

NATO's presence in the Baltic states – reassurance for its allies or deterrence for Russia?

Justyna Gotkowska in co-operation with Piotr Szymański

In late March and early April, the US Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) held an exercise in Estonia, during which US F-16s destroyed ground targets in an Estonian firing range. Around the same time the Americans held a drill with the Swedish and Finnish Air Forces over the Baltic Sea. The United States has been playing a leading role in the process of strengthening NATO's presence in the Baltic states. As far as the Western European allies are concerned, Germany will follow in the footsteps of Denmark and the United Kingdom, both of which made significant military contributions to the strengthening of the allied presence in 2014, and will deploy the largest number of troops in 2015. Non-aligned Sweden and Finland, key for the performance of NATO operations in the Baltic states, have been emphasising their military and political readiness to co-operate with NATO in the event of potential crises or conflicts. Comparing NATO's military presence in the Baltic states before and after the outbreak of the Russian intervention in Ukraine, it is clear that NATO has stepped up its engagement considerably. However, its scope is still relatively small, given the much larger military potential and mobilisation capacity of Russia. Moreover, the message sent by NATO's actions may be diminished by the political, military and financial constraints faced by the allies and Sweden and Finland. It seems that the greatest risk to the military security of the Baltic states currently appears to be the possibility that Russia could wrongly assess the reliability of NATO's security guarantees.

2014: Support for the Baltic states since the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine

Responding to growing concern in the countries of NATO's eastern flank (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria) about Russia's intervention in Ukraine, NATO and the individual allies had decided to step up their military presence in the Baltic states in spring 2014, among others. NATO mostly intensified ongoing activities in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Baltic Sea region by strengthening of air and sea surveillance in the Baltic states (increase in the number of fighters as part of NATO's Baltic Air Policing (BAP) mission, and reactivation of the 'sleeping' Standing NATO Mine Counter-Measures Group 1).

The United States played a leading role in those efforts: as part of the Operation Atlantic Resolve, it increased the number of US fighters participating in the BAP mission (from 4 to 10 in March-April 2014); established a rotating presence of a company-sized contingent (ca. 150 soldiers per country), and stepped up its involvement in pre-scheduled military exercises (in which around 1700 US soldiers took part in 2014)¹. While the US has stepped aside to allow Germany to handle the efforts in finding a political resolution to the conflict in Ukraine,

¹ U.S. European Command, Fact Sheet: Operation Atlantic Resolve, 26 June 2014, http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0514_atlanticresolve/FactSheet_OperationAtlanticResolve_3Jul14.pdf

it has shaped the reinforcement of the NATO presence in the Baltic states through bilateral actions. Among the European NATO members, the USA's closest allies in Europe, i.e. Denmark and the United Kingdom, were the first to step up their military involvement in the Baltic states. They contributed the largest numbers of troops to the military exercises in 2014 (around 1200 in the case of Denmark and around 800 in the case of the UK), and quickly deployed additional fighters to boost the BAP mission (May-August 2014). The contributions of the Visegrad countries, Canada, Norway and Germany to the military drills in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia ranged between 100–250 troops (e.g. Hungary deployed an infantry company for one month), while other allies were involved on a smaller scale. The reactions of Denmark and the UK could be explained by the fact that the two countries share the USA's assessment of Russia's actions in Ukraine and their consequences for NATO, co-ordinate their steps with the USA and were able to mount a quick political and military response in the face of a changing security environment. Moreover, Denmark considers itself responsible for the Baltic states in a way, having advocated their accession to NATO in the 1990s. The Danes are also aware that the functionality, cohesion and credibility of military and political alliances (NATO and the EU) is a guarantee of security and prosperity for the small states, and the Danish leadership's intention is to actively contribute to safeguarding it. The Danish involvement also demonstrated the ability of the Danish Armed Forces to quickly respond militarily to unexpected regional or global crises. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, has been the only large EU and NATO member state in recent years to build up political, economic and military links with the countries of the Nordic-Baltic region, seeing this as a response to Russia's increasingly aggressive policy, among other issues. The large British involvement in the exercises shows that the United Kingdom is ready to assume more re-

sponsibility for buttressing the Alliance's credibility and ensuring the security guarantees on NATO's eastern flank.

