

Dangerous Crossroads: NATO Plans Large Scale Military Deployments on Russia's Doorstep

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The World is at a dangerous crossroads. US-NATO is carrying out a fresh set of military drills in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States involving the deployment of several thousand troops. These drills follow earlier military deployments in the Baltic States in October.

According to NATO General Hans-Lothar Domrose, Commander of Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum:

“Previously, we conducted maneuvers involving 25,000-40,000 soldiers in the western NATO countries alone, and I can imagine that in the future we will also organize a similar event in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States,” (quoted by Die Welt)

These deployments consist of “rapid reaction forces numbering 5,000-7,000 troops that can reach the combat area within two to five days.”

The so-called action plan directed against the Russian Federation was decided upon at the September 2014 Wales summit of the Atlantic Alliance.

As part of this broader endeavour, NATO's Iron Sword 2014 military exercises involving the participation of nine member countries of the Atlantic Alliance were launched in Lithuania on November 2nd.

“US tanks rolled in to Lithuania earlier this month is a show of force to Russia that it's not welcome in the region.”

According to General Hans-Lothar Domrose (in his September 15 statement) the deployments were planned to take place in the three Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. He underscored that NATO would “respect agreements with Russia and the troops will not be there permanently”.

The military exercises are explicitly directed against Russia. According to Moscow, they consist in “increasing operation readiness” as well the transfer of NATO “military infrastructure to the Russian borders”. According to Russian foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov:

“I believe that NATO expansion is a mistake. To a certain degree, it is certainly a provocation, ... It is an irresponsible policy that undermines commitments to build a common security system in Europe, based on equality of rights for all,

regardless of alignment or non-alignment with any military-political bloc,”
(Statement on margin of UN General Assembly in September, RIA Novosti)

It is worth noting that NATO war games were held in Latvia in October coinciding with country's national elections. NATO also conducted war games in Turkey in October.

In response to NATO deployments on Russia's borders, the Russian Federation also conducted in early November extensive war games in the sea of Barent. The Russian drills consisted in testing "its entire nuclear triad consisting of strategic bombers; submarines and the "silo-based Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile launched from Plesetsk in Arkhangelsk Oblast" on November 1st.

In an [open letter to president Obama published by Global Research](#), Former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark points to the dangers of military confrontation with the Russian Federation

The overwhelming majority of the population of the U.S. is against being dragged into another disastrous war. Nothing is more dangerous than the aggressive U.S./NATO troop movements right on the borders of Russia.

Sending U.S. destroyers into the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea; scheduling threatening U.S./NATO war games and troop movements in East Europe; and imposing sanctions on the Russian Federation is a threat to peace on a world scale. We have seen the cost of past and continuing U.S. wars, which enrich the military corporations while impoverishing the targeted countries as well as poor and working people here in the U.S.

What is disturbing, to say the least, is that the antiwar movement in the US, Canada and the European Union has not taken a firm position with regard to US-NATO deployments in Eastern Europe. While piecemeal antiwar actions are carried out, the protest movements fail to address the broader issue of global warfare, namely the dangers of a third world war.

War is presented by the media as a humanitarian endeavor. Sections of the antiwar movement in Western countries (supported by corporate foundations) tacitly endorse this perspective and pay lip service to NATO's "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P). While mass demonstrations are conducted in relation to the threat of climate change, public opinion is largely unaware of the fact that the US and its allies are involved in a global military adventure which threatens the future of humanity.

Michel Chossudovsky is the author of a forthcoming book entitled *The Globalization of War. America's Long War against Humanity*, Global Research Publishers, Montreal, 2014

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