Norway Between the "High North" and the Baltic Sea

By Håkon Lunde Saxi

> *Norway has access to rich natural resources in vast ocean areas, and borders on a great power in the north. These two factors largely define* [Norway's] *regional dimension.*
>
> Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 2004[1]

This article will discuss contemporary Norwegian security and defense policy within a regional and contemporary historical perspective, with particular emphasis on the relative importance assigned to the North Atlantic and Arctic "High North"[2] versus the Baltic Sea area. The main argument is that Norwegian security and defense policy is focused on deterrence and defense in the country's immediate vicinity. The Russian Federation is identified as the main source of regional insecurity. Furthermore, the Nordic-Baltic region is increasingly perceived as one interconnected strategic space, with the geopolitical fault-line between NATO and Russia running straight through the region.

While not divisible, the region arguably has two sub-theaters: the North Atlantic and Arctic "High North" and the Baltic Sea area. Norwegian decisionmakers view the Baltic States as being more at risk from Russian revisionism than Norway itself. This effort is less likely to take the form of overt conventional military aggression than of ambiguous and nebulous "political" and "hybrid" warfare. Therefore, in Norwegian security policy, the Baltic Sea area is today allotted far more attention and resources than before 2014. After years of neglect, Norway realized during the Ukrainian crisis that it had vital security interests in the Baltic Sea region. Nevertheless, the main security priority for Norway remains its maritime High North and Arctic region. The Baltic Sea area, while important, remains a secondary theatre in Norwegian strategy.

This article also discusses which allies and partners are considered vital for Norwegian security. Among its security and defense relationships, Norway has long favored building close ties with the larger "maritime powers" to the west over the "continental powers" to the south or the smaller Nordic-Baltic neighbors to the east. To its east, Norway has been linked by shared bonds of common values, histories, and identities to the other Nordic

Håkon Lunde Saxi is an Associate Professor at the Norwegian Defence University College.

countries and to a lesser extent to the Baltic ones. However, hardnosed calculations of Norwegian interests have continued to favor focusing on developing good and close relations with the maritime Anglo-Saxon powers to the west. As has been the case since Norwegian independence in 1905 and since Norway joined NATO in 1949, the western powers remain the ultimate guarantors of Norwegian security.[3]

At the same time, Norway has continued to place some limitations on its "integration" into the Euro-Atlantic security structures. These included restrictions on placing nuclear weapons or permanent allied bases in Norway, as well as some limitations on allied activities and exercises in the High North. The main purpose of this "screening" has been to alleviate Russian security concerns.[4] This so-called policy of "reassurance" toward Russia aims to maintain the High North as an area of (relative) low tension.[5] As one Norwegian Minister of Defense wrote a few years before 2022, the purpose is to combine "deterrence and reassurance" vis-à-vis Russia, in order to achieve "dialogue and cooperation . . . transparency, predictability and good neighborly relations in the High North."[6] The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has reduced dialogue and cooperation with Moscow to a bare minimum, but has so far not led to the fundamental abandonment of Norway's "reassurance" policy toward Russia.

The Pre-2014 Period: The Baltic Near Abroad as a Peripheral Region

While Norway joined the Council of the Baltic Sea States in 1992, this was almost as an afterthought. Economically and in terms of security, Norway's stakes in the Baltic Sea region were far lower than for those states that shared a Baltic Sea coastline. Meanwhile, its political, economic, and security stakes in the developments in the High North region were far greater. Norwegian leaders and officials therefore devoted far more attention and energy toward developing a successful regional cooperation in the Barents region through, for example, the Barents Regional Council, established in 1993. For Norwegian foreign ministers such as Thorvald Stoltenberg (1990-1993) and Bjørn Tore Godal (1994–1997), it seemed vital to build trust, familiarity, and economic integration between Norway and the northwestern regions of Russia. Ideally, Russia would become a partner and be integrated into the Euro-Atlantic security community.[7]

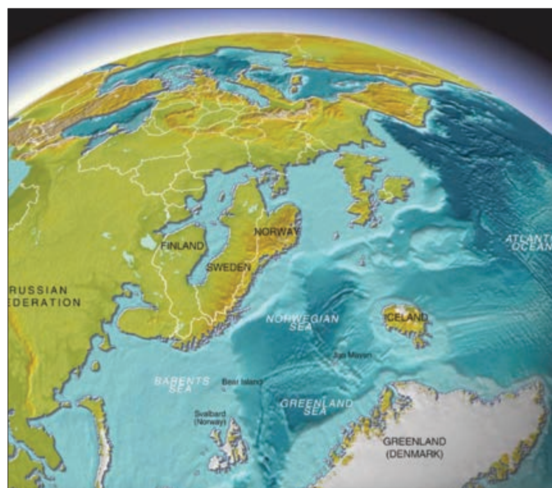
However, that Russia would develop favorably and become a stable, liberal, and democratic partner could not be taken for granted. After the end of the Cold War, Russia was perceived as an unstable and unpredictable great power, with which Norway shares a 196-kilometer border. The political, economic, and military relationship between Norway and Russia was characterized by asymmetry. Following the recommendations of the 1992 defense commission, post–Cold War Norwegian defense policy remained focused upon invasion defense in northern Norway. The main reason for this continuity was concern about the "lingering threat" emanating from Russia. From 1998 to 2002, defense policy became somewhat less focused on territorial defense and Russia.[8] Since 2002, invasion defense has given way to the dual tasks of participating in international military operations abroad and carrying out robust short-notice military crisis management at home. Nevertheless, the main scenario for which the armed forces were designed was a security policy crisis between Norway and Russia in the High North region.[9] Such a limited political-military crisis was expected to be short in duration, take place in international waters and airspace, and involve mainly air and maritime forces.[10]