2015: Who is ready to keep supporting the Baltic states?

The NATO summit in Newport (September 2014) ended with the adoption of a Readiness Action Plan providing for a number of NATO actions in the countries of the eastern flank. Details of those tasks were agreed during a meeting of NATO defence ministers in Febru-

Among the European NATO members, the USA's closest allies in Europe, i.e. Denmark and the United Kingdom, were the first to step up their military involvement in the Baltic states.

ary 2015². From the point of view of the Baltic states, the most important conclusions at the summit included the following decisions: to create the so-called NATO spearhead force (VJTF)³; to establish the NATO Force Integration Units (NFIU) to co-ordinate the activities of allied forces in the countries in question; to develop military infrastructure and to preposition military equipment; and to assure a permanent rotating presence of allied forces. The NFIU commands in Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn will probably become operational in June, and officers from the allied states will account for half of their personnel. The US Army Europe (USAREUR) has already started implementing the provisions on the prepositioning of military equipment. The com-

² North Atlantic Council, Wales Summit Declaration, 5 September 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm; North Atlantic Council, Defence Ministers Meetings, 5 February 2015, http://nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_116569.htm

³ A land brigade with maritime and air support components, created on the basis of a part of the NATO Response Force (around 5000 troops).

mander of USAREUR, Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, has declared that in each Baltic state, the equipment for a company or battalion-size unit would be stored⁴. This will be deployed by the end of 2015 (as part of the equipment prepositioning for one US brigade combat team in Europe). However, most of the approximately 220 heavy vehicles of different types (tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, armoured personnel carriers) will be located in the Grafenwöhr base in Bavaria, Germany⁵.

The US military presence has been widely publicised. Such actions are intended to demonstrate to both the allies and Russia that the United States are still present in Europe and take their commitments seriously.

In 2015, the USA is still maintaining its rotational military presence in the Baltic states. Other allies have also declared that they would participate in three-monthly rotations: so far, such declarations have come from Portugal (one company between April and June in Lithuania) and Germany (one company between April and July in Lithuania, one company between August and November in Latvia). As for allied participation in military exercises in the Baltic states in 2015, the United States will probably again contribute the largest numbers of troops and military equipment. The USA has pledged to contribute a rotation of one brigade combat team, i.e. 3000 soldiers, to the military drills

on the eastern flank (March-June 2015)⁶. The US military presence has been widely publicised, as was the case with the participation of US soldiers in the military parade to celebrate Independence Day in Narva, Estonia, and the so-called Dragoon Ride, i.e. the convoy of several dozen Stryker armoured fighting vehicles moving from the Baltic states to Germany (the return of the rotating company-sized units to the base in Vilseck, Bavaria)⁷. Such actions are intended to demonstrate to both the allies and Russia that the United States are still present in Europe and take their commitments seriously. Among the European NATO members, in 2015 Germany has pledged the largest contribution to the strengthening of the eastern flank, including the Baltic states. In 2015 Germany is also the framework nation of the interim 'spearhead force'⁸, which however will not conduct drills in the Baltic states this year (part of the 'spearhead force' will hold its exercises in Poland in June). Germany will also send around 5200 troops to military exercises in the region, including Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia⁹. A German contribution of this size marks a considerable change, compared to the small German military presence in the Baltic states in

⁴ John Vandiver, Michael Darnell, 'Army looking to store tanks, equipment in eastern Europe', *Stars and Stripes*, 25 January 2015, <http://www.stripes.com/news/army-looking-to-store-tanks-equipment-in-eastern-europe-1.325693>

⁵ The USA has also been investing in the development of military infrastructures on the NATO's eastern flank. In 2015 the US Defence Department allocated US\$18.4 million for the expansion of airfields in the Baltic states, Romania and Bulgaria. European Reassurance Initiative: Fiscal Year 2016, 26 January 2015, http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2016/FY2016_ERI_J-Book.pdf

