

Pentagon to Use War Games to Smuggle Weapons to Ukrainian Army, Extremist Formations for War in Donbass: Russian Defense Ministry

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*Today's TASS cites **Major General Igor Konashenkov**, spokesman for the Russian Defense Ministry, warning that the U.S. and NATO will exploit this year's Sea Breeze military exercise in Ukraine to smuggle advanced weaponry and munitions to the nation's armed forces and fascist paramilitaries and mercenaries of the infamous Azov Battalion and similar units. The arms will be used for the ongoing war in the Donbass region.*

[In Konashenkov's words:](#)

“Advanced armaments, munitions and materiel are planned to be delivered precisely to that region for Ukrainian troops under the guise of holding the drills.

“Eventually, as was the case in previous years, all this weaponry will be delivered to the Ukrainian troops and nationalist formations stationed close to the areas in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions uncontrolled by Kiev.”

This year's version of the annual U.S.-NATO Sea Breeze exercise in the Black Sea region will run from June 28 to July 10 and include 4,000 troops, forty combat ships and other vessels, thirty military aircraft and over 100 armored vehicles from 29 NATO member and partner states.

Before the U.S.-orchestrated overthrow of Ukraine's legally-elected, internationally-recognized government in 2014 in a violent uprising supported by NATO and the European Union, Sea Breeze war games were largely conducted from Crimea.

[The Russian Defense Ministry spokesman was also quoted stating:](#)

“The Defense Ministry of the Russian Federation will closely follow the preparations for and the course of the Ukrainian-American exercise Sea Breeze with the involvement of NATO countries and will, if necessary, react appropriately to the developing situation in the interests of ensuring Russia's military security.”

It's evident the Russia defense establishment and military see this year's U.S.-led exercise posing a more direct threat than its predecessors have; and not only to the Donetsk and Lugansk republics but perhaps to Crimea and Belarus as well.

The Russian Defense Ministry described the land, sea and air components of the drills as including, in the first two cases, the training of partners according to NATO combat standards, the deployment of troops and equipment to "combat employment areas" and "organizing and conducting an offensive in the maritime area in interaction with a seaborne assault force."

The maritime drills will include "forming and ensuring the cohesion of a multinational naval task force, organizing the navy's interaction with the ground forces and aircraft, planning and conducting joint operations, employing an amphibious assault force in joint operations with land troops."

The only states bordering the Black Sea not NATO members or advanced partners (Enhanced Opportunities Partners) are Russia and Abkhazia, the latter [identified by the U.S. and NATO as an occupied territory](#).

The TASS account described the air component of the upcoming exercise as using combat aircraft in support of naval and ground forces, conducting reconnaissance operations and "delivering strikes against sea and ground targets...."

The warfighting scenario entails U.S., NATO and partner states - notably Ukraine - "stabilizing a crisis" incited by the actions of "some armed formations outlawed in Ukraine and enjoying the all-out support of a neighboring state," the Defense Ministry spokesman added.

That is a dress rehearsal for an invasion of the Donbass region, pure and simple; though as noted above regarding Belarus and Abkhazia an assault on the Donbass may not be all that's planned.

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