

1. SECURITY AND GEOPOLITICS

WITH THE CHALLENGE FROM RUSSIA, SHOULD EUROPEAN COUNTRIES NOW SWITCH BACK TO FOCUSING EXCLUSIVELY ON TERRITORIAL DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE?

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ABSTRACT

During the Munich Security Conference 2017, US Secretary of Defence Jim Mattis confirmed US commitment to European security, being an important factor for stability of the continent. Especially for Baltic States as those after gaining NATO and EU membership believed that it resolved their security concerns. However, Russian occupation of Crimea caused real security concerns and Baltic countries invested into conventional capabilities and territorial defence forces. The paper argues that, given the complex and dynamic security situation, it is insufficient if European countries focus exclusively on territorial defence and deterrence. Therefore, a case study, where attention is drawn to the Baltic States, where the challenges from Russia have led into the dilemma of reconciling alliance defence requirements and national defence requirements, is discussed leading to conclusions and recommendations.

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Introduction

The Munich Security Conference 2017 (MSC 2017) was expected with great excitement. The determining question was how the representatives of the new US administration would turn to NATO. The general tenor is best summarized in the words of US Secretary of Defence Jim Mattis:

President Trump came into office and has thrown now his full support to NATO. He too espouses NATO's need to adapt to today's strategic situation for it to remain credible, capable and relevant. [...] I'm also confident that the alliance will adopt a plan this year, including milestone dates,

to make steady progress toward meeting Warsaw and Wales commitments to carry our fair share of the security burden. [...] the transatlantic bond remains our strongest bulwark against instability and violence (Mattis, 2017).

For the European allies, particularly the Baltic States, these were very important words, because the support provided by the USA will be assured also in the future. In the past twenty-five years, the need for this support has never been as great as it is today, where stability and peace are no longer guaranteed. The European Union Global Strategy (EUGS) states that 'Russia's violation of international law and the destabilisation of Ukraine, on top of protracted conflicts in the wider Black Sea region, have challenged the European security order at its core' (EUGS, 2016, p. 33). When the Baltic States gained NATO and EU membership in 2004, it was believed that the Baltic States resolved all of their security concerns (Grigas, 2014). Now, in view of the new Russian aggressiveness, they have to admit that this was a hasty conclusion. The aforementioned words of Mattis also include a clear demand. While the USA is committed to NATO, they expect an adaptation to strategic needs and a fair distribution of costs. The message is unambiguous: European countries have to increase their security and defence efforts. Should these efforts address exclusively the challenge from Russia and therefore focus totally on territorial defence and deterrence? A serious discussion about this issue is impossible without raising other questions: What does the Russian threat look like? Is Russia's aggressive behaviour currently the only challenge that European countries have to face? Moreover, do all European countries perceive Russia as an immediate threat?

The paper will argue that, given the complex and dynamic security situation, it is insufficient if European countries to focus exclusively on territorial defence and deterrence. The paper will reveal four arguments, which aim to underpin the thesis:

1. The multidimensional challenges from Russia require a whole catalogue of countermeasures.
2. Globalization requires a broad approach to security.
3. NATO members have to contribute to collective defence as well as to crisis management and security cooperation.
4. In the face of limited resources, wide and diverse challenges can only be addressed by a security organisation.

The paper is divided into three parts. The first part presents arguments, which support the aforementioned thesis. The second part encompasses a case study, where the attention is drawn to the Baltic States, where the challenges from Russia have led into the dilemma of reconciling alliance and national defence requirements. The third part summarizes the themes and offers recommendations. While a common understanding of the terms territorial defence and deterrence builds the foundation for the paper, Annex A provides the respective definitions.