⁶ 'US delivers military equipment for Baltics to Riga port; 3000 troops to follow', *SARGS*, 10 March 2015, http://www.sargs.lv/Zinas/Military_News/2015/03/10-01.aspx-#lastcomment

⁷ John Vandiver, 'Dragoon Ride will send US troops through eastern Europe in show of support', *Stars and Stripes*, 12 March 2015, <http://www.stripes.com/news/dragoon-ride-will-send-us-troops-through-eastern-europe-in-show-of-support-1.334021>

⁸ The headquarters of the 1st German-Netherlands Corps in Münster, Germany, is in charge of commanding the land component of the 'spearhead force' (VJTF). A German mechanised infantry battalion (around 900 troops), along with the Norwegian Telemark battalion and a Dutch battalion, constitutes the core of the combat force of the land part of the 'spearhead force'.

⁹ In 2015, Germany takes part in the following exercises in the Baltic states: Summer Shield XII (Latvia, 50), Sill (Estonia, 80), Sabre Strike (600, mostly in Poland), Iron Wolf (Lithuania, 400), Silver Arrow (Latvia, 250) and Iron Sword (Lithuania, 150). See Thomas Wiegold, '5200 deutsche Soldaten zu Übungen in den Osten', 5 March 2015, <http://augengeradeaus.net/2015/03/5-200-deutsche-soldaten-zu-uebungen-in-den-osten-und-ein-bataillon-unter-polnischem-kommando/>

2014 and in previous years. From the German point of view, its large involvement on the eastern flank is intended to boost Germany's credibility as an ally and expand the political room for manoeuvre within NATO, should it wish to propose possible initiatives of dialogue with Russia, according to German analysts¹⁰.

The United Kingdom has again pledged a major contribution to the strengthening of NATO's military presence on the eastern flank. In total, it will send around 4000 soldiers, some of whom will take part in exercises in the Baltic states¹¹. The UK has also declared that British staff of the Headquarters of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC) will take part in drills in Lithuania and Latvia in November. HQ ARRC is taking over the command of the 'spearhead force' in 2017 (the UK will be the framework nation at that time)¹². According to available reports, the other allies will contribute between 50 and 150 troops per state (including Canada and Belgium). Of the larger European allies, France is playing a minor role in these efforts in 2014; in 2015 it will also probably make only a small contribution to the military exercises in the Baltic states¹³.

¹⁰ Claudja Major, Christian Mölling, 'Not a hegemon, but the backbone: Germany takes a leading role in NATO's strategic adaptation', *European Leadership Network*, 23 February 2015, http://www.europeanleadership-network.org/not-a-hegemon-but-the-backbone-germany-takes-a-leading-role-in-natos-strategic-adaptation_2459.html

¹¹ Ministry of Defence of the United Kingdom, 'UK confirms lead role in NATO spearhead force', 6 February 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-confirms-lead-role-in-nato-spearhead-force>

¹² Ministry of Defence of Lithuania, 'Elements of the most capable headquarters corps of the United Kingdom will for the first time be deployed in Lithuania and Latvia', 15 April 2015, http://www.kam.lt/en/news_1098/current_issues/elements_of_the_most_capable_headquarters_corps_of_the_united_kingdom_will_for_the_first_time_be_deployed_in_lithuania_and_latvia.html?pbck=0

¹³ In 2014 French fighters participated in the strengthening of the BAP mission (4 Rafale/Mirage 2000 fighters operated from the Malbork airbase between May and August). The French land forces were represented by a cyber-defence team (over a dozen soldiers) in the Spring Storm exercise in Estonia. The French navy took part in two navy drills on the Baltic, BALTOPS and Open Spirit.

