General Assembly 1

Integral Security in the Baltic Sea region

Research Report

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This research report takes a pro-NATO stance in the conflict around the Black Sea. Remember there's another side to every story.

Introduction

The Baltic Sea region is part of a more extensive terrain, stretching from the Arctic to the Black Sea, in which the United States, alongside their allies, try to keep hold of it against the Russian Federation and China. Despite the fact that it is difficult to recall a time in recent history when national efforts and security alliances in the Baltic Sea region were more substantial, the West's response to this reality has been distorted and insufficient and considering Russia's military advantage in the area; It is still inadequate. To add to that, not only the security of the countries involved is at risk, but also Europe's peace and stability, as well as NATO's credibility. Despite the Biden administration's efforts to re-energize US involvement with Europe and NATO, issues in the Indo-Pacific, economic issues, the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic, and nontraditional threats such as climate change may take precedence over regional security successes. That would be a tactical blunder. As the transatlantic alliance's strategic struggle with Russia and China heats up, greater regional and transatlantic cooperation is required to strengthen protection and deterrence in this critical region. In addition, Turkey controls the Black Sea's access from the Mediterranean to a large degree through two essential points of control: the Bosporus and the Dardanelles. On the other hand, the Black Sea has become a maritime tension area between Russia and Ukraine since Russia's unlawful takeover of Crimea in 2014.

Definition of Key Terms

Electronic warfare:

Electronic Warfare (EW) refers to any action involving the electromagnetic spectrum or directed energy to control the spectrum, attack an enemy, or impede enemy assaults via the spectrum. The purpose of electronic warfare is to deny the opponent the advantage of and ensure friendly unimpeded access to the EM spectrum. EW is waged throughout the electromagnetic spectrum to secure and maintain effective control and use through the integration of detection, denial, deception, disruption, and destruction. EW can be applied from air, sea, land, and space by manned and unmanned systems, and can target communication, radar, or other services.[1]

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty:

The 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty required the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate and permanently forswear all of their nuclear and conventional

[1] "Electronic Warfare (Ew)." *AcqNotes*, 31 July 2021, https://acqnotes.com/acqnote/careerfields/electronic-warfare.

ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers. The treaty marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals, eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons, and employ extensive on-site inspections for verification. As a result of the INF Treaty, the United States and the Soviet Union destroyed a total of 2,692 short-, medium-, and intermediate-range missiles by the treaty's implementation deadline of June 1, 1991.[2]

Cold Response 2022:
"Cold Response 2022 will train reinforcements of northern Norway, and the main action will be by navy and air force capacities in the Ofoten area. The region is near to the Army's northern brigade and training areas where U.S., British and Dutch soldiers frequently drill in Arctic warfare.[3]

Internationalism:
The principle of cooperation among nations, for the promotion of their common good, sometimes as contrasted with nationalism, or devotion to the interests of a particular nation

General Overview

For the Baltic Sea region and the Euro-Atlantic community, the road to failure is short. Suppose the Russian Federation can challenge NATO and US regional security assurances through military bluff, threats, or direct attack. In that case, it can overturn the post-1991 security system in Europe in a matter of hours. Nothing else in Russia's military toolkit has the potential to deliver such a swift and conclusive geopolitical victory.

Despite this, many people are unconcerned about Russia's military threat. Since 2008, Russia has improved its numeric and qualitative superiority in the Baltic Sea region, and it now can mobilize over 125,000 high-readiness ground forces in the area in just 14 days. About a third of Russia's military forces are ready to go in 24 to 72 hours, and the Kremlin is known for acting on the spur of the moment. Russia has "absolute supremacy" in the region in terms of offensive equipment, including tanks, fighter jets, and rocket artillery. The Western Military District has also established three army commands, five new department headquarters, and 15 new mechanized units in the last decade. The Zapad exercises demonstrate the Russian's Federation's ability to practice large-scale, integrated operations involving live-fire and realistic, unexpected scenarios and the intensification ladder's superiority.

