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TEXTS ADOPTED

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EU's diplomatic strategy and geopolitical cooperation in the Arctic

European Parliament recommendation of 26 November 2025 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the EU's diplomatic strategy and geopolitical cooperation in the Arctic (2025/2116(INI))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its previous resolutions on Arctic issues, notably its resolution of 7 October 2021 on the Arctic: opportunities, concerns and security challenges[1],

– having regard to the United Nations Convention of 16 November 1994 on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS),

– having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 13 October 2021 entitled 'A stronger EU engagement for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Arctic' (JOIN(2021)0027),

– having regard to the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

– having regard to the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction, adopted on 19 June 2023,

– having regard to the establishment of the Council of the Baltic Sea States,

– having regard to the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention of the International Labour Organization, adopted on 27 June 1989,

– having regard to the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean of 3 October 2018 (Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement),

– having regard to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

[1] OJ C 132, 24.3.2022, p. 113.

– having regard to the Svalbard Treaty of 9 February 1920 (previously the Treaty concerning the Archipelago of Spitsbergen),

– having regard to the Declaration of 19 September 1996 on the establishment of the Arctic Council (Ottawa Declaration),

– having regard to the three legally binding agreements negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council, namely the Agreement of 12 May 2011 on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic, the Agreement of 15 May 2013 on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic and the Agreement of 11 May 2017 on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation,

– having regard to the Joint Statement following the European Union – Canada 2025 Summit: Enduring Partnership, Ambitious Agenda,

– having regard to the inauguration of the EU Office in Nuuk, Greenland, on 15 March 2024,

– having regard to the speech delivered by the Prime Minister of Greenland, Jens-Frederik Nielsen, in Parliament on 8 October 2025,

– having regard to Rule 121 of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A10-0229/2025),

A. whereas the Arctic is a region inhabited by over four million people, with diverse cultures, communities and economies, and as such must remain a zone of peace, with its biodiversity and fragile ecosystems respected; whereas constructive cooperation in the Arctic should be shielded from intensifying global rivalries;

B. whereas the EU has been engaged in both the European Arctic and wider Arctic region for decades as an Arctic actor with strategic interests, and has a fundamental stake in contributing strategically to positive security, socio-economic and environmental outcomes, notably through multilateral cooperation;

C. whereas Russia has been intensifying its military build-up in the Arctic ever since its illegal war of aggression against Ukraine; whereas Russian militarisation, paired with increased Chinese presence, has changed the political and security situation in the region; whereas Russia has adopted a unilateral and illegitimate regime governing navigation along the Northern Sea Route (NSR), including the law of 5 December 2022 restricting the passage of foreign warships, raising serious concerns under international law, notably the UNCLOS, and risking the exacerbation of geopolitical tensions in the Arctic;

D. whereas the use of the Arctic region for military purposes is accelerating at the same time as international regulatory frameworks surrounding arms control, including nuclear weapons, are being weakened, notably through the actions of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes such as Russia;

E. whereas scrupulous respect for territorial integrity and international law – notably the UNCLOS and the conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) – is essential to preserving the Arctic as a safe and stable region; whereas the IMO is the leading global authority on maritime safety and environmental protection, with its legally binding conventions and voluntary guidelines applying globally, including in the Arctic;

F. whereas all Arctic policies must reflect the diverse realities of the region, including different governance systems, legal frameworks, infrastructure capacities and socio-economic conditions;

G. whereas the Arctic Council is the pre-eminent forum for circumpolar cooperation; whereas three EU Member States and two additional members of the European Economic Area (EEA) are part of the Arctic Council, while seven of its members are NATO states;

H. whereas, despite the Arctic Council being based on voluntary commitments and lacking binding authority, it has facilitated constructive cooperation and several binding agreements; whereas its limited mandate reduces its ability to address major challenges, such as environmental disasters or rising geopolitical tensions, which could threaten the Arctic's status as a low-tension region; whereas, due to Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, the Arctic Council's political meetings have been suspended, undermining the ability of the Arctic Council to fulfil its mandate and properly operate;

I. whereas there has been no progress on the EU's application to become a full observer to the Arctic Council;

J. whereas the Arctic Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom (GIUK) gap constitutes a strategic corridor that enables the control of maritime traffic and the detection of hybrid threats; whereas Finland and Sweden's accession to NATO has deepened the Arctic orientation of the Alliance and will enhance its posture in the region;