Hybrid warfare – Blurring the borders between civil and military structures

Since the events that took place on the soil of Crimea and Eastern Ukraine in 2014, the term hybrid warfare has been on everyone's lips. Experts elaborate that this form of warfare aims 'at defeating the target country by breaking its ability to resist without actually launching a full-scale military attack' (Rácz, 2015, p. 87). It is reflected in the contemporary Russian doctrine, which is based on the combined employment of

military and non-military means, including diplomatic, economic, political, social, information, and military tools (Renz & Sinovets, 2015). While Galeotti (2016) claims that hybrid warfare is rooted in Soviet and pre-Soviet Russian practice, Rácz (2015) explains that the real novelty was the high effectiveness of Russian operations in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. However, the success of the hybrid attack was not only due to the strength of Russia, but rather to the fact that Ukraine was an ideal target. The literature describes two preconditions, which have to be fulfilled to wage a hybrid attack. On the one hand, 'the target country must be weak and divided, with officials that are easy to corrupt' (Rácz, 2015, p. 88), and on the other hand, 'the attacker needs to be militarily stronger than the target country in order to limit the countermeasure potential of the defender' (Rácz, 2015, p. 88). The main difference between a conventional war and a hybrid war is the use of regular military forces. While in a conventional war armed forces represent an instrument of open aggression, they serve in a hybrid war predominantly as a deterrent. Although this deterrent can be counterbalanced, either by sufficient and reliable national defence capabilities or by collective defence, European countries are well advised not to reveal any weakness that serve as a point of entry. Rácz (2015) argues that deprived, poorly governed states, where social and ethnic tensions prevail and the respect for democracy and the human rights are weak, are particularly susceptible to a hybrid offensive. Hybrid warfare must be understood as a multifaceted tool, which occupies the space between traditional civil and military structures and addresses the different vulnerabilities of a targeted country. The mitigation of sources of instability and a certain degree of resilience can act as a first layer of defence. Therefore, stable domestic and

economic conditions are just as important as territorial defence and deterrence.

European security – a global vs. regional approach

European countries find themselves in a very dynamic and complex security environment. The challenges can be divided into internal, regional, and global issues. Since 2008, Europe has been suffering from the financial and economic crisis. While not all of the countries were effected in the same manner, the crisis has led to a loss of reputation for the European Union. Consequently, populist parties have gained influence and the European solidarity has come under pressure. In addition, international tensions over Ukraine and in the Arab world have immediate and significant influence on the European security situation. Hilmer (2016) points out that this has led to regional challenges. The majority of European citizens fear the impact of international turmoil in their neighbouring regions. While East-European citizens are extremely concerned about Russia's aggressive behaviour, the massive influx of refugees fleeing war and instability is a matter of concern for citizens of the Mediterranean region (Hilmer, 2016). The most recent terror attacks in Paris, Brussels, and Berlin make international terrorism the most pressing threat for citizens in Central Europe. It can be argued that the perception of a threat varies from country to country. Smith and Hendrix (2016) claim that there are significant differences, which fall along geographical lines. The contemporary discussions on European security and defence strategy are 'guided by the question of how to strike the right balance between east and south' (Simón, 2016, p. 2). The Ukraine crisis has led to a perceived threat to the integrity of the territory on NATO's eastern flank. Thus, NATO has

refocused on defence and deterrence in Eastern Europe. Especially East-European countries seems to believe 'that the immediate neighbourhood comes first and that the rest of the world is not so much European's business' (Simón, 2016, p. 3). Yet, not all of the members of the alliance have an identical point of view:

On the one side are those members that would take an active role in confronting Russian aggression. On the other are those that, not feeling immediately threatened or being otherwise occupied with other fiscal, social, and security challenges, would prefer to defer response until the threat is more immediate (Smith & Hendrix, 2016, p. 4).

While not all European countries share the same sense of urgency, all should be aware that they are effected by entangled threats and challenges. Therefore, European nations are well advised to develop a global approach to security because the EUGS (2016) points out that their prosperity is based on an open and fair international economic system and sustainable access to global resources. Other authors pay attention to the importance of 'the so-called middle spaces (the Indian Ocean, Central Asia and the Arctic), i.e. those regions that connect Europe and its immediate neighbourhood to the rest of the Eurasian landmass, all the way to the Asia Pacific' (Simón, 2016, p. 2). They claim that economic globalisation and improvements in military technology have boosted geopolitical and strategic interconnectivity. From this perspective, it can be argued that there is a direct link between Asian security and the wealth in Europe. Rogers (2013) sees the danger that Europeans will lose their significance in the Indo-Pacific. Thus, he suggests to reassess self-imposed military cuts and to increase the geostrategic outreach of European countries. The EUGS summarize the issue in a quite understandable

manner: 'Internal and external security are ever more entangled: our security at home depends on peace beyond our borders' (EUGS, 2016, p. 7). Therefore, European countries cannot focus exclusively on territorial defence and deterrence; they also have to proceed expeditionary capabilities, which allow to project power on strategic reach.

