

A Vision for a North Atlantic Security and Surveillance Organization

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Introduction

The topic of this essay is the conditions for broad security policy today and in the future in the Greenland-Iceland-Faroe Islands region, observation of current policy and recommendations for future policy: a vision for a North Atlantic security and surveillance organization. Security policy is here conceived broadly as covering exercise of sovereignty, participation in international security orders, for instance, NATO, law enforcement, intelligence, civil defense, environmental protection, provision of search and rescue, air and sea surveillance, etc.

This essay identifies structural, natural and political conditions for security policy in this geographic region: microstates¹ with very limited absolute capabilities, but sovereignty over vast strategically important air and sea spaces; Arctic and Subarctic climatic and geographic conditions, climate change which affects political and economic conditions and in turn increases strategic interest and pressure on the region; short-term political changes as US withdrawal from the Keflavik base; and long-term political changes such as Faroese and Greenlandic independence from the Kingdom of Denmark.²

Based on these conditions, public finance and administration as well as security policy challenges are identified: these microstates have very narrow tax and personnel bases for supplying the means of security policy. Therefore, how can these microstates exercise effective sovereignty over vast, strategically important air and sea spaces, contribute to international

¹ There is, presently, one independent microstate, Iceland, and two microsocieties, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, that are overseas autonomies of a small-state, the Kingdom of Denmark. Despite absence of sovereignty at the present moment, the Faroe Islands and Greenland are called microstates in this essay in light of their determination to achieve full independence from the Kingdom of Denmark. The author defines microstates as less than 1 million inhabitants and small-states as less than 10 million inhabitants. Such a capabilities-centered definition is valid for the purposes of this essay.

² The term 'Kingdom of Denmark' is used for what in Danish is called 'Rigsfællesskabet', the unity of Denmark, the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

security order, protect society against terrorism, organized crime and illegal trafficking, supply environmental protection and civil defense, provide search and rescue services, etc.?

Iceland responds to these challenges through its security policy, and eventually sovereign Faroe Islands and Greenland will have to design policies to do likewise. Therefore, finally, I suggest further security policy initiatives of regional integration and collaboration to address these challenges and prepare for future Faroese and Greenlandic independence.

This essay does not so much report on existing research as outlines a future research and policy-making agenda. For existing related research, I refer to papers by, primarily, Lassi Heininen (2008) and Willy Østreng (2008) at the 5th Open Assembly of the Northern Research Forum. The basis for this essay is experience of North Atlantic public policy-making in, among other institutions, the Icelandic Ministry of Finance on how microstates provide public services under Arctic and Subarctic conditions, adverse climatic and geographic conditions.

The essay is also based on observation of the historic, present and future relations between Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland. These relations have been and continue to be central for the histories and identities of all societies involved, especially the northern three. Based on observation of the historical, present and future relationship between these societies, it is clear that independence would be immensely beneficial for the Faroe Islands and Greenland as well as for the relationship with Denmark. The Icelandic example shows how the Icelandic independence is at the basis of the socio-economic success story of that country as well as the resolved political conflicts and good relations with Denmark.³

There are many lessons to be learned in the historic and current space between Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland to achieve the strategic goal of independence for the Faroe Islands and Greenland. However, there is not enough research and policy-making happening in this space with this strategic aim, while there is, in the author's view, too much attention to the appearances of independence. This essay is aimed at contributing to research and policy-making for the achievement of Faroese and Greenlandic independence.

³ The current economic crisis in Iceland is an anomaly, where external factors of the international financial crisis and the actions taken by Britain in the Icesave conflict contribute significantly to the crisis.

North Atlantic Conditions for Security Policy

This essay identifies a number of central structural, natural and political conditions for formulating and exercising security policy in the region of Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

The *structural conditions* are the population size of the societies in the region, and how the region in the future will be entirely composed of highly developed *microstates* with *vast, strategically important air and sea spaces*. Iceland has a population of around 313,000, the Faroe Islands 48,000 and Greenland 56,000. All these societies are highly developed, thus, with large capabilities *relative* to their populations, but very limited capabilities in *absolute* terms. Sovereign, highly developed states face largely similar policy tasks which the less populated states have to face with less absolute resources and smaller organizations and, thus, possibilities for specialization. A fascinating aspect of Icelandic government and society is how tasks are solved at very high levels of proficiency by very small organizations with limited possibilities for specialization. This fact is amplified by Arctic and Subarctic climatic and geographic conditions (see below) as well as their immense and strategically important air and sea spaces.