K. whereas the Arctic region is warming at roughly three times the global average, accelerating ice loss and threatening planetary climate stability; whereas summer sea ice is rapidly disappearing, causing extensive habitat destruction and declines in populations of species that depend on snow and ice;

L. whereas in 2022, NATO recognised climate change as a defining challenge and a threat multiplier with profound implications for security and military operations, including in the High North, and identified the High North as a region of strategic importance in which Russia's ability to disrupt allied reinforcements and freedom of navigation across the North Atlantic poses a direct challenge to the Alliance; whereas the Arctic can be seen as a primary area for the climate-security nexus; whereas the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal remains necessary in order to prevent the worst consequences of climate change;

M. whereas the thawing of permafrost constitutes a transboundary security, environmental and biological threat due to its destructive impact on infrastructure, the release of climate-damaging methane, the re-emergence of dormant and unknown viruses and bacteria and its contributions to disruptions in weather patterns across Europe and

beyond; whereas subsea permafrost in the East Siberian Arctic Shelf might become yet another source of methane emissions;

N. whereas the diminishing sea ice is raising global interest in the Arctic and its resources; whereas, in particular, the rapid retreat of sea ice is opening seasonal, and potentially year-round, commercial corridors such as the NSR, the Northwest Passage and a possible future trans-polar route, which could reshape global trade patterns while posing profound environmental, security and governance challenges for the Arctic; whereas harsh weather conditions, limited search and rescue capabilities, high insurance costs and unresolved questions regarding the international legal status of these new sea routes constitute major obstacles to their full realisation, and many stakeholders demand that these routes be treated as part of the ‘global commons’;

O. whereas, due to the climate crisis, changes in the Arctic are intrinsically connected with Europe; whereas higher temperatures, rising sea levels, diminishing biodiversity and extreme weather events affect people and ecosystems in Europe, underlining the need for knowledge-based and science-based policies that involve local Arctic communities and research institutions;

P. whereas Russia has markedly expanded its Arctic force posture and military infrastructure, thus heightening regional military tension; whereas the 2023 Russian foreign policy concept identifies the Arctic as one of Russia’s priority regions; whereas the militarisation of the Arctic runs counter to the spirit of cooperation that has so far guided relations between Arctic states;

Q. whereas the deepening cooperation between China and Russia in the Arctic, through joint energy projects, infrastructure investments and shipping ventures along emerging Arctic routes, risks consolidating a geopolitical axis of resource exploitation and restricted access, to the detriment of Arctic coastal communities, Indigenous peoples and global environmental safeguards; whereas Russia’s breaches of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of neighbouring states, coupled with its obstruction of navigation in the Azov, Black and Baltic Seas, raise serious concerns that must be factored into any assessment of the prospects for sustaining peaceful coexistence in the Arctic;

R. whereas, in particular, Russia is enhancing its Arctic infrastructure through the construction and deployment of the Chukotka universal nuclear-powered icebreaker (Project 22220) as part of its broader programme to ensure year-round navigation along the NSR; whereas Russia is building additional icebreakers to support its strategic ambitions in the Arctic;

S. whereas satellite imagery from 2023 revealed significant new construction of buildings and infrastructure on Novaya Zemlya, a remote Arctic island historically used by Russia for nuclear weapons testing; whereas such developments raise serious concerns about renewed nuclear activities in the Arctic and their implications for regional security and environmental safety; whereas Russia’s expansion of military construction, including on Wrangel Island, a UNESCO World Heritage site and nature reserve, is raising serious environmental, security and legal concerns;

T. whereas in March 2024, Russia adopted a decree expanding the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation to include the Berezovsky and Beloyarsky municipal districts of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug-Yugra; whereas this expansion forms part of

Russia's strategy to consolidate federal control over natural resources, reinforce its territorial claims and attract investors through special economic zone incentives;

U. whereas Russia has intensified hybrid threats in the Arctic region, including cyber operations and GPS jamming; whereas the Arctic waters are increasingly used by Russia's ageing and poorly maintained 'shadow fleet', which operates under flags of convenience to circumvent international sanctions, posing significant environmental, safety and security risks in this fragile region;

V. whereas China has declared itself a 'near-Arctic state', has proclaimed a 'Polar Silk Road' as an extension of its Belt and Road Initiative and is steadily and rapidly increasing its footprint north of the Arctic Circle, including through investments in Russian companies; whereas China's 2025 White Paper on National Security in the New Era identifies 'polar security' as part of its comprehensive national security concept;

