establish a consultative mechanism for taking into account the traditions of the indigenous population and allowing the indigenous people the possibility to participate in decision making regarding issues concerning the Arctic Region that will concern them;
2. Requests the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) to process the different claims expeditiously in order to avoid a lengthy period of uncertainty concerning claims made in the Arctic Region i.e. claims for the Lomosonov Ridge;
3. Calls for all Member States making proposals to the CLCS to respect the conclusions reached by the Commission;
4. Recognizes that some disputes regarding contested regions of the Arctic Region may remain unresolved even after the CLCS reaches its conclusion, and therefore advocates the need for a new hybrid solution for such remaining areas;
5. Strongly urges Member States to submit and ratify an amendment to the United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) regarding the creation, management, and oversight of Joint Exclusive Economic Zones (JEEZ) that shall include issues such as but not limited to:
   1. The creation of a JEEZ which shall be formed through a mutually ratified treaty where all involved parties will consent to the creation, location and management of said JEEZ,
   2. The function of a JEEZ which will allow the multiple signatories involved to access resources and conduct economic activities within the JEEZ including:
      1. Extracting minerals and fossil fuels,
      2. Fishing,
      3. Tourism,
   3. The management of a JEEZ, which will be delegated to a specialized committee wherein all signatories are to take part by appointing representatives that will dictate matters such as:
      1. The distribution of resources,
      2. The safeguarding of transit routes,
      3. Conflicts regarding any aspect of the JEEZ,
   4. Cases, in which the JEEZ Committee is unable to resolve such disputes, in which case responsibility will be delegated to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLoS) that will adjudicate on such matters based on established conventions in UNCLOS,
   5. Transit through JEEZ, which will be declared international waterways and will accordingly be open for all Member States;
6. Encourages Member States active in the Arctic Region to, once the amendment submitted and ratified, create JEEZ’s in known areas of conflict and suggests the possibility of an agreement on the Hans Island based on the framework of the JEEZ with both Denmark and Canada as signatories and with the water surrounding it declared open waters for transit;
7. Asks the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to establish a protocol regulating maritime traffic in the Arctic Region taking into account the vulnerable ecosystem in the region;
8. Urges all Member States active in the Arctic Region to ratify the UNCLOS without delay;