

U.S. Trying to Make European Missile Defense Process Irreversible

By [Global Research](#)

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This April, the first battery of U.S. MIM-104 Patriot surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems is scheduled to be deployed at a Polish military base near the town of Morag, just 100 kilometers (60 miles) from the Kaliningrad Region, Russia's Baltic exclave.

Analysts say this move does not threaten Russian national security but could be a step in a "creeping process" of establishing a European missile defense system without Moscow's involvement.

A temporary U.S. military base which will acquire permanent status after 2012 is being established near Morag. Aside from Patriot SAMs, SM-3 IA missiles capable of destroying enemy ballistic missiles will subsequently be deployed there. The Polish media say the required equipment will be installed there on April 10-15.

Patriot SAMs are purely air-defense systems, said Alexei Arbatov, director of the Center for International Security at the Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO). Moreover, Russia and Belarus are building a modern air-defense system that will comprise S-300-P Angara (SA-10 Grumble) and S-400 Triumf (SA-X-21) SAMs, and we do not think that neighboring countries should fear this defensive system, he said.

Pavel Zolotaryov, deputy director of the Moscow-based Institute of USA-Canada Studies, agreed that Patriots and other missile interceptors being deployed in Eastern Europe do not threaten Russian security. At the same time, we are witnessing the "creeping process" of establishing a European missile defense system within the NATO defensive perimeter under U.S. supervision and without Russian involvement, he said.

Washington proposes that Moscow join the system on U.S. terms. Unlike a European missile defense system with full Russian involvement, a NATO missile defense system would only promote a more divided Europe, the analyst said.

According to Zolotaryov, Russia, the United States and Europe have 10 years to implement their declarations on missile defense cooperation. Otherwise Moscow could face far greater risks than those posed by the 10 Ground-Based Interceptors (GBIs) that U.S. President George W. Bush planned to deploy in Poland.

It appears that SM-3 missiles will be able to intercept ballistic missiles by 2020 and could eventually become part of the U.S. multi-echelon missile defense system. "Russia would therefore have no choice but to deliver strategic nuclear weapons to Iran in order to justify the deployment of this U.S. system in Europe," Zolotaryov joked grimly.

According to Major General Zolotaryov, certain interests, primarily those in the U.S., would try to make the process of creating a European missile defense system without Russian involvement irreversible pending extended negotiations between Moscow and Washington.

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