The term *microstate* is an important analytical category and should be used here, although it is sometimes substituted in political discourse by *small-state*: the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland face different conditions than, for instance, Sweden with its population of around 9,045,000, which is a small-state with a large territory including Arctic and Subarctic regions.

The *natural conditions* for North Atlantic security policy are both permanent and changing. Permanent natural conditions are difficult Arctic and Subarctic climatic conditions as well as great distances over sea and ice (especially in the case of Greenland), which make all kinds of communication, transportation, projection of capabilities, etc. much more difficult and, thus, expensive. These conditions and the sheer distance of the region from areas of conflict was for centuries the principal security policy of the region. Technological advances, especially in long-range flying during World War II and to an even greater extent during the Cold War cancelled those distances and integrated the region into global politics and conflict. This development led to an unprecedented militarization, which has, however, been replaced by greater cooperation after the Cold War (Corgan, 2002, Eidesgaard, 2004b, Heininen, 2008, Østreng, 2008, Young, 2008).

Other natural conditions are abundant resources. Marine resources have caused conflict, recently most notably between Iceland and Britain, resolved through the development of international maritime law. The region's rich renewable geothermal and hydroelectric energy resources and possibly hydrocarbons are drawing increasing attention and investment. The renewable energy resources are sought after as a response to green house gasses, which is clear from the large recent and proposed investments in power generation and energy-intensive aluminum and other industries in Iceland and Greenland. High, though volatile, oil prices also focus attention on possible hydrocarbon resources in the region, where, for instance, the United States Geological Survey predicts with varying probability around 51.8 billion barrels of oil and oil-equivalent natural gas around Greenland (United States Geological Survey, 2008).

The natural conditions are also changing due to climate change, which is particularly pronounced in the High North. Global warming is affecting, for instance, the sea ice in the Arctic Ocean and is 'very likely' to improve access to energy exploration and shipping (Hassol 2004, p. 11). This improved access may contribute to placing these societies much more centrally in global energy and transportation systems than hitherto through possible oil and gas exploration in their exclusive economic zones or on their continental shelves as well as being on new trans-Arctic shipping lanes linking the Atlantic and the Pacific (Valsson, 2006).

Such changes will have profound social, political and economic impact. Independence is the proclaimed goal of both Faroese and Greenlandic political leaders, and new economic opportunities because of climate change may contribute to that goal. This development to independence is a key, but overlooked, political change in the Arctic and North Atlantic, which is addressed further below. As mentioned, these societies have security policy-wise historically benefitted from distance from international conflict and later drawn on the capabilities of outside states as the Kingdom of Denmark and the United States of America. Energy exploration and important shipping lanes for the global economy will further increase outside strategic interest and pressure on the region.

Short term *political changes* have, for instance, been the US withdrawal from the Keflavik Base in Iceland in September 2006. This action removed the capabilities of a superpower from the region leaving it in the hands of microstates (Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland) and a small-state (Kingdom of Denmark). Iceland was forced to rethink its security policy in light of this loss of, for instance, search and rescue as well as air policing capabilities in

the region, which led to innovative policy-making covering the entire spectrum of security policy that is further discussed below.

An overlooked, but both a very important and likely long-term *political change* in the region is Faroese and Greenlandic independence from the Kingdom of Denmark. Such development will remove a small-state with its naval and other capabilities from the region, and leave it entirely under the sovereignty of microstates. In their pursuit of independence, Faroese and Greenlandic political leaders and policy makers—and Danish likewise contributing—have to think through how to manage the process towards this goal and the end state. Part of the success of independent Iceland has been to formulate and execute a successful security policy, and the Faroe Islands and Greenland must do the same to become successful, independent microstates.

Public Finance and Administration as well as Security Policy Challenges for North Atlantic Microstates

Based on the conditions for security policy outlined above, this essay outlines the following intertwined public finance and administration as well as security policy challenges for the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland.

First of all, the complex of structural, climatic and geographic conditions of microstates in the North Atlantic with vast strategically important air and sea spaces lead to the following *public finance and administration* dilemma: There is a *narrow tax basis* for large capital investments and expenditures to implement security policy, for example, ocean-going patrol vessels, surveillance aircraft, search and rescue helicopters, etc, not to speak of any kind of combat forces and power.