All the Nordic states began to extend considerable amounts of military and security assistance to the Baltic states after 1990, especially following the withdrawal of Russian forces in 1994. Norway's engagement was, however, of a lesser order than that of Denmark, Sweden, and Finland.[11] Norway was

also at the time perceived, with some justification, as one of the countries that was more skeptical about NATO enlargement eastward. Instead, Norwegian officials tended to advocate integrating "our Baltic friends" as far as possible into the Euro-Atlantic institutions but without full membership in NATO in the near term. Norwegian officials were on the one hand concerned with not "diluting" NATO's Article 5 security guaranties, stressing that the ability to carry out collective defense of member states also had to be preserved in the "new" post–Cold War alliance. On the other hand, while carefully stressing that a Russian veto on enlargement was not acceptable, Norway was also worried about the consequences for Western/Russian relations. If enlargement caused a backlash to Russia's integration as a "normal" member of the European security community, this would not be in Norway's interests.[12] In this careful and "gradualist" policy toward enlargement, Norway differed from Denmark.[13] Sharing no border with Russia and standing to benefit more directly from enlargement, Copenhagen much more quickly came to champion full NATO membership for Poland and the Baltic states.[14]

By the time NATO enlarged to include the countries around the Baltic Sea—Poland in 1999 and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 2004—these Norwegian concerns had largely been laid to rest. Norway by that time had come to support enlargement. Both before and after enlargement, the Norwegian armed forces worked closely with their Nordic and Baltic counterparts in NATO operations in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. The enlargements also meant that the Baltic Sea became a virtual "NATO and European Union (EU) lake." However, this did not immediately increase Norway's attention to the Baltic Sea region.

The foreign policy priorities of long-serving Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre (2005–2012), were not directed eastward but northward, toward the High North and the Arctic, with



"The High North is the Government's number one foreign policy priority." Image by: The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. December 1, 2006

their crucial oil, gas, and fishery resources.[15] The minister repeatedly emphasized that "the High North is the Government's number one foreign policy priority." Støre was fond of quoting at length from a poem by the Norwegian poet Rolf Jacobsen that suggests its listeners "look north more often" (*se oftere mot nord*).[16] The government's policy reflected longstanding economic realities. The Norwegian economy remains heavily dependent on natural resources extracted from its huge exclusive economic zone. Since oil was discovered in 1969, the petroleum sector alone has grown to account for about 20 percent of gross domestic product and 50 percent of the country's exports.[17] The revenues generated by the oil and gas sector made Norway a wealthy country, and by investing revenues abroad the Norwegian state has built one of the largest global sovereign wealth funds, holding more than $1 trillion USD in foreign assets.[18] The revenues from this "oil fund" (*Oljefondet*) played a key part in financing the Norwegian welfare state. Fisheries and shipping were also key maritime sectors making important contributions to the Norwegian economy. Unsurprisingly, this maritime dependence heavily influenced Norwegian foreign policy.

This foreign policy preoccupation with the "High North" was given a stronger military dimension from about 2007, when Norway again became concerned about growing Russian capabilities and assertiveness in the region. In response, Norwegian defense policy experienced a "retro-tendency."[19] In 2008, Norway also introduced a Core Area Initiative within NATO, which aimed at strengthening the focus in the Alliance on more traditional "in-area" security and collective defense.[20]

To accompany his story about the importance of the north, Støre was fond of showing his audiences a map that was centered on the North Pole and showed Norway's vast northern maritime areas. On this map, the Baltic Sea appeared only as a small lake in the lower right-hand corner. Its appearance on the map reflects its position in Norwegian foreign and security and defense policy: at the periphery and off to the side; an afterthought.[21]

Nordic-Baltic Cooperation in the 2000s

In the second half of the 2000s, there was a surge toward greater Nordic and Nordic-Baltic cooperation on security and defense. In 2009, many of these defense initiatives among the Nordic countries were brought together under the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) framework. Simultaneously, the by-then elder statesman Thorvald Stoltenberg was asked to present proposals for more Nordic foreign and security policy cooperation. Presented in February 2009, these proposals became known as the Stoltenberg Report.[22]

The Norwegian military identified a strong need to cooperate internationally to meet the dual challenge of rising costs and shrinking force size and found the Nordic neighbors to be agreeable and willing partners.[23] The Baltic states were, however, seen as less interesting. They were small, had fewer relevant capabilities and less equipment commonality, were culturally more dissimilar, and were geographically not adjacent to Norway. Nonaligned Sweden and Finland, and especially NATO member Denmark, appeared as more appropriate partners to meet the Norwegian military's needs.

