

Lund University
Department of Political Science

STVK12
Supervisor: Agustín Goenaga

The Greenland-Denmark Relationship

A New Security Configuration



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Anna Klara Beniczky
Emmeline Orton Ek

Abstract

This thesis examines how the second Trump administration's renewed interest in Greenland reshaped Danish and Greenlandic security discourse from January 2025 to April 2026. Building on securitization theory and literature on Greenland in Arctic security, the thesis analyzes official Danish and Greenlandic political statements through qualitative discourse analysis. The analysis focuses on what Danish and Greenlandic officials securitize, what they de-securitize, and how responsibility is placed between Greenland, Denmark, the United States, NATO, and other partners.

The thesis argues that Trump's second term partly reconfigured Danish and Greenlandic security discourse. Greenlandic sovereignty and society became the central shared object of protection, while the United States became both ally and pressure source. Greenlandic discourse became more explicit about agency, consent, red lines, and respectful cooperation. Danish discourse became more protective by rejecting US ownership and annexation logic, while keeping security cooperation open through NATO, the 1951 defence agreement, and dialogue. The findings show that the crisis did not erase the hierarchy of the Realm. Instead, it reorganized it: Denmark and Greenland moved closer together under US pressure, but not as equals.

Key words: Arctic security; Securitization; Greenland; Denmark; Danish Realm.

Words: 10.000.

Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Background.....	7
2.1. Trumps Renewed Interest in Greenland.....	7
2.2. The Realm Relationship.....	8
3. Literature review.....	9
3.1 Broader Arctic Security Debates.....	9
3.2 Greenlandic Identity and Role.....	9
3.3. Baseline and Contribution.....	10
4. Theoretical Framework.....	13
4.1. Securitization and De-securitization.....	13
4.2. Arctic Security Configuration.....	15
4.3. Limitations of Securitization Theory.....	16
5. Methodology.....	17
5.1. Research Design.....	17
5.2. Data Collection.....	18
5.3. Data Analysis.....	20
5.4. Limitations & Reflections.....	22
6. Results.....	24
6.1. Greenland.....	24
6.1.1. Statements before the Venezuela crisis.....	24
6.1.2. Statements between the Venezuela strike and meeting in D.C.....	26
6.1.3. Statements post-D.C.....	28
6.2. Denmark.....	29
6.2.1. Statements before the Venezuela crisis.....	29
Securitizing Arctic Stability and Security.....	30
Defending Greenlandic sovereignty and society.....	30
De-securitizing the US relationship.....	31
Modernizing the Realm.....	31
6.2.2. Statements between the Venezuela Strike and Meeting in D.C.....	31
From sovereignty pressure to alliance-level securitization.....	31
Keeping the US relationship open.....	32
Managing the crisis together.....	33
6.2.3. Statements post-D.C.....	33
Securitizing persistent territorial moves.....	33
Normalizing Military Presence through NATO.....	34
Conditional Cooperation after D.C.....	34
7. Discussion.....	35

7.1. A Reconfigured Danish and Greenlandic Security Configuration..... 35

7.2. An Updated Greenlandic Configuration.....38

7.3. From controlling Greenland to protecting sovereignty?..... 39

8. Conclusion.....41

9. References..... 43

9.1. Academic and background sources..... 43

9.2. Empirical material/data sources..... 46

Appendix A..... 50

Appendix B.....53

1. Introduction.

Trump's renewed interest in Greenland created a difficult security problem for Denmark and Greenland: how do you respond to territorial pressure from your closest ally? Greenland has long been strategically important to the United States because of its location in the Arctic and North Atlantic (Jacobsen & Lindbjerg, 2024, p. 205). At the same time, Greenland is not just a strategic space. It is a self-governing society within the Danish Realm, with its own political agency, sovereignty claims, and long-term independence aspirations (Gad et al., 2024a, p. 228). This makes security discourse around Greenland politically sensitive. It is never only about military presence or Arctic defence. It is also about who has the authority to speak for Greenland, who can define threats, and who gets to decide the terms of cooperation.

This thesis asks:

How did the second Trump administration's renewed interest in Greenland reshape Danish and Greenlandic security discourse from January 2025 to April 2026?

This question matters because Trump's renewed interest placed Denmark and Greenland in a position that ordinary alliance language could not easily solve. The United States was not an external rival that could simply be rejected. It was Denmark's closest ally and Greenland's long-standing security partner (A7; A1). At the same time, its interest in Greenland challenged basic questions of sovereignty, consent, and territorial integrity. This creates the central tension of the thesis: Denmark and Greenland had to reject ownership and annexation logic without closing the door to security cooperation. Studying how they did so allows us to examine whether the Danish-Greenlandic security relationship was simply reinforced under pressure, or whether it was partly reshaped.

To answer the research question, the thesis uses Securitization Theory as a framework for qualitative discourse analysis of official Danish and Greenlandic political statements. The analysis is divided into three periods: before the Venezuela strike, between the Venezuela strike and the D.C. meeting, and after the D.C. meeting. We examine what Danish and Greenlandic officials securitize, what they de-securitize, and how responsibility is placed between Greenland, Denmark, the United States, NATO, and other partners.

The thesis contributes to the literature on Greenland in Arctic security by updating existing accounts of low tension, sovereignty games, and Danish-Greenlandic asymmetry after Trump's return to office. We argue that Trump's second term partly reconfigured Danish and Greenlandic security discourse. Greenlandic sovereignty and society became the central shared object of protection, while the United States became both ally and pressure source. Denmark and Greenland moved closer together in response, but not as equals. The crisis did not erase the hierarchy of the Realm; it reorganized it.

2. Background.

The following background provides the empirical context needed to understand the thesis. It first explains the critical juncture created by Trump's renewed interest in Greenland, before outlining the Danish-Greenlandic Realm relationship in which that pressure was received.

2.1. Trumps Renewed Interest in Greenland.

Trump has expressed interest in Greenland for several years, but his second administration adopted a more forceful tone. Shortly after the United States took military action against Venezuela in early 2026 in the name of national security, Trump stated: "There's not a thing that Denmark can do about it if Russia or China wants to occupy Greenland, but there's everything we can do. You found that out last week with Venezuela" (Curtis & Fella, 2026). In our thesis, this moment matters because it turned renewed US interest into a sharper security and sovereignty issue. It also triggered public mobilisation. In January 2026, Greenlandic organisations and ActionAid Denmark called for demonstrations in Nuuk and major Danish cities under the slogan "Hands off Greenland," demanding respect for Greenland's democracy, self-determination, and the Danish Realm (ActionAid, 2026).

Greenland's strategic importance helps explain why the issue gained such attention. Its location matters for US missile warning, Arctic surveillance, North Atlantic sea lanes, and future Arctic shipping routes (Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste, 2025; Forsvarsministeriet, 2025a). Its natural resources have also become part of broader great-power competition involving the United States, Russia, and China (Schwartz & Baskaran, 2026, pp. 1-3, 5). At the same time, Trump's transactional language about Greenland raised concerns that a unilateral American approach could weaken NATO cohesion and destabilize a region often framed as relatively low tension. Danish and Greenlandic actors rejected the idea of US acquisition and instead emphasized Greenland's autonomy, self-determination, and status as a political community rather than a territorial commodity (FitzGerald, 2026).

2.2. The Realm Relationship

Trump's renewed interest did not enter a settled relationship between Denmark and Greenland. It entered a relationship already shaped by colonial history, expanding Greenlandic autonomy, and an uneven division of authority. Danish colonization began in 1721, Greenland was formally integrated into the Danish state in 1953, and Home Rule in 1979 and Self-Government in 2009 expanded Greenlandic autonomy (Gricius, 2025, p. 4). The Self-Government Act also strengthened Greenland's claim to self-determination, including the right to decide on independence (Statsministeriet, 2009). Yet, Denmark still holds responsibility for foreign affairs, defence, and security, while Greenland's economic dependence on the Danish block grant continues to shape debates about independence and self-sufficiency (Gricius, 2025, pp. 4-5). Sovereignty is therefore legally structured, but politically contested: Greenland has gained more room to act, but key security competences remain tied to Denmark.

The uranium debate illustrates how this division of authority can become politically contested. Denmark and Greenland disagreed over whether uranium belonged under security and foreign policy competences, or under economic and environmental policy (IWGIA, 2014). Trump's renewed interest adds a new layer to this older tension: it cannot be understood only as an external security issue, but must also be read through existing debates about Arctic security, Greenlandic agency, and Danish-Greenlandic sovereignty relations.

3. Literature review.

The literature review places the thesis in relation to existing work on Arctic security, Greenlandic agency, and Danish-Greenlandic security relations. We first outline the broader Arctic security debate, then narrow in on Greenland's identity and sovereignty games, before establishing the baseline for analyzing changes in Danish and Greenlandic security discourse after Trump's return to office

3.1 Broader Arctic Security Debates.

Recent Nordic and Arctic International Relations scholarship depicts the Arctic as a dense governance landscape, where states, Indigenous organisations, defence alliances, and scientific networks overlap, rather than as an order centred only on the Arctic Council (Hansen-Magnusson & Gehrke, 2025, p. 934). Earlier ideas of "Arctic exceptionalism" emphasized resilience, multilateral cooperation, and low tension, even as global conflict indicators worsened (p. 928). More recent analyses suggest that Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, NATO enlargement, and strengthened borders and command structures have weakened this narrative and pulled the Arctic back into broader great-power and alliance dynamics (Rekvig & Finger, 2025, p. 2). Within this shift, securitization theory has been used to study Swedish discussions of Arctic and northern security (Risfelt, 2024, p. 32). Danish research similarly presents the Realm's Arctic and North Atlantic policy as shaped by major-power rivalry, US relations with Nuuk and Tórshavn, and vulnerabilities in Greenland and the Faroe Islands (Rahbek-Clemmensen & Sørensen, 2021). This provides the context for analyzing Danish and Greenlandic responses to renewed US interest in Greenland.

3.2 Greenlandic Identity and Role.

In the Greenland-focused literature, research raises questions about identity, status, alliances, independence, and foreign-policy agency within late-colonial hierarchies and renewed great-power rivalry (Jacobsen, 2019, p. 2; Hansen, 2023, p. 461).

Domestically, Greenland is often described as caught between Inuit cultural authenticity and modernist narratives of democracy, welfare, and global connectedness. Denmark appears both as a constitutive “other” and as a barrier to full independence and nationhood (Jacobsen, 2019, pp. 12-13). This tension contributes to ontological insecurity, as Danish “post-colonial gaslighting” is argued to undermine Greenlandic experiences of colonial injustice and complicate collective agency around independence (Hansen, 2023, pp. 468-477). Questions about who can legitimately speak for Greenland on security issues are therefore central, especially when Greenlandic actors challenge Denmark’s authority to define threats and manage US basing arrangements and nuclear legacies (pp. 473-475). Externally, Greenland is depicted as a “sovereignty games” actor that uses Denmark’s Arctic dependence to broaden its room for manoeuvre in foreign policy (Jacobsen, 2019, pp. 2-4, 18-21).