Likewise, *organizations are very small* with limitations to specialization in, for instance, military assessments, law enforcement and intelligence work. Because of the small absolute size of organizations, there are few opportunities in reaping returns to scale. There are high average costs in operating patrol vessels, search and rescue helicopters, surveillance aircraft, which in larger organizations can be spread over more units (a problem which becomes more serious from the narrow tax basis). These microstates must therefore design policies to counter this public finance and administration challenge trying to achieve returns to scale, which is pursued in current policy and where I suggest further steps.

These public finance and administration challenges are at the basis of a pivotal *security policy* challenge: how microstates with very limited *absolute* capabilities, but sovereignty over vast, strategically important air and sea spaces, pursue an effective security policy: exercise effective sovereignty over this space, contribute to international security order, such as NATO, well-grounded and researched debate and policy-making, provide efficient law enforcement and intelligence against terrorism, organized crime and trafficking, provide environmental protection, search and rescue services, etc.?

A practical example of how the means of sovereignty can be beyond the capabilities of a country is that Iceland does not field interceptor fighter jets to police its air space.⁴ Historically, Iceland has relied on the USA to supply air policing through the bilateral US-Icelandic Defense Agreement of 1951 and fighters stationed at the Keflavik Base. Since the US abandonment of the Keflavik Base, Iceland has relied on NATO allies rotating fighter jets through Keflavik to provide such policing.⁵ These historical and present arrangements are examples of how a microstate must create policies around these challenges. Iceland has also had to design specialized policies for its civilian authorities to work with allied military and intelligence authorities (Bjarnason, 2007b, 2007c).

This challenge will be even greater for the independent Faroe Islands and Greenland with their population bases around 50,000-60,000 or about 1/6 that of Iceland. Faroese and Greenlandic society today rely on the ships and helicopters of the 1st Squadron of the Royal Danish Navy, together with the overall security capabilities of the small-state of the Kingdom of Denmark. Faroese and Greenlandic Home Rule governments are getting increasingly involved in security and defense policy. Independent Faroe Islands and Greenland will have to devise policies to replace those Danish assets and reach out to allies and partners in Europe, North America and the North Atlantic.

⁴ At the small-state level, the Royal Danish Navy has abandoned submarines.

⁵ This NATO policy is also pursued in the case of other member states with very limited absolute capabilities as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Slovenia.

Overview of Current Icelandic, Faroese and Greenlandic Security Policies

The Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland have all throughout their history had to address the security policy challenges outlined above and design policies around them. These historical and present policy responses are outlined here, and this essay adds its own policy suggestion.

Michael Corgan (2002) in his overview of Icelandic security policy since the settlement of the island in the late 800s shows the core security policy to have been the sheer distance from European conflicts. This security through distance was fundamentally broken during World War II by technological advances in long-range flying making Iceland a strategically vital location for control over North Atlantic air and sea space and the connection between North America and Europe. This development led to first British and shortly after American occupation of Iceland during WWII.

Iceland's strategic importance increased further with the onset of the Cold War. Icelandic political leaders addressed this strategic pressure through continued partnership with the USA about the airfield at Keflavik, founding membership of NATO and the bilateral US-Icelandic defense agreement from 1951 basing troops and aircraft at Keflavik. This policy firmly placed Iceland under the protection of the USA against covert or overt Soviet pressure. In addition, the base earned valuable foreign currency for Iceland, and the search and rescue helicopter assets were valuable additions to Icelandic emergency services.

The base was also an extremely contentious element in Icelandic politics and society and by many seen as a threat to cultural and linguistic uniqueness. Iceland is as mentioned a microstate with very small institutions in absolute terms (though exceptionally competent in relative terms) and with no military heritage or tradition, which significantly hampered domestic debate and policy-making. Corgan shows the value of the development of indigenous security policy and research institutions for Icelandic debate and policy-making in the field: the Icelandic Commission on Security and International Affairs and the Department of Defense Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These lessons are very relevant for the Faroe Islands and Greenland facing identical structural and historical conditions as microstates with little, if any, military heritage.