W. whereas China's proclamation as a 'near-Arctic state' is a misleading self-designation with no legal foundation, privileges or justification for a military presence in the High North; whereas China has been disguising its military and political outreach under the cover of scientific research since Chinese research facilities in the Arctic, such as the Yellow River Station in Svalbard and the China-Iceland Arctic Science Observatory in Kárhóll, carry potential dual-use applications; whereas in October 2024 the Chinese Coast Guard claimed to have entered the Arctic Ocean for the first time during a joint patrol with Russia, further signalling a coordinated Chinese-Russian push to expand their strategic footprint in the High North;

X. whereas in recent years several European countries have blocked attempted Chinese acquisitions of sensitive Arctic infrastructure on national-security grounds, including Denmark's 2016 decision to block the purchase of the Grønnedal naval base in Greenland, Finland's 2018 decision to block the purchase of Kemijärvi Airport near a military zone, and Norway's 2024 decision to halt the sale of Søre Fagerfjord to Chinese buyers;

Y. whereas Russia and China have in recent years deepened their cooperation in the Arctic through the signing of a coast guard cooperation agreement, the conduct of joint military drills, such as 'Ocean-2024' and 'Pacific Patrol-2024', near the Arctic, and technological and shipbuilding projects and new trade corridors along the NSR, thereby reinforcing their strategic alignment in the High North; whereas despite Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, China has continued Arctic cooperation with Russia, substituting lost investments from Western companies following the Western sanctions adopted after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine;

Z. whereas China is testing, via a cargo ship, an express route to Europe through the Arctic to establish a regular service via Russia's NSR, which would link multiple ports in Asia and Europe;

AA. whereas the United States' approach to the Arctic is evolving towards expanded involvement, preceded by certain regrettable statements involving Greenland;

AB. whereas Indigenous peoples and local communities hold irreplaceable traditional knowledge, act as primary stewards of Arctic ecosystems and are already

disproportionately affected by climate change, socio-economic marginalisation and environmental degradation, while often remaining excluded from decision-making processes; whereas there is a wide acceptance among European policymakers that Indigenous peoples must be further supported and their interests given higher priority in policymaking, while at the same time ensuring that their community-based knowledge is respected and considered in all policy developments; whereas the Arctic Council has taken significant steps to address this issue;

AC. whereas Denmark, Sweden and Finland are signatories to the 1996 Ottawa Declaration, which confirms their commitment to the well-being of the inhabitants of the Arctic, including recognition of the special relationship and unique contributions of Indigenous peoples and their communities, acknowledges the traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples and calls for them to be fully consulted and involved in decision-making;

AD. whereas the EU's Arctic regions serve as the gateway to its engagement and presence in the wider Arctic, providing resources for European strategic autonomy while meeting local interests, such as the growing demand for natural resources and the rights of Indigenous populations; whereas EU support under cohesion policy, Interreg, Horizon Europe and rural development programmes to areas such as the Northern Sparsely Populated Areas and networks such as the Arctic Mayors' Forum and the Arctic Six, are crucial to the EU's Arctic interests;

AE. whereas initiatives such as the Summit of Barents Euro-Arctic Indigenous Sámi People, held at the European Parliament in 2023, can further enhance cooperation with the Sámi community;

AF. whereas Greenland will chair the Arctic Council for the 2025-2027 period on behalf of the Kingdom of Denmark, providing a pivotal opportunity to reinforce inclusive, rules-based Arctic governance;

AG. whereas Greenland's strategy is to strengthen its diplomatic representation worldwide, including plans to open offices in Ottawa and New York, while maintaining its representations in Washington, Beijing, Reykjavik and Brussels; whereas the strategic importance of the US Pituffik Space Base in Greenland is essential to NATO's missile-defence system and space-monitoring activities;

AH. whereas after repeated recommendations from Parliament, the EU finally established an EU Office in Nuuk in March 2024, enhancing its diplomatic presence and fostering closer cooperation with Greenland; whereas the EU and the Faroe Islands have agreed on an enhanced partnership, including cooperation on fisheries, climate and other strategic issues;

AI. whereas the Arctic's abundant hydrocarbons, rare earth elements, fisheries and other resources are increasingly coveted, necessitating stringent sustainability standards and equitable benefit-sharing;

AJ. whereas the Arctic holds diverse energy resources crucial for the EU's green and digital transitions, including green hydrogen, hydropower, wind and geothermal energy, which can help diversify and decarbonise the EU's energy mix; whereas strategic investments are necessary to secure critical raw materials essential for the EU's industrial competitiveness and defence capabilities;