In the air, Russia has a tactical edge, which is supported by large and effective air-defense and electronic warfare (EW) systems. In violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, Russia has deployed new ground-based intermediate-range nuclear-capable missiles, and it continues to engage in additional actions that risk Baltic Sea regional security, such as the HALO commando parachute jumps.[4] In the region, Russian planes and ships also engage in dangerous maneuvers and interference, neglecting to declare their position

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[2] "Fact Sheets & Briefs." *The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty at a Glance | Arms Control Association*, https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/INFtreaty.
[3] Laird, Robbin. "Shaping a Way Ahead for the Assault Support Community: Visiting Mag-26." *Second Line of Defense*, 9 Aug. 2021, https://sldinfo.com/2021/08/shaping-a-way-ahead-for-the-assault-support-community-visiting-mag-26/.

[4] WP Post Author Edward Lucas , et al. "Close to the Wind: Baltic Sea Regional Security." *CEPA*, 9 Sept. 2021, https://cepa.org/close-to-the-wind-baltic-sea-regional-security/

and altitude, file a flight plan, or contact with controllers. Unconfirmed claims of electronic warfare (EW) targeting US Navy ships in the Baltic Sea, as well as the deployment of unmanned surveillance devices launched from fishing vessels, have surfaced. These exercises, according to the Kremlin, are low-risk and practical, but they also increase the likelihood of mishaps and fatal miscalculations between Russia and NATO. These facts demonstrate Russia's persistent and increasing willingness to win quick conflicts and destabilize Western political will.

The Kaliningrad exclave, which Russia retains as a strategic presence in the region, has both obstacles and opportunities. Countering Russia's weapons would be a difficult task, not only due to the potential of escalation. In 2018, Russia modernized a nuclear weapons storage facility, and the deployed Iskander missiles are nuclear-capable. Russia is also believed to possess tactical nuclear weapons capability, as well as 19 missile-armed corvettes equipped with eight vertically fired Kalibr cruise missiles since 2016. Having eight battalions of long-range S-300 and S-400 surface-to-air missile batteries, along with shorter-range weapons, Kaliningrad is well-defended against any effort to neutralize military assets. Despite this, Kaliningrad is landlocked by Poland and Lithuania. While Russia's anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities would limit NATO mobility, these systems are really not impregnable. In the event of a battle in the Baltic Sea region, Russia's strategic nuclear plants on the Kola Peninsula could be targeted

Belarus, Russia's closest ally would be involved in any Russian military or low-intensity action against the Baltic nations or Poland. The two countries agreed on a five-year strategic collaboration agreement on air, airborne, air defense, ground, and special operations forces cooperation in March 2021. Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka supported Russian planes being deployed in Belarus, and the defense ministers of the two nations unveiled plans for three cooperation training sites. Russia may deploy S-400 air-defense systems in Belarus after this year's (2021) Zapad exercises because the air and missile systems are already closely integrated and under Russian control. In Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland, Belarusian intelligence agencies are operational and hostile. The Astravets nuclear power station, near the Lithuanian border, has been afflicted by safety, management, transparency, and regulatory failures, threatening to influence the region's electricity market badly.

China provides a new dimension to this international security picture for Baltic Sea region countries. China's impact in the Baltic Sea region is limited, with numerous countries taking significant steps to counter Chinese influence efforts. Although this connection lacks depth, China's strongest relationships in the region are with Belarus, where it has major investments and offers surveillance equipment. The Chinese navy visited the Baltic Sea in 2017 for joint drills with the Russian Baltic Fleet, and it is anticipated to participate in the Russian-led Zapad exercise this year, highlighting the Sino-Russian security ties. However, China's most significant influence in the Baltic Sea region is the possible impact of an Indo-Pacific crisis on US resources and attention. A military conflict over Taiwan, for example, may provide the Kremlin with an opportunity to put NATO's determination in defending the Baltic states to the test.

In recent years, the volume and pace of allied exercises has changed, especially in Sweden and Finland. Cold Response 2022 will be the largest military exercise inside Norway's Arctic Circle since the 1980s, including 40,000 NATO troops from ten nations. Exercises have not yet reached the adequate level, but given the increased national capabilities of nations in the region, as well as the resources that are available from outside allies and partners, Russia can no longer ignore the risks that any military actions in the region pose to its own territory.