The 2006 US withdrawal from Keflavik was a shock to Icelandic security policy and forced Icelandic authorities to undertake a wide ranging security policy, organizational and capabilities review, which is the topic of Gunnar Þór Bjarnason's study (2008b). When the US

government informed the Icelandic government on 15 March 2006 that it would withdraw its aircraft from Keflavik before the end of September of that year, it was a major defeat for Icelandic policy. The conservative Independence Party-led governments since the end of the Cold War had averted US disengagement from Keflavik and maintained the twin aim of avoiding unilateral US decisions and maintaining US air defense capabilities at Keflavik. The US decision was a negation of both aims.

This new situation forced the Icelandic government and authorities to review organization, legislation and capabilities with substantial development and innovation of Iceland's broad security policy, authorities and capabilities. Under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Icelandic Defense Agency was established with the first defense policy act from April 2008. The agency's main task is operating the Icelandic Air Defense System with the NATO radar installations in the country. In addition, the agency maintains the security area at Keflavik reserved for visiting NATO forces, collaboration with NATO and other defense and security related tasks.

The domestic security functions under the Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs were particularly developed. The police services and Icelandic Coast Guard fall under this ministry. A driving force here was that the search and rescue, etc., capabilities of US forces at Keflavik would no longer support the Icelandic Coast Guard and other emergency services (Bjarnason 2008b). Revised civil defense legislation established a Security and Civil Defense Council responsible for policy and composed by the prime minister (chair), the minister of justice and ecclesiastical affairs, minister of transportation, minister of environment, minister of health, minister of foreign affairs and minister of industry together with relevant senior civil servants and heads of agencies. The legislation also established a new coordination and control center for all civil defense and search and rescue work bringing together relevant authorities and emergency services supported by a new Tetra communication system. The Coast Guard received new helicopters and will receive in coming years a new aircraft and ship. The national police have established an intelligence analysis unit. A North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum has been established inspired by its namesake in the North Pacific collaborating on security issues as illegal migration and drug trafficking, fisheries, environment and search and rescue. Icelandic Minister of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs, Björn Bjarnason, has suggested to develop this Forum into a standing multilateral coast guard force in the area (Bjarnason 2007a, 2007c, 2008a).

The Faroe Islands were equally drawn into European conflict during WWII by British occupation. After the war, the Faroe Islands remained in the Kingdom of Denmark gaining home rule in most domestic issues in 1948. This constitutional status left security policy, including law enforcement and intelligence matters, in the hands of government authorities in Copenhagen, and integrated the Faroe Islands together with the Kingdom of Denmark into NATO during the Cold War. The Danish air force operated a NATO radar facility at Sornfelli from 1963 to 2007 when it was dismantled, and the Danish navy usually has an inspection vessel with helicopter in the area. The Faroese home rule government through Faroese Islands Fisheries Inspections operate the two patrol and rescue patrol vessels Brimil (60m long) and Tjaldrið (42m long), and the national carrier, Atlantic Airways, disposes of two Bell 412 helicopter, available for rescue work.

As with Greenland and Iceland, the Faroe Islands were important for NATO to close the *Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom* gap to keep the Soviet navy out of the North Atlantic and protect trans-Atlantic lines of communication. The Faroese parliament, Løgtingið, has since 1940 on several occasions expressed a stand emphasizing keeping the Faroe Islands out of international conflict and keeping military forces out of the islands. The Faroe Islands today adapt a broad security concept and is concerned with topics as organized crime and trafficking. In the modernization of the Faroese home rule in 2005, it was emphasized in the Danish-Faroese legislation that foreign, defense and security policy does not fall under the home rule. On the other hand, the Kingdom of Denmark and the Faroe Islands agreed to involve the Faroe Islands as an equal partner in foreign and security policy deliberations concerning the islands (Eidesgaard, 2004a, 2004b, Møller, Eidesgaard, 2005, Joensen, 2008,)

Greenland has played a key role in North Atlantic and North American security since its occupation by US forces during WWII, the US-Danish agreement on the defense of Greenland from 1941 and the defense agreement from 1951. The USA kept forces and facilities in a number of bases in Greenland. Today, the only facility is the Thule radar, which is part of the National Missile Defense project showing the continued central strategic role of Greenland. The Danish navy operates inspection vessels with helicopters and patrol vessels, and the national carrier, Air Greenland, has a fleet of 12 helicopters. The Greenland home rule government has been keen to take a greater and equal role in the foreign, defense and security policy deliberations concerning the island. Whereas the Faroe Islands seem concerned with a broad spectrum of security challenges, Greenland is naturally focused on the US-Danish-Greenlandic relationship and the

presence of US forces in Greenland. In addition, Greenland is focused on developing its relations with the USA in other areas as economic development, science and education.