3.3. Baseline and Contribution.

To assess whether Trump’s second term reshaped Danish and Greenlandic security discourse, we first need a baseline for the pre-2025 configuration. We use Jacobsen et al.’s book *Greenland in Arctic Security* as our main point of departure, especially two chapters on the Greenlandic and Danish sides of the relationship. Gad et al. (2024a) examine Greenlandic de-securitization and sovereignty games through close readings of coalition agreements, parliamentary debates, and political statements on Greenland’s future defence policy (p. 231). Jacobsen and Lindbjerg (2024) analyze Danish parliamentary debates on Arctic cooperation and how Danish politicians discursively position the United States, China, and Russia in relation to Greenland (pp. 197-200). Both chapters are useful as a baseline because they combine securitization theory with close discourse- or narrative-oriented readings of how Greenland and Denmark position security, sovereignty, and agency within the Realm.

In Gad et al.’s Greenlandic analysis, independence is the key referent object, while Denmark appears as the main threat to that goal (2024a, p. 233). Greenlandic politicians respond by trying to “take security out of security”: they de-securitize defence and foreign policy to gain more control over selected areas and support a path toward independence, or at least preserve room for manoeuvre in sovereignty games with Denmark (pp. 228, 233). This works through three

de-securitizing narratives: the self-sustaining economy, the peaceful Inuit, and the demilitarized zone, which reframe defence and security as economic development, civilian concerns, and low tension rather than military build-up (pp. 239-240).

Jacobsen and Lindbjerg's Danish analysis shows a related, but different, logic. Denmark presents itself as a responsible Arctic actor focused on peace and low tension, while its Arctic status depends on Greenland's role in legitimising Denmark as an Arctic state (2024, pp. 196, 200). The key referent objects are regional peace, the coherence of the Realm, and Greenland's political security (pp. 202-204, 213). Russia is framed as the clearest military threat to Arctic peace, while China is treated as both economically interesting and politically worrying. The United States is harder to place: from 2018 to 2019, it moves from a taken-for-granted ally to a more awkward partner linked to pressure and potential strain on the Realm's coherence (pp. 210-214). Yet Denmark's response was not simply to control Greenland more directly. It was also to recognize Greenlandic agency in order to make the Realm more resilient (p. 220).

Gricius (2025) further supports this baseline by analyzing public-facing documents and Greenlandic official discourse on security narratives around Greenland. She shows that Danish discourse is dominated by "low-tension" narratives, where risks are recognised but presented as manageable challenges requiring diplomatic engagement rather than as existential threats (pp. 8, 10-11). Greenlandic official discourse, by contrast, is characterized by de-securitization, social and economic concerns, and independence aspirations as ways of enlarging Greenland's agency within the Realm (pp. 16-17).

Taken together, these chapters sketch a baseline configuration marked by cooperation, asymmetry, and low-tension management. Greenlandic discourse centres on independence, de-securitization, and sovereignty games with Denmark. Danish discourse centres on peace, low tension, the Realm's coherence, and great-power competition. This leaves an important gap: existing work has shown how Greenland and Denmark managed security discourse before Trump's second term, but not how this configuration changed when US interest in Greenland became more explicit, direct, and politically disruptive after January 2025. Gricius (2025) herself calls for further research, noting that post-election changes in the US political landscape create

new dynamics for Greenland's role and agency in a more contested environment (pp. 3, 19). This thesis takes up that gap by examining how Danish and Greenlandic officials securitized and de-securitized Greenland, sovereignty, and security cooperation from January 2025 to April 2026.

4. Theoretical Framework.

Our theoretical framework is based on the Copenhagen School of Securitization Theory, but we apply it through the Arctic security configuration logic developed in *Greenland in Arctic Security* (Jacobsen et al., 2024). To explain the relevant theoretical concepts, we draw especially on Chapter 11 by Gad, Wæver, and Jacobsen (2024), which develops the book's updated Arctic application of securitization theory. Security is understood as discursively constructed through political language and shared understandings, rather than as a fixed objective condition (Buzan et al., 1998, pp.21-23; Gad et al., 2024b, p.310). This means that when political actors describe an issue as urgent, existential, or manageable through normal politics, they are not just reflecting reality. They are also shaping what counts as a security problem, who is responsible for handling it, and what kind of response becomes legitimate.

For this thesis, securitization theory is useful because we are not only interested in whether Greenland becomes “more securitized.” We are interested in what Danish and Greenlandic actors securitize, what they de-securitize, and how these moves together reshape the Danish-Greenlandic security relationship.

4.1. Securitization and De-securitization.

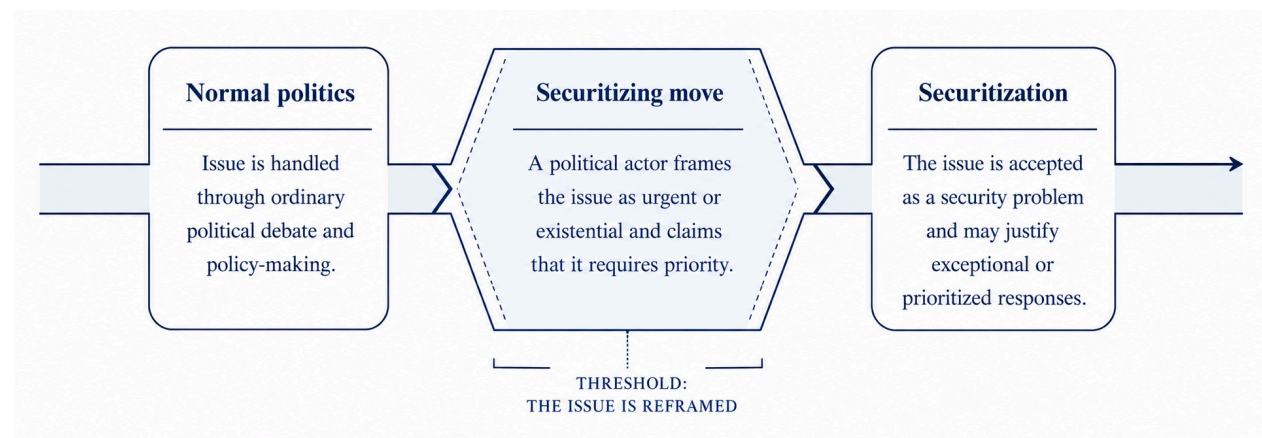
In Copenhagen School terms, a *securitizing actor* is the actor who presents an issue as an existential threat that requires priority and possibly extraordinary measures beyond normal politics. This is done through a *speech act*: a statement that does not simply describe a threat, but helps construct one by claiming urgency for a given issue (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 23-27).

In many cases, securitizing actors are state representatives or other elites already recognized as “voices of security”, such as governments, defence institutions, or high-ranking officials (p. 49). However, securitization is a practice rather than a fixed status. Who can speak security successfully depends on the political setting and the audience (p. 31).

The thing that is presented as being under threat is called the *referent object*. In the classical military-political sector, the referent object is often the state, including government, territory, and society. But referent objects can also be sovereignty, collective identity, national economies, international order, alliances, or specific communities (pp. 21-23). This matters because Greenland can be framed as territory, society, people, strategic space, part of the Realm, or an actor with political agency (Gad et al., 2024b, p. 312).

A key distinction is between a securitizing move and successful securitization. A securitizing move happens when an actor frames an issue as a serious or existential threat. Successful securitization requires some level of audience acceptance, so that the framing can legitimize exceptional measures or rule-breaking that would not otherwise be acceptable (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 25). In this thesis, we focus on securitizing and de-securitizing moves in official statements. We do not claim to measure whether full securitization succeeded in a strict sense.

Figure 1: The securitization process.



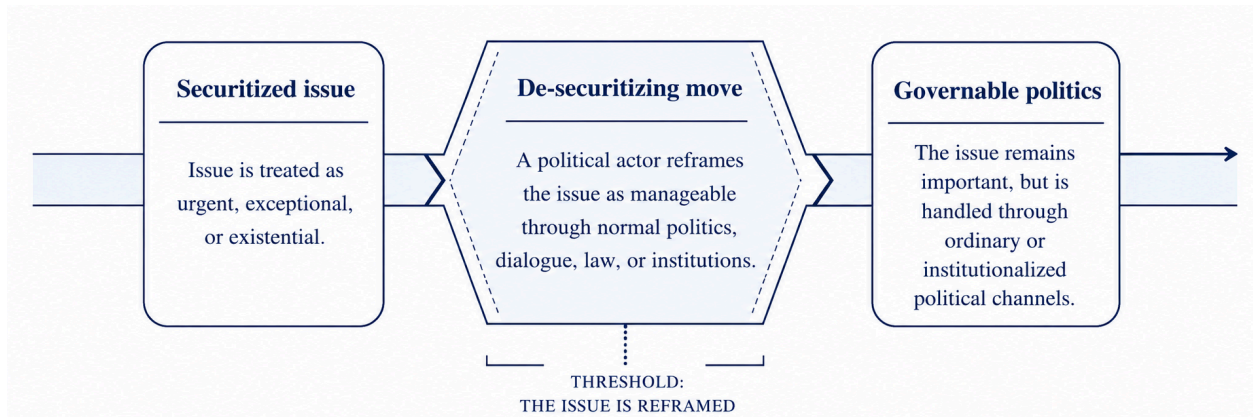
Source: Authors' own illustration based on Buzan et al. (1998).

Note: The figure was created by the authors with assistance from ChatGPT.

Alongside securitization, we pay equal attention to de-securitization. De-securitization refers to moves that limit the use of the security speech act by bringing an issue back into normal politics, where it can be handled through democratic rules, transparency, and accountability (Gad et al., 2024a, p. 230). This can happen when an issue is downgraded from an existential threat to a

manageable concern, or when actors stop treating it as a security problem altogether. Gad et al. also show that de-securitization can be an active political strategy, not simply the absence of security language (2024b, pp. 331-332). In this thesis, de-securitization helps us analyze how Danish and Greenlandic officials make security cooperation governable through dialogue, law, alliances, red lines, and existing institutional frameworks.

Figure 2: The de-securitization process.



Source: Authors' own illustration based on Gad et al. (2024a).

Note: The figure was created by the authors with assistance from ChatGPT.