However, for the wider Norwegian security policy establishment, even the Nordic framework was seen as problematic. The preference was rather for building close cooperation with the Allies to the west and south who would ultimately guarantee Norway's security in a crisis. This applied particularly to the major maritime powers to Norway's west, the United States and the United Kingdom (UK), but also to the southern continental powers, Germany and France. The Nordic and Baltic states were too small to offer much in the way of support in a crisis, even if Sweden and Finland were to abandon nonalignment and become members of NATO. For this reason, the Norwegian security policy community warmly welcomed the British initiative to establish the so-called Northern Group in 2010. The Northern Group was more of a security policy talking shop than NORDEFCO, which aimed toward more concrete military cooperation on training, education, acquisition, and maintenance. However, it had a strong security-policy appeal in its inclusion of several key NATO countries; It consisted not only of the Nordic-Baltic states but, more important, also the UK, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands.[24]

The 2009 Stoltenberg Report contained a number of suggestions for joint action favored by Norway, since they focused on northern maritime issues. These included surveillance of Icelandic airspace, satellite-based maritime monitoring in the Baltic Sea, joint sea patrols, and more political cooperation on Arctic issues.[25] In Sweden and Finland, officials stressed that this emphasis on the High North and the Arctic needed to be balanced by a greater focus on the Baltic Sea area.[26] Norway, however, demonstrated a limited willingness to invest political and economic capital in Baltic Sea security. Not surprisngly, when a "wise-men" group convened in 2010 to identify how to advance the cooperation between the Nordic and

Baltic countries (NB8), the joint initiative was comprised of Denmark and Latvia.[27]

The Sea Surveillance Cooperation in the Baltic Sea (SUCBAS) provides an interesting case of Norwegian non-involvement in Baltic Sea security. Originally launched in 2006 as a Swedish-Finnish undertaking, SUCBAS has since enlarged to also include all the NATO member states around the Baltic Sea (Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Germany). In 2015, the UK also joined. Norway remained skeptical about its usefulness, though, and did not wish to pay the entry costs. Oslo was, however, eager to encourage the other Nordic states to join a very similar Norwegian project, Barents Watch, which focused on maritime situational awareness in the High North, the Barents Sea, and the Arctic.[28]

NATO air-policing in the Baltic states and Iceland also provides tangible clues to national priorities. Norway, with its long Atlantic coastline, contributed to both missions but concentrated more on patrolling Icelandic airspace. Denmark, with both an Atlantic and a Baltic Sea coastline, split its efforts more equally between the two.[29]

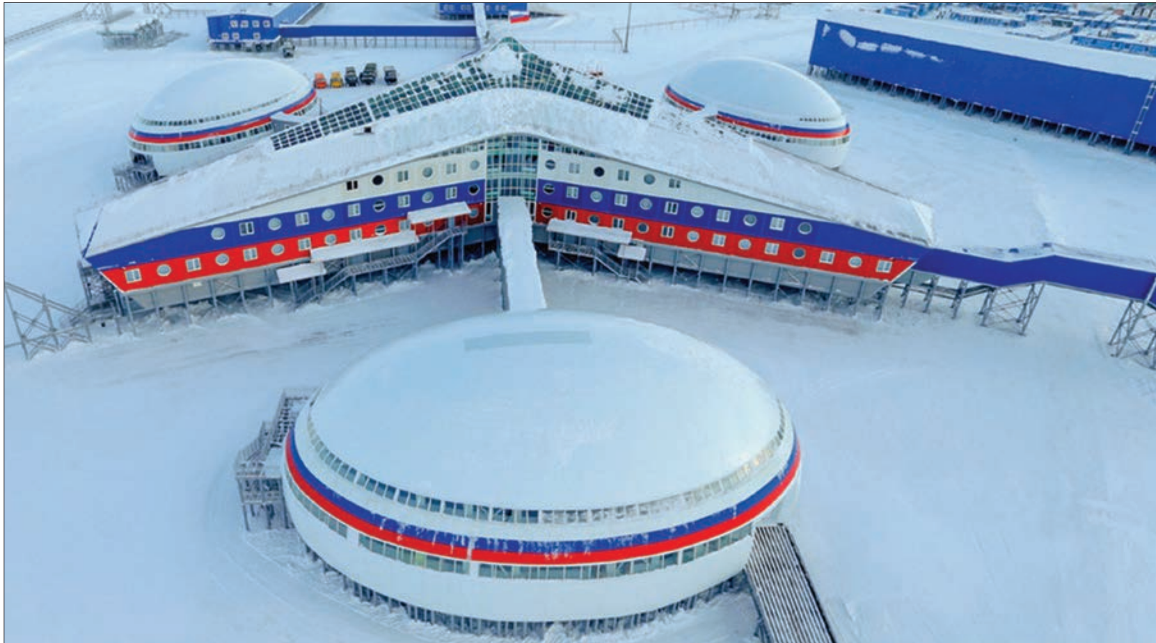
The 2014 Ukraine Crisis: Norway Discovers the Baltic Sea

With the 2014 Ukrainian crisis, Norway now viewed the security situation as significantly changed. In an interview conducted a year after the start of the crisis, Norwegian Minister of Defense, Ine Eriksen Søreide, told CNN in an unusually clear, but not alarmist way, that "I want to warn against the fact that some people see this as something that is going to pass. The situation has changed. And it has changed profoundly." She argued that there was now "no going back to some sort of normality."[30]

Considering its relatively small size, Norway now took an unusually prominent and active role in NATO's Immediate Assurance Measures toward the Baltic states in the wake of the crisis. In April 2014, following an Alliance request, Norway assumed out-of-rotation command of NATO Mine Countermeasure Group 1, contributing the flagship KNM *Valkyrien* and the minesweeper KNM *Otra*. The naval force was active in the Baltic Sea as part of NATO's reassurance measures. In June and October, Norwegian infantry companies also trained in Latvia for several months in exercises with a similar purpose.[31] Following the September Wales Summit, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway also agreed to contribute to NATO's interim Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) in 2015. This brigade-sized force (approximately five thousand troops) should be able to rapidly reinforce frontline Allies, thereby acting as a deterrent to potential aggressors. The VJTF was to form a more responsive core of the existing NATO Response Force (NRF), which the three countries had already been slated to provide. The Norwegian army committed its high-readiness force, the Telemark Battalion battle group, to the interim VJTF.

