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SECONDARY NATIONAL SECURITY: A CASE STUDY OF GREENLAND**

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between sovereignty and national security by questioning the assumption that they depend on one another. This paper aims to conceptualize secondary national security within the broader theoretical framework of Security Studies associated with the Copenhagen School and Stephen Krasner's understanding of sovereignty, and to apply this concept as an analytical framework in a qualitative case study of Greenland. The analysis demonstrates that national security can exist in the absence of full sovereignty through a configuration in which security provision is externalized, while security perception and the political articulation of security remain internalized. Greenland illustrates how political entities lacking independent military capabilities nevertheless develop autonomous security perceptions and security priorities. The findings indicate that security perception and provision can be institutionally separated yet politically interconnected. The paper concludes that national security is not a fixed, inherent

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** This article is the result of the work on the project "Changes in the Strategic Environment of the Republic of Serbia – Trends and Implications Relevant to National Security and Defense" of the Strategic Research Institute (ISI/DH/2/26–28).

attribute of a sovereign state, but rather a variable, context-dependent phenomenon. For this reason, the concept of secondary national security provides a useful analytical framework for studying security practices under conditions of limited statehood.

Keywords: secondary national security, sovereignty, limited statehood, security governance, Greenland, security perceptions, externalization of security.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of national security has long been viewed as inseparable from the sovereign state. Certain classical and contemporary approaches within Security Studies assume that the state, as a political entity exercising supreme authority over a defined territory and population, serves as the primary referent object and the principal provider of security (Buzan 1991, 65; Walt 1991, 212). Within this framework, sovereignty is not merely a legal attribute, but also a practical precondition for the formulation and implementation of national security policy, primarily because of its connection with the monopoly over the legitimate use of force.

However, the development of contemporary security studies, particularly following the broadening and deepening of the concept of security and the emergence of critical approaches, has expanded the range of referent objects of security, which, in addition to the state, may also include individuals, social groups, nations, regional communities, economic systems, and even the biosphere (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). In this context, the paper proceeds from the assumption that certain non-sovereign or partially sovereign political entities may also constitute significant referent objects of security under conditions of geopolitical competition and strategic dependence. The concept of secondary national security is introduced as an analytical framework for understanding these configurations.

Yet, developments in contemporary international relations increasingly call this assumption into question. The expansion of global governance structures, the proliferation of politically autonomous territories, and the growing complexity of security interdependence

have produced entities that do not fully correspond to the traditional model of sovereign statehood (Lake 2009, 18). Although such entities frequently lack independent military capabilities and do not exercise full control over their external security, they nonetheless articulate distinct security perceptions, priorities, and policy preferences.

This apparent mismatch between political authority and security capabilities raises a key analytical question: can national security exist in the absence of full sovereignty? This paper proceeds from the assumption that national security is not necessarily a function of full sovereignty, but rather the result of specific institutional and political configurations.

In response, this paper introduces the concept of secondary national security. The term refers to a form of security that emerges within political entities lacking full sovereign authority, especially in the domain of defense, but which still retain the ability to define and pursue their own security interests. In such configurations, security is at least partially externalized, typically guaranteed by a sovereign state, while the perception and articulation of security remain, to a significant extent, internal.

The paper analyzes Greenland, an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark, as an illustrative example. Greenland represents a particularly instructive case due to its combination of extensive internal self-government, the absence of independent military capacity, and its growing relevance within the Arctic region (Rahbek-Clemmensen 2017, 55). While Denmark formally retains responsibility for defense and foreign policy, Greenland has increasingly developed its own perspectives on issues such as resource security, climate change, and geopolitical positioning.