4.2. Arctic Security Configuration.

For this thesis, the most useful part of the updated framework is its focus on security configurations. Gad et al. (2024b) argue that many uses of securitization theory become too narrow when only asking whether one specific case is securitized or not. Instead, they introduce the idea of *midrange dynamics*: patterns between individual securitizing moves and broader regional or global security structures (pp. 325-326). The midrange dynamic *security transfiguration* is especially relevant here, as it describes how the overall security configuration changes from one snapshot to another (pp. 328-329). This allows us to examine how securitizations and de-securitizations interact, trigger each other, and change over time.

The concept of a *security configuration* is central here. Gad et al. (2024b) define configuration analysis as the mapping and relating of different securitizations and de-securitizations to show

how they have historically triggered, transformed, or stabilized each other (p. 310). This is different from analyzing one actor, one threat, or one referent object in isolation. Instead, it asks how several actors and moves together produce a wider security pattern. This matters for Greenland because it is not captured by the purist Securitization Theory's state-centered regional security model (p. 334). Greenland is placed geographically in North America, constitutionally in Europe, and politically inside a postcolonial Danish-Greenlandic relationship. Furthermore, Greenland is described as a "hybrid polity" in terms of sovereignty and political identity (p. 312). Therefore, Greenland can be a referent object in Danish and US security discourse, but it can also act as a securitizing or de-securitizing actor in its own right (p. 324).

This framework fits our research question. We analyze Danish and Greenlandic statements not as isolated speech acts, but as connected moves in a wider configuration. We ask what each actor securitizes, what they de-securitize, which referent objects they construct, and how responsibility is distributed between Greenland, Denmark, the United States, NATO, and other partners. This makes it possible to study how Trump's renewed interest in Greenland reshaped the relationship between threat, agency, and protection.

4.3. Limitations of Securitization Theory.

A limitation of securitization theory is that it can be difficult to define where normal politics ends and securitization begins. Scholars disagree on whether securitization requires only security language, audience acceptance, or actual extraordinary measures (Karyotis et al., 2025). This lack of clear-cut boundaries introduces a degree of interpretive flexibility (and potential contestation) into our coding because Danish and Greenlandic statements often combine threat language with cooperation, diplomacy, and alliance management. We address this limitation by focusing on discursive moves rather than claiming to measure successful securitization in a strict sense. Our aim is not to decide once and for all whether an issue "is securitized." Instead, we use the theory as a lens to trace how Danish and Greenlandic actors move issues between threat, cooperation, and normal politics. In the methodology, we make our coding logic transparent and show how we identify securitizing moves, de-securitizing moves, referent objects, responsibility, and relationship framing in the statements.

5. Methodology.

This section explains how we designed the study, selected the material, and analyzed the statements. We first outline the research design and periodization, before presenting the statement corpus, coding process, and limitations of the analysis.

5.1. Research Design.

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretive research design based on discourse analysis of official political statements. We closely read how Danish and Greenlandic officials talk about security, sovereignty, Greenland, and the Arctic. This allows us to compare how securitizing and de-securitizing moves developed before, during, and after the crisis.

Our approach is grounded in a constructivist ontology, meaning that we understand security as something that is created through political language and shared understandings (Buzan et al., 1998). When political actors describe an issue as urgent, existential, or manageable through normal politics, they also shape what kind of response becomes legitimate. Methodologically, we adopt an interpretivist epistemology, which means that our goal is to understand how these meanings are created and how they change over time (Panke, 2018, ch. 1). We therefore focus on how Danish and Greenlandic actors use language to construct security, and how these constructions develop over time.

We treat the Denmark-Greenland relationship as a relational case. This means that we do not study Denmark and Greenland as two separate national cases, but as actors whose security discourses are connected through the Realm, sovereignty disputes, and wider Arctic security dynamics. This allows us to examine both sides separately in the analysis, while still asking how they together produce a Danish-Greenlandic security configuration.

The beginning of Trump's second term in January 2025 is treated as a critical juncture. Trump's renewed interest in Greenland creates new external pressure, making it meaningful to examine whether and how Danish and Greenlandic security discourses shift in response. We therefore divide the analysis into three periods: before the Venezuela strike, between the Venezuela strike and the D.C. meeting, and after the D.C. meeting. The Venezuela strike refers to the US military

strike in Venezuela that triggered sharper responses to American power and territorial pressure, while the D.C. meeting refers to the later diplomatic meeting after which the crisis was increasingly framed through dialogue and crisis management. This periodization made the material manageable and reflects a pattern in the statements: rhetoric becomes sharper during the peak of the crisis and more focused on diplomacy after the D.C. meeting.

5.2. Data Collection.

Our empirical material consists of official political statements from Danish and Greenlandic political actors between 1st of January 2025 and 9th of April 2026. The decision to focus solely on statements derived from our aim to analyze public meaning-making and narratives, rather than internal decision-making or technical policy implementation. We were interested in how political officials publicly framed Greenland, sovereignty, security cooperation, and the role of the United States during the crisis.

The Danish material includes statements by Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Minister for Foreign Affairs Lars Løkke Rasmussen. We focus on these two political actors because they were the main Danish officials publicly managing the Greenland issue during the period. They repeatedly addressed the United States, Greenland, NATO, sovereignty, and Arctic security. We considered including Minister of Defence Troels Lund Poulsen, but his statements did not contribute substantially to the narrative patterns we trace in this thesis. Since our aim is not to map every Danish statement, but to identify the main official narratives, we limited the Danish corpus to the actors most central to the public handling of the crisis.

The Greenlandic material includes statements by former Premier Múte B. Egede, Premier Jens-Frederik Nielsen, and former Greenlandic Minister of Foreign Affairs Vivian Motzfeldt. These actors were selected because they spoke in official executive roles and were central to Greenland's public framing of sovereignty, cooperation, and red lines. We also include selected statements by Pipaluk Lyngé, a Greenlandic member of parliament. This creates a broader actor category than on the Danish side, but the choice is justified by the focus of the study. We are not comparing office-holders one-to-one. We are analyzing meaning-making and narratives. Lyngé's

statements provide an important articulation of a sharper annexation-threat narrative, which helps capture variation within Greenlandic discourse that would otherwise be missed.

It is important to note that Denmark and Greenland do not speak from the same institutional position. Denmark holds formal authority over foreign and security policy in the Realm, while Greenlandic officials articulate sovereignty and security from within that uneven framework (Gad et al., 2024a, p. 232). We do not treat this asymmetry simply as a limitation, but as part of the uneven security configuration we study.

We also used three Danish policy documents as contextual material: *Partial Defence Agreement 1 on the Arctic and North Atlantic* (Forsvarsministeriet, 2025a), *Partial Defence Agreement 2 on the Arctic and North Atlantic* (Forsvarsministeriet, 2025b), and the Danish Defence Intelligence Service's *Intelligence Outlook* (Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste, 2025). These documents helped us understand the broader Danish security-policy setting. We decided on not including these in our empirical material because they differ from the statements in both length and genre, which would have skewed the coding in NVivo.

To make the corpus manageable and analytically balanced, we selected statements across three dimensions. First, we included Danish statements, Greenlandic statements, and joint Danish-Greenlandic statements. Second, we covered all three periods in the analysis: before the Venezuela strike, between the Venezuela strike and the D.C. meeting, and after the D.C. meeting. Third, we considered the likely audience of the statements. We roughly categorized statements as directed toward Danish domestic, Greenlandic domestic, Realm, or international audiences. These categories sometimes overlap, but they helped us avoid selecting only one type of public communication. The full list of coded statements, including speaker, date, type, time period, and audience category, is included in Appendix A.

The purpose of the selection was not to collect every statement made about Greenland during the period. That would have been too broad for this thesis and less useful for our research question. Instead, we aimed to construct a corpus that captures the main official narratives across actors, periods, and audiences. This allows us to trace how Danish and Greenlandic officials securitized and de-securitized Greenland, sovereignty, and security cooperation over time.

5.3. Data Analysis.

We analyzed the statements through qualitative discourse analysis in NVivo. Following Milliken's understanding of discourse analysis, we use texts to examine how political meanings and subject positions are produced through language (Milliken, 1999). The coding was mainly deductive, guided by the securitization theory framework. At the same time, we remained open to inductive patterns, especially when statements did not fit neatly into securitizing or de-securitizing categories.

NVivo was used as a tool for systematizing the material and making the coding process more transparent. We organized the statements by actor, speaker, period, statement type, and estimated audience. This made it possible to compare patterns across the Danish and Greenlandic material, while still reading each statement in context. The full codebook is included in Appendix B. We coded the statements using a set of parent nodes and child nodes in NVivo. The parent nodes captured the main analytical dimensions, while the child nodes helped us specify, for example, which actors were being framed, what objects were being protected, and who was assigned responsibility.

Table 1. Coding dimensions.

Parent node	Child node	What we looked for
Audience	Danish domestic; Greenlandic domestic; Realm; International	Who the statement appeared to address, for example Danish domestic, Greenlandic domestic, Realm, or international audiences.
Discursive move	Securitizing move; de-securitizing move	Whether a passage worked as a securitizing or de-securitizing.
External actors	United States; Russia/China; NATO/allies; Europe/ EU	How the United States, Russia, China, NATO, the EU, and other partners were positioned.
Framing	Existential threat; normal politics	Whether the issue was framed through threat, cooperation, law, economy, alliance, diplomacy, ownership, or crisis management.
Referent object	Greenlandic sovereignty; Greenlandic society; Arctic stability/security; Realm unity; Alliance unity; Danish security	What was presented as needing protection, for example Greenlandic sovereignty, society, Arctic stability, NATO, or the Realm.
Object of de-securitization	Hierarchy & asymmetry; unity & cooperation	What was made governable or moved away from emergency framing, for example US cooperation, military presence, independence, or the Realm relationship.
Relationship framing	Denmark leads; Greenland leads; shared with DK-GL; shared with allies	How Denmark, Greenland, the United States, and allies were positioned in relation to each other.
Responsibility/ authority	US relationship; military/ security cooperation; Greenlandic independence; Realm relationship; crisis management	Who was presented as having the right or duty to act, decide, protect, negotiate, or coordinate.

After coding, we used NVivo matrices to compare patterns across actors and periods. This helped us identify whether Denmark and Greenland securitized the same objects, whether referent objects changed over time, and how de-securitizing moves clustered around cooperation, NATO, dialogue, red lines, or existing agreements. The matrices helped trace shifts before, during, and after the crisis peak.

The analysis remains qualitative. Frequency tables would have given a misleading picture, because the statements vary in length, audience, and context. A longer statement naturally creates more coding references than a shorter one, without necessarily being more analytically important. For that reason, we focus on what Danish and Greenlandic actors securitized and de-securitized, how they did so, and how these moves together produced a Danish-Greenlandic security configuration.