Some of these land exercises, as well as the Norwegian commitment to the NRF, had been planned already before the Russian annexation of Crimea but were now framed in the completely new context of deterrence and reassurance. To explain the increased Norwegian military presence in the Baltic states, the Norwegian Chief of Defense stressed that Norway's actions were intended to communicate "clearly" to Russia that the Baltic states were behind "NATO's red line."[32] Søreide told reporters, "When one is a member of NATO, one has to respond when Allies request support, just as we would expect support if we needed it."[33]

Norway had come to discover two vital interests in Baltic Sea security: preserving the inviolability of international law in general and upholding NATO's Article 5 security guaranties. These were longstanding priorities in Norwegian security policy, sometimes described as the United Nations track and the NATO track.[34] As a small state with limited military resources but with huge maritime



Central administrative and residential complex of the "Arkticheskiy Trilistnik" or Arctic Trefoil base. Image by: Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation.

areas rich in resources, Norway considered the upholding of international law to be its "first line of defense."[35] Furthermore, within NATO, Norway was often grouped together with the "new" Central and Eastern European member states as "Article 5ers:" countries that first and foremost see the Alliance as a provider of (primarily American) security guaranties. These countries all bordered or were located close to Russia.[36] For the Article 5ers, the credibility of Alliance collective defense was the bedrock upon which their security rested. The seeming vulnerability of the Baltic states now threatened to undermine this vital foundation. Additionally, with key Norwegian allies such as the United States, the UK, and Germany leading the efforts to reassure the Baltic states and Poland, Norway viewed it as important to work closely with these major powers.[37]

All Quiet on the Northern Flank

One reason why Norway could commit itself to such an extent to the reassurance of its Allies on the eastern flank was that things were initially comparatively quiet on the northern flank.[38] The situation in the High North and the Arctic regions was not considered to have changed in the same alarming way after February and March 2014. As Søreide told the press in February 2015, the Russians "have not breached our territory and that is different from what is happening in the Baltic Sea area. They are breaching territory there all the time."[39] By October 2014, the number of intercepts of Russian aircraft by NATO in the Baltic area had tripled compared to 2013. In what was described as "dangerous brinkmanship," Russian pilots were also reported to be acting aggressively and unpredictably. This new pattern of activity was initially very different from in the Norwegian High North, although this later changed around 2017, when, for example, Russian aircraft began simulating attacks against Norwegian military installations in the High North.[40]

The Norwegian Intelligence Service has for years closely watched the increase in Russia's air

and naval activity in the Arctic. Since 2007, this has included the resumption of strategic bomber patrols over the Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea. Russia's Northern Fleet has also increased its activities in the Arctic. This Russian resurgence included a revitalized "bastion defense concept" intended to protect its strategic submarines in the European Arctic Ocean, with ambitions of sea-denial extending west and south to the Greenland-Iceland-UK gap. However, the increases in Russian capability in the High North and Arctic regions were seen as a "normal" part of Russia's long-term military modernization as developments had taken place gradually over many years.[41]

In the Norwegian High North, unlike in the Baltic Sea area, there was no sudden change in the patterns of Russian military behavior following the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis. The two Norwegian F-16 fighter aircraft assigned to act as NATO's Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) in Norway had intercepted and identified more or less the same number of Russian aircraft in 2014 as in 2013.[42] The relative continuity in Russian behavior in the High North gave Norway the necessary freedom of action to increase its efforts to strengthen Baltic Sea security in 2014 and 2015.

In light of the tense situation in Norway's near abroad, the country nevertheless did increase its national military preparedness and situational awareness efforts at home. This, together with the already mentioned in-NATO-area efforts on the eastern flank, was given priority over out-of-NATO-area missions on the Mediterranean, North African, and Middle Eastern "southern flank." In 2011, during NATO's UN-sanctioned air war over Libya, Norway and Denmark provided almost identical contributions to the Alliance effort: six F-16 combat aircraft.[43] In October 2014, Norway differed markedly from Denmark. Unlike Copenhagen, Oslo now declined a request to provide combat aircraft to support the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq fighting against the Islamic State group.

At the time, Norway's F-16AM/BM aircraft were showing signs of aging. Cracks had been discovered in their 1980s-era fuselage, which meant that many aircraft were at least temporarily unavailable. This forced the government to prioritize. Prime Minister Erna Solberg (Conservative Party) argued that, "due to our border with Russia, Norway is in a different situation than countries such as Denmark, Holland and Belgium." The government's decision and reasoning enjoyed bipartisan support. Jonas Gahr Støre (Labor Party), now the leader of the largest opposition party, stated that "we not only have a long coast to patrol, but we also have assumed responsibility for large sea areas, which has strategic importance for NATO."[44] The Minister of Defense echoed this sentiment: "Right now and today, we have to make sure we can keep our situational awareness and . . . keep up our presence in the High North, both with frigates and planes."[45] Norwegian leaders effectively argued that the Alliance expected Norway to keep its house in order at home, maintaining good situational awareness, presence, and readiness on NATO's northern flank.