The paper is structured in several parts. It first examines the theoretical relationship between sovereignty and national security, highlighting its core assumptions and limitations. It then develops the concept of secondary national security as a distinct analytical category. This framework is subsequently applied to the case of Greenland to demonstrate how security can be conceptualized and practiced under conditions of incomplete sovereignty. The final section considers the broader implications of this concept for security policy, particularly in the context of small political entities, autonomous regions, and

other forms of dependent security arrangements. By reassessing the traditional equation of national security with the sovereign state, the paper introduces the concept of secondary national security as a new analytical category, aiming to contribute to a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of security in contemporary international relations.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The concept of national security has historically been closely connected with the notion of sovereignty, as the state has been regarded in a significant part of the Security Studies and International Relations literature as the primary provider and guarantor of security (Waltz 1979; Buzan 1991; Krasner 1999). Within the classical Westphalian framework, the state is understood as the supreme political authority within a defined territory, possessing both the right and the capacity to ensure its own security (Krasner 1999, 20). Sovereignty implies not only formal independence but also effective control over internal and external security functions, including the organization and deployment of military force.

Within traditional security studies, this relationship has rarely been questioned. As Barry Buzan argues, the state functions simultaneously as the referent object of security and as its primary provider, thereby reinforcing an analytical framework in which national security is both defined by and dependent upon state sovereignty (Buzan 1991, 65). Similarly, Stephen Walt emphasizes that the core of security studies lies in the examination of threats to the state, particularly in the military domain, further consolidating the centrality of sovereignty (Walt 1991, 212). Under conditions of an anarchic structure of international relations, security perceptions and interpretations of threats remain, to a significant extent, shaped by the positions and interests of actors, further underscoring the relativity and contextuality of security (Proroković i Parezanović 2023, 13–14). However, this perspective remains limited because it assumes the institutional completeness of the state, which does not apply to many contemporary political entities.

However, this conventional linkage rests on a set of implicit assumptions that have increasingly come under scrutiny. It presumes that the state maintains a monopoly over the legitimate use of force within its territory, that the state possesses the institutional capacity to translate security perceptions into policy and action, and that sovereignty is indivisible and functionally comprehensive. While these assumptions may hold for fully consolidated states, they are less applicable to a growing number of political entities characterized by partial sovereignty, limited capacity, or external dependence.

In response, contemporary international relations scholarship has emphasized the variability and fragmentation of sovereignty. Stephen Krasner's distinction between different dimensions of sovereignty (domestic, interdependence, international legal...) demonstrates that states often lack full control across these domains (Krasner 1999, 9). This conceptual distinction enables the analysis of political entities that exercise authority in certain domains but lack it in others.

In this context, David A. Lake introduces the concept of hierarchy in international relations, arguing that interactions among political units are not always characterized by complete anarchy. Instead, relations of authority and dependence can emerge between states and subordinate entities, particularly in the domain of security (Lake 2009, 18). In such arrangements, weaker actors often delegate or relinquish certain aspects of their security to stronger actors in exchange for protection, resulting in structural asymmetries. This perspective is particularly important for understanding autonomous territories and non-sovereign political entities. Although such entities typically lack their own military capabilities and rely on external actors for defense, they retain varying degrees of political autonomy and internal governance. As a result, they occupy a hybrid position in the international system, between full sovereignty and complete dependence.

The expansion of the security agenda beyond the military domain has further complicated the relationship between sovereignty and security. The "widening" of security studies, associated with the Copenhagen School, has introduced additional sectors such as economic, environmental, and societal security (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 7). This broader understanding shifts attention away from an exclusive focus on territorial defense toward a more complex set of

vulnerabilities and threats, many of which do not require traditional military capabilities to be articulated or managed. This trend is also confirmed by domestic research indicating that contemporary threats are increasingly moving beyond the military sphere and require an expanded understanding of security that encompasses political, economic, and social factors (Milenković i Subotić 2022, 52).

Within this expanded framework, political entities lacking full sovereignty may nonetheless develop distinct security perceptions and policy preferences. Issues such as environmental change, resource governance, and economic resilience can be framed as security concerns even in the absence of sovereign control over defense. This suggests that the capacity to perceive, define, and prioritize security issues may be analytically separable from the ability to provide security in the traditional sense.

