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CARLETON MODEL  
**NATO**

# 2019 MNATO

MILITARY COMMITTEE  
BACKGROUND GUIDE

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- Reinforcing NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence
  - NATO and Hybrid Warfare
  - Addressing Russian Nuclear Doctrine

## **Introduction to the Military Committee**

The Military Committee (MC) is the senior military authority in NATO and the oldest permanent body in NATO after the North Atlantic Council, both having been formed months after the Alliance. It is the primary source of military advice to NATO's civilian decision-making bodies: the North Atlantic Council and the Nuclear Planning Group. Its advice is sought prior to any authorization for military action and, consequently, is an essential link between the political decision-making process and the military structure of NATO.

The Military Committee is charged with translating political decisions into military action, taking the direction of the political element and finding practical ways to bring about action. Delegates will be addressing some of the pressing nuts-and-bolts questions facing NATO at this time, and will be expected to provide both appropriate, reality-based recommendations, as well as practical solutions to decisions made at the political level.

## Topic A: Reinforcing NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence

### Introduction

NATO's foundational principle is collective defence of its Member States from external aggression. This security guarantee is particularly prized by NATO's newest members in Central and Eastern Europe, who face a Russia that is focused on re-establishing a geopolitical sphere of influence among its former satellite and vassal states. Russia's invasions of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014, coupled with ongoing hostile activities aimed at NATO states, have forced the Alliance to re-orient back towards prioritizing collective defence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The invasion of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea in particular, as well as ongoing Russian military exercises in close proximity to NATO member territory, has prompted NATO to provide its easternmost members with concrete assurances of its security guarantee. Long-standing strategic divisions within NATO, as well as more recent doubts over the sanctity of its Article 5 mutual defence guarantee, necessitated a display of solidarity and common purpose to project Alliance unity.

### Threats to NATO

Military spending within the Alliance has increased over the past few years, though many Alliance members still struggle to provide credible military forces.<sup>1</sup> In order to maintain a credible deterrent capability against Russia, Allies implemented the 2016 Warsaw Summit decision to establish a forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.<sup>2</sup> NATO has sought to assuage the precarious security situation of the Baltic states, and reassure Poland of its security commitments, by deploying rotational battalions to the area led by large Western members – Canada, the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> However, current NATO deployments are far too small to sustain any substantive resistance in the event of a Russian incursion, and critical vulnerabilities such as the defence of the Suwalki Gap remain.<sup>4</sup>

NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) is instead acts as a geopolitical tripwire through an array of NATO states within each deployed battalion.<sup>5</sup> The concept of EFP is that, while Russia might be tempted to strike at the Baltic states in isolation and win a quick victory that Alliance members might be reluctant to challenge, the presence of multinational forces would leave NATO Member States with no choice but to respond to aggressive action that struck at their own soldiers. During the Cold War a similar reasoning was used for the maintenance of Western military forces in West Berlin, to ensure that any Soviet incursion would necessarily involve hostile action against American, British, and French troops.

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<sup>1</sup> NATO, 10 July 2018, "Information on defence expenditures,"

[https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics\\_49198.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics_49198.htm).

<sup>2</sup> NATO, 10 September 2018, "Boosting NATO's presence in the east and southeast,"

[https://www.nato.int/cps/em/natohq/topics\\_136388.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/em/natohq/topics_136388.htm).

<sup>3</sup> NATO, August 2018, "NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence Fact Sheet,"

[https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2018\\_09/20180910\\_1809-factsheet\\_efp\\_en.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_09/20180910_1809-factsheet_efp_en.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> CEPA, 9 July 2018, "Securing the Suwalki Corridor," <https://www.cepa.org/securing-the-suwalki-corridor>.

<sup>5</sup> McNamara, E. M., 2016, "Securing the Nordic-Baltic Region," <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2016/also-in-2016/security-baltic-defense-nato/EN/index.htm>.

As these multinational forces remain concentrated at specific bases in their host countries, there is a risk that any Russian incursion could opt to bypass NATO troops while seizing their objectives. This would defeat the purpose of the tripwire, and potentially lead to critical delays in NATO's response to Russian aggression as Member States consider the prospective costs of digging out locally superior Russian conventional forces.<sup>6</sup> A significant delay by NATO in response to a Russian attack on a Member State would catastrophically undermine the Alliance's credibility in providing collective defence and could lead to a complete breakdown of NATO.