The 2016 Warsaw Summit: Making NATO "Look North More Often"

Moving into 2015 and 2016, Norway continued to maintain its strong support for NATO's reassurance and deterrence measures on the eastern flank of the Alliance. From May until September 2015, Norway assumed lead-nation responsibility for NATO's air-policing mission in the Baltic states, providing four F-16s and seventy personnel.[46] At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, Norway pledged to provide a company-sized unit as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic states.[47] The security of the Baltic states also enjoyed a newfound prominence in Norwegian security thinking. In October 2015, a government-appointed expert commission on defense delivered its advice for the next long-term plan for the armed forces. The commission allotted high priority to the defense of the Baltic states.

The expert commission outlined three scenarios to illustrate some of the situations the armed forces now had to prepare for. Scenario one was an (initially) bilateral crisis involving Norway and Russia in the High North. Scenario two was a NATO collective defense operation in the Baltic Sea area in defense of the Baltic states. The third was a nonstate terrorist attack on Norway. Considering that Norway is itself a "frontline" state bordering Russia and vulnerable to Russian "horizontal escalation" in case of a NATO-Russian conflict, the commission recommended a high level of ambition for Norway's participation in the collective defense of the Baltic states: "The Norwegian Armed Forces must be able to rapidly provide and transfer units to the Baltic area, to demonstrate political will and an actual ability to exercise collective defense. . . . The Norwegian forces must be prepared for both military combat and to remain in the area for a protracted period of time."[48]

However, Norwegian politicians and government officials soon came to champion an increased NATO focus on the maritime High North. One reason for this was that the initial calm in the High North gradually gave way to more bellicose Russian behavior. The Norwegian Intelligence Service reported larger and more frequent Russian exercises near Norwegian borders, including unannounced "snap readiness exercises."[49] The number of "scrambles" and identifications of Russian aircraft in the High North by the Norwegian QRA aircraft stationed in Bodø also increased after 2016 to a level not seen since the end of the Cold War.[50] In 2017, Russian aircraft simulated attacks against radar installations in Norway.[51] In 2018, GPS signals in northern Norway were periodically jammed by Russia. This affected Norwegian and Allied air traffic and represented a threat to civilian air traffic safety in Norway. Surface vessels from the Northern Fleet also held live fire exercises off the Norwegian coast.[52] These developments led Norway to bolster its own defenses in the High North and to increase its efforts to strengthen Allied awareness and engagement in the region.[53]

In the run-up to the 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw, Søreide stressed that the "new security environment" required "maritime power and presence" and the need to "raise NATO's profile in the maritime domain." Russia's new high-end military capabilities and infrastructure in the Arctic, such as its submarines, aircraft, and long-range missiles, were identified as the challenge.[54] Norwegian decisionmakers believed that a major NATO-Russian conflict was unlikely to start in the High North, but that a crisis could quickly spread to the region.[55]

A key Norwegian concern was that in the event of a NATO-Russian conflict in the Baltic Sea area, Russia could seek to put into effect the previously mentioned "Bastion defense concept" designed to protect the Barents Sea patrol areas of its ballistic missile-carrying submarines and their bases in the Kola peninsula. This would involve securing Russian control over the Barents and Norwegian Sea and parts of northern Norway, as well as seeking to establish sea denial in the North Atlantic Ocean down to the Greenland, Iceland, and UK (GIUK) gap. Norway's main military response was to encourage greater military engagement in the region from the United States, UK, and the Netherlands, who were judged to possess both the political willingness and relevant naval, air, and amphibious forces capable of supporting Norway in case of a High North contingency.[56]

At the Warsaw summit in 2016, Norway joined forces with the UK, France, and Iceland to successfully champion new proposals to strengthen NATO's activities and force posture in the North Atlantic.[57] The summit communiqué reflected this effort. It added the North Atlantic to the list of strategically important areas where the Alliance faced "evolving challenges" and committed NATO to strengthen its maritime posture and situational awareness. The Alliance would deter and defend

against threats to "sea lines of communication and maritime approaches of NATO territory."[58]

Following the inauguration in January 2017 of President Donald J. Trump, who cast doubt on U.S. commitment to NATO in general and Article 5 collective defense in particular, a muted debate gradually emerged regarding the reliability of the United States as a security provider. However, no credible alternative existed that could replace Norway's security reliance on the United States in the short or medium term. After four turbulent years, the election and subsequent inauguration of President Joe Biden in January 2021 was therefore greeted with a collective sigh of relief in Norway. It seemed to signal a return to greater normalcy. Nevertheless, Norway continued its existing efforts to strengthen security and defense ties with its key Northern European allies and partners, including the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, and its Nordic and (to a lesser extent) Baltic neighbors. While more credible deterrence and better "burden sharing" in the Alliance were formal objectives, reducing dependence on the United States was one unstated objective of Sweden and Finland's decision to apply for NATO membership in May 2022. This was warmly welcomed in Norway, as it would, one, make it easier to prepare and organize the collective defense of the region within the framework of NATO, and two, simultaneously make the region more capable of ensuring it's own security. It would significantly improve the prospects for successfully defending the Baltic states against Russian aggression.[59]