The resulting gap between security perception and security provision challenges the conventional equation of national security with sovereign statehood. This gap is further reinforced at the regional level, where security dynamics are shaped through patterns of interdependence rather than purely national capabilities (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 44). This interdependence is further deepened by technological development and global power dynamics, which influence the redistribution of military and security capacities and alter the traditional structure of security in the international system (Miloradović 2023, 30; Vuletić 2025, 84–85). If security is understood as a multidimensional, socially constructed phenomenon rather than exclusively as a function of military power and state sovereignty, it becomes possible to identify different referent objects of security that transcend the traditional state-centric framework. The development of contemporary Security Studies, particularly through the broadening and deepening of the concept of security, has made it possible to regard not only states, but also individuals, social groups, nations, economic systems, regional communities, and the biosphere as referent objects of security (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998). In this context, the present paper proceeds from the assumption that certain non-sovereign or partially sovereign political entities, insofar as they possess a significant degree of autonomy and a specific geopolitical relevance,

may constitute a distinct category of referent objects of security, despite lacking full sovereignty in the classical state sense.

Beyond the state-centric perspective, regional governance frameworks further complicate the relationship between sovereignty and security. In the Arctic context, governance has evolved into a multilayered system characterized by cooperation, overlapping jurisdictions, and functional interdependence rather than strict sovereignty-based control (Young 2017, 14). This environment enables non-sovereign actors to participate in shaping security-relevant agendas, particularly in environmental protection and resource management. Consequently, security becomes embedded in governance structures that transcend traditional state boundaries (Keil and Knecht 2017, 6). Contemporary technological transformations further complicate this relationship, as they change how information is collected, processed, and used in security processes, which is clearly observable in modern armed conflicts (Vuletić 2011; Vuletić 2012). In particular, the application of artificial intelligence in military systems affects the acceleration of decision-making, increases dependence on complex technological infrastructures, and introduces new risks, including issues of reliability, accountability, and cyber vulnerability (Đorić i Glišin 2023, 61–65; Vuletić 2025, 94–95; Vuletić 2026, 63–66).

This relationship provides the foundation for the concept developed in this paper. By questioning the necessity of sovereignty as a precondition for national security, it becomes possible to explore alternative configurations in which security is partially externalized but internally articulated. Such configurations are not anomalies, but increasingly common features of the contemporary international system, particularly in regions characterized by asymmetrical power relations and complex governance arrangements.

Therefore, the relationship between sovereignty and national security should not be understood as fixed or absolute, but rather as contingent and variable. Recognizing this variability is a necessary step toward developing conceptual tools that capture the diversity of security practices beyond the traditional state-centric framework.

CONCEPTUALIZING SECONDARY NATIONAL SECURITY

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that the traditional linkage between national security and sovereignty is neither as stable nor as universal as often assumed. The fragmentation of sovereignty, the emergence of hierarchical security arrangements, and the widening of the security agenda collectively indicate that security can be conceptualized beyond the confines of fully sovereign statehood (Krasner 1999, 9; Lake 2009, 18; Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998, 7). This perspective is further reinforced by arguments that modern statehood represents an ideal type, as many political entities operate under conditions of limited sovereignty and capacity (Risse 2013). Building on the above, this section introduces the concept of secondary national security.

At its core, secondary national security refers to a form of security that emerges in political entities that do not possess full sovereign control over the means of coercion, particularly in the domain of external defence, but nevertheless retain the institutional capacity to articulate their own security perceptions, interests, and priorities. In such contexts, security is partially or predominantly externalized, while its interpretation and political articulation remain, at least in part, internalized. Formally, secondary national security can be defined as a configuration in which a political entity lacking full sovereignty maintains autonomous security perceptions and policy preferences while simultaneously relying on an external actor to provide key security functions, above all defense (Wendt 1999, 92; Lake 2009, 35). Unlike the concept of societal security, in which the primary referent object is the collective identity of a social group or nation, the concept of secondary national security developed in this paper refers to institutionalized political entities that possess a certain degree of autonomy, but lack full sovereignty.

This definition rests on three constitutive elements. The absence of full sovereignty, particularly in the domain of external security, implies that political entities operating under conditions of secondary national security lack independent control over the use of military force in the international arena. Responsibility for defence usually rests with

a sovereign state or an international organization acting as a security guarantor. This reflects broader patterns of authority delegation and hierarchical ordering in international relations, where weaker actors accept asymmetric arrangements in exchange for protection (Lake 2009, 18).

The presence of autonomous security perception indicates that these political entities, despite their dependence on external actors for security provision, are not passive recipients of protection. They develop their own understandings of threats, vulnerabilities, and priorities, which may or may not align with those of the security guarantor. This reflects the broader insight that security is not an objective condition but a product of political articulation, whereby actors define what constitutes a threat (Wæver 1995, 55). This dimension draws on the Copenhagen School's emphasis on the discursive and political construction of security, where security issues are framed and prioritized through political processes (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 21). The importance of local actors is further emphasized by critiques of state-centric approaches to security governance, which show that domestic actors can shape security outcomes even under conditions of external dependence (Schroeder and Chappuis 2014, 134–135). This further reinforces the analytical distinction between the perception of security and its provision.

The partial internalization of security policy reflects broader patterns of governance in areas of limited statehood, where authority is not monopolized by a single actor but distributed across multiple levels and includes both state and non-state participants (Risse 2013). While key aspects of security provision remain externalized, political entities may exercise varying degrees of influence over how security issues are framed and addressed domestically. Such arrangements are not exceptional, but rather represent a widespread feature of the contemporary international system (Risse 2011, 6).

Taken together, these elements produce a hybrid configuration in which security perceptions and control over key security instruments are distributed between internal and external actors. This separation constitutes the defining feature of secondary national security and distinguishes it from both classical national security and other forms of dependent security arrangements. It is also characteristic of governance

in areas of limited statehood, where the provision of collective goods, including security, is carried out through complex interactions between domestic and external actors (Risse 2013). Such arrangements reflect broader patterns of interaction between these actors, through which security governance emerges via processes of negotiation, contestation, and adaptation rather than unilateral control (Schroeder and Chappuis 2014, 136–137).

The relevance of this concept is particularly evident in contexts where authority is distributed across multiple levels and among different actors. In the Arctic region, for example, institutional frameworks enable significant participation of non-sovereign entities in policymaking, including in areas with clear security implications (Young 2017, 52). This demonstrates that perceptions and articulations of security can persist even in the absence of full sovereign control over military capabilities. In such conditions, secondary national security should not be seen as an exception but rather as a common, structurally embedded feature of contemporary systems of governance (Keil and Knecht 2017, 11).

To more precisely determine its analytical position, secondary national security needs to be distinguished from related concepts. Unlike classical national security, in which the state defines threats, formulates policy, and possesses the means to implement it (Buzan 1991, 65), secondary national security implies a separation of these functions. Simultaneously, it differs from protectorate or colonial security arrangements, in which the role of domestic actors is minimal or highly constrained, and security is both defined and implemented by an external actor, leaving very limited space for autonomous perception and policy formation. By contrast, secondary national security presupposes the existence of a politically relevant entity capable of expressing its own security interests. This concept complements, rather than replicates, notions such as security dependence or reliance on alliances. While alliances imply cooperation between sovereign actors, secondary national security describes a more asymmetrical and institutionalized form of dependence. In this sense, it is closer to hierarchical security relationships, but with an emphasis on the role of internal actors (Lake 2009, 35).

Secondary national security is not an exception, but a phenomenon observable in various political contexts (Risse 2011, 10). This conceptualization has important implications for public policy analysis: it highlights the possibility of divergence between the security priorities of a political entity and those of an external guarantor, raises questions of accountability in multi-level security arrangements, and highlights the importance of security issues articulated within the competences of non-sovereign political entities. By introducing secondary national security as an analytical category, this paper expands the conceptual framework of security studies and offers an approach for analyzing security practices under conditions of shared or limited sovereignty. In the next chapter, this framework is applied to the case of Greenland.

