

# US/NATO Escalation in Europe

The 70 Years of NATO: From War to War

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by the Italian Committee No War No NATO

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In the course of the next two weeks, Global Research will publish the 16 sections of this important document, which will also be available as an E-book.

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1. The “new mission” of NATO was made official by the September 2014 Summit in Wales, launching the “Readiness Action Plan”, the official purpose of which was “to respond quickly and firmly to new security challenges” attributed to “military aggression of Russia against Ukraine “and to the growth of extremism and sectarian conflict in the Middle East and North

Africa". The Plan was defined by the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, as "the greatest reinforcement of our collective defense since the end of the Cold War".

2. In just three months, NATO quadrupled the fighter-bombers, with both conventional and nuclear capabilities, deployed in the Baltic region (once part of the USSR), sent AWACS radar aircraft to Eastern Europe and increased the number of warships in the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean Seas, deployed US, British and German land forces in Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and intensified joint exercises in Poland and the Baltic countries, bringing them to over 200 during the year.

3. From 2014, the US/NATO pressure on Russia grew in geometric progression. In four years, from 2014 to 2018, the United States spent US\$10 billion on the "Europe Reassurance Initiative" (ERI), the official aim of which was "to increase our ability to defend Europe against aggression Russian". Almost half of the expenditures were used to strengthen the US "strategic prepositioning" in Europe. The armaments that were placed in an advanced position allowed "the rapid deployment of forces in the war theater". Another large segment of funds were destined to "increase the presence on a rotating basis of US forces throughout Europe". The remaining funds served to develop the infrastructure of bases in Europe to "increase the readiness of US actions", and to strengthen military exercises and training in order to "increase the readiness and interoperability of NATO forces".

4. The funds of the European Defense Initiative (EDI) - formerly known as the European Reassurance Initiative of the United States - were only a part of those targeted for the "Operation Atlantic Resolve that demonstrated the USA's ability to respond to the threats against the allies". In the framework of this operation, the 3rd Armored Brigade, comprising 3,500 men, 87 tanks, 18 self-propelled howitzers and other means, was transferred to Poland from the USA in January 2017. It was subsequently replaced by another unit so that US armed forces could be permanently stationed on Polish territory. From there, their departments were transferred, for training and exercises, to other Eastern countries, especially Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania and also Ukraine. In other words, they were continuously deployed close to Russia.

5. Also in the framework of this operation, the 10th Combat Air Brigade was transferred to the Storck Barracks/Illesheim Kaserne United States Army facility (Germany) along with 100 war helicopters. The Combat Air Brigade's forces are sent to "advanced positions" in Poland, Romania and Latvia. In the bases of Ämari (Estonia) and Graf Ignatievo (Bulgaria), US and NATO fighter-bombers are deployed, including Italian Eurofighters, for the Baltic air patrol. The operation also provides for "a persistent presence in the Black Sea" along with the Mihail Kogalniceanu Base (Romania) and the Novo Selo Training Area (Bulgaria).

6. General Curtis Scaparrotti, head of the European Command of the United States and at the same time Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, has assured Congress that "our forces are ready and positioned to counter the Russian aggression". A US contingent is positioned in eastern Poland, in the so-called "Suwalki Gap", a stretch of flat land about a hundred kilometers long which, NATO warns, "would be a perfect gateway for Russian tanks". The propaganda paraphernalia of the old cold war is thus revived: that of the Russian tanks ready to invade Europe. Waving the specter of a non-existent threat from the East, the US tanks arrived in Europe instead.

7. The plan is clear. After provoking a new confrontation with Russia in the Maidan Square

protests, Washington (despite the change of administration from President Obama to President Trump) has pursued the same strategy: transforming Europe into the forefront of a new cold war to the advantage of US interests and their balance of power with the major European powers.

8. The European powers of NATO participate in the deployment on the eastern flank – including armored forces, fighter-bombers, warships and even nuclear missile units – as evidenced by the dispatch of French troops and British tanks to Estonia. In this period, we talk about “a European army, but in the meeting with the defense ministers of the EU, in April 2017 in Malta, NATO general secretary Stoltenberg explained in what terms.” It was clearly agreed by the “The European Union that its purpose is not to build a new European army or competitive structures in competition with those of NATO, but something that is complementary to what NATO does.”

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Sections 11-16 of the 70 Years of NATO, From War to War, forthcoming on Global Research

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