The role of non-aligned Sweden and Finland in the allied support for the Baltic states

Because of their geographic locations, Sweden and Finland, which are not NATO members, are both important for the planning and conducting of NATO operations in the event of conflicts or crises in the Baltic states. The political and military reactions of these two countries to the increased allied presence and the extent to which they are willing to co-operate with NATO and the United States in the Baltic Sea region are therefore crucial. In the years 2014–2015,

The reaction of Sweden and Finland to the increased allied presence and the extent to which both countries are willing to co-operate with NATO and the USA in the Baltic Sea region are crucial to the security of the Baltic states.

Sweden and Finland continued their involvement in regular military exercises in the region either with the other Nordic states or with NATO¹⁴. Moreover, both states started developing new forms of Finnish-Swedish and Nordic co-operation, as well as co-operation with NATO, which have provoked official discontent in Russia. Within NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, the Swedish and Finnish air forces (JAS 39 Gripen and F-18 Hornet jet fighters) took part in the regular *Baltic Region Training Event (BRTE)* in the Baltic states' air space both in 2014 and 2015. In 2015 both countries started a series of drills with the air forces of the NATO members temporarily present in the Bal-

¹⁴ In 2015 Finland took/will take part in the BRTE XX (April) and in Sabre Strike (June). In 2014, the Finnish Armed Forces took part in the Sabre Strike, BRTE XIX, XVIII, XVII and BALTOPS exercises. The Swedish Armed Forces took part in BRTE XX, XIX, XVIII, XVII, as well as Open Spirit and BALTOPS.

tic states (the so-called *Finland-Sweden Training Event, FSTE*)¹⁵. The exercises took part in Swedish, Finnish and international air space over the Baltic Sea. The first drill of this series, held in late March 2015, involved the Swedes and the Finns alongside the USA¹⁶. Moreover, in May 2015 Sweden and Finland together with Norway co-organise and participate in the largest air force exercises in Europe this year, the *Arctic Challenge Exercise (ACE 2015, with over 100 aircraft)* in the northern regions of Norway, Sweden and Finland, with a large participation from other countries, including the USA, France and Germany¹⁷.

The fact that Sweden and Finland have maintained their previous level of involvement, and even expanded participation, in military exercises in the Nordic-Baltic region demonstrates that they are ready to co-operate with NATO

The current allied activity in the Baltic states is the outcome of a compromise concluded at the NATO summit in Newport.

militarily in the face of adverse developments in the regional security environment, which is a clear signal to Russia. The two states have also demonstrated their political will to co-operate in the Nordic-Baltic region. The widely-commented joint article by the five Nordic ministers (of Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland) entitled 'We must be ready for emerging crises'

¹⁵ Stefan Kaarle, 'Med våra närmaste grannar', *Flygvapenbloggen* (official blog of the Swedish Air Force), 14 April 2015, <http://blogg.forsvarsmakten.se/flygvapenbloggen/>

¹⁶ 14 US F-16 fighters from the 510th Fighter Squadron based in Aviano operated from the air base in Ämari, Estonia. The Swedish and Finnish Air Forces contributed 8 JAS 39 Gripen fighters and 4 F-18 Hornet fighters respectively.

¹⁷ Norwegian Armed Forces, *Arctic Challenge Exercise 2015*, updated on 22 April 2015, <https://forsvaret.no/ace>, Trude Pettersen, 'Update: Large air force drill in the Barents Region', *BarentsObserver*, 4 March 2015, <http://barentsobserver.com/en/security/2015/03/update-large-air-force-drill-barents-region-04-03>

(9 April 2015) sent a clear message to Russia¹⁸. It emphasised that in view of the rising uncertainty in the Baltic Sea region, the Nordic states would act in solidarity, and also extend that solidarity to the Baltic states. This attitude by Sweden and Finland (in political and military terms) is immensely important because of the Russian disinformation campaigns aimed at discrediting the two states as reliable partners for NATO.

Conclusions – reassurance for the allies, or deterrence for Russia?