5.4. Limitations & Reflections.

This project has clear limitations. First, the analysis focuses on publicly available official statements. This makes the material traceable, but also means that we analyze elite public discourse rather than internal decision-making or broader public opinion. The topic nevertheless concerns sensitive security and defence issues. Ethical responsibility therefore lies in careful interpretation and presentation: we avoid exaggeration and respect the context in which statements are made.

Second, the empirical material is selective rather than exhaustive. We did not aim to collect every statement made about Greenland during the period. Instead, we selected statements that were most relevant for tracing securitizing and de-securitizing moves across actors, periods, and audiences. This means that some public statements may fall outside the analysis.

Third, language and translation create a limitation. Several Greenlandic statements were originally made in Greenlandic. For these, we relied on translations provided by the news sources that published or reproduced the statements. Vivian Motzfeldt's speech in D.C. was transcribed and translated for us by a Greenlandic diplomat. These translations made the material accessible, but some nuances may have been shaped by translation choices. We were also unable to obtain a

reliable transcript or translation of Jens-Frederik Nielsen's Greenlandic statement at the joint press conference with Múte B. Egede and Mette Frederiksen on 3 April 2025. For that reason, this statement was not included in the coded material. Where possible, we therefore interpreted translated statements cautiously and focused on broader framing patterns rather than isolated wording.

Finally, the interpretive design means that we do not make causal claims about policy outcomes. Instead, we examine how Danish and Greenlandic officials publicly constructed threat, agency, responsibility, and cooperation. This allows us to analyze how the security configuration around Greenland was discursively reshaped, while remaining careful about what official statements can show.

6. Results.

This section analyzes Greenlandic and Danish official discourse across the three periods. It examines what each actor securitizes, what they de-securitize, and how responsibility is placed in relation to Greenland, Denmark, the United States, NATO, and other partners. The Venezuela strike and D.C. meeting mark the escalation and partial diplomatic re-management of the crisis. This prepares the ground for the discussion of a wider Danish-Greenlandic security configuration.

6.1. Greenland.

This section examines how Greenlandic political officials framed Trump's renewed interest, Greenlandic sovereignty and security cooperation across the three periods. The overarching pattern is that Greenlandic leaders mostly de-securitize Trump's agenda by keeping cooperation open, while setting red lines around sovereignty and territorial integrity. At the same time, some statements contain sharper securitizing moves, especially when US rhetoric is framed as pressure on Greenland and its people.

6.1.1. Statements *before* the Venezuela crisis.

Greenlandic political elites already framed Trump's renewed interest through two contrasting narratives. Senior figures, such as former Greenlandic Premier Múte B. Egede and current Premier Jens Frederik Nielsen, presented a cooperative but conditional partnership with the United States, de-securitizing Trump's acquisition agenda by treating defence cooperation as normal politics carried out on Greenlanders' terms and within a rules-based order (A10;A3). By contrast, member of the Greenlandic parliament, Pipaluk Lyngé, articulated a much sharper threat narrative, in which Trump's annexation ambitions endanger Greenland's sovereignty, government and the security of its people (A1).

In early January 2025, Múte B. Egede participated in a joint press briefing alongside Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, during which he stated:

“We cooperated with the United States yesterday, we cooperate with them today, and we will also cooperate with them tomorrow (...) But that must also take place on the terms – the terms that are the Greenlanders’ – when people are to cooperate with one another.” (A10)

This statement draws on a narrative of long-standing, beneficial cooperation with the United States, but makes that partnership explicitly conditional on “Greenlanders’ terms.” At the same time, he implicitly securitizes Greenlandic self-determination by centring “Greenlanders’ terms” and the right of the Greenlandic people to decide their own future as the key referent objects. This is underscored by his earlier remark in the same press conference that “we do not want to be Danes, we do not want to be Americans; we of course want to be Greenlanders. And of course it is the Greenlandic people who determine their future.” (A10). Speaking in Danish to a primarily Realm audience, Egede thus signals a trajectory of increasing self-sufficiency and eventual independence, while insisting that this does not mean “cutting all ties and all cooperation and all relations with Denmark.”(A10).

Later, in October 2025, Jens-Fredrik Nielsen spoke at the European Parliament, referring to the past “six to eight months” as “a bit strange” (A3). Indirectly addressing US attempts to acquire Greenland, he draws on a narrative of cooperative but conditional partnership, repeatedly stressing unity with both the European Union and the United States. When asked what kind of cooperation Greenland would consider with the United States, he replies:

“We seek to have more and better cooperation also with the USA when we can fulfill the respectful tone. We have had a cooperation for many many many years and let me state at last that I think a stronger and better partnership with the EU doesn't close the doors for other relationships or other cooperations with other countries.” (A3)

In an earlier joint appearance alongside Mette Frederiksen and French President Emmanuel Macron in July 2025, Nielsen also described the recent period as “strange” while avoiding direct threat language (A2). Instead, he grounds Greenland’s position in “very old democratic principles: respect for international law, respect for borders, and the law of the sea,” implicitly making Greenlandic society, sovereignty and the rules-based order the referent objects to be protected (A3).

In contrast, when Pipaluk Lyngé is asked whether Greenland feels abandoned by Denmark during an interview with TVP world, she responds:

“...in our eyes, we're more concerned that we'll be enacted, like, overtaken, because Trump has been saying that he wants to control and own us. So we really want to secure our own security and our sovereignty and government with the collaboration of Denmark and hopefully with Europe.”

Here, Lyngé articulates a threat narrative in which Trump's annexation ambitions endanger Greenland's sovereignty, government and “our own security,” making the Greenlandic people and their self-government the key referent objects (A1).

Taken together, these statements show that pre-Venezuela Greenlandic discourse is not uniformly de-securitizing but marked by a tension between cooperative-conditional and annexation-threat narratives. While Egede and Nielsen move Trump's acquisition agenda into the realm of normal politics and quietly protect Greenlandic sovereignty and long-term independence through law-based language, Lyngé openly securitizes Trump's plans as an existential danger to Greenland's sovereign government, relying on Denmark and the EU as protective shelters.

6.1.2. Statements *between* the Venezuela strike and meeting in D.C.

Here, the Greenlandic discourse is structured around two intertwined narratives. One is a crisis-driven red-line narrative, which presents Trump's acquisition agenda and the Venezuela strike as warning signs that sovereignty and society may be at risk, and the other alliance-anchored protection narrative, which treats Denmark, NATO and long-standing cooperation with the United States as the proper way to manage this pressure.

On 5 January 2026, two days after the US strike in Venezuela, Nielsen issued two statements addressing Trump's renewed attempts to acquire Greenland, each directed at a different audience. He posted a statement in English on X and delivered a press conference in Greenlandic in the Inatsisartut. In both instances, he explicitly referenced the events in Venezuela, and framed Greenlandic sovereignty and society as the key referent objects (A12; A4). In his message on X,

aimed at an international audience, he combines a crisis-driven red-line narrative with an alliance-anchored protection narrative:

“We have been the United States’ close and loyal friend for generations. We have stood shoulder to shoulder in difficult times. We have taken responsibility for security in the North Atlantic and, not least, North America. That is what true friends do. For this reason, the immediate and repeated rhetoric coming from the United States is completely unacceptable.” (A12)

By stressing Greenland’s and the Realm’s long history as a loyal security provider for North America, he desecuritized the broader relationship with the US and NATO, while presenting Trump’s current rhetoric as a breach of friendship and as an unacceptable way of treating a trusted ally. This is reinforced by his subsequent declaration that: “Enough is enough. No more pressure. No more insinuations. No more fantasies of annexation. We are open to dialogue. We are open to discussions”(A12) combining a sharp defence of Greenland’s sovereignty with an immediate pivot back to dialogue and long-standing cooperation. Similarly, in his domestic press conference, he re-anchors the situation within a framework of established rules and partnerships, mixing securitizing language about pressure on “our country and its population” with stabilizing, de-securitizing moves that stress diplomacy and alliance management rather than emergency measures (A4).

A week later, when Nielsen appears alongside Mette Frederiksen at a press conference addressing the Danish Realm, his tone shifts. Here, the analytical significance lies in the shared platform - Nielsen no longer speaks solely as a Greenlandic representative, but as part of the Kingdom of Denmark. He states:

“The situation is very, very, very serious (...) Greenland, as part of the Kingdom of Denmark, is a member of NATO. We have great confidence in the NATO Alliance and know that NATO supports us in this situation.” (A11)

In contrast to his earlier statements, this articulation more clearly frames the situation as a serious, potentially existential threat, and thus constitutes a securitizing move centred on Greenland’s population and sovereign status. Yet, consistent with broader patterns, this threat

framing is immediately accompanied by de-securitizing elements, as Nielsen stresses confidence in NATO and calls for support through established alliance structures.

6.1.3. Statements *post-D.C.*

A recurring narrative this time around is that Greenland, Denmark and their allies share responsibility for Arctic security and Greenlandic sovereignty, and insist that these challenges should be handled through respectful - but conditional - cooperation. This should all be done in accordance with their “red lines”, which are defined throughout this period as territorial integrity, international law and sovereignty (A6; A8). Greenlandic officials do not deny that Arctic security is a concern; in fact, they stress it. They argue that additional measures and greater security are necessary, but place primary shared responsibility for this in the hands of NATO and other allied partners (A6; A8).

When addressing an international audience, Nielsen speaks on behalf of the Danish Realm , foregrounding that “...nobody other than Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark have the mandate to make deals or agreements about Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark.” (A6). Now former Greenlandic Minister of Foreign Relations, Vivian Motzfeldt, is less explicit on this point, in part because she typically speaks in more specialised but still international settings such as Arctic Frontiers and the Arctic Circle (A8; A9). Even so, she notes that “Together with Denmark, there is an intensified effort to address the national security issues in and around Greenland, with massive investments in new capabilities and capacities” (A8), again highlighting joint responsibility with Denmark.

“ The Kingdom of Denmark and the United States stood side by side for many, many years also in tough times (...) It's about the world order, the principles we have built the world on. The Western alliance that has kept the world safe for many, many years. That's nothing to gamble on and that's what we are trying to state. And we are ready to do it through democracy, diplomacy and through the right channels.” (A6)

Here, he speaks as part of the Danish Realm. When he emphasizes the long standing relationship with the United States, he is de-securitizing Trump's acquisition agenda while simultaneously

framing the “world order” and the “western alliance” of being under threat if the relationship ceases to exist. He very much wants to “bring back” the strong relationship with the US, and wants to find a solution that respects their “red lines”(A6). This conditionality is reinforced by Motzfeldt at the end of her arctic circle speech, where she states: ”Greenland is not for sale. Greenland has never been for sale. Greenland will never be for sale. But we are open for cooperation and business with anyone who will respect our rules and laws and who share the same values like we do.”(A8).