An important achievement for Greenland was the US-Danish-Greenlandic foreign ministers' meeting at Igaliku in Southern Greenland on 6 August 2004. Here, Colin Powell, Per Stig Møller and Josef Motzfeldt agreed on involving the Greenland home rule government and authorities in the hitherto US-Danish relationship about the defense agreement and the US forces in Greenland, which was a Greenlandic condition for upgrading the Thule radar for the National Missile Defense project. In addition, the parties made joint declarations on the environmental aspects of the US presence in Greenland and economic and technical cooperation between the USA and Greenland with a tripartite joint committee to support this collaboration (Powell, Møller & Motzfeldt, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c).

Suggested Policy Response: Regional Integration through a North Atlantic Security and Surveillance Organization

In addition to the security policies outlined above, this essay suggests a regional security and surveillance organization in the Greenland-Iceland-Faroe Islands area. Such an organization would be a substantial contribution to addressing the public finance and administration as well as security policy challenges identified above. The basic challenges are the narrow tax basis and very small organizations with limited possibilities for specialization under the difficult natural and geostrategic conditions presented. The proposed regional organization will contribute to addressing these challenges by expanding the basis of organizations and the organizations themselves allowing for greater efficiency, returns to scale and specialization. Such a regional organization could contribute to solving this dilemma by increasing efficiency, returns to scale and liberate resources through joint deployment of assets, procurement, maintenance and training.

The aim of this organization would be to implement broad security policy under *present* climatic and political conditions and facilitate adaptation to *future* climatic and political conditions in the region: Faroese and Greenlandic independence as well as increased outside strategic interest and pressure from energy exploration and shipping facilitated by climate change.

The initial members of the organization should be the Kingdom of Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Iceland. The organization will naturally work closely with neighboring states as Norway, Canada and the USA, and the organizational ties to these must be carefully considered. On the one hand, cooperation should be seamless; on the other hand, core members must be able to focus on close integration and synergy effects. The membership of the Kingdom of Denmark will naturally be revised upon Faroese and Greenlandic independence one day.

This organization will be virtual in many respects tying together existing organizations, ships, aircraft, etc., spread out over the North Atlantic. For the legitimacy of the organization, this is important. The Faroe Islands and Greenland do not pursue independence from the Kingdom of Denmark for the purpose of placing their organizations in Iceland rather than at home. To the extent, the organization needs an operational headquarters; I suggest the former NATO base in Keflavik. It is centrally located in the region (except for the west coast of Greenland), has ample airport, harbor, communications and surveillance facilities, and can easily collaborate with, for instance, NATO air policing in the region.

This organization should continue and expand the efforts of the current North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum mentioned above and move in the direction of a standing common force, suggested by Björn Bjarnason (2007a). The new organization should comprise the present Greenland and Faroe Islands Commands of the Royal Danish Navy with their vessels with helicopters of the 1st Squadron of this navy, which are ultimately to be made superfluous in the region. The central organizations to join and develop further in the initiative are the fisheries, emergency and environmental services of the Faroe Islands and Greenland Home Rule governments, the police forces in the area, the Icelandic Coast Guard, the Icelandic Defense Agency, Icelandic search and rescue volunteer associations, etc.

As pointed out by Corgan (2002), domestic security policy expertise is vital for informed debate and policy-making. The proposed operational cooperation here should therefore be accompanied by extensive collaboration by politicians, civil servants, academics, and others. The Faroe Islands and Greenland must (to the extent they do not already) follow in the footsteps of Iceland and develop the domestic expertise to assess military, strategic and other security issues so not to rely on Danish and other outside opinions. For this author, it does not make sense to discuss, for instance, Icelandic security apart from Faroese or Greenlandic in most respects. The

recent threat assessment commissioned by the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been an obvious opportunity for a joint Faroese-Greenland-Icelandic analysis.