Major Parties Involved

USA

Since 2015, the US has contributed more than $250 million to the Baltic nations through the Foreign Military Financing (FMF). These contributions can be attributed in part to the recent revival of Russian aggressiveness. Electronic and hybrid warfare, border security, and marine and air domain awareness were created as a result of US funding under FMF. It also contributed to NATO's defensive and integrated a deterring posture in the area by increasing the Baltic nations' cooperation with NATO military forces.[5] Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania signed Defense Cooperation Agreements with the US in 2017. The basis for improved relationship and defense and security cooperation between the US and NATO Allies was formed by these fundamental agreements. These accords, along with the NATO Status of Forces Agreement, provide the whole legal basis for US forces serving in the Baltic nations. The United States of America signed Security Cooperation Roadmaps in 2019 with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. These agreements establish mutually agreed-upon security cooperation goals for the years 2019 through 2024.[6]

Russian Federation

Russia has been developing Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD) weapons since the Cold War, with the goal of protecting critical territories and its capacity to wage war against NATO activities in a wartime situation, particularly in opposing NATO's aerial and naval dominance. In both Ukraine and Syria, Russia gained fighting experience. In general, Russia's A2AD capacity is a complex system of systems meant to deny enemy troops freedom of movement inside and across an area of operations, whether on the land, at sea, or in the air. A collection of numerous, mutually reinforcing military methods is another way to describe the system of systems. Air defense systems that overlap, long-range artillery, high-precision attack capabilities (short- and medium-range conventional or nuclear ballistic missiles and cruise missiles), anti-ship and anti-submarine weapons, and electronic warfare systems are just a few examples. These skills work together to provide a multi-layered, all-encompassing defense of vital locations.[7]

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[5] "U.S. Security Cooperation with the Baltic States - United States Department of State." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 29 Apr. 2021, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-the-baltic-states/#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20fosters%20a,Estonia%2C%20Latvia%2C%20and%20Lithuania.&text=It%20also%20increased%20the%20Baltic,deterrence%20posture%20in%20the%20region.

[6] ibid

[7] Heinrich Brauß Dr. András Rácz, et al. "Russia's Strategic Interests and Actions in the Baltic Region." *DGAP*, 3 Nov. 2020, https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/russias-strategic-interests-and-actions-baltic-region#2.2.

NATO

On a recurring basis, NATO has increased its forward presence in the eastern half of the Alliance by stationing four multinational battalion-size battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. These battlegroups, led by the UK, Canada, Germany, and the US, respectively, are powerful and combat-ready units. They highlight the transatlantic bond's tenacity and make it clear that an attack on one Ally would be regarded as an attack on the Alliance as a whole.NATO also maintains a forward strong force in the southeast of the Alliance's territory. On land, at sea, and in the air, allies are providing forces and assets. The ground element in the Alliance's southeast is centered on a multinational unit, which is part of Multinational Division Southeast in Romania. NATO has increased the number of ships it has deployed and the number of naval exercises it has undertaken at sea. Allies have increased their training in the air, which has resulted in improved situational awareness and responsiveness. NATO's advanced force is part of the Alliance's most significant collective defense reinforcement in a generation, while also additional forces and capabilities can be quickly deployed to augment forward presence.[8]

Timeline of Events

1980	Norway's Arctic Circle
1987	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty
2008	Russia started upgrading their military equipment that were established in the baltic sea
2017	The Chinese navy joined Russia in 2017 for joint drills in the Baltic sea
2018	Russia upgraded a nuclear storage facility in Iskander
2019	USA signed Security Cooperation Roadmaps
2022	Norway will perform Cold Response 2022 (see the definitions)

[8] Nato. "Boosting NATO's Presence in the East and Southeast." *NATO*, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm

Possible Solutions

De jure demilitarization

The intention is to prevent a certain physical location from becoming either the cause or perhaps the site of armed confrontation. As a result, demilitarization conditions usually prohibit the establishment or maintaining of fortifications, as well as the deployment or expansion of armed forces and their equipment, in a specific area with the explicit or implicit goal of preventing conflict. To the extent that demilitarization is often accomplished through servitude, it is rare for a country to accept unilaterally jeopardizing its sovereignty on its territory. It should be noted that all de jure demilitarized areas have occurred in countries that have lost wars and have had parts of their territory'subtracted' by disarmament efforts.[9]

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[9] *The Demilitarization of Kaliningrad: A 'Sisyphean Task'?* https://www.baltdefcol.org/files/docs/bdrev13/8._Matthieu_Chillaud_and_Frank_Tetard-Demilitarisation_of_Kaliningrad.pdf

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