A notable indication of increased coherence among Greenlandic officials is a new TV interview with Lyngé on the same channel as the previous year. Her tone differs markedly from the earlier appearance: where she previously relied heavily on annexation-threat language, she now largely avoids overt securitization. When she does allude to risks, she immediately anchors them in appeals to cooperation with Denmark, the EU and NATO, bringing her rhetoric much closer to Nielsen’s narrative and softening the imbalance that characterised the pre-Venezuela period (A13).

6.2. Denmark.

The Danish statements show a different but closely connected pattern. This section traces how Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen framed Greenland, the United States, and Arctic security across the three periods. Danish discourse shows how Denmark positions itself as an Arctic security actor, Greenland’s partner, and a defender of sovereignty within an increasingly difficult alliance relationship.

6.2.1. Statements *before* the Venezuela crisis.

Before the Venezuela strike, Danish discourse was marked by a careful balancing act. Denmark securitizes the changing Arctic security environment and Greenlandic sovereignty, but works to keep both the United States and the Realm relationship inside normal politics. Russia and China carry the clearest threat language, while American interest is mostly presented as manageable through cooperation, existing agreements, and alliance frameworks.

Securitizing Arctic Stability and Security.

The strongest securitizing move concerns Arctic stability and security. Danish statements present the Arctic as a region where the old low-tension logic no longer holds. As Rasmussen puts it, “we have all been harvesting the peace dividend. We all acted on the assumption that the Arctic was and should be a low tension area”, but “that time is over. Status quo is not an option” (A14). The referent object is therefore Arctic stability itself. This securitization is tied most directly to Russia and China. Frederiksen states that “Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine has shifted our security foundation - globally, in the Nordic region, and in the Arctic,” and that societies must withstand “both military and hybrid threats” (A15). The same logic appears in Frederiksen’s and Egede’s joint press conference:

Frederiksen: “War has returned to the European continent. There is an increased security threat, both from Russia, and we also see a China that is increasingly directing its focus toward the Arctic.” (A10)

Russia and China are framed as direct security threats. The United States is not. This absence allows Denmark to justify a stronger Arctic security posture while keeping American interest in Greenland inside an alliance frame rather than a threat frame.

Defending Greenlandic sovereignty and society.

A second securitizing move concerns Greenlandic sovereignty and society. Denmark presents Greenland not as a strategic object to be exchanged, but as a political community with its own identity and agency. Frederiksen states that “Greenland belongs to the Greenlanders,” emphasizing that Greenlanders “have a language”, “a culture”, and are “a population of their own” (A16). The phrase “Greenland is not for sale” functions as a sovereignty boundary (A16). This is a restrained form of securitization. Denmark does not present Greenland as already lost or invaded. It marks Greenland as non-transferable. Cooperation with the United States is possible, but not if Greenland is treated as an object rather than a people.

De-securitizing the US relationship.

At the same time, Denmark de-securitizes the US relationship. American interest is framed as historical, familiar, and manageable (A17; A10). Denmark stresses that “the United States is our

closest and nearest ally” and that increasing American interest in Greenland is “positive” and “by no means new” (A10). The 1951 defence agreement is central here. It allows Denmark to present greater US military presence as something that can happen “within the framework we have today,” not as a sovereignty crisis (A14; A10). This also applies to economic cooperation. Denmark links American interest to investments, critical minerals, infrastructure, and business development. US interest is moved from possible threat to alliance management and economic opportunity.

Modernizing the Realm.

Finally, Denmark de-securitizes Greenlandic independence and the Realm relationship. Independence is not framed as a threat. It is described as “legitimate and understandable” and as something Denmark must respect (A10). Denmark tries to position itself not as the actor blocking Greenlandic agency, but as the actor that recognizes it. Frederiksen states that “the Realm is something different today than it was before, and it will also look different in the future” (A10). The Realm is not presented as fixed or fragile, but as something that can change.

6.2.2. Statements *between the Venezuela Strike and Meeting in D.C.*

After the Venezuela strike, Danish discourse becomes sharper. The United States is no longer only managed as an ally with an interest in Greenland. American pressure is now framed as a challenge to sovereignty, borders, and NATO itself. Still, Denmark does not fully break the alliance frame. This period therefore shows a tense double move: Denmark securitizes US territorial pressure, while de-securitizing the relationship through NATO, existing agreements, and Danish-Greenlandic coordination.

From sovereignty pressure to alliance-level securitization.

The strongest securitizing move concerns NATO and the alliance order. Frederiksen states:

“...if the United States chooses to militarily attack another NATO country, then everything comes to an end, including our NATO, and thereby the security that has been provided since the end of the Second World War” (A18).

This is a major rhetorical escalation. The referent object is no longer only Greenlandic sovereignty; it expands to NATO, alliance trust, and the post-war security order itself. Denmark now openly imagines military action by an ally against another ally. Unlike the pre-Venezuela period, American interest is no longer kept safely inside cooperation and existing frameworks. If allies no longer respect each other's borders, the security system itself could come to an end.

This is why the sovereignty language matters. Frederiksen states that the United States has “no legal claim to annex one of the three countries in the Realm” and urges it to “stop the threats against a historically close ally and against another country and another people, who have very clearly stated that they are not for sale” (A19). Greenland is defended as territory and as a people with political agency. The joint statement sharpens this logic: “one must not be able to change borders by force,” “one cannot buy another people,” and “small countries should not have to fear large countries” (A11). The Greenland question is lifted into a wider defence of international order.

Keeping the US relationship open.

At the same time, Denmark continues the de-securitizing strategy already visible before the Venezuela strike. American military presence is made governable by placing it inside existing alliance and legal frameworks. Frederiksen stresses that Greenland is covered by NATO's security guarantee, that the Kingdom already has a defence agreement with the United States, and that this agreement gives the US “broad access to Greenland” (A19). Military presence is not presented as a dramatic break with normal politics, but as something that can be handled within existing frameworks. This move is even clearer when Denmark says that “if this is about security, then there is much more that we can and must do jointly,” including with “the United States, with NATO, with Europe, and with the Arctic states in NATO” (A11). Denmark keeps the US relationship open, while keeping sovereignty closed.

Managing the crisis together.

Finally, Denmark de-securitizes the pathway of the sovereignty crisis through rules and Danish-Greenlandic unity. Frederiksen says she believes in democracy, “the international rules of the game,” and that “borders are not changed by force” (A18). The crisis is serious, but it should

be managed through rules rather than rupture. This also applies internally. Denmark and Greenland are presented as having handled “a quite unfamiliar and difficult situation” together, by strengthening Arctic security, tightening bonds in the Kingdom, and building closer alliances (A11). Sovereignty is closed for negotiation, but security cooperation remains open.

6.2.3. Statements *post-D.C.*

After the D.C. meeting, Danish discourse tries to make the crisis governable again. It holds together the two previous moves: sovereignty remains non-negotiable, but the crisis is placed back inside NATO, dialogue, and Danish-Greenlandic coordination.

Securitizing persistent territorial moves.

The clearest securitizing move concerns the continued American ambition toward Greenland. Danish statements indicate that the D.C. meeting did not close the issue. As Rasmussen puts it, “what seems quite clear after this speech is that the President’s ambition remains intact” (A20). The threat is not treated as a one-time rhetorical disruption. It persists. Rasmussen continues that the issue does not “go away” because it is still expressed “very, very, very clearly that it is better to own than to rent, and that Denmark cannot protect Greenland” (A20). Here, Denmark securitizes not the United States as such, but a specific American logic: ownership, territorial control, and the claim that Denmark cannot protect Greenland. The referent object is Greenlandic sovereignty, but also Denmark’s authority within the Realm.

Denmark still avoids turning the United States into a straightforward enemy. But after D.C., territorial ambition is no longer treated as something that can simply be absorbed into alliance cooperation. It remains a challenge that must be contained. This becomes clearest in Frederiksen’s statement: “But we cannot negotiate about our sovereignty” (A21). Security, investments, and economic cooperation can be discussed (A21). Sovereignty cannot. Denmark separates the negotiable from the non-negotiable.

Normalizing Military Presence through NATO.

At the same time, Denmark de-securitizes increased military presence in Greenland and the Arctic. This returns to a pattern already visible before the crisis intensified. Military presence is made governable by placing it inside NATO and existing security frameworks.

Rasmussen states that “the purpose of the increased military presence in Greenland... is to enhance security in the Arctic” (A22). Military presence is not presented as a dramatic break with normal politics, but again as a practical response to a changed security environment. The same move appears in Frederiksen’s statement:

“Security in the Arctic is a matter for the entire NATO Alliance. It is therefore good and natural that it is also discussed between NATO’s Secretary General and the President of the United States. The Kingdom of Denmark has long worked for NATO to increase its engagement in the Arctic.”
(A21)

The phrase “good and natural” normalizes what could otherwise look like crisis escalation. Denmark does not remove security from the issue; it places security inside NATO. This also explains why Frederiksen stresses coordination with Naalakkersuisut and “close dialogue with NATO” (A21). The crisis is made less dangerous by showing that Denmark is not acting alone, and that Greenland is not being bypassed.

Conditional Cooperation after D.C.

The post-D.C. discourse constructs a specific Danish role. Denmark presents itself as the actor that can defend sovereignty while keeping cooperation open. This is visible in the statement that the Kingdom “continues to wish to engage in constructive dialogue with allies on how we can strengthen security in the Arctic,” including the United States’ Golden Dome, “provided that this takes place with respect for our territorial integrity” (A21). The word “provided” is central. Cooperation is possible, but conditional.

The post-D.C. period does not undo the previous securitization. It manages it. Sovereignty is closed for negotiation, but security cooperation remains open.

7. Discussion.

So far, we have analyzed the Danish and Greenlandic statements separately. In the following discussion, we bring the two parts together and ask what they show about a wider security configuration around Greenland. We first interpret the findings as one reconfigured relationship, before returning to our baseline to discuss what has changed and what remains. Our aim is to show what Trump's second term changed in the relationship between threat, agency, and protection.

7.1. A Reconfigured Danish and Greenlandic Security Configuration.

The Danish and Greenlandic analyses point to a partly reconfigured security relationship. The second Trump administration did not simply intensify existing Arctic security discourse. It changed how threat, protection, and agency are distributed. The central pressure shifts outward toward the United States, while Denmark and Greenland are pushed into a closer, but still asymmetrical, security relationship.

Table 2. Danish-Greenlandic security configuration, January 2025 - April 2026.

