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On Canada's Arctic Sovereignty

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ABSTRACT

With the successful voyage of the *Crystal Serenity* now completed, Canadians are once again reminded that the Northwest Passage is opening as an international waterway. It had long been thought that the voyage of such a large vessel that did not have ice-breaking capability was an impossibility. We now know this is not true. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the interest of the new Liberal Government is considerable less than that of the preceding Conservatives. There was no Prime Ministerial northern visit this year as had been the case for almost every year under the Harper Government. But even more telling is the complete lack of comment on the voyage of the *Crystal Serenity* or even on the more recent discovery of the wreck of the HMS *Terror*. But regardless of the silence that now seems to exist, there are forces regarding Canadian Arctic security and sovereignty that are now developing that will require a Canadian response. At the forefront is the Russian move to greatly improve and expand its northern military capabilities. Furthermore, there are also recent signs that the Chinese are also looking to begin building up some arctic capabilities for its naval assets. What does this mean for Canada? What does it mean for Canada's allies and friends? These questions and others concerning Arctic security will be examined from a Canadian perspective and form the focus of this talk.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

Rob Huebert is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Calgary. He is also a senior research fellow with the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies. He was a senior research fellow of the Canadian International Council. In November 2010, he was appointed as a director to the Canadian Polar Commission. Dr. Huebert has taught at Memorial University, Dalhousie University, and the University of Manitoba. His area of research interests include: international relations, strategic studies, the Law of the Sea, maritime affairs, Canadian foreign and defence policy, and circumpolar relations. He publishes on the issue of Canadian Arctic Security, Maritime Security, and Canadian Defence. His work has appeared in *International Journal*; *Canadian Foreign Policy*; *Isuma- Canadian Journal of Policy Research* and *Canadian Military Journal*. He was co-editor of *Commercial Satellite Imagery and United Nations Peacekeeping and Breaking Ice: Canadian Integrated Ocean Management in the Canadian North*. His book, written with Whitney Lackenbauer and Franklyn Griffiths, is *Canada and the Changing Arctic: Sovereignty, Security, and Stewardship*. He also comments on Canadian security and Arctic issues in both the Canadian and international media.