The operational task of such an organization will be to coordinate all exercise of sovereignty in the area, fisheries inspection, air and sea surveillance, search and rescue, environmental protection, etc. For instance, a helicopter equipped or supported patrol vessel or surveillance aircraft should be able to cover both sides of the equidistance lines between Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, if it has authority in the whole area.

It has been pointed out how the Danish navy and air force, the Icelandic Coast Guard, Atlantic Airways and Air Greenland all operate helicopters or aircraft with rescue or surveillance roles. Five organizations that each operate and maintain a small number of different models—and from a great distance in the Danish case—cannot be optimal. It should be beneficial to unite and standardize the operation and maintenance of, for instance, for a start, the Danish navy and Icelandic Coast Guard helicopters at a location in Iceland, which is centrally located for the operations area of the Danish navy. The three microstates should also be able to benefit from, for instance, collaboration between the police colleges in Iceland and Greenland.

This organization could tie together many parties. It could supply the vertical, organizational link from NATO to local authorities (Iceland is a member of NATO, and independent Faroe Islands and Greenland are expected to remain members). This organization could integrate horizontally at all levels between these societies: policy-making bodies, agencies and volunteer associations.

The public finance and administration and ultimately security policy challenges addressed in this essay are not unique to the North Atlantic. The Caribbean, the Pacific or the Indian Oceans all have island states with very limited absolute capabilities while they have very large air and sea space with serious security issues in areas as, for instance, illegal trafficking. If the societies in the North Atlantic can present very innovative and smart solutions to address and overcome these challenges, these societies can make a unique and important contribution to security policy-making and implementation of small countries, especially island nations, around the world.

Conclusion

Security policy-making and implementation in the North Atlantic region of Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands take place under demanding structural, natural and political conditions,

which cause significant public finance and administration and security policy challenges. This essay identifies these conditions and challenges, describes how these three microstates historically and currently address these conditions and challenges, and finally suggest regional integration through a North Atlantic Security and Surveillance Organization.

The structural conditions are that the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland all are highly developed *microstates*, thus with large *relative*, but limited *absolute* capabilities. These conditions are intensified by the difficult Arctic and Subarctic climatic and geographic conditions, which make communication, transportation and projection of capabilities difficult and expensive. Natural conditions are changing with climate change, where, for instance, melting sea ice is very likely to improve access to oil and gas exploration and trans-Arctic shipping. These processes may further Faroese and Greenlandic independence through economic opportunities as well as increase outside strategic interest and pressure on the region. Political conditions are changing with, in the short term, the US abandonment of the Keflavik base, which removed the capabilities of a superpower leaving behind three microstates and a small-state. In the longer term, a crucial political change in the region will be Faroese and Greenlandic independence from the Kingdom of Denmark, which is their declared goal. Iceland shows the feasibility and desirability of the independence of the North Atlantic autonomies of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Based on these conditions, the three microstates face the public finance challenge of a very narrow tax basis for the capital investments and expenditures of security policy as ocean-going patrol vessels, search and rescue helicopters, surveillance aircraft, etc. Equally, they face the public administration challenge of very small organizations with limited possibilities for specialization, for instance, in strategy, law enforcement and intelligence. This complex of conditions and challenges pose the security policy challenge of how these three microstates with large, strategically important air and sea space can pursue security policies to effectively exercise their sovereignty, contribute to international security, protect society from organized crime, illegal trafficking or terrorism, provide search and rescue as well as environmental protection, etc.?

Iceland has successfully faced these challenges, which is part of its successful independence, and the Faroe Islands and Greenland must equally formulate and implement successful security policies as part of independence. Sheer distance and difficult natural conditions isolated the region from international conflict until WWII and the Cold War. NATO

membership and US presence at Keflavik, together with domestic capabilities addressed Iceland's security needs under the Cold War and 15 years after. The US withdrawal from Keflavik forced Iceland to review its security policy, legislation and capabilities. The Faroe Islands and Greenland benefit from Danish capabilities, which they will have to design policies to replace when independent.

This essay suggests in addition as an answer to present conditions and challenges and a future with a changed climate and Faroese and Greenlandic independence: wide-ranging regional integration in a North Atlantic Security and Surveillance Organization. This organization should expand the basis of security policy related organizations and the organizations themselves offering greater efficiency, returns to scale and professionalism. This proposed organization should coordinate all exercise of sovereignty in the area, fisheries inspection, air and sea surveillance, search and rescue, environmental protection, etc.

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