Configuration element	Reconfigured pattern, January 2025 - April 2026
Main referent object	Greenlandic sovereignty and society.
Main threat	US territorial pressure; Russia and China as wider Arctic security context.
Object of de-securitization	US relationship, security/military cooperation, crisis management, and the Realm relationship.
De-securitizing narrative source	Conditional cooperation, red-line diplomacy, NATO/alliance management, the 1951 defence agreement, rules-based order, and Danish-Greenlandic coordination.
Denmark's role	Protector, stabilizer, and mediator of security cooperation.
Greenland's role	Agency-bearing political actor setting red lines.
US role	Ally and partner when respectful; pressure source when linked to ownership or annexation.
NATO/alliance role	Framework that makes security cooperation governable.
DK-GL relationship	Closer crisis coordination, but not equality.

Source: Authors' own synthesis based on the Danish and Greenlandic analysis sections and coded statements listed in Appendix A.

The main referent object in this configuration is Greenlandic sovereignty and society. Both Denmark and Greenland protect Greenland as more than territory: as a people, a political community, and an actor whose consent matters. However, they do this from different positions. Greenlandic discourse emphasizes self-determination, red lines, mutual respect, and the right to set the terms of cooperation. Danish discourse frames sovereignty through territorial integrity, the Realm, NATO, and the rules-based order. This shows both convergence and asymmetry: Denmark and Greenland increasingly defend the same object, but not from the same institutional position.

The United States becomes the most ambivalent actor in the configuration. It remains a long-standing ally and desired partner when cooperation takes place through respect, dialogue, and existing frameworks. But it also becomes a pressure source when linked to ownership, annexation, or unilateral control. This makes the configuration triangular: Greenlandic sovereignty is pressured by the United States, defended and mediated through Denmark and NATO, but still shaped by the asymmetries of the Realm.

De-securitization is therefore central to the new configuration. Neither Denmark nor Greenland fully rejects security cooperation with the United States. Instead, both try to make it governable. Greenland does this through mutual respect, proper channels, red lines, and alliance-based crisis management. Denmark does it through NATO, the 1951 defence agreement, the rules-based order, and Danish-Greenlandic coordination. Ownership and annexation are rejected, but cooperation remains open.

The result is not equality. Greenland becomes more visibly agency-bearing, but in a more pressured security environment. Denmark becomes more protective, but not less structurally powerful. Its protection still runs through institutions Denmark largely controls or mediates. Trump's second term therefore does not erase the old hierarchy of the Realm. It reorganizes it.

7.2. An Updated Greenlandic Configuration.

The Greenlandic analysis shows a clear shift from the configuration described by Gad et al. (2024a). In their account, Greenlandic securitizing discourse was centred on independence, with Denmark positioned as the threat to that independence (p. 233). In the statements analyzed here, the centre of gravity moves. Greenlandic officials still speak about independence, but the sharper concern is sovereignty and society under external pressure. Greenland is not only defended as a future independent state. It is defended as a people, a political community, and an actor whose consent is necessary now. The threat is therefore no longer mainly Denmark blocking independence. It is the risk that the United States treats Greenland as something that can be decided over Greenlanders' heads.

This also changes Denmark's position in the Greenlandic discourse. Denmark is less often framed as the immediate threat and more often placed inside the protective framework together with NATO, the EU, and other allies. But the old asymmetry does not disappear. Greenlandic agency is still expressed through institutions and alliances that Greenland does not fully control. The shift is therefore not from dependence to full autonomy, but from one kind of dependence to a more active, still constrained, form of agency. This tension is central. Greenlandic officials appear more agency-bearing. They set red lines, insist on mutual respect, refer to international law, and demand that dialogue takes place through proper channels. Yet these red lines are needed because Greenland is operating in a more pressured security environment. Trump's second term does not simply give Greenland more agency. It forces Greenland to articulate agency more clearly.

The same pattern appears in Greenlandic de-securitization. Compared to Gad et al. (2024a), the self-sustaining economy narrative remains visible, especially when external interest is translated into minerals, business, legislation, environmental standards, and future-making for Greenlandic society (pp. 239-240). But the peaceful Inuit and demilitarized zone narratives are not central in the statements analyzed here (pp. 239-240). Instead, Greenlandic de-securitization works mainly through conditional cooperation, red-line diplomacy, and alliance-based crisis management. Greenland does not simply take security out of security (p. 239). It tries to make cooperation possible without giving up sovereignty.

7.3. From controlling Greenland to protecting sovereignty?

The Danish analysis does not show a completely new pattern. It shows a sharper version of a tension already visible in Jacobsen and Lindbjerg (2024). Russia and China remain the easier threats for Danish discourse (pp. 202-204, 219). Russia can still be tied to Arctic instability and the end of low tension, while China can still be linked to strategic vulnerability in Greenland. These are threats Denmark knows how to manage: through surveillance, defence investments, and alliance coordination (p. 212). The United States is more difficult. In Jacobsen and Lindbjerg's analysis of 2019, the US had already moved from close ally to a more unstable actor (pp. 210-211). It was still an ally, but also a source of pressure. Denmark could not simply block American engagement in Greenland, partly because of US power and partly because of Greenlandic self-determination. The response was therefore not to demand obedience from Greenland, but to acknowledge Greenlandic agency more clearly in order to make the Realm more resilient (p. 220).

The statements analyzed here show more of that same Danish logic. The main change is intensity. The second Trump administration makes the uncertainty harder to manage. Denmark still does not present the United States as a consistently antagonistic other. Even at the peak of the crisis, the US remains an ally whose relationship must be kept open. But the alliance is no longer only a framework for managing the crisis; it becomes part of what is at stake.

This matters because Denmark's response is not mainly to securitize Greenlandic agency as a problem. Instead, Denmark securitizes US ownership and annexation logic, while de-securitizing Greenlandic independence and the Realm relationship. Greenland "belongs to the Greenlanders" and cooperation with the United States is acceptable only if it respects sovereignty and territorial integrity (A16; A21). This is not a shift from control to equality. It is a shift from control toward protection. Denmark becomes less clearly the actor limiting Greenlandic agency and increasingly presents itself as defending Greenlandic sovereignty against external pressure. But this protection still runs through institutions Denmark largely controls or mediates: the Realm, NATO, the 1951 defence agreement, and foreign and security policy. Denmark therefore becomes more protective, but not less structurally powerful.

In this sense, Trump's second term does not overturn Jacobsen et al.'s Danish pattern. It pushes it further. The old question was how Denmark could keep the Realm together when US interest made Greenland more strategically attractive. The new question is: how can Denmark protect Greenlandic sovereignty against US pressure without turning the US alliance into a full enemy relationship? Danish discourse answers by recognizing Greenlandic agency, keeping cooperation open, and drawing a harder line around sovereignty.

Taken together, the Greenlandic and Danish findings show that Trump's second term does not create a completely new security configuration, but changes the balance inside it. Pressure shifts outward toward the United States, while Denmark and Greenland move closer together in response. Yet closer coordination is not the same as equality. Greenland becomes more visibly agency-bearing, and Denmark becomes more protective, but protection still runs through uneven institutional structures. Trump's renewed interest makes Danish-Greenlandic unity more necessary, but also makes the asymmetry behind that unity more visible.

8. Conclusion.

This thesis asked how the second Trump administration's renewed interest in Greenland reshaped Danish and Greenlandic security discourse from January 2025 to April 2026. The analysis shows that this was not simply Greenland becoming "more securitized". What changed was the relationship between threat, agency, and protection. The main concern moved away from Greenlandic independence from Denmark as the central tension, and toward Greenlandic sovereignty and society under external pressure from the United States.

By tracing this shift, the thesis contributes an updated account of Danish-Greenlandic security discourse after Trump's return to office. Greenland becomes more visibly agency-bearing through red lines, consent, and demands for proper diplomatic channels. Denmark becomes more protective by rejecting US ownership and annexation logic and insisting that Greenland belongs to Greenlanders. The United States becomes both ally and pressure source: acceptable as a partner within existing frameworks, but threatening when linked to acquisition, ownership, or unilateral control.

The findings also update the earlier security configuration in Jacobsen et al. (2024). In the Greenlandic case, the referent object shifts from independence toward sovereignty and society. The self-sustaining economy narrative remains visible, but de-securitization is now more strongly organized around conditional cooperation, red-line diplomacy, and alliance-based crisis management. In the Danish case, Trump's second term does not overturn the earlier pattern; it pushes it further. Denmark still manages US pressure by recognizing Greenlandic agency, but the pressure is now more explicit and harder to contain.

The thesis also shows that de-securitization does not only mean taking security out of security. Here, Denmark and Greenland both try to make security cooperation governable without giving up sovereignty. Greenland does this through red lines and mutual respect. Denmark does it through NATO, the 1951 defence agreement, the rules-based order, and Danish-Greenlandic coordination. Ownership and annexation are rejected, but cooperation remains open.

This is why the hierarchy of the Realm is not erased. Security cooperation remains open partly because it is placed inside frameworks where Denmark still has greater formal authority. Denmark becomes more protective, but not less structurally powerful. Greenland becomes more visibly agency-bearing, but still acts within an uneven security framework. The result is therefore closer Danish-Greenlandic coordination under US pressure, but not equality.

9. References.

9.1. Academic and background sources.

ActionAid International. (2026, January 15). *Greenlandic organisations call for demonstrations for unity and support for Greenland*. ActionAid.

<https://actionaid.org/news/2026/greenlandic-organisations-call-demonstrations-unity-and-support-greenland>

Buzan, B., Wæver, O., & De Wilde, J. (1998). *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Curtis, J. & Fella, S. (2026) *President Trump and Greenland: Frequently asked questions*. UK Parliament. URL: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10472/>

FitzGerald, J. (2026, January 22). Why does Trump want Greenland, and what could it mean for Nato? BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c74x4m71pmjo>

Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste. (2025). Udsyn 2025.

<https://www.fe-ddis.dk/globalassets/fe/dokumenter/2025/-fe-udsyn-25-.pdf>

Forsvarsministeriet. (2025a). *Delaftale 1 om Arktis og Nordatlanten under forsvarsforliget 2024–2033* [Sub-agreement 1 on the Arctic and North Atlantic under the Defence Agreement 2024–2033].

<https://www.fmn.dk/globalassets/fmn/dokumenter/-aftaletekst-.pdf>

Forsvarsministeriet. (2025b). *Delaftale 2 om Arktis og Nordatlanten under forsvarsforliget 2024–2033* [Sub-agreement 2 on the Arctic and North Atlantic under the Defence Agreement 2024–2033].