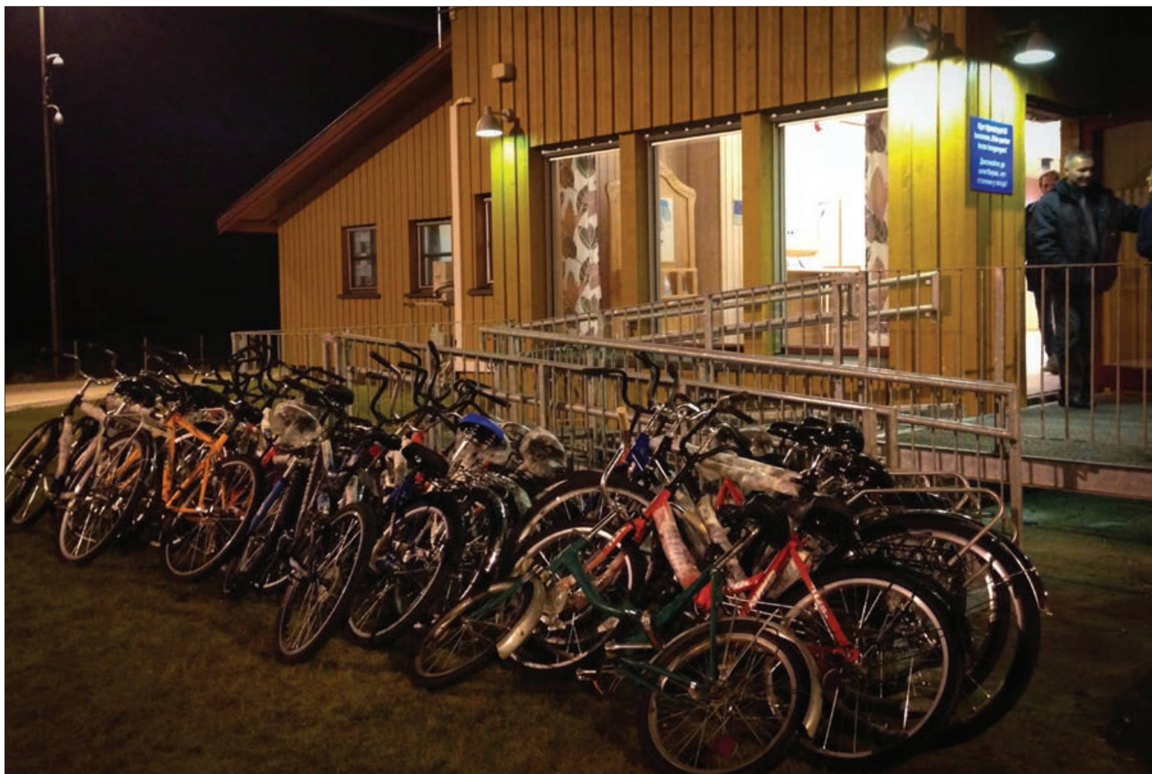
The high priority given to the defense of the Baltic states and the wider eastern flank in Norwegian defense policy has to be understood as part of Norway's priorities as an Article 5er. If NATO's security guaranties were tested and proved ineffective, it would have devastating repercussions for Norwegian security. For this reason, making NATO's deterrence efforts credible and effective was of key importance for Norway. On the one hand, from this point of view, strengthening Norwegian security and strengthening the security of Norway's Baltic Sea Allies and partners were two sides of the same coin. There were mutual interests both in Norway and among the Baltic Sea states in strengthening the security of the latter.

On the other hand, Norwegian leaders simultaneously worried that the deterrence, defense, and reassurance measures so far enacted after 2014 were too reactive and one-sidedly focused toward the eastern flank. NATO's military efforts—such as the VJTF—were also perceived as too land-centric. Norway's desire to see NATO revitalize collective defense in the Northern Atlantic maritime area, while strengthening its maritime capabilities, should be read as a reaction to this perceived one-sidedness.[60] *If* one regards the attention, focus, and military capabilities of the Alliance as zero-sum—which is debatable—then such a shift toward an increased northern maritime presence would necessarily have to come at the expense of the eastern or southern flanks. From this point of view, there were also some competing interests at work.

Facing Up to New Security Challenges: "Hybrid" Warfare and the "Gray Zone"

In 2015, during the European refugee crisis, more than 5,500 migrants were unexpectedly permitted to cross the heavily guarded and closely monitored (on the Russian side) Russian-Norwegian border on bicycles, cars, and mini-buses in the course of a few weeks. This caused a tug-of-war between Moscow and Oslo, as Norwegian authorities scrambled to reign in this uncontrolled flow of migrants.[61] It was not seen as credible that this could have occurred without the active endorsement and support of Russian authorities.[62] As such, the incident can be regarded as a Russian attempt to "weaponize" the flow of asylum-seekers to Europe in order to destabilize, punish, and influence its western neighbors.

In October 2020, the Norwegian Government took the unprecedented step of carrying out the



Bikes of the Syrian refugees that made it to the Norwegian border (this is in front of passport control). Image by: Rosa Menkman (Wikimedia Commons). October 11, 2015

public attribution of a cyber intrusion against the Storting (Norwegian parliament). "Based on the information the Government has, it is our view that Russia is responsible for these activties," stated the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs.[63] The attribution was based on information provided by the Norwegian security and intelligence services. Its primary purpose seems to have been to punish Russia and thereby potentially exert a deterrent effect against future cyber intrusions, attacks, or influence operations. The Norwegian Intelligence Service, in its annual assessment of current security challenges, also took the unusual step of stressing the heightened risk of foreign interference in the 2021 parliamentary election in Norway.[64]

The cyber intrusion in the Storting was the most recent, but by no means the only, "gray zone activity" undertaken by Russia against Norway since 2014. These activities were all below the threshold of armed conflict, but they represented unfriendly acts against Norway designed to destabilize, unbalance, or influence the Norwegian state, society, and key decisionmakers.