GREENLAND AS A MODEL OF SECONDARY NATIONAL SECURITY

The case of Greenland provides a particularly suitable model for illustrating the concept of secondary national security. In this sense, Greenland is not only an empirical example but also a test of the analytical applicability of the proposed concept. As an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark, Greenland occupies a hybrid political position characterized by a high degree of internal self-government combined with structural dependence on an external actor for core security functions. This configuration closely corresponds to the defining elements outlined in the previous section.

Greenland exemplifies the absence of full sovereignty in the domain of external security. Under the constitutional arrangements of the Danish Realm, Denmark retains authority over defense and foreign policy, including the protection of Greenland's territory (Government of Denmark [GoD] 2009). Greenland lacks independent military capabilities and is not a sovereign actor in international security affairs. Instead, its external security is guaranteed through Denmark's defense policy and, indirectly, through Denmark's participation in broader security frameworks. This institutional arrangement reflects a clear case of externalized security provision, in which the means of coercion are controlled by a sovereign guarantor rather than by the political entity

itself. This externalization has deep historical roots. During the Cold War, Greenland constituted a critical component of the United States' polar strategy, particularly through the establishment of Thule Air Base, which served as a key forward operating and staging site for strategic air operations (Petersen 2011, 90–91), thereby reinforcing the long-standing external structuring of its security.

Despite this structural dependence, Greenland demonstrates a distinct and increasingly articulated security perception. Local political actors actively participate in debates on resource governance, climate change, and the geopolitical implications of Arctic development. This focus is closely linked to the economic and political importance of natural resources, which are widely perceived as a key basis for reducing dependence on external actors and achieving greater autonomy (Mortensen 2014, 94–95). These issues are increasingly viewed not only as economic or environmental challenges, but also as matters of long-term security in the context of autonomy, sustainability, and external influence. This is particularly evident in light of the growing importance of critical minerals and the vulnerability of supply chains, which increasingly connect resource governance with questions of national security in the Arctic context (Schwartz and Baskaran 2026, 1). The exploitation of mineral resources is especially regarded as a pathway toward economic self-sufficiency and a reduction of dependence on Danish financial support (Mortensen 2014, 96–97). This perspective is further reinforced by the strategic importance of rare earth elements and critical minerals, which are playing an increasingly important role in the development of advanced technologies, the energy transition, and supply chain resilience, thereby elevating resource exploitation from the level of economic activity to the level of strategic security (Schwartz and Baskaran 2026, 1–2). Greenland's growing participation in paradiplomatic activities further demonstrates its capacity to act within international relations, although Denmark formally retains authority over foreign and security policy. Paradiplomacy, understood as the participation of sub-state actors in international relations, represents a mechanism through which Greenland articulates its security and political interests, particularly in areas such as resource governance, environmental protection, and regional cooperation (Ackrén 2014, 42–43).

Greenland demonstrates a partial internalization of security policy in areas falling within its autonomous competencies. While Denmark retains formal authority over defense, Greenland exercises significant control over areas such as natural resource management, environmental policy, and aspects of economic development, each of which carries important security implications (Rahbek-Clemmensen 2017, 55). In this sense, security governance is functionally divided: military security remains externalized, while broader security dimensions are domestically managed (Gad et al. 2024, 229–230). The interaction between these elements produces a configuration in which security is neither fully external nor fully internal, but rather distributed across different levels of authority. This distribution generates both opportunities and constraints. It is also reflected in Greenland's increasing awareness of its international role and its political aspiration toward greater autonomy, including the long-term possibility of statehood (Ackrén 2014, 43). On the one hand, reliance on an external security guarantor reduces the burden of maintaining independent military capabilities, which may be economically and politically unsustainable for small or non-sovereign entities. On the other hand, it limits the political entity's ability to respond independently to external threats, particularly when its security priorities diverge from those of the guarantor.