AK. whereas initiatives such as Polar Connect and the 'Vision 2030' concept envisage resilient trans-Arctic submarine cable routes linking Greenland and Iceland with continental Europe; whereas such projects are vulnerable to hybrid threats by malign actors such as Russia and China;

AL. whereas the development of Arctic subsea fibre-optic cables linking Europe with Japan and South Korea represents a strategic opportunity to enhance secure, high-speed digital connectivity, strengthen the EU's digital sovereignty and deepen EU-Asia cooperation; whereas protecting submarine cables, pipelines, communication systems and transport corridors in the Arctic is vital for the digital, energy and economic security of the EU and the EEA;

AM. whereas Greenland, Iceland and Norway manage the Arctic's largest sustainable fisheries, and the region is developing expertise in biotechnology and innovation, which are vital for the EU's food security, blue economy and scientific leadership; whereas the UNCLOS contains provisions on the rights, duties and responsibilities of states to safeguard environmental considerations;

AN. whereas the Arctic's economic potential extends beyond natural resources to sectors such as sustainable tourism, space technology, and data centre infrastructure, offering the EU opportunities to develop strategic partnerships that leverage the region's unique geography, renewable energy resources and proximity to key allies;

AO. whereas the principle of 'do no significant harm' means not supporting or carrying out economic activities that cause serious damage to environmental objectives within the meaning of Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852[2];

AP. whereas energy connections with the Arctic – including oil and gas imports from Norway's Barents Sea, liquefied natural gas (LNG) shipments via Arctic shipping routes during the transition period towards the EU's energy autonomy, renewable energy exports and green hydrogen potential from Iceland and Greenland, EU-backed infrastructure projects such as submarine cables and pipelines, and cooperation in research and innovation for sustainable development – are crucial for the EU's energy security and future economic development and to ensure investments in local Arctic economies and infrastructure; whereas reliable energy partners and supplies are key to achieve overall security, as shown by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the subsequent energy crisis;

AQ. whereas the Arctic suffers from a shortage of infrastructure, placing local populations and others at a disadvantage; whereas the development of multipurpose infrastructure projects could help address both these shortcomings and broader security challenges;

AR. whereas newly constructed and planned LNG terminals – in particular floating storage and regasification units to which EU Member States have committed in recent years – provide an essential gateway for Norwegian LNG, further strengthening the diversification and security of supply; whereas the further development and production

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[2] Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2020 on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment, and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 (OJ L 198, 22.6.2020, p. 13, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/852/oj).

of icebreakers is key for the exploration and safety of the Arctic, and Finland has particular expertise in this regard;

AS. whereas EU-funded research, Horizon Europe partnerships and Copernicus satellite services provide essential data for security, climate resilience, navigation safety and environmental stewardship in the High North;

AT. whereas secure, resilient and autonomous satellite connectivity constitutes a strategic asset for safeguarding communications, enhancing situational awareness, protecting critical infrastructure and reinforcing the EU's capacity to prevent, deter and respond to hybrid and conventional threats in the Arctic;

AU. whereas space technologies, including positioning, navigation, Earth observation and satellite communication, are essential for Arctic situational awareness, environmental monitoring and connectivity; whereas Norway's geographic location and facilities, such as the Andøya Spaceport and the Arctic satellite broadband mission, provide critical infrastructure supporting EU interests and enable independent European access to space; whereas enhanced cooperation with Norway on space capabilities is vital for advancing the EU's Arctic strategy and security;

AV. whereas the European External Action Service (EEAS) plays a central role in shaping and coordinating the EU's Arctic policy;

1. Recommends that the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

   (a) condemn the growing militarisation of the Arctic, particularly due to Russia's extensive military restructuring, including the establishment of the Maritime Collegium, which, in combination with China's clear interest in the region, has further escalated regional tensions and undermined regional stability;

   (b) closely monitor China's growing strategic interest and activities in the Arctic region under the framework of the 'Polar Silk Road'; acknowledge that China's declared ambition to become a 'polar great power' by 2030 and the expansion of its presence through research missions, strategic infrastructure investments and dual-use partnerships may challenge established governance principles;

