

# Institutions of Arctic Ordering: The Cases of Greenland and Nunavut

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I am a scholar of comparative constitutional and international law with research interests in the circumpolar region, covering eight Arctic States (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States). As a region, the Arctic has an increasing role to play in dealing with environmental and global changes. At the same time, we witness the emergence, transformation, and gradual evolution of innovative governance systems around the North, especially in Greenland (Denmark) which has been Home Ruled since 1979, and Nunavut's public government (Canada's Eastern Arctic), created in 1999. The impact of globalization on the relationship between individual and collective autonomies within Greenland and Nunavut is complex. Moreover, global implications of changes taking place within the Arctic raise the standing of Greenland and Nunavut within their respective states, make their voice more visible, and put pressure on Canada and Denmark to deal with global problems, especially those related to environmental and security matters.

My research focuses on the question of how the jurisdictions of Greenland and Nunavut, each with a different degree of autonomy and inhabited by a majority of Indigenous peoples (the Inuit), respond to the challenges of globalization and mediate with national states towards greater autonomy. On the one hand, I consider how the role of Greenland and Nunavut is changing within their respective states due to the growth of supraterritorial and transregional networks across the North. On the other hand, I look at the new diplomacy among the Inuit as they collectively assert their rights to autonomy, extending to a claim for international representation in the form of an Indigenous activism that takes place beyond the boundaries of Canada and Denmark.

Tensions between the devolving autonomy of the subnational units of Greenland and Nunavut and their capability to become a part of global developments are influenced by existing particularities of the political, social, legal, environmental, and economic settings within these Arctic areas; limitations in the legal and de facto scope of autonomy; adaptive capacities of subnational governments to deal with global changes; their aspiration to be involved in global developments despite having limited economic possibilities and a heavy dependency on financial support from their national governments; the cultural clash between Indigenous views on globalization (which is being interpreted as a continued form of colonization that undermines the individual autonomy of Indigenous residents and adds constraints for implementation of collective autonomy in these regions) and the necessity for Nunavut and Greenlandic governance systems to be responsive and involved in any consequences of globalization which somehow affect their regions.

The role of Greenland and Nunavut in dealing with globalization can be observed in the developing of their governance systems and economies in closer line with global standards (which is hard to reach due to limited technological, financial, infrastructural, climate, demographic, and other reasons). In practice, their potential for input on global issues is more significant when dealing with environmental problems (e.g., climate change or pollution).

Activities in international trade will most likely become a priority of participation by Greenland and Nunavut on the global scale. Currently, Greenland's and Nunavut's international involvement takes place in two dimensions: transnational cooperation mostly within the Arctic realm and Indigenous cooperation on the regional and global levels. Thus, for example, focusing on the protection of Indigenous peoples' rights and traditional values in meeting global challenges proved to be a successful strategy for the Inuit. For instance, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, being an NGO for the Inuit of Canada, Alaska, Greenland, and Chukotka (the Russian Federation), is able to raise Inuit's concerns globally ahead of national governments.

My analysis of Greenland's or Nunavut's possible involvement in global processes shows that these subnational units mostly engage in the Arctic institutional networks and partially deal with globalization by means of Indigenous internationalism. The international activity of Greenland and Nunavut is only to a certain degree boosted by globalization. Governments of Greenland and Nunavut enhance their collaboration within the Circumpolar North with some elements of global involvement. However, regardless of the limitations caused by their legal status and insignificant decision-making powers in external processes, Greenland and Nunavut have a voice in the main international fora and bring a new diplomacy by creating a special relationship with various institutions of global and Arctic ordering.

From economic and environmental perspectives, Greenland and Nunavut have to deal with the challenges of globalization. I conclude that further evolution of these entities is going to take place in the framework of regionalization within the Arctic while addressing globalization in closer partnership with the national governments (Nunavut) or on the basis of a new arrangement (e.g., Greenland, depending on the result of the reform and changes to the constitutional status of the Territory).

Subnational governments, such as Greenland and Nunavut, can increase their participation in global developments though greater partnership with or assistance from their national authorities in dealing with global challenges or participating in the implementation of global regimes and institutions. Thus, the Inuit of Nunavut and Greenland are already partaking in observance of climatic changes, assessing the status of migratory species, and monitoring polar bears, which are crucial for implementation of existing international regimes dealing with ecosystems and management of wildlife resources. Obtaining by Greenland and Nunavut of greater autonomy from Denmark and Canada will mean more sustainability and financial independence from national grants and subsidies. These subnational entities would be in a better position to tackle their local and regional problems. In partnership with national and international decision-makers, both governmental and non-governmental, these entities are capable of raising the voice of the Arctic in global forums and having potentially a significant impact on monitoring and addressing global matters such as pollution, climate change, and security.