Greenland's position within the broader Arctic governance framework further reinforces its role as a case of secondary national security. As Arctic governance increasingly operates through cooperative and multi-level mechanisms rather than strict territorial control, Greenland participates in shaping agendas related to climate change, resource extraction, and regional development (Young 2017, 89). In addition, the opening of new Arctic shipping routes and access to previously inaccessible resources further enhance Greenland's strategic relevance, linking environmental change to evolving security dynamics (Schwartz and Baskaran 2026, 2–3), and reinforcing the role of non-sovereign actors in shaping security outcomes within multi-level governance frameworks.

This potential divergence is a central feature of secondary national security. In the case of Greenland, such differences are most likely to emerge in areas such as resource exploitation, environmental

protection, or the presence of external actors. While Denmark's security policy is shaped by broader strategic considerations, including alliance commitments and international obligations, Greenland's security concerns are more closely tied to local conditions and long-term autonomy. This creates a layered security environment in which multiple security logics coexist and occasionally compete. Such divergence is rooted in competing understandings of political entity and identity, which remain internally contested and continuously negotiated within Greenlandic society (Gad 2017, 106), thereby reinforcing the structural separation between security perception and security provision. Moreover, it is reinforced by a broader political strategy that intentionally downplays security issues to preserve room for maneuver in economic and foreign policy domains (Gad et al. 2024, 231–232).

Importantly, the Greenland case also demonstrates that secondary national security is dynamic rather than static. As political autonomy evolves and external conditions change, the balance between internal perception and external provision may shift. Increased autonomy may lead to stronger articulation of independent security preferences, while changes in the strategic environment may alter the nature of dependence on the security guarantor. In this sense, secondary national security should be understood as a relational and evolving configuration rather than a fixed institutional arrangement. This perspective enables a more nuanced understanding of security practices beyond the traditional state-centric model and sets the stage for examining the broader implications of such arrangements for security policy.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SECURITY POLICY

The concept of secondary national security carries several important implications for both analysis and the practice of security policy. By identifying configurations in which political entities articulate their own security priorities despite lacking full control over the means to implement them, this concept challenges state-centric assumptions and underscores the need for more nuanced approaches under conditions of partial sovereignty and structural dependence.

Secondary national security underscores the potential divergence between a political entity's security priorities and those of its external

security guarantor. In traditional models, national security policy is assumed to reflect a unified set of interests defined and implemented by a sovereign state. However, in contexts such as Greenland, security preferences are shaped by local conditions, economic priorities, and societal concerns that may differ significantly from those of the guarantor state. This reflects a broader pattern observed among small political entities, which often rely on external security guarantees while maintaining distinct policy preferences shaped by their specific vulnerabilities and structural constraints (Thorhallsson 2018, 21). Such divergence can generate tensions in areas such as resource governance, environmental protection, and engagement with external actors, requiring policymakers to account for multiple layers of security interests within a single political framework.

The concept highlights the issue of accountability in multi-layered security arrangements. When security outcomes result from interactions between internal and external actors, it becomes less clear who is responsible for both successes and failures. External guarantors may retain formal authority over defense, while local authorities manage key aspects of non-military security. This division can produce accountability gaps, particularly in crises where rapid decision-making is required. The diffusion of authority across multiple levels complicates traditional mechanisms of democratic control and responsibility (Risse 2011, 12).

Secondary national security highlights the possibility that political entities lacking full sovereignty may nevertheless serve as relevant referent objects and actors in security. Under conditions in which security is partially or predominantly externalized, such entities still retain the capacity to articulate their own security perceptions, define priorities, and participate in shaping security policies. In this way, the concept of secondary national security points to the possibility of an institutional separation between the perception of security and control over the means of its provision. These domains become central to local understandings of security and may shape long-term strategic behavior more significantly than traditional defense considerations. This aspect is consistent with the broader trend of expanding the security agenda, in which non-military threats are increasingly recognized

as central to stability and well-being (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998, 7).