NATO has taken additional measures to guarantee the sanctity of its eastern members, including the formulation of the Four 30s plan, which would reinforce NATO's eastern presence in the event of a crisis with the deployment of 30 combat battalions, 30 aircraft squadrons, and 30 warships within 30 days.<sup>7</sup> NATO has also stood up additional commands and headquarters capacity which are responsible for easing the passage of military forces across European borders, to ensure NATO has the capacity and capability to rapidly reinforce its deployed forces in the east.<sup>8</sup> The Alliance has also begun to conduct larger scale exercises, such as the recently concluded Trident Juncture, which focused explicitly on defeating large-scale conventional incursions from a hostile state.<sup>9</sup> Despite US President Trump's stated ambivalence towards NATO, the United States has committed additional forces and funding through such measures as its European Deterrence Initiative which will strengthen the Alliance via additional exercises, increased forward presence, and improving and expanding forward deployed equipment.<sup>10</sup>

## Conclusion

Concerns abound that efforts by the United States and its NATO allies are still not enough. Studies of Russian and NATO capabilities stress that absent substantial increases in NATO's military presence, Russia would be able to overrun the Baltics in a matter of days.<sup>11</sup> Russia has also been increasing its local military capabilities and has concentrated in particular on deploying large quantities of ground to air missiles to deny NATO its assumed domination of the air. Russian forces in Kaliningrad pose another concern for NATO, as these are well positioned to cut off land access to the Baltics via closing the Suwalki Gap in the event of conflict.<sup>12</sup> Russia's ongoing escalation is eroding regional security and stability, and the Alliance will face increasing pressure

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<sup>6</sup> Shlapak, D. A. and Johnson, M. W., 2016, "Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics," *RAND*,

[https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND\\_RR1253.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND_RR1253.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 7 June 2018, "NATO Agrees To 'Four 30s' Plan To Counter Russia," <https://www.rferl.org/a/nato-ministers-expected-to-okay-four-thirties-initiative-stoltenberg/29275979.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Emmott, R., 28 March 2018, "With NATO, EU sets out plan to enable faster troop movement across Europe," *Reuters*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-russia/with-nato-eu-sets-out-plan-to-enable-faster-troop-movement-across-europe-idUSKBN1H41RQ>.

<sup>9</sup> NATO, 29 October 2018, "Trident Juncture," <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/157833.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Judson, J., 12 February 2018, "Funding to deter Russia reaches \$6.5B in FY19 defense budget request," *Defense News*, <https://www.defensenews.com/land/2018/02/12/funding-to-deter-russia-reaches-65b-in-fy19-defense-budget-request/>.

<sup>11</sup> Shlapak and Johnson, "Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics."

<sup>12</sup> CEPA, "Securing the Suwalki Corridor."

to properly defend its eastern members against Russian hostility. NATO must determine a realistic level of commitment for its eastern frontier, and credibly demonstrate its commitment to defend its members.

### **Guiding Questions:**

- In the event of invasion or a more limited incursion, would NATO multinational forces be proactively deployed from their bases to engage?
- How can NATO reassure its easternmost Member States of its commitment to their security?
- How can NATO best ensure the rapid reinforcement of its eastern deployed forces? Is the Four 30s plan sufficient?

### **Further Readings:**

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (August 2018). "NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence Fact Sheet." [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2018\\_09/20180910\\_1809-factsheet\\_efp\\_en.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_09/20180910_1809-factsheet_efp_en.pdf).

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Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. (7 June 2018). "NATO Agrees To 'Four 30s' Plan To Counter Russia." <https://www.rferl.org/a/nato-ministers-expected-to-okay-four-thirties-initiative-stoltenberg/29275979.html>. Shlapak, D. A. and Johnson, M. W. (2016). "Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics." *RAND*. [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND\\_RR1253.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1253/RAND_RR1253.pdf).