<https://www.fmn.dk/globalassets/fmn/dokumenter/-endelig---opdateret-aftaletekst-delaftale-2-om-arktis-og-nordatlanten-.pdf>

- Gad, U. P., Rud, S., Jacobsen, M., & Rasmussen, R. K. (2024a). Ch. 8 Greenland's desecuritization of security and defense. In M. Jacobsen, U. P. Gad, & O. Wæver (Eds.), *Greenland in Arctic security: (De)securitization dynamics under climatic thaw and geopolitical freeze* (pp. 227–252). University of Michigan Press.
- Gad, U. P., Wæver, O., & Jacobsen, M. (2024b). Ch. 11 Conclusion: Greenland in Arctic security. In M. Jacobsen, U. P. Gad, & O. Wæver (Eds.), *Greenland in Arctic security: (De)securitization dynamics under climatic thaw and geopolitical freeze* (pp. 310–349). University of Michigan Press.
- Gricius, G. (2025). Constructing low tension: The role of experts and narratives in the case of Greenland. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 00108367251364175.
- Hansen, E. S. (2023). Post-colonial gaslighting and Greenlandic independence: When ontological insecurity sustains hierarchy. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 58(4), 460-484.
- Hansen-Magnusson, H., & Gehrke, C. (2025). The Arctic as a boundary object: who negotiates Arctic governance?. *International Affairs*, 101(3), 925-945.
- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. (2014, March 20). *Debate about uranium mining in Greenland*.
<https://iwgia.org/en/kalaallit-nunaat-greenland/1990-debate-about-uranium-mining-in-greenland.html>
- Jacobsen, M. (2019). *Arctic identity interactions: Reconfiguring dependency in Greenland's and Denmark's foreign policies* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Copenhagen).
- Jacobsen, M., Wæver, O., & Gad, U. P. (Eds.). (2024). *Greenland in Arctic Security: (De)securitization Dynamics under Climatic Thaw and Geopolitical Freeze*. University of Michigan Press.

Jacobsen, M., & Lindbjerg, S. L. (2024). Ch. 7 Denmark's security perspectives on USA, China, and Russia in Greenland: How great power threats made Danish politicians talk about independent Greenlandic agency. In M. Jacobsen, U. P. Gad, & R. C. Thomasen (Eds.), *Greenland in Arctic security: (De)securitization dynamics under climatic thaw and geopolitical freeze* (pp. 196–220). University of Michigan Press.

Karyotis, G., Paterson, I., & Judge, A. (2025). Understanding securitization success: A new analytical framework. *International Studies Review*, 27(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viaf006>

Milliken, J. (1999). The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods. *European journal of international relations*, 5(2), 225-254.

Panke, D. (2018). *Research design and method selection: Making good choices in the social sciences*. SAGE.

Rahbek-Clemmensen, J., & Sørensen, C. T. N. (2021). *Sikkerhedspolitik i Arktis og Nordatlanten*. Djøf Forlag.

Rekvig, G., & Finger, M. (2025). *The New Dynamics of Arctic Governance*. Springer.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96-4868-9_1

Risfelt, L. (2024). The Arctic Front: A study using the Securitization Theory to analyse in which way the Arctic region is perceived a security and defence concern within Swedish Arctic discourse.

Schwartz, M., & Baskaran, G. (2026). Greenland, rare earths, and Arctic security (CSIS Report). Center for Strategic and International Studies.

https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2026-01/260108_Schwartz_Greenland_Security.pdf?VersionId=IH90a1bk2QUEecJKhdvSxTqoLSIPoSn3

Statsministeriet. (2009). Act on Greenland Self-Government (Act no. 473 of 12 June 2009).

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

9.2. Empirical material/data sources.

Arctic Circle (2026, March 12) Foreign Minister of Greenland, Vivian Motzfeldt. [Video].

YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuYC53uTIEg>

Associated Press. (2026, January 14) *Press conference after US-Denmark-Greenland talks in Washington*. [Video] Youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/KDol6P5OmY8?si=O-GQzPcHBpAg-afE>.

DWS News (2026, February 7) FULL PRESSER: Denmark Canada Greenland Ministers Unite For Historic Arctic Press Conference | AC14. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxZa52GTh58&t=1s>

Élysée (2025, June 15). Conférence de presse depuis le Groenland. [Video]. YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/live/xC1FiOlv9I4?si=iIZ5QR7-bnyT_EEY

EU Debates (2026, February 8) Greenland Is Not for Sale! Vivian Motzfeldt Draws Clear Red Lines at Arctic Frontiers! [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArYu7WwS6cg&t=3s>

European Parliament. (2025, October 8). *Greenland's PM Jens-Frederik Nielsen addresses MEPs* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPVa3nneLkM>

FRANCE 24 English. (2026, January 28). *Replay: France's Macron, Denmark and Greenland leaders give joint press conference*. [Video]. YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBhqC_w-xfQ

Greenland in USA and Canada [@GreenlandRepDC]. (2026, January 4). Statement by the Prime Minister of Greenland Jens-Frederik Nielsen [Post]. X.

<https://x.com/GreenlandRepDC/status/2008245444472963299?s=20>

Guardian News (2026, Jan 6) Denmark, Greenland push back on Trump remarks, say Greenland not for conquest. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2EwL2Vn-TsM>

Rasmussen, L. L. [@larsloekke]. (2025, March 28). *Dear American friends, ...* [Video statement] [Post]. X. <https://x.com/larsloekke/status/1905764027210547565?s=20>

Reuters. (2026, January 22) LIVE: Greenland's PM Jens-Frederik Nielsen holds a briefing.

[Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLwCFvwHw2U&t=92s>

Statsministeriet. (2025, January 10). *Pressemøde den 10. januar 2025* [Transcript of press conference].

<https://stm.dk/presse/pressemoedearkiv/2025/pressemoede-den-10-januar-2025/>

Statsministeriet. (2025, April 3). *Pressemøde den 3. april 2025* [Transcript of press conference].

<https://stm.dk/presse/pressemoedearkiv/2025/pressemoede-den-3-april-2025/>

Statsministeriet. (2025, May 25). *Statsministeren, lagmanden og formanden for Naalakkersuisut deltager i nordisk ministermøde* [Pressrelease].

<https://stm.dk/presse/pressemeddelelser/2025/statsministeren-lagmanden-og-formanden-for-naalakkersuisut-deltager-i-nordisk-ministermoede/>

Statsministeriet. (2026, January 4). *Udtalelse fra statsminister Mette Frederiksen* [Presserelease].

<https://stm.dk/presse/pressemeddelelser/2026/udtalelse-fra-statsminister-mette-frederiksen/>

Statsministeriet. (2026, January 13). *Pressemøde den 13. januar 2026* [Transcript of press conference].

<https://stm.dk/presse/pressemoedearkiv/2026/pressemoede-den-13-januar-2026/>

TALKING WITH TVP WORLD. (2026, April 9). *“We fought for this”*: Greenlanders cherish their autonomy | Pipaluk Lyngé. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://youtu.be/WmSus41M07U?si=eaJwQl2BWk00KqjD>

TALKING WITH TVP WORLD (2025, March 25) Trump turns towards Greenland again | Pipaluk Lyngé-Rasmussen. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://youtu.be/5BDeA-iqCXE?si=tbtehLYk4PmQ286G>

TV 2 Nyheder. (2025, January 6). *Mette Frederiksen: Grønland er ikke til salg* [Video]. TV 2 Nyheder.

<https://nyheder.tv2.dk/live/2025-01-06-kampen-om-groenlands-fremtid/mette-frederiksen--groenland-er-ikke-til-salg?entry=4b2880c9-b346-44e4-862d-420de86b42c6>

TV 2 Nyheder. (2026, January 5). *Hvis USA angriber, hører alting op, siger statsministeren* [Video]. TV 2 Nyheder.

<https://nyheder.tv2.dk/video/2026-01-05-hvis-usa-angriber-hoerer-aling-op-siger-statsministeren-6387256568112>

TV 2 Nyheder. (2026, January 5). *Grønland ønsker ikke at være en del af USA, siger statsministeren* [Video]. TV 2 Nyheder.

<https://nyheder.tv2.dk/video/2026-01-05-groenland-oensker-ikke-at-vaere-en-del-af-usa-siger-statsministeren-6387256166112>

TV 2 Nyheder. (2026, January 18). *Lars Løkke kalder situation i Grønland paradoksal* [Video].

TV 2 Nyheder.

<https://nyheder.tv2.dk/video/2026-01-18-lars-loekke-kalder-situation-i-groenland--paradoksal-6387905966112>

Statsministeriet. (2026, January 22). *Udtalelse fra statsminister Mette Frederiksen 22. januar 2026* [Pressrelease].

<https://stm.dk/presse/pressemeddelelser/2026/udtalelse-fra-statsminister-mette-frederiksen-22-januar-2026/>

TV 2 Nyheder. (2026, April 9). *Trump har ikke opgivet sin vision om Grønland, siger Løkke* [Video]. TV 2 Nyheder.

<https://nyheder.tv2.dk/video/2026-04-09-trump-har-ikke-opgivet-sin-vision-om-groenland-siger-loekke-6392806936112>

Udenrigsministeriet. (2026, January 18). *Statement from Danish Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen* [Post]. Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/17SEmP6MDZ/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

Appendix A

ID	Type	Speaker	Date	Description	Time-period	Constellation & Audience
A1	TV-Interview	Pipaluk-Lynge Rasmussen	25/03/25	Greenlandic MP addresses Trump turning towards Greenland.	Pre-Venezuela	Greenland alone, International audience
A2	Press conference	Jens-Fredrik Nielsen, Mette Frederiksen & Emanuel Macron	15/06/25	Macron visits Greenland for press conference	Pre-Venezuela	Joint statement, International audience
A3	Press conference	Jens-Frederik Nielsen	08/10/25	Statement in european parliament	Pre-Venezuela	Joint statement, International audience
A4	Press conference	Jens-Frederik Nielsen	05/01/26	Greenlandic PM addressing Trump's threats.	Post-Venezuela, Pre-DC	Greenland alone, Domestic Greenlandic audience
A5	Press conference	Vivian Motzfeldt & Lars Løkke Rasmussen	14/01/26	Danish and Greenlandic foreign ministers speak after meeting with US Vice president JD Vance.	Post DC-meeting	Joint statement, International and domestic Greenlandic audience.
A6	Press conference	Jens-Frederik Nielsen	22/01/26	Greenlandic PM addresses media post US meeting	Post DC-meeting	Greenland alone, International audience
A7	Press conference	Jens-Frederik Nielsen, Mette Frederiksen & Anita Anand	07/02/26	Canadian foreign minister visits Greenland following opening of Canadian consulate.	Post DC-meeting	Joint statement, International audience.
A8	Speech	Vivian Motzfeldt	08/02/26	Speech at Arctic frontiers conference	Post DC-meeting	Greenland alone, International Audience.
A9	Speech	Vivian	12/03/26	Speech at Arctic	Post	Greenland alone,