The concept has implications for the design of security partnerships and governance arrangements. External guarantors must balance the provision of effective security with respect for the political entity's autonomy. Over-centralization of decision-making risks undermining local legitimacy, while excessive decentralization may weaken strategic coherence. Effective policy, therefore, requires institutionalized mechanisms for consultation, coordination, and the incorporation of local security perspectives into broader strategic frameworks.

Secondary national security raises questions about the evolution of political status and strategic autonomy. As political entities gain greater autonomy, their security preferences may become more distinct and assertive, potentially leading to the renegotiation of existing arrangements. Conversely, changes in the external security environment may reinforce dependence on the guarantor. Security arrangements should therefore be understood as dynamic rather than fixed, requiring continuous adaptation to shifting political and strategic conditions.

This concept suggests that secondary national security is not limited to a single case, but can be applied to a wider range of political entities, including autonomous territories (e.g., Greenland, Faroe Islands), states in free association (e.g., Palau), and other forms of non-sovereign governance (e.g., Hong Kong). Recognizing this broader applicability enables comparative analysis and supports the development of more generalizable policy frameworks. Taken together, these implications indicate that security policy in contexts of incomplete sovereignty cannot be adequately understood or managed through traditional state-centric models alone. Instead, it requires an approach that acknowledges the coexistence of multiple actors, levels of authority, and security dimensions.

The case of Greenland also reflects broader transformations in Arctic governance, in which security is increasingly shaped by cooperative frameworks rather than unilateral state action. This suggests that security policy must account not only for state actors but also for non-sovereign entities participating in governance processes (Young 2017, 102). In such environments, secondary national security provides

a useful analytical lens for understanding how security is negotiated, distributed, and implemented across different levels of authority (Keil and Knecht 2017, 17).

CONCLUSION

The paper examines the relationship between sovereignty and national security by questioning the assumption that one necessarily depends on the other. Drawing on insights from security studies and international relations theory, it shows that contemporary political realities increasingly challenge the traditional state-centric framework. In response to this challenge, the paper introduces the concept of secondary national security, defined as a configuration in which a political entity lacking full sovereignty retains autonomous security perceptions and policy preferences while simultaneously relying on an external actor to provide key security functions. This concept encompasses a hybrid form of security in which security perceptions and control over key security capacities are institutionally separated, yet politically interconnected.

The case of Greenland illustrates how this configuration operates in practice. Greenland demonstrates that even in the absence of full sovereignty, political entities may develop autonomous security perceptions and priorities while remaining structurally dependent on an external guarantor for the provision of defence. This example highlights the analytical value of distinguishing between different dimensions of security, as well as the need to recognize the variability of sovereignty.

The broader implications of the concept extend beyond the specific case examined in this paper. Secondary national security provides a framework for analyzing a range of political entities that do not neatly fit into traditional categories of sovereign states or dependent territories. It also offers insights into the challenges of governance, accountability, and policy coordination in multi-layered security arrangements, where authority is dispersed, and outcomes are shaped through interaction rather than centralized control.

From a theoretical perspective, the concept contributes to the ongoing effort to expand the analytical boundaries of security studies. By decoupling national security from full sovereignty, it opens

space for the study of security practices in contexts that have been relatively neglected in the literature, including autonomous territories, associated states, and other forms of limited statehood. At the same time, it emphasizes the importance of integrating constructivist and institutionalist approaches to adequately capture the complex relationship among authority, actors, and security.

From a public policy perspective, the research findings point to the need for more flexible and context-sensitive approaches to security governance. Decision-makers must take into account the coexistence of multiple actors and levels of authority, as well as potential divergences between local security perceptions and security arrangements provided by an external guarantor. This underscores the importance of developing consultation mechanisms, adaptable institutional arrangements, and the inclusion of non-sovereign actors in security-related decision-making.