Collective Defence – one of three NATO core tasks

Most European countries are the members of NATO and/or EU. So as regards security and defence policy, the EU 'respects the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realised in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)' (EU, Lisbon Treaty, Article 42). The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) of the EU can be understood as compatible with the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty. The Strategic Concept (2010) defines NATO's core tasks as collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. Collective defence builds the cornerstone of NATO. It means that whenever the fundamental security of individual allies or the alliance as a whole is threatened by aggression or emerging security challenges, the alliance will respond appropriately in order to deter and defend against the respective actors. Crisis management is designed to address the full spectrum of crisis and takes the exceptional and robust set of NATO's political and military capabilities into account. NATO will employ an applicable mix of tools, which allow for preventing or deescalating a crisis or are suited to consolidate stability in a post-conflict situation. The aim of cooperative security is to collaborate actively with relevant countries and other international organisations in order to enhance international security. The Strategic Concept

states that security of NATO members on both sides of the Atlantic is inseparable. It also reminds that this has to be based on solidarity, shared purpose and fair burden sharing. In other words, every ally has to bear particular responsibility, which serves the whole set of NATO's core tasks. Limited capabilities prohibit single national attempts and require cooperation projects that allow an efficient use of resource. Cooperation projects have to address the concerns of all parties involved and do not allow focusing exclusively on certain security issues. While some countries tend to focus on their most pressing threat, European countries are generally well advised to establish a broad approach to security. The dynamic and complex security environment requires the attention of all of them and in a more multifaceted world, NATO and EU must stand united.

Multinational cooperation – implementing security in an efficient manner

The EUGS argues that 'only the combined weight of' European countries 'has the potential to deliver security, prosperity and democracy to its citizens and make a positive difference in the world' (EUGS, 2016, p. 8). While member states of NATO and/or EU remain sovereign in their defence decisions, defence cooperation should be enhanced to obtain and sustain the respective capabilities. The EU encourages its Member States to commit to mutual assistance and solidarity as well as to increase their efforts on defence, cyber, counterterrorism, energy and strategic communications (EUGS, 2016). While investments in security and defence are a question of urgency, European countries must be aware that they have to invest in all aspects of foreign policy. Military resources, which are tightened exclusively to the defence of

the own territory 'constrains the country's participation in an international military alliance' (Mendershausen, 1980, p. 3). In times of limited resources, it is advisable to spent security-related budgets in a coordinated and therefore more efficient manner. While the combined set of political, military, and economic capabilities of European countries remain a significant power, which allows for reacting on instability and fast changing risks, everyone should be aware that there is currently no European country, which has the capability to solve today's challenges on its own (Bühler, 2017). This is why German Lieutenant General Bühler (2017), who is currently the Chairman of the European Defence Agency Steering Board, strongly believes that multinational cooperation builds the bedrock of national, European and Transatlantic defence. The EU has the ambition to 'act at all stages of the conflict cycle, acting promptly on prevention, responding responsibly and decisively to crises, investing in stabilisation, and avoiding premature disengagement when a new crisis erupts' (EUGS, 2016, p. 9). In order to respond to external crises and to guarantee Europe's safety, a full range of capabilities is required. If Europe wants to maintain or increase influence in a globalized world, it has to emphasise credibility and unity. While the combined political, economic, and military capabilities of EU and NATO are already a noticeable deterrence, clear signals of unity, solidarity, and decisiveness could significantly increase the effect.

The aforementioned passages have shown that European countries find themselves in a very diverse security environment. It can be claimed that territorial defence and deterrence are adequate measures to counter conventional threats to a country's territorial integrity. This paper will not challenge this statement. However,

it argues that European countries have to develop a whole set of political and military capacities, which allows them to handle current and future security issues. While this includes territorial defence and deterrence, it should not be limited to it. Countries who are members of NATO and/or EU remain dedicated to fulfil all of their obligations, including crisis management and security cooperation. The following part of the paper will pay attention to the Baltic States, where the complexity and dependency of the aforementioned aspects can be illustrated in a comprehensible manner.