## Topic B: NATO and Hybrid Warfare

### Introduction

NATO has traditionally been organized to defend against, and fight with, conventional military force. Conventional forces refer to national militaries that conform to standards in areas such as organizational tactics, behaviour, weapons and equipment, and who generally can be expected to obey the laws of armed conflict. NATO's planned defence against the USSR, and its follow-on interventions in the former Yugoslavia and in Libya correspond with fighting conventional wars.

NATO has also recently acquired hard won experience in prosecuting unconventional war via counterinsurgency experience in Afghanistan, waged against forces that did not conform to traditional standards and could not be expected to adhere to the laws of armed conflict. Yet NATO is now confronted with an unfamiliar type of conflict, one which combines a range of military and non-military activities which have been variously termed hybrid, grey zone, or new generational warfare.<sup>13</sup>

As noted by NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg these sorts of tactics (propaganda, deception, sabotage, etc.) are not new; what is new about Russia's operations in Ukraine and elsewhere is the speed, scale, and intensity of these actions, facilitated by rapid technological change and increased global interconnectivity.<sup>14</sup> The flexibility of such operations enables their use within NATO countries as well, shorn of the more blatant military aspects of Russia's war against Ukraine.

### Russia's Use of Hybrid Warfare: A Brief Case Study

Russia's 2014 invasion of Ukraine, first seizing Crimea and then parts of eastern Ukraine, was a major example of this new type of grey zone conflict. Non-military tactics were employed, such as social media tools, public disinformation campaigns, and the building up and leveraging of business and political relationships to pressure and obfuscate the situation. In conjunction with these non-military destabilization efforts, Russian arms, advisors, and troops entered the country to seize objectives and support anti-government forces against the Ukrainian military response.<sup>15</sup> In February 2014 in Crimea, military units with unmarked Russian equipment barricaded Ukrainian military and police facilities in conjunction with disciplined 'civilians' who seized other key administrative facilities and media buildings. The overall effect was to paralyze local political decision-making, deny Ukrainian access to the media, and place Ukrainian forces in

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<sup>13</sup> CSIS, 29 March 2017, "Russian Influence and Unconventional Warfare Operations in the 'Grey Zone': Lessons from Ukraine," <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russian-influence-and-unconventional-warfare-operations-grey-zone-lessons-ukraine>.

<sup>14</sup> NATO, 17 July 2018, "NATO's response to hybrid threats," [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_156338.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm).

<sup>15</sup> CSIS, "Russian Influence and Unconventional Warfare Operations in the 'Grey Zone': Lessons from Ukraine."

position of having to escalate the situation further in order to leave their bases.<sup>16</sup> These kinetic (but largely bloodless) operations supported an aggressive information campaign aimed at intimidating decision-makers and crushing the morale of Ukrainian forces. These anti-Ukraine actors consistently claimed they were local protestors and were referred to as such by Russian officials and media. Even though it quickly became obvious these units had arrived from Russia, the ambiguity of their affiliation allowed Moscow to deny involvement even as it proceeded to orchestrate events that eventually led to the annexation of Crimea.

Russia has pursued hybrid warfare as a means of threatening and destabilizing NATO members and their internal cohesion without crossing the threshold of an Article 5 response. In this way Russia has been able to carry on an active challenge against NATO without the Alliance being able to respond with its superior conventional forces, undermining the deterrent power of a collective response. Russia's activities vary between countries, allowing them to selectively calibrate their active measures in an opportunistic fashion that is responsive to local conditions.<sup>17</sup> Russia's tool box is enhanced by the presence of friendly actors in its target countries, ranging from government officials and politicians, to business folk and academics, to civil society and organized crime.<sup>18</sup> This enables Russia to zero in on specific vulnerabilities in target states.<sup>19</sup>

## Conclusion

NATO is thus confronted by an old adversary using an unfamiliar combination of military and non-military resources that places pressure on Alliance vulnerabilities. Beyond Russia's current occupation of Crimea and its ongoing invasion of eastern Ukraine, it has also targeted NATO members with elements of its hybrid warfare activities. Russian air and naval forces routinely violate the air and sea territory of NATO members in the Black and Baltic seas. Russian disinformation operations are actively attempting to undermine trust in NATO-enhanced Forward Presence forces, as well as more broadly fomenting discord between NATO members by playing up old grievances or current disagreements. Russia has also supported the development of destabilizing political movements within NATO countries across the political spectrum with an eye to sharpening internal divisions and paralyzing NATO states.<sup>20</sup> As Russia seeks to demoralize and divide NATO and the EU, keeping them busy to avoid further expansion,