The concept points to the dynamic nature of such arrangements. Secondary national security is not a static condition but evolves in response to changes in political autonomy, strategic environment, and governance structures. As a result, security relationships between political entities and external guarantors are likely to remain fluid, requiring continuous adjustment and renegotiation.

In conclusion, national security should not be understood as a fixed attribute of sovereign statehood, but as a variable and context-dependent phenomenon. Recognizing the existence of secondary forms of national security is a necessary step toward developing a more comprehensive and empirically grounded understanding of security in the contemporary international system. Simultaneously, this concept provides a foundation for future research focused on analyzing how different configurations of authority and dependence shape security practices across various political contexts.

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СЕКУНДАРНА НАЦИОНАЛНА БЕЗБЕДНОСТ: СТУДИЈА СЛУЧАЈА ГРЕНЛАНДА**

Резиме

У овом раду се испитује однос између суверености и националне безбедности доводећи у питање претпоставку да једно нужно зависи од другог. Ослањајући се на увиде из студија безбедности и теорије међународних односа, посебно конструктивистичке и институционалистичке приступе, рад развија концепт секундарне националне безбедности као аналитички оквир за разумевање безбедности у контекстима ограничене суверености и спољне зависности. Овај концепт се односи на конфигурацију у којој политички ентитет нема пуну суверену контролу над средствима принуде, посебно у домену спољне одбране, али ипак задржава способност да артикулише сопствене безбедносне перцепције, приоритете и политичке преференције. У таквим аранжманима, обезбеђивање безбедности је екстернализовано ка сувереном гаранту, док интерпретација и политичка артикулација безбедности остају бар делимично интернализоване. Ово доводи до хибридне структуре у којој су перцепција и обезбеђивање безбедности институционално раздвојени, али политички међусобно повезани. Методолошки, истраживање комбинује концептуалну анализу са квалитативном студијом случаја Гренланда као аутономне територије у оквиру Краљевине Данске. Овај случај показује на који начин се безбедност може концептуализовати и практиковати у одсуству пуне суверености. Иако Данска задржава формалну

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** Чланак је резултат рада на пројекту Института за стратегијска истраживања „Промене у стратегијском окружењу Републике Србије – трендови и импликација од значаја за националну безбедност и одбрану” (ISI/DH/2/26–28).

надлежност над одбраном и спољном политиком, Гренланд све више развија сопствене безбедносне перцепције и политичке приоритете у областима као што су управљање ресурсима, заштита животне средине и климатске промене. Ове области се све више посматрају као кључне за дугорочну безбедност, посебно у контексту економске аутономије и стратешког позиционирања у Арктику. Резултати истраживања показују да политички ентитети без независних војних капацитета нису само пасивни примаоци безбедности, већ активни актери у обликовању безбедносних агенди. Случај Гренланда илуструје да национална безбедност може настати кроз вишеслојне управљачке аранжмане у којима је ауторитет расподељен између домаћих и спољних актера. Истовремено, такви аранжмани стварају потенцијалне тензије између локалних безбедносних приоритета и приоритета спољног гаранта, нарочито у областима као што су експлоатација ресурса, еколошка политика и односи са спољним актерима. У раду се закључује да националну безбедност не треба разумети као фиксно својство суверене државности, већ као варијабилан и контекстуално условљен феномен. Раздвајањем безбедности од пуне суверености, концепт секундарне националне безбедности проширује аналитички домет студија безбедности и пружа користан оквир за анализу безбедносних пракси у условима ограничене државности. Шире посматрано, он указује на потребу за флексибилним и контекстуално осетљивим приступима управљању безбедношћу који узимају у обзир коегзистенцију више актера, нивоа власти и димензија безбедности.

Кључне речи: секундарна национална безбедност, сувереност, ограничена државност, управљање безбедношћу, Гренланд, безбедносне перцепције, екстернализација безбедности.

* This paper was received on April 29, 2026, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 12, 2026.