Case study: The Baltic States

The Baltic States are currently in a situation, where their threat perception is dominated by Russia's aggressive behaviour. It is obvious that they increase measures, which are designed to address this issue. While they benefit from their membership in NATO and EU, they have to avoid focusing exclusively on territorial defence and deterrence. Moreover, they have to be aware that nothing is without costs. NATO and EU are organisations with global interests and strategic reach. Being member of this organisations means contributing to common efforts irrespectively of geographical location. The following part of the paper will elaborate on the situation of the Baltic States and will argue that they are well advised to find a balance between territorial defence and deterrence on one hand and being a reliable partner within the full framework of EU's CSDP and NATO's Strategic Concept 2010 on the other hand.

When the Baltic States joined NATO and the EU in 2004, it was believed that they resolved all of their security concerns (Grigas, 2014). The collective defence clause of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty would assure, so the assumption, that the NATO

allies line up to defend the Baltic States in the case of military aggression from the East. Once the Baltic States became members of NATO and the EU, the pressure to pursue reforms and to modernise and transform their armed forces disappeared. While financial turmoil affected most European countries, especially Lithuania and Latvia cut down their defence spending and demonstrated a lack of solidarity with other allies (Paulauskas, 2013). Only Estonia remained committed and reached the required benchmark of 2% of their GDP in 2012. Paulauskas (2013) describes that it was difficult for politicians of the Baltic States to persuade their populations to send troops abroad. He mentions that the national security interests of the Baltic States are limited to the region; while on the other hand, both NATO and the EU are organisations with global ambitions. Concerning new challenges, which the Baltic States distinguish as originating from Russia, they play a more active role within the alliance. NATO's cyber defence policy and the dedication of NATO's Cyber Centre of Excellence in Tallinn are based on Estonian-led efforts. A Lithuanian initiative resulted in a reference to energy security in NATO's Strategic Concept 2010 and the foundation of the respective Centre of Excellence in Vilnius. In addition, Riga hosts the NATO's Centre of Excellence for Strategic Communication. In 2013, Paulauskas assessed the overall performance of the Baltic States in NATO as follows:

While the Baltic States have consistently delivered with regard to NATO operations before and after enlargement, defence reforms and defence spending – the two key prerequisites for long-term viability of the Baltic contributions to NATO – have stalled or even reversed (Paulauskas, 2013, p. 79).

While the events in Georgia in 2008 did not lead to significant changes, the year 2014 was finally a wake-up call. For Cusumano and Rogers (2016), it is no surprise that the greatest worries over Russian aggressiveness appeared on the north-eastern periphery of the alliance's territory, where geographical vicinity, imbalance of power, ethnical tensions and historical aspects have led to a 'Russophobia' (Paulauskas, 2013). The Crimea Crisis, Russia's activities within the information environment and the mobilisation of Russian minorities within the Baltic States have dramatically increased the threat perception of the population during the last three years. In the meanwhile, the individual capacities of the Baltic States to resist an armed attack are limited. Paulauskas (2013) pays attention to the geographic location and negligible size of the Baltic States and argues that even 2% of GDP for their defence would be not enough to establish a sufficiently robust initial self-defence capability. Even the wider Baltic region, the so-called NBP9 (Nordic five (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the Baltic three (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), plus Poland) cannot defend themselves. The Baltic Sea Security Report 2015 claims that 'they are dependent on the deterrent effect of the promises of others' (CEPA, 2015, p. 2). While the majority of the population was not able to realize the need to invest in security or even to take part in expeditionary operations, it can be argued that exactly this has now paid off. During NATO's Summit in Wales in September 2014, the Alliance acknowledged the concerns of the Baltic States. The Readiness Action Plan (RAP) was implemented to perform visible assurance measures. Gotkowska (2016) claims that the NATO Summit in Warsaw in 2016 changed the nature of the alliance's involvement because the members deemed