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<sup>16</sup> United States Army Special Operations Command, "'Little Green Men': a primer on Modern Russia Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014,"

[https://www.jhuapl.edu/Content/documents/ARIS\\_LittleGreenMen.pdf](https://www.jhuapl.edu/Content/documents/ARIS_LittleGreenMen.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> Galeotti, M., 1 September 2017, "Controlling Chaos: How Russia manages its political war in Europe," *European Council on Foreign Relations*,

[https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/controlling\\_chaos\\_how\\_russia\\_manages\\_its\\_political\\_war\\_in\\_europe](https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/controlling_chaos_how_russia_manages_its_political_war_in_europe)

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Kols, R., 3 July 2018, "NATO Must Meet Russia's Hybrid Warfare Challenge," *Atlantic Council*,

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/nato-must-meet-russia-s-hybrid-warfare-challenge>.

<sup>20</sup> Salvo, D. and Andell, A., 10 October 2017, "The Active Measures Orchestra: An Examination of Russian Influence Operations Abroad," *Alliance for Securing Democracy*, <https://securingdemocracy.gmfus.org/the-active-measures-orchestra-an-examination-of-russian-influence-operations-abroad/>.

helpful reform, or united action, it will likely continue to target NATO members as well as foster instability in NATO's near-abroad such as in the Balkans.<sup>21</sup>

### Guiding Questions:

- How have hybrid threats evolved since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014?
- Have efforts by NATO and its Member States been effective or sufficient in responding to and countering hybrid threats?
- What lessons can be drawn from the past four years to inform NATO's ability to anticipate future threats or challenges?
- Do NATO members need to alter current or future force structures to better address hybrid threats?
- Are there non-military elements and capabilities that should be integrated into NATO's strategic posture? Are there military elements and capabilities that are currently deficient or in need of change to properly deter hybrid warfare?

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<http://www.natolibguides.info/hybridwarfare/reports>.

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<sup>21</sup> Chivvis, C. S., 22 March 2017, "Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare": And What Can Be Done About It," *RAND*, [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/CT400/CT468/RAND\\_CT468.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/CT400/CT468/RAND_CT468.pdf).



## Topic C: Addressing Russian Nuclear Doctrine

### Introduction

Nuclear weapons are unparalleled in human history in their destructive capacities with the potential to end life on Earth as we have come to know it. To many their mere existence causes the world to be far less safe than if they were gotten rid of all together. Difficulties arise, however when one has to determine what the threshold of threat the nuclear states have whether it be real or perceived before they feel compelled to deploy their nuclear weapons. This is why the evaluation and response of states' nuclear doctrines is so vitally important.

### Historical Context

One of the defining features of the Cold War was the nuclear brinkmanship between the United States with NATO and the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact alliance states. With the stakes so high and the level of trust between the two sides low, the world was dangerously close to disaster, as was highlighted in 1962 with the Cuban Missile Crisis. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, the danger of nuclear confrontation appeared to dissipate. As the ideological divide between the two sides had greatly narrowed and Russia was forced to look more inward in order to rebuild the state, nuclear conflict seemed far less likely.

Following the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union, nuclear weapons did not completely disappear from the Russian Military Doctrine. While never formalized, Russia debated an expanded role for tactical nuclear weapons as a deterrent in conventional conflicts because Russian forces were outdated and inadequate to deal with them otherwise.<sup>22</sup> In 2000 Russia released a formal military doctrine, spurred on by what it saw as NATO's threatening expansion, especially its involvement in Kosovo. Russia outlined dangers (issues that it was concerned about going forward) and threats (more immediate issues), as well as its position on its use of nuclear weapons. One of the more interesting points of the 2000 military doctrine was notion of using targeted nuclear strikes as means of "de-escalation" in conflicts where deterrence had failed.