The current allied activity in the Baltic states is the outcome of a compromise concluded at the NATO summit in Newport, where the allies discussed the status of NATO-Russia relations and the form of allied presence on the eastern flank in view of Russia's annexation of Crimea and intervention in eastern Ukraine, as well as Moscow's anti-Western rhetoric and provocative actions in the Baltic Sea region. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were in the group of states calling for the NATO-Russia agreements of 1997 and 2002¹⁹ to be deemed no longer binding in view of Russia's violations of their provisions. Politically, this would entail a change of Russia's status in its relations with NATO – the country would officially cease to be treated as NATO's partner (Russia itself views NATO and the USA as opponents, and for years has been conducting military drills with offensive scenarios against NATO states). In the military dimension, such a decision would pave the way for the permanent deployment of significant NATO forces on the eastern flank. From the Baltic states' point of view, it would have constituted a clear confirmation of the collective defence

¹⁸ Ine Eriksen Søreide, Nicolai Wammen, Carl Haglund, Gunnar Bragi, Peter Hultqvist, 'Vi må være forberedt på at kriser kan oppstå', *Aftenposten*, 9 April 2015, <http://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kronikker/Fem-nordiske-ministre-i-felles-kronikk-Russisk-propaganda-bidrar-til-a-saplid-7967230.html>

¹⁹ See the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, *op. cit.*, and the 2002 Rome declaration 'NATO–Russia relations: A new quality', http://www.nato.int/cps/ar/natohq/official_texts_19572.htm

guarantees and sent a clear deterrent signal. However, the Western European allies under the leadership of Germany refused a change to Russia's status and to the formula of NATO's presence in the countries of the eastern flank, although they did recognise the need to boost their security. The underlying reason was an unwillingness to escalate tensions between NATO and Russia. The compromise reached stated that the Alliance would continue to unilaterally abide by the NATO-Russia agreements, but at the same time it would step up its involvement on the eastern flank (by ensuring a rotating and continuous presence of allied forces, greater involvement in military exercises, prepositioning of military equipment and development of military infrastructures) and adapt to new challenges in collective defence (by forming the 'spearhead force' and increasing the readiness level of the Multinational Corps Northeast in Stettin and extending its tasks).

If Russia views NATO's actions as a sign of weakness and divisions, rather than as a manifestation of strength underpinned by a well-considered strategy, this may encourage Moscow to test the cohesion and credibility of NATO in the future.

Comparing the allied presence in the Baltic states before and after the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, it is clear that NATO's involvement has increased considerably. However, in quantitative terms it is relatively low, especially given the much larger military potential and mobilisation capacity of Russia. Moreover, the message of NATO's actions may be diminished by the political, military and financial constraints faced by the allies as well as Finland and Sweden. (1) **For the USA, the strategy of strengthening NATO's eastern flank** is an attempt to reconcile several contradictory objectives of US policy. On the one hand, the USA deems it necessary to reassure the allies in Europe, and especial-

ly the Baltic states. On the other, Washington is set to continue rebalancing its engagement and building up its position in the Asia Pacific region, and Europe will remain just one of several theatres of action. Because of US budgetary constraints and the US administration's reluctance to excessively escalate tensions with Russia (as clearly visible in its rather cautious direct support for Ukraine), the US presence in the Baltic states is and will probably remain limited to a relatively small force (even though the USA is still the largest military contributor of all the NATO members). However, this will be widely publicised to demonstrate that the United States treats security guarantees to its allies seriously. In this context it should be noted that the Americans expect Europe to become more involved in ensuring security in the Baltic Sea region. (2) **For this reason, the scale and sustained nature of the European contribution to strengthening NATO's eastern flank**, as well as the political and military credibility of the Western European allies, will be crucial. Following the major contributions of the United Kingdom and Denmark to the exercises in 2014, and of Germany in 2015, the question of the involvement of Western European states in the future arises. The underfinancing of the Western European armed forces will limit the ability to develop sustainable military capabilities, and may affect the ability to continuously take part in military exercises on the eastern flank. Insufficient defence spending may be seen as a factor undermining the credibility of an adequate reaction in the event of conflicts in the region²⁰. According to SIPRI statistics, the crisis in Ukraine triggered a spike in defence spending in 2014 in the NATO states bordering Russia, but not in those in Western Europe, where defence budgets have continued to stagnate or decrease (France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Spain). Only small increases in

