



The EU, Russia and the changing shape of the Arctic

12 December 2019, 17:00 – 18:30

Ms Marie-Anne Coninx, Former EU Ambassador for the Arctic
Dr Tony van der Togt, Associated Senior Research Fellow, Clingendael Institute

Dear Madam, Sir,

We are pleased to invite you to an evening conference, organised by the **Centre for Security and Defence Studies** of the Royal Higher Institute for Defence on **Thursday 12 December 2019**.

For a long time, the Arctic has been considered as an area of few military tensions, with even a potential for sub-regional cooperation, in particular for jointly exploiting resources in the High North. In this respect, the withdrawal of the polar ice due to climate change has created even more opportunities. However, the region is no longer exempt from broader geopolitical tensions as the overspill into the Arctic of conflicting policies of great powers – in particular Russia and the United States –, more robust Arctic policy interests of other countries and a certain “militarisation” of the region have become much more visible in the past few years. Coming in from the cold, the Arctic’s shape is changing and the region is increasingly moving away from the international strategic periphery. Recognising these changes, several individual EU Member States have published white papers on Arctic security and the EU has been pushing for better policy coordination.

Discussions on a more integrated and renewed EU Arctic Strategy have already started under the new Commission. Therefore, it seems an appropriate time to analyse the political and security developments in the Arctic from a European perspective. What are the objectives, the framework and the content of the Union’s action toward the region? How does Europe respond to the growing strategic importance of the Arctic? What are the options to address competition risks, and foster conflict prevention and security cooperation mechanisms, including with Russia?

In order to address those issues and highlight the main challenges that are shaping the “topography” of the Arctic’s political and security landscape today, we will be pleased to welcome Ms Marie-Anne Coninx, former EU Ambassador for the Arctic, and Dr Tony van der Togt, Associated Senior Research Fellow at the Clingendael Institute in The Hague, who will share their views and experiences on Arctic matters.

This conference will take place on **Thursday 12 December 2019 at 17:00 hours** in the conference centre of the Campus Renaissance (entrance: **rue Hobbema 8, 1000 Brussels**). The lecture will be given in **English** with **simultaneous translation** into **French** and **Dutch**. Parking is available on the Cinquantenaire esplanade in front of the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and Military History. We are looking forward to welcoming you and kindly ask you to confirm your participation by registering online on the RHID’s website: www.irsd.be. **Pre-registration is mandatory to access the premises and must reach us not later than Tuesday 10 December 2019.**

(Signed)

Filip BORREMANS, MSc Eng
Air Force Colonel GS
Director-general
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

Programme:

16:30 : Registration
17:00 : Conference and Q & A
18:30-19:30 : Reception