

# GA1 Background Guide

AMSIMUN'26

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Dear delegates,

We are honored and delighted to welcome you to the Annual AMSI Model United Nations 2026 conference as your chairs for General Assembly 1. It is a privilege to guide you through what promises to be a dynamic and stimulating committee experience. As experienced delegates and chairs ourselves we are proud to be your moderators for GA1.

In an increasingly interconnected and unpredictable world, issues of international security, arms control, disarmament, and emerging global threats demand urgent and thoughtful attention. Since its establishment under the framework of the United Nations, GA1 has served as the primary forum for addressing global challenges related to peace and security. The committee plays a pivotal role in shaping international norms, fostering dialogue among nations, and promoting cooperative solutions to some of the world's most pressing security concerns.

As delegates of GA1, you are entrusted with representing your country's policies, strategic interests, and diplomatic priorities with accuracy and professionalism. The topics before you require not only a strong understanding of global politics and security frameworks, but also the ability to negotiate, compromise, and innovate. We encourage you to approach debate with open-mindedness, respect, and a commitment to constructive dialogue.

An important thing to note is that this background guide is simply a starting point and foundation of your research, not the focal point of it. This document will serve as an outline and you should not solely rely on it. As experienced delegates we expect you to conduct thorough research on your country's relevance, stance, and relation to the topic.

We are incredibly excited to embark on this journey with all of you. Your participation in GA1 marks the beginning of a challenging yet rewarding experience filled with critical thinking, diplomacy, and collaboration. As your chairs, we are committed to ensuring that every delegate has the opportunity to be heard and to contribute meaningfully to debate. We look forward to seeing you all this April, proudly representing the General Assembly First Committee. Please remember to submit your position papers exclusively through **Mawakeb Mail**, and do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns!

Your chairs,

Lina Gazar, Yousif Kasab, & Zinah Al Najjar

## **Topic: Addressing the Impact of the United States' Increased Interest in Greenland**

The United States' increased interest in Greenland has sparked significant global debate, raising concerns about sovereignty, security, and geopolitical competition in the Arctic. Greenland, an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark, holds immense strategic value due to its location, natural resources, and emerging Arctic shipping routes. What may appear as economic or diplomatic engagement carries deeper implications for global power dynamics and regional stability. Historically, Greenland has played a crucial role in transatlantic defense arrangements, particularly through cooperation within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In recent years, renewed political attention from Washington has intensified discussions surrounding territorial integrity, self-determination, and the growing militarization of the Arctic. As global powers increasingly shift their focus northward, competition over influence and resources continues to rise. This issue must be brought to immediate discussion to ensure that sovereignty is respected, tensions are prevented, and long-term peace and stability in the Arctic region are preserved.

### **History**

Over the course of more than a century, Greenland's geopolitical significance has been influenced by its strategic location in the Arctic, its relationship with the Kingdom of Denmark, and the increase in global competition in the north. Despite its being geographically located in North America, Greenland has maintained political ties to Denmark since the 18th century. It was first labeled as a Danish colony before it officially became part of the Danish realm in 1953.

The United States of America first demonstrated strategic interest in Greenland after purchasing Alaska in the 19th century. Since the 1860s, discussions about acquiring Greenland began and resurfaced again in the early 20th century, revealing American awareness of the island's geographic influence and benefit. The United States formally acknowledged Danish sovereignty over Greenland in 1917 when it bought the Danish West Indies (now the U.S. Virgin Islands), establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries (UK Parliament Commons Library, 2024).

During the Second World War, Greenland's significance increased dramatically. In response to Nazi Germany's invasion of Denmark in 1940, the United States took over Greenland's

defense in order to prevent Axis control. Afterwards, American forces set up weather stations and military installations on the island, initiating a long-term security partnership (Office of the Historian)

The United States' interest in acquiring Greenland persisted even after World War II. Due to the island's strategic military value, the Truman administration formally offered Denmark \$100 million in gold for the island in 1946; however, Denmark turned down the proposal (Gümplová, 2025).

Greenland's importance was further elevated during the Cold War. Under the auspices of NATO, the United States was granted the right to maintain military bases on the island in 1951 when Denmark signed the Defense of Greenland Agreement. The Thule Air Base (now Pituffik Space Base) was one of the most significant installations that became a key part of the U.S. ballistic missile early warning systems during tensions with the Soviet Union (U.S. Department of State).

Furthermore, with the 2009 act on Greenland Self-Government, Greenlanders were recognized as people under international law. They had their authority over natural resources increased, expanding Greenland's political autonomy (Government of Denmark, 2009).

In the 21st century, global interest in Greenland increased once more due to the melting of the Arctic ice, enabling resource accessibility. According to the U.S. Congressional Research Service, Greenland's location and its rare earth minerals have also intensified its significance.

Claiming national security concerns, President Donald Trump publicly expressed his interest in purchasing Greenland in 2019. The proposal, despite being rejected by both Denmark and Greenland, highlighted Greenland's growing geopolitical relevance. Furthermore, as a sign of strengthening diplomatic ties, the U.S. reopened its consulate in Nuuk in 2020 (U.S. Embassy & Consulate in the Kingdom of Denmark, 2020).

Greenland continues to play a critical role in discussions about Arctic security, climate governance, and the great power competition. Current discussions about the effects of increased U.S. interest in Greenland revolve around its developing autonomy within Denmark and its longstanding defense cooperation with the U.S.

## **Analysis**

The United States of America's interest in the taking of Greenland, governed by the Kingdom of Denmark, represents what can only be described as a boiling point of American European relations. For the first time ever, the spheres of alliance and power seem to be shifting in ways experts deem unpredictable. The 1951 Defense of Greenland Agreement has been a longstanding and stable, although unacknowledged, model of presence of American military forces, but with the second Trump administration, the island is no longer described as a partner territory, a mandatory national security asset that Washington must possess, one way or another. The reasons behind this change are an overly realistic perception of great power competition in which the Arctic is no longer perceived as a region of peace but as a battleground in a new Cold War with Russia and China.

