



National Defence Academy of Latvia
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Baltic Military Cooperation: Challenges for Common Response

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Aim

- To analyze whether the ambiguously assessed Baltic military cooperation can provide tangible common military response to the increasing threat from Russia.



Research questions

- What have been the successes and shortcomings in Baltic military cooperation?
- What factors have determined the development of cooperation and what have hindered it?
- What are the Baltic States' common military efforts to deter Russia?



Methodology

- Anonymous interviews with Latvian policymakers
- Interviews with Estonian and Lithuanian researchers
- Analysis of existing research done on this topic

Theoretical framework

Theoretical discussion on regional security cooperation.

H. Milner, 1992 on international theories of cooperation among nations (tacit, negotiated or imposed cooperation),

B. Buzan & O. Waever, 2003 on regional security complex theory

(security of each actor in a region interacts with the security of the other actors; intense security interdependence within a region)

Baltic military cooperation: successes and shortcomings

- Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion (BALTBAT), 1994
 - Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON), 1998
 - Baltic Air Surveillance Network (BALTNET), 1998
 - **Baltic Defence College (BALDEFCOL), 1999**
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- **Baltic Host military excersises, 2010**

Baltic military cooperation: *enhancing* and *hindering* factors

- Common threats
 - Geography and operational realities
 - Absence of alternative cooperation platforms
 - Complementary development of armed forces
- Differing defence budgets
 - Divergent strategic views
 - Dissent of personalities

Baltic common military deterrence efforts

- Initiatives:
 - Atlantic Resolve (US)
 - NATO Reassurance Measures
 - Transatlantic Capability Enhancement and Training Initiative (TACET) (GER & US)
- Military exercises
- Military presence
- Military armament
- NATO Force Integration Unit (NFIU)
- NATO Air Policing mission

Conclusions

- Despite the obvious necessity to cooperate there are still problems for the Baltic States focus their national interests and overcome the concerns about their sovereignty.
- Although there is very good cooperation and pooling efforts at the military tactical level when it comes to the big question of how to defend the Baltics States, differing strategic views significantly hinder constructive attempts to come up with a tangible common response.
- The main factor that disciplines the Baltic States to keep working together is the external pressure originating from NATO officials and particular member states who urge the three countries to acknowledge operational realities and overcome their individual national interests.

Conclusions

- Since Ukraine crisis BS have been successful in attracting external «investments» to their defences, though there can be evident a competition among BS about attracting the best «investment».
- Mostly the external initiatives are the ones that constitute BS common response.
- Military exercises is the only platform where common Baltic military capacity is build.
- The great hopes are raised regarding Baltic Battalion for VJTF and NFIUs. The latter when fully operational will function as a crucial element for synchronizing and coordinating host nation support activities in all three Baltic States.
- Due the lack of trust and differing strategic views still there is still reluctance to share operational plans and organize joint procurements.



Questions?
Comments?