it necessary to ensure a larger presence of NATO forces suited for combat, not for exercises. While it would be not in accordance with the NATO-Russia Founding Act, there will be no permanently stationed allied forces. However, it was agreed that four battalion-sized battlegroups, fully armed and properly equipped, will be deployed on a persistent rotational basis. Even though the four battlegroups are not sufficient to balance the force ratio between NATO and Russian forces in the region, Gotkowska (2016) assumes that their engagement in fighting would trigger the chain of NATO military response and would engage the alliance in a conflict with Russia. The aim of the deployment is therefore not to defend the Baltic States and Poland but to deter Russia from undertaking serious violent actions. While Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty is extremely prominent, Article 3 of the document is less well-known. The Article says:

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack (North Atlantic Treaty, Article 3).

The article can be interpreted as follows: If an ally expects mutual support from other allies, the ally has first to develop individual capacities. Furthermore, an ally has to contribute to collective defence within reasonable means and capabilities. The responsibility for the security of their population as well as the burdens of Article 3 requires the Baltic States to make higher investments in security and defence. Paulauskas (2013) argues that the Baltic States are confronted with the difficult challenge of reconciling national defence requirements with additional NATO and EU requirements. Especially in

times of limited financial resources, they have to make very tough defence planning choices. While prioritising is a crucial aspect of strategy, the Baltic States should be cautious about 'confounding a neighbourhood-first strategy with a neighbourhood-only strategy' (Simón, 2016, p. 3). The Baltic States must avoid focusing exclusively on national approaches and instead coordinating closely with one another and with their alliance partners on questions of capability development. Palmer (2016) argues that the spectrum of real and potential conventional and unconventional threats requires a higher level of strategic interdependence and operational coherence among all of the Allies. The Baltic States and NATO are well advised to formulate realistic capability development targets, which find the right balance between national constraints and attractive opportunities to enhance capabilities toward coherent forces. Under the current circumstances it seems to be advisable to increase efforts which are related to Host Nation Support, Indicators & Warning, Air Defence, and Area Denial capabilities. While it is unrealistic and unaffordable to develop own expeditionary forces, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania should look for achievable options to remain trustful partners, who contribute in an adequate manner to the full spectrum of Alliance missions. The Framework Nations' Concept (FNC), where 'smaller Allies have the opportunity to step forward voluntarily and cluster around a larger Ally' (Palmer, 2016, p. 12), is a reasonable option. In fact, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have already joined the UK-led FNC grouping, to contribute assets and capabilities to the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF). Furthermore, the Baltic States should be committed to support their partners on missions abroad, at least with single personnel or smaller units. It is no coincidence that the UK took over responsibility to lead

the battalion-seized battlegroup in Estonia. Estonian Defence Forces have fought together with Forces from the UK in Afghanistan. As regards Lithuania and Latvia, there are similar constellations. As this form of mutual assistance has paid off, the Baltic States are well advised to avoid focusing solely on territorial defence and deterrence. Dash, terrorism, and the migration crisis are, from a Baltic point of view, far away. However, the Baltic States should acknowledge these issues as European threats and demonstrate, within means and capabilities, solidarity with their European partners. This kind of unity would ensure that the larger European partners remain committed in the Baltic region.

Conclusion and recommendations

While the paper was initiated by a brief impression of the MSC 2017, it ends with findings from the Conference on Russia, which was held in the same period in Tartu (Estonia). During the conference, representatives from the Baltic States, such as former Minister of Defence of Estonia Hannes Hanso (2017) and State Secretary of the Latvian Ministry of Defence Jānis Garisons (2017) claimed several times that unity is the key to solve the current security issues in the region. The paper has argued in the same manner. It has been explained that there is no European country, which is capable of solving security challenges on its own. It has been described that this is the reason why most of the European countries find themselves in NATO and/or the EU. The paper has argued that European countries are confronted with a variety of threats and challenges, which can be categorized into internal, regional, and global challenges. While threat perception differs from country to country, single nations tend to focus on their most press-

ing threats. NATO and the EU are organisations with global ambitions, who have to address security concerns irrespectively of their geographical location. Today, the most pressing threats emerge on the north-eastern and southern periphery of Europe, namely Russia's activities and migrants fleeing war and instability in Africa and the Middle-East. However, if Europe wants to remain stable and prosperous, European countries have to come up with a global approach to security. This should include the development of capabilities, which allow for projecting power on strategic reach. While territorial defence and deterrence are important to ensure the territorial integrity against a potential adversary, they do not address the whole spectrum of the threats and challenges. Countries which tighten their military resources exclusively to the defence of the own territory constrain their participation in an international military alliance. Therefore, it is not advisable to focus exclusively on those two aspects.