The center of this calculated strategy is the Pituffik Space Base, once called Thule Air Base, the base of the most northern American military base and a critical point in the global network of the Space Force. It has an Upgraded Early Warning Radar system that has the capability of identifying intercontinental ballistic missiles launched and monitoring space debris which is indispensable in the defense of the North American continent and the overall NATO nuclear deterrence. But the U.S. government is of the view that it is necessary to offer access. The administration has claimed that the so-called two dog sleds of Danish defense cannot afford such important infrastructure against the advanced electronic warfare and naval strength that is being deployed by Moscow and Beijing in high north. The result is a deep-seated diplomatic crisis with the U.S. applying intense economic coercion, including threatening Germany and France with 25% tariffs, to make them agree to an American takeover.

In addition to military equipment, the U.S. military expansion is being slowly supplanted by a more economic-driven imperialism known as the mechanism of mineral independence that has become a priority of the latest National Security Strategy. The island of Greenland is projected to possess 25 out of 34 raw materials listed by European Commission as critical when it comes to high-technology defense systems and the world transition to green energy, and contains enormous reserves of rare earth elements. The Tanbreez and Kuannersuit mines are no longer merely a commercial enterprise, and are regarded by Washington as more of a strategic asset that should not fall into the hands of the Chinese-owned state-operated enterprises. Moreover, due to the receding of the Arctic ice at an increasing speed due to climate change, Greenland lies at the intersection of new shipping routes, including the

Northwest Passage and the Transpolar Sea Route. These paths would one day reduce the transit times between Asia and Europe by weeks and have the potential to compete with the Suez Canal in terms of strategic value and turn Greenland into a global maritime gateway.

But there is a terrible truth about this American thrust, and that is that the people of Greenland and the Danish government have virtually unanimously denied the possible annexation or ownership. A poll in early 2026 shows that 85 percent of Greenlanders disapprove of joining the United States, and all five party leaders of parliament have made combined statements that they are entitled to self-determination. Greenland is a semi-autonomous unit that has been gradually progressing to become an independent country in full relations with Denmark through the 2009 Self-Government Act. The U.S. administration, when they tried to work with the island like it is a real estate transfer, does not consider the democratic procedures and cultural belonging of the Inuit people who believe that their land is their motherland, not a commodity. This neglect of international law and international sovereignty has caused a breaking point in transatlantic relations with the leaders in Europe threatening a downwards spiral that would ruin the rules-based order the West has worked decades to create.

The legal and constitutional challenges are also very steep. The 2023 defense accord that gave U.S. troops the right to access airbases freely in Denmark is now under legal opposition, with opponents claiming that it illegally outsources authority to another military institution against the citizens of Denmark. In the event that the U.S. should change the guest status to an owner status, it would have to change its constitution in Denmark and this would need a five-sixths majority in parliament which it does not have. The diplomatic tone changed somewhat in February 2026 upon the realization of this dead end. After the intervention of NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, the U.S. withdrew the threats of using military force and imposing tariffs and moved towards the discussion of updating the agreement of 1951. The speech of Secretary of State Marco Rubio at the Munich Security Conference was aimed at rebuilding trust stating that Europe and America belong together, but the tension is present. The United States still sees Greenland as an existential imperative of 21st century security whereas the Greenlanders still see the U.S. as a predatory partner who cherishes their geography more than their agency.

After all, the effects of American interest in Greenland have created the necessity of a reality test on the idea of Arctic exceptionalism. The area has been completely absorbed into the

world power games where resource mining and missile defense have become the main priority over environmental conservation and local control. Although an embryonic diplomatic compromise can be achieved through stressing that there ought to be common stewardship, the ultimate issue of who would determine the future of the arctic is still pending. By continuing with its hyper-realistic quest on the island, the U.S. may not only lose its closest allies but also result in a long-term legal and political crisis capable of undermining the very security it has been trying to secure.

### **Starter Resources:**

- 1) <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10472/>
- 2) <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpretor/denmark-plays-royal-flush-trump-greenland-saga>
- 3) <https://blogs.shu.edu/thediplomaticenvoy/2026/02/17/trump-claims-victory-over-greenland-crisis/>
- 4) <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/trump-greenland-logic-chaos/>
- 5) <https://www.politico.eu/article/nato-launches-symbolic-arctic-sentry-mission-to-placate-us-donald-trump-on-greenland/>

### **Questions to be answered in your resolutions:**

How does the United States' increased interest in Greenland affect the sovereignty of Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark?

What multilateral mechanisms can be strengthened to maintain long-term peace and stability in the Arctic?

How might this issue influence relations within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and broader transatlantic alliances?

How can Greenland's right to self-determination be protected amid rising geopolitical competition?

What role should international law and Arctic governance frameworks play in regulating foreign involvement in Greenland?

What strategic motivations are driving the United States' renewed focus on Greenland?

In what ways could increased foreign interest reshape the political future of Greenland?

How can indigenous voices be meaningfully included in negotiations regarding foreign engagement?

## Matrix

Denmark - United States of America - France - UK - Russia - China - Spain - Switzerland - Saudi Arabia - Germany - Netherlands - Belgium - Italy - Sweden - Finland

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<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10234/>

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<https://english.stm.dk/media/4vgewyoh/gl-selvstyrellov-uk.pdf>

*U.S. Consulate Nuuk*. (2023, November 29). U.S. Embassy & Consulate in the Kingdom of Denmark. <https://dk.usembassy.gov/nuuk/>