

Large NATO exercise starts in Northern Norway

By [Global Research](#)

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Near 9.000 soldiers from 14 countries participates when the exercise Cold Response 2010 started in Northern Norway this week. This year is the first time such NATO exercise also includes Swedish territory.

The exercise involves land forces, air forces and naval forces. The portal of the [Norwegian Armed Forces](#) reports that some 1.000 Special Forces soldiers will participate. Largest part of the activity will be in the northern part of Nordland County and the southern part of Troms County. The exercise Cold Response 2010 is said to be the highest priority for the Norwegian military this year.

Cold Response 2010 has some 1.500 more soldiers than the exercise Cold Response 2009.

The soldiers are not only from NATO member countries. Swedish soldiers participate and for the first time NATO's Cold Response exercise includes military activity within Swedish territory. The territory in question is the area from Riksgrensen to Abisko in the municipality of Kiruna.

[Swedish Sami Radio](#) reports that the Sami reindeer herders in the area are opposing the exercise claiming the military activity happens without first consulting the reindeer herders.

Some 1.000 Swedish soldiers participate in Cold Response 2010. Sweden is cooperating with NATO through the [Partnership for Peace](#) (PfP) programme, but the background for Sweden's participation in the exercise is the framework agreement for the Nordic Defence Cooperation, according to the portal of the [Swedish Armed Forces](#).

United Kingdom participates in the exercise with their largest warship, HMS Ocean. The vessel with its crew of 1.000 persons is operating in the region as part of the UK's Amphibious Task Group, according to the portal of the [Royal Navy](#).

Other forces include U.S. Marines, soldiers that see such exercise in Norway's harsh Arctic winter environment as a realistic combat training opportunity, reports the portal of the [US Marines](#). The last time U.S. Marines participated in such NATO exercise in Northern Norway was in 2005.

All soldiers from the 14 participating countries will during the exercise focus on cold weather maritime/amphibious operations, interoperability of expeditionary forces, and special and conventional ground operations.

Cold Response 2010 will go on until March 4th. Till now, the such NATO exercise in Northern Norway has been annually, but according to the portal of the [Norwegian Armed Forces](#) the

larger NATO exercises will from now on be held each second year.

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For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca