

Russia China Partnership In The Arctic

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As a result of climate change and global warming, the snow in the Arctic is melting and thus unlocking new commercial and human activity in the region. Subsequently it has given rise to international interests in the region. The countries encircling the ocean as well as the non-Arctic countries have expressed interests in the economic activities and exploration of mineral reserves in the region.

The Arctic region consisted of according to the assumptions, almost 13% of the world's undiscovered oil and almost 30% of the undiscovered gas. This gives the region a starting importance, especially for Russia since its economy is primarily dependent on extraction of hydrocarbons (Feng H, 2017).

The Arctic council, which is an intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation in the Arctic, has been giving observer status to non-Arctic countries since 2013 - like India, China, Switzerland, Italy, Japan, South Korea etc. This has increased the international participation in the region's governance and development process.

China has also expressed its willingness to join the countries in exploration and investment in the region's natural resources. Its interests are mainly driven by its need to promote exports through new transportation channels and markets for its telecommunication and logistics business houses.

This increasing external presence in the region is viewed as a potential security threat to Russia. This region is viewed in Russia's foreign policy as its 'privileged sphere of interest'. As an Arctic nation, Russia has often projected itself as an important player in front of the local as well the global audience. It famously planted its flag in the Arctic seabed in 2007 as a sign of its ambitions for the region. In 2015, Moscow made additional territorial claims to a larger portion of the Arctic Ocean through the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas.

Russia in the current political situation globally prefers to keep issues related to the Arctic states among themselves only. Moscow has preferred for a smaller and more

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