²⁰ Sam Perlo-Freeman, Aude Fleurant, Pieter D. Wezeman, Siemon T. Wezeman, *Trends in world military expenditure 2014*, SIPRI Fact Sheet, http://books.sipri.org/product_info?c_product_id=496

some of the Western European countries are planned in the years to come. Moreover, the allies' disparate perceptions of and reactions to the Russian intervention in Ukraine may pose questions about the political will within NATO to acknowledge a potential Russian aggression in the event of hybrid threats and to invoke Article 5. **(3) The readiness that Sweden and Finland have been demonstrating to co-operate with NATO in the region** (which, however, does not extend to active involvement in a potential allied operation to defend the Baltics) may be mitigated by political and military limitations. The relatively underfinanced Swedish Armed Forces, which in recent years have been focused on developing their expeditionary capabilities, are less capable to defend their own territory, and could face difficulties if Sweden becomes involved in a protracted operation in the region. In Finland, the Swedish-Finnish air force exercise with the United States and the joint article by the Nordic ministers provoked

internal political controversies, although the pre-election context also played a role there²¹. The political, military and economic pressure from Russia, with which Finland shares a long land border and has extensive economic co-operation, may reduce the scope of Finland's co-operation with NATO in the event of a crisis or conflict in the region.

However, the key factor is the Russian perception of NATO's activities and the credibility of the Alliance's security guarantees for the Baltic states. If Russia views NATO's actions as a sign of weakness and divisions, rather than as a manifestation of strength underpinned by a well-considered strategy, this may encourage Moscow to test the cohesion and credibility of NATO in the future. It is in the interest of NATO as a whole to make sure that the reinforcement of the allied presence on the eastern flank is not seen as a lukewarm policy to reassure the Baltic states, but as a credible policy of deterrence vis-à-vis Russia.

²¹ The parliamentary elections in Finland took place on 19 April 2015. Prime Minister Alexander Stubb and defence minister Carl Haglund reportedly responded positively to the US invitation to take part in an air force exercise involving the USA, while President Sauli Niinistö and foreign minister Erkki Tuomioja were against Finnish involvement. See 'High level discord over US-Finnish air force exercises', YLE, 18 January 2015, http://yle.fi/uutiset/hs_high_level_discord_over_us-finnish_air_force_exercises/7744391. In the wake of the joint article by the Nordic ministers, President Sauli Niinistö found it necessary to declare that Nordic co-operation was not directed against anyone. Foreign minister Erkki Tuomioja described the declaration as "slightly misleading" because Finland had no hostile intentions. See: 'Debattartikel om försvar ifrågasätts', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 14 April 2015, http://www.svd.se/nyheter/utrikes/debattartikel-om-forsvar-ifragasatts_4481937.svd

APPENDIX 1

Selected military exercises in the Baltic states in the years 2013–2015

Codename	Summer Shield X	Summer Shield XI	Summer Shield XII
Location and date	Latvia, 15–26 April 2013	Latvia, 7–17 April 2014	Latvia, 22–31 March 2015
Host and scenario	Latvia and USA, integration of combat support elements in various infantry operations	Latvia and USA, improving combat support capabilities and cooperation with other units of armed forces	NATO, a combined land, air and naval exercise, integration and coordination of fire support in infantry unit operations
Number of troops and countries participating	450 in total Latvia – 350 USA – 100 Estonia – as observer Lithuania – as observer	600 in total Latvia – 350 Estonia – 150 USA – 100 Lithuania – as observer	1100 in total Latvia – 600 Lithuania – 150 USA – 260 Germany – 50 Canada – 45 Luxembourg – 18

