**FORUM:** GA4

**QUESTION OF:** The geopolitical situation within the Arctic Circle

**SUBMITTED BY:** Pakistan

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

*Acknowledging* that with a significant increase in global warming, ice caps are melting at an extreme rate, creating new trade routes and access to natural resources resulting in the Arctic Circle being a highly desired territory,

*Recognizing* that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sparked interest in the Arctic Circle in 1982 because it addressed Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), drilling and other activities within the Arctic,

*Keeping in mind* that since 2014 the militarization presence of the eight Arctic countries has increased significantly,

*Noting* that Russia made trade routes accessible by sending Yamal, a nuclear-powered icebreaker vessel, to the North Pole to push ice out of the way and thus opening the sea to incoming vessels,

*Deeply conscious* that Russia released a National Security Strategy document outlining its plan for action, stating in 2020 it wants the Arctic Circle to be its primary extraction base for natural resources,

*Aware* that Russia’s plan is already underway, including the development of ‘Russian Special Artic Forces’ as well as long range missile systems in the region, demonstrating militarisation of the Arctic to establish political dominance and a claim of territory,

*Pointing out* the plan mentioned in the clause above echoes a Cold War mentality, as tension between all eight countries bordering the Arctic Circle rises,

1. Encourages border disputes to be resolved by having the international community accept borders drawn by the Search and Rescue Agreement (SAR) in which:
   1. the borders are drawn based on the length of country borders connecting with the Arctic Ocean
   2. countries will own sections of the Arctic, but trade routes shall be deemed international territory;
2. Stresses that if states do not agree to the SAR, then all territory claimed shall be frozen until an agreement on an Arctic Treaty is made in which:
   1. states would be able to do extensive research to provide a more accurate representation of the Arctic Circle
   2. states can discuss the consequences of resource extraction and what the acceptable level of extraction is;
3. Considers it desirable to still work towards reducing global warming through the Reduce our Carbon Footprint Initiative (RCF) that:
   1. advocates for citizens to make changes to their everyday lives by using vegan diets and driving electric cars through social media campaigns
   2. encourages companies to “go green” by introducing a carbon cap goal;
4. Calls for a comprehensive Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Weapons in the Arctic in order to ensure the protection of the environment and humanity, with the treaty specifically banning the build-up of large and military weaponry within a 200-mile radius of the North Pole;
5. Recognizes the severe need for strong shipping regulations that will be enacted by the use of the Global League for Arctic Course of Action and Revision, so as to ban the use of heavy fuel oils (HFOs) similar to the prohibition of these oils in Antarctica;
6. Promotes the rights of the indigenous people of the Arctic through:
   1. amending the Arctic Council to include Indigenous organizations as a significant participant in the agenda of the Arctic Council
   2. making the conversation of global warming and climate change a priority among the eight arctic nations
   3. giving the Arctic populations a share of the proceeds of natural resources, as well a portion of global aid;
7. Further calls for avoiding monopolisation of the Arctic territory, and consequently its resources, through:
   1. creating a transparent UN body with the purpose of governing these territories, in which all UN member states are represented, to be named the International Land and Ocean Management Body (ILOMB)
   2. authorising ILOMB to monitor the environment status of the region and prohibit exploitation of resources if the body determines it too precarious, so as to prevent ecological damage
   3. ensuring ILOMB addresses who profits from those resources
   4. having ILOMB enforce fishing quotas to be calculated per country and to regulate them with the same procedure as done in the EU;
8. Acknowledges that the receding of thick sea ice during warmer periods creates opportune waterways which need to be addressed, e.g. Canada's claim on the Northwest Passage as internal waters permitting free access;
9. Requests a treaty which allows Canada’s (and other nations' with similar context) sovereignty claim to remain intact, conditional to allowing transit passage through international straits in order to:
   1. boost trade links between nations
   2. improve trade efficiency through shorter distances and hence reduce pollution
   3. maintain the Arctic as an international zone where decisions have global implications;
10. Proposes that international investment into research programs is heightened, as much dispute over territory in the Arctic stems from uncertainty due to a lack of knowledge and scientific data;
11. Urges all nations to view the Arctic Circle with intentions for conservation and preservation, and as a region too valuable to remain without united regulation.