The 2015 refugee crisis and 2020 cyber intrusion are but two examples of how the Russian Federation has employed ambiguous and nontraditional tools to influence, destabilize, or even coerce Norwegian authorities and society. To address these new "gray zone" challenges, Norway has sought to strengthen civil-military cooperation by revitalizing and modernizing its total defense concept. It is important to note that this "modernized" total defense concept differs significantly from its Cold War–era counterpart in several ways.

The Cold War–era total defense concept was geared toward mobilizing civilian resources for

military and civil defense in case of a massive "total" war of national survival against the Soviet Union. At its peak in the 1980s, about one million citizens were assigned a function in the total defense system, divided equally between military and civilian functions—about a quarter of the population of Norway! Prepared plans existed for the massive requisitioning of private vehicles, buildings, ships, helicopters, and other aircraft by the military.[65] The "modernized" concept is far less "total" in scope, encompassing fewer people and resources. It is designed less as an instrument of last resort and more as a tool to be utilized regularly if and when needed, in order to face up to a more fluid security environment where the distinction between peacetime, crisis, and war has become unclear and fuzzy. Rather than requisitioning, it depends much more upon partnerships and commercial agreements with businesses and industry—particularly in logistics.[66] The old concept was one-sidedly focused on mobilizing civilian resources for military and civilian defense in wartime. The new concept envisages and encourages greater civil-military cooperation and more mutual support between the armed forces and the different civilian-government agencies. This cooperation extends in principle to all types of crisis situations, from peacetime events, such as natural disasters and pandemics, to security policy crises and war.[67]

The modernized total defense concept aims to address new and more diverse threats and challenges, including "the increased flow of migrants," "serious terrorist attacks," "frequent extreme weather events," and "cyber-attacks."[68] Enhancing emergency preparedness and building increased societal resilience, especially within "critical societal functions," are important objectives within the modernized concept.[69] One concrete measure undertaken was the establishment in 2019 of a Norwegian National Cyber Security Center within the National Security Authority, built on public-private cooperation. The Center was tasked with enhancing Norway's resilience in the digital domain and handling severe computer attacks against critical digital infrastructure.[70]

Building on this theme, in October 2020, the government submitted a report to the Storting entitled "Societal Security in an Insecure World."[71] The report underscored how the security and defense of Norway is no longer solely focused on military issues, but on creating a whole-of-society approach to maintaining societal security and building resilience.[72] Nevertheless, it should be stressed that at its core, the total defense concept still also seeks to retain and modernize the traditional principle of extensive civilian support to the armed forces in crisis and in war. If necessary, the state will still attempt to mobilize "society's total resources . . . in the defense of the nation."[73]

Svalbard: Norway's Soft underbelly?

The most serious potential challenge posed by Russia to Norway—below the threshold of war—is arguably the Svalbard archipelago in the Arctic. To understand why, some background is required. Svalbard became a part of Norway in 1925 when the Svalbard Treaty came into force. The treaty recognized Norwegian sovereignty over the archipelago, but gave all citizens and companies from signatory states equal rights to engage in commercial activities on the islands. The treaty also limited taxation and placed some limits on establishing permanent military installations on the islands. Mainly Norwegian and Russian companies are engaged on the islands. A Russian mining company runs the "company town" Barentsburg on the Spitsbergen Island, with about 450 inhabitants—mostly Russian and Ukrainian citizens.[74]

As a sovereign part of Norway, there is no question that the Svalbard archipelago is covered by NATO Article 5 security guaranties. Nevertheless, the islands are virtually defenseless. The Svalbard

Aerial view of Svalbard Satellite Station in 2011. Image by: Erlend Bjørtvedt (Wikimedia Commons). September 13, 2011

Treaty prohibits Norway from establishing "naval bases" and "fortifications" or from using Svalbard for "warlike purposes."[75] Norwegian authorities interpret these stipulations strictly, so the islands are de facto demilitarized most of the time. Norwegian military forces do, however, visit the islands regularly and are permitted to use them for transit purposes. Russian military forces have similarly used the island for transit purposes. In 2016, there was considerable attention and some controversy when units of Russian Federation special forces and airborne troops used the islands to move equipment and personnel participating in exercises close to the North Pole.[76]

A Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs once remarked that when the phone rang late at night in his home, his first thought was, "it's about Svalbard."[77] The interpretation of the Svalbard Treaty has long been a source of contention in relations with Moscow. Russian authorities have, for example, protested against Svalbard environmental protection rules as "discriminatory" against Russia. The Kremlin has also since 1970 opposed Norway's claim to exclusive rights in the maritime areas around Svalbard. At times, Moscow has deployed warships into the zone to signal displeasure with how the Norwegian Coast Guard has enforced Norwegian sovereign rights in the zone. The matter is exacerbated by the fact that few NATO allies support Norway's claim to exclusive rights in the maritime areas outside Svalbard's territorial waters.[78]

The Svalbard archipelago is a part of Norway that is also strategically important to Russia in the Arctic, is demilitarized most of the time, and has some unresolved legal issues concerning the interpretation of the Svalbard Treaty. These three factors make it a potential flashpoint in relations with Russia and therefore a continuing source of concern for any Norwegian government.