   (c) take into account all potential threat scenarios related to the situation in Ukraine, including the possible strengthening of Russia's presence in the Arctic as a consequence of a potential frozen conflict in Ukraine; therefore fully implement EU sanctions on dual-use technologies destined for Russia's Arctic military expansion, while supporting Ukraine's engagement with Arctic governance structures, including the prospect of observer status in relevant forums; strengthen sanctions against shadow fleet vessels using flags of convenience to evade sanctions in the Arctic; upgrade the monitoring and enforcement thereof, including through international cooperation to ensure that ports and insurance companies blacklist such vessels; hold flag states fully accountable for ensuring compliance with environmental and safety standards;

(d) appreciate to its full extent the importance of the GIUK gap as a maritime transit corridor indissociable from EU interests, and the risks associated with its emergence as a theatre for grey-zone operations; accordingly, seek to build the institutional resilience of these countries and territories in cooperation with constructive partners;

(e) work together with the Member States and NATO allies to strengthen deterrent capabilities in response, including through enhanced EU-NATO strategic dialogues on Arctic domain awareness, intelligence sharing and defensive joint exercises in the High North, following the examples of the Arctic Challenge 2023 hosted by Sweden, Finland and Norway and the Danish-led military exercise Arctic Light 2025; enhance cooperation with NATO structures and the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats to build resilience and develop common standards for infrastructure protection in the Arctic; deepen practical EU-NATO cooperation in the Arctic in areas of shared concern – including maritime domain awareness, protection of critical infrastructure, logistics and search and rescue interoperability; enhance vigilance in the EU's engagement with external partners and establish EU-level security screening mechanisms for foreign Arctic research and infrastructure projects;

(f) in parallel, continue working to prevent a spillover of geopolitical conflicts into the region, while assuming a more prominent role in the Arctic and pursuing a comprehensive re-articulation of Arctic policy that moves beyond the outdated notion of Arctic exceptionalism, and instead employing it as a method for assessing evolving challenges in the current geopolitical context;

(g) with all that in mind, ensure that EU actions in the High North are complementary to NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept and benefit from the Alliance's reinforced maritime posture; promote NATO-EU deconfliction and shared situational awareness and call for strengthened interoperability between the EU Member States and other NATO allies in Arctic security, maritime surveillance, search and rescue operations and the protection of critical infrastructure;

(h) take note that the European Arctic region is part of a continuum that includes the Baltic Sea region within the Arctic, sharing common challenges and interests; acknowledge that the EU's activities in the Arctic need to be aligned with, and support, the EU's development activities implemented within the EU's eastern border areas in the north to maximise their impact;

(i) against this backdrop and in the light of recent incidents in the Baltic Sea attributed to Russia's shadow fleet and Chinese vessels, substantially strengthen the protection of essential underwater infrastructure in the Arctic, particularly submarine cables and pipelines, including those in the proximity of Greenland, and tighten the regulatory framework for sanctions and countermeasures; uphold and enforce obligations under Articles 112 to 115 of the UNCLOS, which are essential to safeguard Europe's digital and energy interconnectivity from geopolitical disruption; develop an EU and EEA strategy to monitor and counter Sino-Russian cooperation in the High North, which potentially undermines freedom of navigation and international law;

(j) support the establishment of common cybersecurity and resilience standards for submarine cables, landing points and critical digital infrastructure in the Arctic, including through joint risk assessments, incident reporting requirements and periodic stress-testing exercises, recognising their strategic role in the EU's open strategic autonomy;

(k) address hybrid threats such as cyberattacks, GPS jamming and spoofing and undersea cable sabotage, which require enhanced monitoring and response mechanisms through a joint EU-NATO monitoring and response framework and increased investment in upgraded, secure and autonomous satellite communications, including launch capacity, as well as investments, underwater drones and sea-floor mapping; in that regard, support research, testing and phased deployment of EU-funded hybrid surveillance technologies, including unmanned systems, in coordination with Nordic partners, to monitor and respond to hybrid threats;

(l) considering the growing strategic importance and reliance on Arctic space-based capabilities for European security, strengthen collective situational awareness, resilience and regional stability in the Arctic; in addition, promote EU-led investments and partnerships with trusted allies to secure critical Arctic infrastructure and reduce dependency on authoritarian powers, including the production of icebreakers, if possible, in cooperation with the EU's strategic partners;

(m) recognise the increasing geopolitical competition along Arctic maritime routes, particularly the NSR; support, therefore, diplomatic dialogues aimed at establishing clear international agreements regarding freedom of navigation and peaceful maritime cooperation, resisting unilateral claims and promoting the application of international maritime law in accordance with the UNCLOS; accordingly, publicly condemn Russia's restrictions on free navigation in the NSR and its reinforcement of military infrastructure along the NSR; support the application of international law to counter attempts to legitimise contested shipping corridors or to project geopolitical influence under the pretexts of scientific or economic cooperation; engage in regional dialogues on the implementation of the Agreement under the UNCLOS on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction in the Arctic;