		Motzfeldt		circle conference	DC-meeting	International Audience.
A10	Press conference	Mute B. Egede & Mette Frederiksen	10/01/25	Danish and former Greenlandic PM at biannual Realm meeting.	Pre-Venezuela	Joint statement, Realm audience.
A11	Press conference	Jens-Fredrik Nielsen & Mette Frederiksen	13/01/26	Danish and Greenlandic PM address US acquisition in Danish	Post-Venezuela a pre-DC	Joint statement, Realm audience.
A12	X publication	Jens-Fredrik Nielsen	05/01/26	Statement by Greenlandic PM addressing Trump's threats.	Post-Venezuela, Pre-DC	Greenland alone, Domestic Greenlandic audience
A13	TV-Interview	Pipaluk-Lynge Rasmussen	09/04/26	Greenlandic MP addresses	Post-D.C.	Greenland alone, International audience.
A14	Social media statement	Lars Løkke Rasmussen	29/03/25	Danish Foreign Minister, Video-statement on social media (X and Facebook)	Pre-Venezuela	Denmark alone, International audience.
A15	Press release	Mette Frederiksen	26/05/25	Danish PM's press release by the PM's Office.	Pre-Venezuela	Denmark alone, Realm audience.
A16	Media statement	Mette Frederiksen	07/01/25	Danish PM interview with TV2.	Pre-Venezuela	Denmark alone, Danish domestic audience.
A17	Press conference	Mette Frederiksen, Mute B. Egede & Jens Frederik Nielsen	03/04/25	Danish PM, former Greenlandic PM and current PM press conference during Danish PM visit in Greenland	Pre-Venezuela	Joint statement, Danish and Greenlandic domestic audiences.
A18	Media statement	Mette Frederiksen	05/01/26	Danish PM interview with TV2	Post-Venezuela, Pre-DC	Denmark alone, Danish domestic audience.

A19	Press release	Mette Frederiksen	04/01/26	Danish PM's press release by the PM's Office.	Post-Venezuela, Pre-DC	Denmark alone, International audience.
A20	Media statement	Lars Løkke Rasmussen	18/01/26	Danish Foreign Minister asked about situation by TV2	Post-DC	Denmark alone, Danish domestic audience.
A21	Press release	Mette Frederiksen	22/01/26	Danish PM's press release by the PM's Office.	Post-DC	Denmark alone, Realm audience
A22	Social media statement	Lars Løkke Rasmussen	18/01/26	Danish Foreign Minister, statement on social media (X, Instagram and Facebook)	Post-DC	Denmark alone, International audience.
A23	Media statement	Lars Løkke Rasmussen	09/04/26	Danish Foreign Minister asked about situation by TV2	Post-DC	Denmark alone, Danish domestic audience.
A24	Press conference	Jens-Fredrik Nielsen, Mette Fredriksen & Emanuel Macron	28/01/26	DK & GL PM speak alongside Emanuel Macron	Post-DC	International Audience

Appendix B

Top-level code	Code name	Definition (what to code)	Typical indicators / examples
Audience	Denmark domestic	Statement that appears directed toward the Danish public, Danish institutions, or Danish political debate.	“The Danish people”; “the Folketing”; “our debate in Denmark”; references to Danish public opinion or Danish political responsibility.
	Greenland domestic	Statements that appear directed toward the Greenlandic public, Greenlandic institutions, or Greenlandic political debate.	“The Greenlandic people”; “Greenlanders”; “our citizens” when clearly Greenlandic; “Naalakkersuisut”; “Inatsisartut”; domestic appeals to Greenlandic unity or agency.
	Realm	Statement that constructs the Danish Realm as the relevant audience or political community.	“The Kingdom of Denmark”; “the Realm”; “we in the Realm”; references to Denmark and Greenland standing together.
	International	Statements that appear directed toward international audiences, allies, NATO, the United States, the EU, or wider global publics.	“Our allies”; “NATO”; “the United States”; “international law”; “the international community”; statements in English or at international conferences.

Discursive moves	Securitizing move	Statements that frame an issue as urgent, serious, exceptional, or existential, and/or present it as requiring priority or special political attention.	“Threat”; “serious”; “unacceptable”; “sovereignty is at stake”; “cannot be changed by force”; warnings about annexation, ownership, military attack, or alliance breakdown.
	De-securitizing move	Statements that reframe an issue as manageable through normal politics, dialogue, law, diplomacy, alliances, or existing institutional frameworks.	“Dialogue”; “proper channels”; “existing agreements”; “NATO framework”; “cooperation remains open”; “handled through law/diplomacy.”; emphasis on law, diplomacy, administration
Framing	Existential threat	Passages where an issue is framed as a fundamental danger to sovereignty, territory, society, alliance order, or political survival.	“Attack”; “annexation”; “ownership”; “everything comes to an end”; “small countries should not fear large countries”; “threats against sovereignty” “risk to our security”, “jeopardises peace”, “undermines our sovereignty”.
	Normal politics	Passages where an issue is framed as manageable through ordinary politics, cooperation, law, diplomacy, economy, or institutional procedures.	“Administrative question”; “technical matter”; “part of normal foreign policy”: “handled by the usual procedures”; “dialogue”; “business”; “investments”; “existing agreements”; “normal cooperation”; “proper channels”; “international law.”

Referent object	Greenlandic sovereignty	Passages where Greenlandic territorial integrity, self-determination, decision-making authority, or right to consent is presented as needing protection.	“Sovereignty/self-government”, “control over our territory/resources/foreign policy”, “who decides...”. “territorial integrity”; “Greenland belongs to the Greenlanders”; “not for sale”; “mandate to make agreements”; “red lines.”
	Realm unity	Passages where the coherence, unity, or future of the Danish Realm is presented as needing protection or management..	“The Realm”; “Kingdom of Denmark”; “standing together”; “tightening bonds”; “handled together.”
	Greenlandic society	Passages where Greenlandic people, communities, democracy, culture, welfare, or future generations are presented as needing protection.	“The Greenlandic people”; “our society”; “our citizens”; “democracy”; “future”; “culture”; “not decided over Greenlanders’ heads.”
	Arctic stability	Passages where peace, stability, low tension, surveillance, defence, or security in the Arctic/North Atlantic is presented as what needs protection.	“Low tension”; “Arctic security”; “security in the Arctic”; “surveillance”; “North Atlantic”; “changed security environment.”
	Danish security	Passages where Denmark’s security, authority, credibility, or ability to protect Greenland is presented as at stake.	“Denmark cannot protect Greenland”; “Danish responsibility”; “the Kingdom’s security”; “Denmark’s authority in the Realm.”

	Alliance unity	Passages where NATO, alliance trust, Western unity, or the post-war security order is presented as needing protection.	“NATO”; “alliance”; “Western alliance”; “security since the Second World War”; “allies respecting borders.”
Object of de-securitization	US relationship	Passages where the US relationship is moved away from threat framing and back into alliance cooperation, friendship, partnership, or dialogue.	“Closest ally”; “long-standing partner”; “we stood side by side”; “bring back the relationship”; “cooperation with the US remains open.”
	Military /security cooperation	“Closest ally”; “long-standing partner”; “we stood side by side”; “bring back the relationship”; “cooperation with the US remains open.”	“1951 defence agreement”; “broad access to Greenland”; “within existing frameworks”; “NATO engagement”; “enhance security.”
	Greenlandic independence	Passages where Greenlandic independence is framed as legitimate, understandable, or normal politics rather than a threat.	“Independence is legitimate”; “Greenlanders decide their future”; “not cutting all ties”; “self-determination.”
	Realm relationship	Passages where tensions within the Realm are reframed as manageable through cooperation, modernization, mutual respect, or shared crisis handling.	“The Realm is changing”; “handled together”; “closer bonds”; “Denmark and Greenland together.”

	Crisis management	Passages where the crisis is shifted from emergency or rupture into diplomacy, law, alliance coordination, or controlled political management.	“Democracy”; “diplomacy”; “proper channels”; “rules-based order”; “dialogue”; “international rules of the game.”
Relationship framing	Asymmetry + hierarchy	Passages that frame relations between Denmark, Greenland, the US, or allies as unequal, dependent, pressured, or structurally uneven.	“Small countries”; “large countries”; “pressure”; “Denmark holds authority”; “not equality”; “bypassed”; “cannot protect Greenland.”
	Unity/ cooperation	“Small countries”; “large countries”; “pressure”; “Denmark holds authority”; “not equality”; “bypassed”; “cannot protect Greenland.”	“We stand together”; “close cooperation”; “shared responsibility”; “together with Denmark”; “with NATO and allies”; “respectful cooperation.”
Responsibility / authority	Greenland leads	Passages where Greenland claims or is assigned authority to decide, consent, set terms, or define red lines.	“Greenlanders decide”; “on Greenlanders’ terms”; “our red lines”; “mandate”; “not over our heads.”
	Denmark leads	Passages where Denmark is presented as responsible for acting, protecting, negotiating, coordinating, or managing security.	“Denmark has worked for NATO engagement”; “the Kingdom has responsibility”; “Danish government”; “foreign and security policy.”
	Shared with allies	Passages where responsibility is placed with NATO, the EU, the US, Europe, or allied partners.	“Together with NATO”; “with allies”; “with Europe”; “Arctic states in NATO”; “shared security responsibility.”

	Shared with DK–GL Realm	Passages where responsibility is shared between Denmark and Greenland, or placed inside the Realm relationship.	“Denmark and Greenland together”; “the Kingdom of Denmark”; “coordinated with Naalakkersuisut”; “handled together.”
External actors	US	Any mention of the United States as an actor in relation to Greenland and the Arctic (ally, partner, pressure source, investor, security guarantor, or possible threat in relation to Greenland).	References to US bases, presence, investments, interest in buying Greenland, “The United States”; “our American ally”; “US interest”; “US military presence”; “ownership”; “annexation”; “Golden Dome.”
	Russia/ China	Passages where Russia and/or China are positioned as external security concerns, strategic competitors, or drivers of Arctic instability.	Passages where Russia and/or China are positioned as external security concerns, strategic competitors, or drivers of Arctic instability. “Russia’s war”; “China’s focus on the Arctic”; “great-power rivalry”; “hybrid threats”; “Chinese investments”; “near-Arctic state.”; “War in Europe”,
	NATO / other allies	Passages where NATO or allied partners are positioned as relevant actors in Arctic security, crisis management, or protection	“NATO”; “allies”; “Europe”; “Arctic states in NATO”; “security guarantee”; “alliance cooperation.”

	Europe/EU	Passages where Europe or the EU are positioned as partners, protective frameworks, or political/security actors.	“Europe”; “European partners”; “EU cooperation”; “European Union”; references to EU values, support, or partnership.
--	-----------	--	--