

SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
GENERAL CHARLES H. JACOBY, JR., UNITED STATES ARMY
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AND
NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND
BEFORE THE
SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
14 JUNE 2012

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Chairman Kerry, Senator Lugar, distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate this opportunity to provide my position on the Law of the Sea Convention. As a combatant commander with mission responsibilities for homeland defense and civil support in the maritime approaches to the homeland with an increasingly accessible Arctic Ocean, I fully support our nation's accession to the Convention. From an Arctic perspective, our accession to the Convention is important to encouraging cooperative relationships among Arctic states and securing continental shelf limits and natural resources in the Arctic as human activity increases. From a global perspective, with the overwhelming majority of countries being party to the Convention, it is the internationally recognized legal framework that will formalize our nation's standing and leadership where our vital interests are at stake, secure U.S. rights over extensive marine resources, promote freedom of navigation and overflight, and support our national security interests in the maritime domain.

Acceding to the Convention will reinforce our leadership role in shaping international maritime policy and overseeing peaceful economic activity on and under our world's seas and oceans. Greater access to the Arctic Ocean highlighted by Shell's exploratory drilling this summer and the increasing trend in commercial shipping through the Bering Strait are new circumstances that highlight the benefits the United States can access through the Convention for continued economic progress, freedom of maneuver, conservation of offshore resources, and protection of the sensitive maritime environment. Joining the Convention would help our nation in each of these respects.

Cooperative partnerships are essential for our national security. As human activity in the Arctic region increases, a cooperative and peaceful opening of Arctic waters is in the interest of the global community and in particular the Arctic nations. Accordingly, Arctic Cooperative

Security is one of the five lines of operation delineated in U.S. Northern Command's Theater Campaign Plan. However, the United States is the only Arctic nation that has not acceded to the Convention, which could impede international cooperation and eventually limit the development of cooperative partnerships with the other members of the Arctic Council, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia. Future defense and civil support scenarios in the Arctic maritime domain will require closely coordinated, multinational operations in this expansive and resource rich region. Therefore, U.S. accession to the Convention will set the conditions for partnership and cooperation, resulting in more efficient and effective multinational command and control and operations in the maritime domain.

I support the current and past administrations' position, as well as that of my primary interagency partner in the maritime domain, the U.S. Coast Guard, to become a Party to the Convention. Joining the Convention will protect and advance a broad range of significant economic and national security interests, and ultimately contribute to the peaceful opening of the Arctic in a manner that strengthens the United States and international cooperation.

We are grateful for everything the members of this committee have done to ensure our ability to defend the homeland. We appreciate your support of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and of their families for their efforts to defend our nation at home and abroad. With your help, North America will be even safer tomorrow than it is today. I am honored to appear before you, and look forward to your questions.

“WE HAVE THE WATCH”