(n) given the disproportionate impact of climate change on the Arctic, and in cooperation with international partners and Arctic Indigenous peoples, urgently enhance adaptation strategies that also have a security policy dimension, support extensive monitoring initiatives and significantly increase investments in research programmes that prioritise the need to balance economic growth while protecting critical ecosystems in the Arctic, in line with the 'do no significant harm' principle enshrined in Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852; recognise that, while climate change threatens Arctic ecosystems, rising temperatures also have major societal impacts in the Arctic regions, emphasising the need to place the people living in the Arctic at the centre of research and to ensure that the benefits of research activities help local communities adapt and become more resilient;

(o) given the significance of Arctic natural resources, including hydrocarbons, rare earth elements and fisheries, and together with the Member States, strengthen consensual partnerships with Greenland and other Arctic stakeholders, including Indigenous communities, on sustainable resource extraction and processing while strictly adhering to the highest environmental standards to avoid disastrous consequences, such as the ones caused by the 2020 Norilsk (Russia) oil spill; ensure that such cooperation, on the one hand, contributes to population growth and the revitalisation of local communities in the Arctic and, on the other hand, reduces the EU's dependence on China and other unreliable providers; take into account the EU's strategic interests in securing access to critical raw materials from reliable, like-minded partners, as well as the EU's economic growth;

(p) in parallel, work towards the establishment of a binding international environmental liability regime to ensure that polluters bear full responsibility for accidents and ecological damage in Arctic waters, in the light of the potential opening of new trans-Arctic shipping lanes;

(q) given the need to respect and promote the rights of Indigenous peoples across the Arctic, work towards the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge in environmental and policymaking processes, ensuring that Indigenous interests and expertise are well integrated in all levels of EU policymaking alongside all other relevant sources of knowledge, and that their languages and culture are protected;

(r) prioritise mental health, literacy, language and youth programmes in EU Arctic cooperation, responding to recommendations from Arctic Indigenous and youth forums;

(s) respect Article 19 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which states their rights; similarly, ensure that the EU's and Member States' activities in the Arctic contribute to, and do not harm, the well-being and rights of Indigenous communities, in accordance with the 1996 Ottawa Declaration; consider and counteract Indigenous peoples' heightened exposure to foreign interference and disinformation campaigns that seek to weaponise complex and unique contexts;

(t) fully integrate the recommendations of the 2013 Kiruna Declaration into the EU's Arctic policy, including by supporting increased funding for renewable energy and sustainable waste management in Arctic communities, strengthening mechanisms for the meaningful participation of Indigenous peoples in Arctic governance and decision-making, enhancing civil security and emergency response capacities in Arctic regions – including search and rescue and disaster preparedness infrastructure – and promoting interdisciplinary research and education partnerships, including support for Arctic youth and local and Indigenous institutions;

(u) promote the full implementation of the Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement, requiring the signatories to establish a joint programme of scientific research and monitoring and to integrate Indigenous knowledge before allowing any future commercial fishing activities in the region;

(v) acknowledging that a populated Arctic, cross-border infrastructure and resilient societies are of strategic importance for European security, strengthen cooperation within and with the European Arctic; support, in particular, the development of north-to-north and east-to-west infrastructure projects in the Swedish and Finnish Arctic, with particular emphasis on facilitating increased capacity on the existing railway from Finland to the Arctic Ocean and exploring new multimodal transport links, to strengthen EU-Nordic connectivity and military mobility;

(w) recognising the importance of resilient connectivity for Arctic communities and EU security, devise EU instruments that actively promote increased economic integration in the Arctic region, as investments in cross-border infrastructure increase mobility, stimulate innovation and business development and strengthen the security of supply and preparedness through cooperation between public and private actors;

(x) acknowledge that the EU's support of Arctic development and collaboration is vital for fostering relations, trust and development capacity in sparsely populated and vulnerable northern areas;

(y) recognise that competitiveness and crisis management in a complex security policy environment depend on strong, innovative societies and local businesses with their own capabilities, and on cross-border cooperation between policymakers, researchers, businesses and communities; recognise that the EU should continue to, in close dialogue with relevant states and regional bodies, support the capacity building of more resilient and sustainable Arctic communities;

(z) highlighting the critical role played by international scientific cooperation in Arctic governance and climate understanding, support continued EU funding for and active participation in Arctic research projects and scientific dialogues; promote open data sharing and the integration of scientific findings into policymaking processes, while ensuring that such scientific exchange is conducted with full awareness of the current defence and security risks arising from the geopolitical situation;

(aa) recognise the unique role of universities in Arctic rural areas as drivers of regional development and economic growth through innovation in research and businesses, attracting newcomers, enhancing local and regional competence and skills, promoting regional cohesion, and distributing knowledge and information that contributes to resilience and preparedness; support Arctic universities, including through financial contributions via a mix of EU programmes; reinforce educational and research mobility between EU universities and Arctic higher education institutions, including in Greenland, Iceland and northern Norway, to foster a new generation of Arctic experts and deepen people-to-people cooperation; increase funding of interdisciplinary research on the Arctic and support the establishment of a European Centre of Excellence for Arctic Research, making use of Copernicus services, open data infrastructures, in situ measurements and traditional knowledge, in order to provide operational scientific products to support EU-level decision-making and cooperation with legitimate international partners;

(ab) in the light of the growing support for EU accession in Iceland, welcome the intention expressed by local authorities to hold a referendum by 2027 on the resumption of EU accession negotiations and pledge to respect the outcome thereof, as democratically expressed by the Icelandic people; meanwhile, engage proactively with the Icelandic Government to promote the benefits of potential EU membership and enhance preparedness for a renewed accession process should Iceland formally reactivate its application, while immediately enhancing cooperation on common interests and offering EU assistance in the fight against hybrid threats and foreign interference;

(ac) welcome the Icelandic Government's decision to launch talks on a security and defence partnership with the EU; express that the resulting agreement will be fundamental for future EU-Iceland relations;

(ad) recognise Norway as a key EU and NATO ally and underline the ongoing need to strengthen security and defence cooperation with full alignment to NATO commitments; with that in mind, considering that Norway's EU membership would strengthen both its national interests and the EU's geopolitical resilience by closing critical gaps in the latter's collective defence – notably in the GIUK gap – explore deeper cooperation with Norway, including the possible extension to Norway of Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union and Norway's potential EU accession; highlight that comprehensive defence cooperation with Norway is already possible, as demonstrated by robust Nordic defence cooperation, which should serve as a model for closer EU-Norway ties;

(ae) given Norway's crucial role in EU energy security, accounting for more than 30 % of EU gas imports in 2024, enhance cooperation on energy resilience and supply diversification as a key tool – alongside other strategic infrastructure projects such as the Baltic Sea Gas Corridor – to achieve EU strategic autonomy, enhanced resilience and reduced dependence on Russian energy supplies;

(af) welcome Norway's ongoing support for Ukraine, including its decision to allocate almost EUR 600 million towards Ukrainian air defence systems;

(ag) in the light of Parliament's deep concern about Greenland's growing geopolitical significance – exacerbated by external actors' statements questioning Denmark's constitutional arrangements and sovereignty, and reports of foreign interference in its domestic affairs, including certain statements by the US administration – reaffirm respect for Greenland's right to self-determination, emphasising that decisions regarding Greenland's constitutional future and international relations must be made exclusively by the people of Greenland, free from external pressure;

(ah) in view of the increasing relevance of Greenland in Arctic and European security frameworks, alongside increasing support for EU accession among Greenlanders, evidenced by polling suggesting that around 60 % of Greenlanders now favour rejoining the EU, welcome any potential initiative by the Government of Greenland to strengthen its political, institutional and economic links with the EU; encourage the EU to engage in deeper strategic and economic partnerships, including in the context of potential accession, if and when desired by the Greenlandic people; in this regard, underline that EU membership, which gives

access to initiatives such as Iris[2] and Galileo, would give Greenland a stronger voice in Arctic governance, provide the means to protect its crucial ecosystems and enable the sustainable development of critical infrastructure as new northern trade routes emerge, while also bolstering its security;

(ai) take note of Greenland's first security strategy entitled 'Greenland in the World: Nothing about Us Without Us – Greenland's Foreign, Security and Defense Policy 2024-2033', which reflects the principle of meaningful inclusion of Arctic peoples in shaping policies that affect their region; take note of the recommendation in the strategy to establish a peace centre in Nuuk that would promote dialogue and facilitate research and mediation;