Over the 2000s Russia and NATO relations warmed up somewhat as Russia grew stronger in terms of its economy, state apparatus, and military as it embarked on a large-scale modernization of its conventional forces. This led to an updated military doctrine that brought its nuclear policy more in line with other nuclear states as it removed the idea of using nuclear weapons as a tool for de-escalation.

### Current Russia-NATO Relations

Relations between NATO and Russia have taken a turn for the worse in the past few years. This has led to the latest published Russian Military doctrine in December 2014 (which is technically 6 years early given that the one released in 2010 was meant to last until 2020). What is interesting about the latest doctrine is not specifically the nuclear portion (as that has remained

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<sup>22</sup> NTI, 2018, "Russia," <https://www.nti.org/learn/countries/russia/nuclear/>.

unchanged), but the dangers and threats that Russia feels are the greatest. The language has changed from alluding to NATO and EU as dangers to the country and to naming specific NATO weapon systems.<sup>23</sup> In 2015 Russia staged massive military maneuvers that took place from the Baltic region all the way to its Pacific coast. During these exercises Russia stationed state-of-the-art nuclear capable missiles with a range of 500Km in the Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad in between NATO members Poland and Lithuania.<sup>24</sup> Russia's nuclear capabilities were once more brought to the fore in 2018 with the unveiling of two new nuclear weapon delivery systems (a low-flying cruise missile and a new submarine launched ballistic missile) that are significantly more advanced than previous Russian technology, allegedly capable of reaching targets anywhere in the world.<sup>25</sup> Both are allegedly capable of evading existing anti-ballistic missile defence systems.<sup>26</sup>

This being said, there have been further movements between the US and Russia towards disarmament, including Russia's move under the terms of the New START agreement. Signed in April 2010, it was required to cut its strategic nuclear arsenal to 1,550 operational warheads and 800 deployed and non-deployed launchers by February 2018 and as reported by the February 2018 New START data exchange, Russia met this obligation.<sup>27</sup> However, recent moves by the US, such as the announcement of its decision to pull out of certain nuclear arms treaties based on accusations of bad faith on the part of the Russians, has cast continued international commitment to Nuclear Arms Treaties in doubt.<sup>28</sup>

## Conclusion

The military doctrine highlighted Russian fears of outside influence of its population resulting in upheaval such as that seen in Ukraine in 2014 as well as the other so-called colour revolutions. Russia sees these as the result of Western influence as a means to diminish Russian influence and power in the region. This is what makes the situation different in terms of nuclear doctrine in 2014 from 2010. While the threshold to use nuclear weapons has not necessarily changed, it is possible what constitutes a threat to Russia may have changed. This, as well as the slowing of Russia's military modernization due to sanctions and falling energy prices, makes Russia-NATO relations even more unpredictable.

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<sup>23</sup> The Embassy of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 29 June 2015, "PRESS RELEASE: The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation (English Translation)," <https://rusemb.org.uk/press/2029>.

<sup>24</sup> Isachenkov, V., 18 February 2015, "Russia is putting state-of-the-art missiles in its westernmost Baltic enclave," *Business Insider*, <https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-placing-state-of-the-art-missiles-in-kaliningrad-2015-3>.

<sup>25</sup> BBC News, 1 March 2018, "Russia's Putin unveils 'invincible' nuclear weapons," <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43239331>.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance, 22 February 2018, "New START Aggregate Numbers of Strategic Offensive Arms," *U.S. Department of State*, <https://www.state.gov/t/avc/newstart/278775.htm>.

<sup>28</sup> BBC News, 21 October 2018, "President Trump to pull US from Russia missile treaty," <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-45930206>.

### Guiding Questions:

- Has the threat of nuclear conflict with Russia increased? If so, how does it avoid escalation while maintaining a satisfactory level of deterrence?
- Has Russia's perception of what constitutes a threat fundamentally changed, and has its threshold for nuclear action shifted?
- Are Strategic Missile Defence Systems an appropriate deterrent/defence to rival countries' (including but not limited to Russia) nuclear capabilities?
- What can be done to reassure NATO members that are within striking distance of the missiles in Kaliningrad?
- How much of Russian posturing is for the domestic audience due to economic difficulties? How much is meant to intimidate and pressure EU Member States to keep from imposing sanctions?

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