Codename	Spring Storm 2013	Spring Storm 2014 (Steadfast Javelin 1)	Spring Storm 2015 (Siil 2015)
Location and date	Estonia, 9–25 May	Estonia, 5–23 May	Estonia, 4–15 May
Host and scenario	Estonia largest annual military exercise of the Estonian Armed Forces; command at battalion level, final exam for conscripts	Estonia and NATO largest annual military exercise of the Estonian Armed Forces; command at battalion level, repulsion of an attack on Estonia (Steadfast Javelin), final exam for conscripts	Estonia and NATO largest annual military exercise of the Estonian Armed Forces; test of combat readiness of the armed forces in the whole country, mobilisation of reservists (around 7000), command at brigade level, final exam for conscripts
Number of troops and countries participating	6000 in total Estonia – 4600 Latvia – 100 United Kingdom – 100 Lithuania – 30 Belgium – 30	USA – 190 United Kingdom – 100 Latvia – 100 Lithuania – 30 Belgium – 10 France – 10	USA – 120 United Kingdom – 100 Germany – 80 Latvia – no data Belgium – no data Netherlands – no data

Codename	Sabre Strike 2013	Sabre Strike 2014	Sabre Strike 2015
Location and date	Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, 3–14 June	Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, 9–20 June	Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland 8–20 June
Host and scenario	USA host nation support, defence of national territory	USA host nation support, defence of national territory	USA host nation support, defence of national territory
Number of troops and countries participating	2000 in total Lithuania – 600 USA – 580 Latvia – 490 Estonia – 200 United Kingdom – 100 Finland – 60	4500 in total Lithuania – 1440 Dania – 1100 Latvia – 500 Estonia – 500 USA – 380 Poland – 150 Canada – 120 Norway – 120 United Kingdom – 120 Finland – no data	No data available USA – 700 (estimated) Germany – 600 France – 300 (estimated) Portugal – 140 United Kingdom – 120 (estimated) Lithuania – no data Latvia – no data Estonia – no data Dania – no data Finland – no data

APPENDIX 2

Strengthened Baltic Air Policing mission 2014–2015

Rotation	State (airbase)/ fighters
September-December 2015	Hungary (Šiauliai) 4 × JAS 39 Gripen no data (Šiauliai) Germany (Ämari) 4 × Eurofighter no data (Malbork)
May-August 2015	Norway (Šiauliai) 4 × F-16 Italy (Šiauliai) 4 × Eurofighter United Kingdom (Ämari) 4 × Eurofighter Belgium (Malbork) 4 × F-16
January-April 2015	Italy (Šiauliai) 4 × Eurofighter Poland (Šiauliai) 4 × MiG 29 Spain (Ämari) 4 × Eurofighter Belgium (Malbork) 4 × F-16
September-December 2014	Portugal (Šiauliai) 4 × F-16 Canada (Šiauliai) 4 × CF-18 Hornet Germany (Ämari) 4 × Eurofighter Netherlands (Malbork) 4 × F-16
May-August 2014	Poland (Šiauliai) 4 × MiG 29 United Kingdom (Šiauliai) 4 × Eurofighter Denmark (Ämari) 4 × F-16 France (Malbork) 4 × Rafale/Mirage 2000
January-April 2014	USA (Šiauliai) increased from 4 to 10 × F-15 in March 2014

Before March 2014, the Baltic Air Policing mission involved 4 fighters based in Šiauliai. The current number of 16 fighters, operating from the bases in Šiauliai, Ämari and Malbork, will be maintained at least until the end of 2015.

Author of the Appendix: Piotr Szymański

EDITORS: Olaf Osica, Anna Kwiatkowska-Drożdż

Katarzyna Kazimierska, Anna Łabuszewska

TRANSLATION: OSW

CO-OPERATION: Jim Todd

DTP: Bohdan Wędrychowski

Centre for Eastern Studies

Koszykowa 6a, 00-564 Warsaw

phone: +48 | 22 | 525 80 00

e-mail: info@osw.waw.pl

The views expressed by the authors of the papers do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Polish authorities

Visit our website: www.osw.waw.pl