(aj) acknowledge that Greenland aligned itself with EU sanctions against Russia following the invasion of Ukraine; underline that the opening of the Commission's office in Nuuk marks a new stage in cooperation with Greenland, which, although not a Member State, has long maintained a close association with the EU and benefited from its financial support, including in the education sector;

(ak) strengthen collaboration with Canada; underline the strategic relevance of the EU-Canada partnership in the light of shared democratic values and global responsibilities, and promote security and defence cooperation in the Arctic as part of an ambitious and forward-looking EU-Canada agenda;

(al) highlight, in particular, the need for increased cooperation to combat malign activities by Russia and China in the Arctic, while fostering economic development and recalling that military cooperation can also strengthen local communities; develop a structured dialogue within the framework of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement[3], focusing on ecosystem and biodiversity protection, the implementation of international environmental standards, resilient infrastructure, maritime route security and the integration of Indigenous knowledge into decision-making processes; recall the high potential for EU-Canada cooperation on Canadian natural resources; encourage closer cooperation in scientific and cultural fields to empower Indigenous populations and strengthen Arctic resilience; emphasise that collaboration on infrastructure development and management and Indigenous partnership models is central to EU-Canada cooperation; prioritise rapid steps to deepen political, economic and security cooperation with Canada, given its role as a founding member of the Arctic Council and a strategic EU partner;

(am) advance EU-US dialogue on the Arctic; highlight the many common EU-US challenges in the region, ranging from climate to security cooperation; underline that EU-US cooperation in the Arctic is fundamental to containing Russia and China and ensuring shared security between the EU and the US;

(an) underline that a stronger regional dialogue with like-minded partners in the Arctic is necessary, and call upon EU leaders to bring together the leaders of such

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3 Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part (OJ L 11, 14.1.2017, p. 23, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2017/37/oj).

partners in order to establish a common, substantial and viable long-term Arctic strategy;

(ao) reinforce multilateral governance and cooperation through the Arctic Council, particularly under the current Chairship of the Kingdom of Denmark, spearheaded by Greenland for the 2025-2027 period; in this respect, urge all members to uphold peaceful, law-based governance frameworks and to restore effective multilateral cooperation, with a particular emphasis on environmental protection, sustainable development and the rights of Indigenous peoples;

(ap) strengthen cooperation with Arctic Council observer states, such as Japan and South Korea, focusing on sustainable technology, icebreaking capabilities and maritime safety, while safeguarding EU strategic interests;

(aq) renew its efforts to support the EU's application to become a full observer within the Arctic Council and enhance EU participation in the working groups of the Arctic Council;

(ar) increase funding and support for cooperation with key Arctic institutions, such as the Arctic Economic Council, the Arctic Mayors' Forum and the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, including through capacity-building, joint projects and research initiatives, recognising their essential role in promoting sustainable development and local engagement across the Arctic region;

(as) recognise that an upgraded and enhanced EU Arctic strategy also requires additional financial resources; therefore, ensure that the next multiannual financial framework stimulates strategic investments in Arctic shipping capabilities, modern communication systems, logistics hubs and supporting infrastructure, including icebreaking vessels; stress that such investments must guarantee strict compliance with environmental standards and ensure the meaningful participation of Indigenous peoples in policy planning and implementation;

(at) strengthen the mandate of the Special Envoy for Arctic Matters by ensuring clearer authority, adequate resources and responsibilities to monitor security and environmental developments, represent the EU in Arctic forums, coordinate Arctic policy, engage with Indigenous communities, and report to the Council and Parliament;

(au) call for the creation of a dedicated Arctic unit within the EEAS to foster more comprehensive and proactive engagement with Arctic states and stakeholders; emphasise that the EU should treat the Arctic region as a long-term partner in sustainable prosperity, prioritising collaboration in economic, environmental and security matters; urge the EEAS to build Arctic-specific expertise, including through staff training, and closer cooperation with Arctic communities and institutions, and strengthen EU participation in the working groups of the Arctic Council; stress that this capacity-building must be supported by sufficient funding, including resources for staff training, research and partnership-building with Arctic communities and institutions, to ensure a comprehensive, informed, effective and coordinated approach to EU Arctic policy;

(av) explore and establish a formal EU representation in the Faroe Islands to strengthen political dialogue, enhance cooperation on fisheries, climate resilience and sustainable development, and consolidate the EU's strategic presence in the North Atlantic region;

2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and, for information, to the governments and parliaments of Arctic states and to Indigenous representative organisations.