

NATO's Upcoming War Games Targeted Against Russia

U.S. strengthening its military presence in Europe

By [Paul Antonopoulos](#)

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Last week NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg explained why the U.S. are strengthening their military presence in Europe. The reason is unsurprisingly to pressurize and intimidate Russia, but also against China and the so-called fight against terrorism. Stoltenberg explained that there are now more U.S. soldiers in EU Member States, more than ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In the coming months, the [Defender-Europe 2020](#) exercises, the largest of its kind in the last 25 years, will begin. And with this exercise, U.S. troop numbers will only increase in Europe with another 20,000 troops and officers arriving.

Germany will be the logistics center for the Defender-Europe 2020 exercise in March and by the end of January, thousands of U.S. soldiers will not only arrive in Germany, but also in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. The military drill will take place in Germany, Poland, Georgia and the Baltic States with the participation of 18 NATO countries, cover 4,000 kilometers of convoy routes and rely on 10 European countries to host exercise activities. The U.S. will send a total of 37,000 soldiers and officers to the exercise with the total number of troops to exceed 40,000 people.

There are also discussions about the resumption of the annual REFORGER exercises that were held in Europe from 1969 to 1993. The REFORGER exercises was to have constant training for a rapid deployment in West Germany in any potential conflict with the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact countries. Lieutenant General Chris Cavoli, the U.S. Army Europe commander, explained in an [interview with Defense News](#) that the Defender-Europe 2020 exercises has been compared to REFORGER, but that this is “not a completely apt comparison” because REFORGER exercises were about getting a force into one country — Germany — “to defend a very-known location against a force that we all understood very well.” He recalled hearing about REFORGER exercises as a little boy when his father was an Army officer serving in Europe but that “the only thing we didn’t know was what time it was going to happen.”

There can be little doubt that Russia is the main target of these exercises with the drills occurring directly on their doorstep in Poland and the Baltic states, particularly focussed against Russia’s Kaliningrad enclave. As Russia continues working towards a balanced multipolar international system based on sovereignty, U.S.-led Atlanticist powers have maintained pressure against the Eurasian Giant. NATO spy and scout planes flew over Kaliningrad over 800 times in 2019 alone. NATO are keeping close tabs on the enclave as it is a well-fortified region wedged between Poland the Baltics, a so-called security threat for the Atlanticist Alliance.

In response to the increasing military pressure by Russia against Kaliningrad, the Russian Foreign Ministry said in December that

“Western media are trying to spread their ideas about the ‘Russian aggressor’ in their own way. Some media cite statements by the U.S. Air Force Commander in Europe, General Jeffrey Harrigian, that the Pentagon has a plan to break through the multilayered air defense of the Kaliningrad region in the event of Russia’s invasion of the Baltic. It conceals the fact that the improvement of military capabilities in the enclave is dictated solely by the reasons of maintaining the balance of power.”

NATO are constantly reinforcing their military presence near Russia’s borders and are increasing the readiness to transfer forces to their eastern flank. The intensity of the exercises is also significantly increasing in a way as if Europe is preparing for a major military conflict against Russia. The planned development of the European segment of the U.S. and NATO air defense system also continues to move closer to Russia’s borders. It is for this reason that Russia has had to turn Kaliningrad into a fortress with operationally tactical complexes like the Iskander, in conjunction with the S-400 missile defense system and anti-ship coastal complexes. Despite these systems, experts still maintain that if NATO attacks Kaliningrad, the enclave is likely to fall, providing Russia does not resort to the use tactical nuclear weapons.

Whether these experts are correct or not can only be known in a real war situation, a situation that Russia is attempting to avoid. However, exercises suggest that NATO is making every plan for an invasion of Kaliningrad if such a war ever occurs. However, with Europe, led by French President Emmanuel Macron becoming increasingly critical of NATO and Washington’s policies, it remains to be seen if EU countries are willing to go to war with Russia because of U.S. escalations despite their participation in such aggressive exercises aimed towards the Eurasian country.

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