The most pressing threat for the three Baltic States has been Russia. While the reason for this is understandable, the Baltic States have to be aware that NATO and the EU are globally acting organisations with global interests. Although NATO has acknowledged the concerns of the Baltic States and significantly increased the activities in the region, the three Baltic States should avoid focusing exclusively on territorial defence. It has been explained that the Baltic States are unable to defend themselves against Russia. They are dependent on deterrence. With the enhanced forward presence of larger NATO allies on the territory of the three Baltic States and Poland, a sufficient political signal has been sent to Russia. The Baltic States would be well advised to be realistic when they are going to formulate further expectations. While most of the armed forces of the European NATO

members are still confronted with insufficient funding, the crises and conflicts in Europe's southern neighbourhood demand resources and limit NATO's presence on the eastern flank to a certain degree. Therefore, all European NATO members would be well advised to strengthen their collective role and weight in the alliance irrespectively of their geographical location. The Baltic States should avoid to be recognized as neighbourhood-only or one-issue nations. The achievements of the NATO Summits in Wales and Warsaw have proven the alliance's trustworthiness. The hard work of the Baltic States to address their issue has paid off. While NATO's deterrence strategy has to be further developed and a series of measures need to be taken, it is time for the Baltic States to value the efforts of their European and Transatlantic partners and to stop questioning the credibility of collective defence. This narrative would also increase solidarity and unity. The three Baltic States should start to understand themselves as part of a common solution for the full spectrum of threats and challenges, rather than being part of a regional problem.

ANNEX A – Terms and Definitions

In 1980, when the Cold War reached fever pitch, Mendershausen (1980) mentioned four characteristics of a Territorial Defence posture. First, he described the defensive character of the system, which is not meant to be a threat to the territorial integrity of another country. As a second characteristic, he named a military system, which relies on latent rather than on standing forces. Furthermore, he elaborated that the defence system usually involves a broad spectrum of criticizes, which allows a reaction to aggression in a comprehensive manner. Thirdly, Mendershausen (1980) pointed out that the military system depends on weapons and technologies, which are in terms

of type and composition different from expeditionary means. Finally, he showed that the military resources are tightened to the defence of the own territory and institutions. This limits the country's participation in an international military alliance, 'especially one that calls for an integration of alliance forces' (Mendershausen, 1980, p. 3). Even if the explanations were written almost four decades ago, the aggressive posture of Russia has led to a reintroduction of some characteristics. For example, in the Baltic States there are reserve units, used exclusively for territorial defence. In Estonia and Lithuania, compulsory military service was reintroduced. This gives the Baltic States little financial leeway for further commitments.

The NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions defines Deterrence as follows: 'The convincing of a potential aggressor that the consequences of coercion or armed conflict would outweigh the potential gains. This requires the maintenance of a credible military capability and strategy with the clear political will to act' (AAP-06, Edition 2015, p. 2-D-6). The academic literature knows different components of deterrence: by denial, by punishment, extended, and direct. Freedman distinguishes deterrence by denial from deterrence by punishment as follows: 'Preventing gain by means of a credible ability to stop aggression in its tracks became known as deterrence by denial, while imposing costs became deterrence by punishment' (Freedman, 2013, p. 159). While direct deterrence lies within the capabilities of a particular country, extended deterrence is achieved by combining the capabilities of two or more partners (alliance). During the Cold War the key to NATO's successful deterrence was 'the close link between American power – including its nuclear arsenal – and European security' (Freedman, 2013, p. 172), or with

other words, the appropriate combination of the different components of deterrence. The enhanced forward presence of NATO forces on the soil of the Baltic States equals a journey into the past. Credible conventional European military forces are linked with transatlantic strategic capabilities.

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