Important changes are under way in the High North which will have a broad impact on international affairs. The shrinking of the Arctic ice cap and technological advances are making the region’s energy resources more accessible. At the same time, new trans-arctic shipping routes are opening and are expected to alter global transportation patterns. The economic interests are reflected in a growing global awareness in the region, competing claims by relevant stakeholders, and resumed military presence in the area. As it is a region of enduring strategic importance for NATO and allied security, developments in the High North require careful and ongoing examination.

WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY

Arrival in Keflavík International Airport

1900 – 2100 Welcoming reception hosted by the Government of Iceland in the Culture House, National Center for Cultural Heritage

THURSDAY 29 JANUARY

PLENARY SESSION

0900 – 0915 Opening address:
H.E. Mr. Geir H. Haarde, Prime Minister of Iceland

0915 – 0930 Keynote speech:
H.E. Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of NATO

SEMINAR

0930 – 0945 Introductory remarks:
H.E. Mrs. Ingibjörg Sólrun Gísladóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Iceland
Lieutenant General Wolf-Dieter Loeser, Commandant, NATO Defense College

0945 – 1145 SESSION 1: Current Strategic Challenges in the High North

The North-Atlantic has historically been a region of strategic importance. Following the end of the Cold War, military presence in the High North was significantly reduced. In the last few years, interest in the region has grown significantly. How do we view the current strategic situation in the High North? What are today’s security challenges, are we sufficiently aware of them and properly equipped to meet them?
Speakers:
H.E. Mr. Jonas Gahr Støre, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Norway
General John Craddock, Supreme Allied Commander Europe
Dr. Robert Huebert, Professor of Political Science, University of Calgary

Panel discussion with questions and comments from the audience, moderated by Ms. Ragnheiður Elín Árnadóttir, Member of Althingi

1200 – 1330  Buffet Luncheon, Conference Hall, Hilton Reykjavik Nordica Hotel

1330 – 1500  SESSION 2: A Look into the Future - Where Are We Headed?

Given the economic potential and political interest in the High North, what strategic scenarios can be envisaged? How do the “best case” and the “worst case” scenarios look in terms of security implications? Should new security challenges, organized crime, terrorism or environmental disasters, be our priority, or are traditional military threats likely to emerge?

Speakers:
Rt Hon. Baroness Ann Taylor, Minister for International Defence and Security, UK
General James N. Mattis, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation
Dr. Henning Riecke, Head of European Foreign and Security Policy Program, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP)

Panel discussion with questions and comments from the audience, moderated by Mr. Brian Hanrahan, BBC foreign news correspondent

1500 – 1630  SESSION 3: Options for Closer Cooperation in the High North

The opportunities and challenges in the High North require close international cooperation if to be met in a peaceful, sustainable and mutually beneficial manner. Is the current level of international cooperation in the High North sufficient? Is the existing institutional framework adequate? Should individual states enhance their cooperation? Does NATO have a particular a role to play?

Speakers:
H.E. Søren Gade, Minister of Defence, Denmark
Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola, Chairman of NATO´s Military Committee
Dr. Alyson Bailes, visiting Professor, University of Iceland

Panel discussion with questions and comments from the audience, moderated by Dr. Jamie Shea, Director, Policy Planning Unit, NATO

1630 – 1700  Chairman’s conclusions

H.E. Mrs. Ingibjörg Sólrun Gísladóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

END OF SEMINAR