Norwegian Defense Policy Since February 24, 2022

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has caused some dramatic changes in Norway's security environment and in Norwegian defense policy. Most significantly, Sweden and Finland's decisions to abandon military nonalignment and seek full

membership in NATO has been a boon to Norwegian and regional security. To name but one benefit, it will mean that Norway's challenging defense of its exposed northern flank will become far more manageable.[79] Reports that Russian units garrisoned on the Kola Peninsula have suffered heavy casualties in Ukraine have added to this improved security environment.[80] The war also led to rapid changes in Norway's arms export policy—within days of the invasion, Norway abandoned its historical restriction on delivering arms to warzones and has since become a significant supplier of arms to Ukraine.[81]

At the same time, there has been no radical reconceptualization of Norway's defense priorities, which continue to be focused on deterring Russia in the High North. Norwegian policy is therefore marked more by *continuity* rather than *change* since February 2022. Norway has remained a steadfast ally in NATO and a reliable partner to the EU, following NATO allies and EU partners closely. For example, it has signed on to virtually all EU sanctions and has followed its allies in condemning Russian actions and expelling Russian diplomats. At the same time, Norway has not abandoned its efforts to strike a balance between deterrence and "reassurance" vis-à-vis- Russia, and it continues to seek cooperation in some fields, such as fishery management. In short, developments since February 2022 have so far *reinforced* rather than *changed* existing priorities in Norwegian security and defense policy.

Conclusions

In 1939, the Swedish Embassy in Oslo wrote home to Stockholm complaining about the "complete lack of interest from the Norwegian side for all Baltic Sea problems."[82] If we had had access to the same kind of correspondence written sixty or seventy years later, it would portably have revealed a similar disinterest in Oslo for Baltic Sea security issues. As Thorvald Stoltenberg once lamented, "it was not always easy to get the Icelanders and Norwegians to realize that what was happening in the Baltic also affected their safety."[83] Until the 2014 Ukrainian crisis, the Baltic Sea area in general and the security of the Baltic states in particular were issues of relatively minor importance in Norwegian security and defense policy.

From a Norwegian point of view, the Baltic states were allies, friends, and partners, but their importance was limited. In contrast, Sweden and Finland share a 2,366-kilometer border with Norway (92 percent of its total land border), are far more populous and economically significant, and are, arguably, more similar to Norway culturally—for these reasons, they have figured much more prominently in Norwegian thinking. However, this interest did not carry as far as the Baltic Sea or to the Baltic states. Among the Nordic capitals, with the possible exception of Reykjavík, Oslo paid the least attention to the Baltic Sea region. Instead, Norwegian attention was directed northward and westward. In the High North and the Arctic, Norway sought to develop and protect its huge exclusive economic zones, with their rich natural resources. In the west, Norway sought to maintain and strengthen its ties with those Western powers that ultimately guaranteed its security.

The 2014 Ukrainian crisis generated an upsurge in Norwegian interest in the Baltic Sea and, in particular, in the security of the Baltic states. Russian revisionism now appears to threaten the law-based international order and Western security guarantees upon which Norwegian prosperity and security rely. Furthermore, in military-strategic terms, the Nordic-Baltic area appears increasingly to be one strategic space.[84] In response, Oslo has committed political and military resources to ensure a more credible deterrence posture for the Baltic states. Simultaneously, Norway has also sought to modernize its total defense concept in the face of Russian "hybrid" or "gray zone" activities, including cyber intrusions and the "weaponization" of migrants.

However, Norwegian attention soon turned toward strengthening its national defenses at home and bringing NATO to engage more assertively in the High North and the North Atlantic. While Norway has not abandoned its newfound awareness of the Baltic Sea area, Norwegian security policy returned in a sense to its classical pursuit: to tie the Western (maritime) powers more closely to the defense and security of Norway and the wider northern flank of the Alliance. PRISM

Notes

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[1] Strength and Relevance: Strategic Concept for the Norwegian Armed Forces (Oslo: Ministry of Defence, 2004), 42.

[2] This is an imperfect translation of the Norwegian term "*nordområdene,*" which entered Norwegian political and academic discourse in the 1970s. It overlaps to some extent with the geographical Arctic, but is more diffuse geographically and more political. It usually includes the Arctic parts of Norway, and of Norway's neighbors, as well as the counties of northern Norway. It also includes the maritime areas in the Arctic, including islands and archipelagos eastwards, from the Greenland Sea to the Barents Sea and the Pechora Sea. See Odd Gunnar Skagestad, *The "High North" An Elastic Concept in Norwegian Arctic Policy.* Report 10/2010 (Oslo: Frid TJDF Institute [FNI], 2010).

[3] Olav Riste, "Was 1949 a Turning Point? Norway and the Western Powers 1947–1950," in *Western Security: The Formative Years: European and Atlantic Defence 1947–1953*, ed. Olav Riste (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1985).

[4] The historian Rolf Tamnes developed the terms "integration" and "screening." See Rolf Tamnes, "Integration and Screening: The Two Faces of Norwegian Alliance Policy, 1945–1986," in *Forsvarsstudier VI: Årbok for Forsvarshistorisk forskningssenter, Forsvarets høgskole*, ed. Rolf Tamnes (Oslo: TANO, 1987).

[5] The term comes from the Norwegian statesman Johan Jørgen Holst. See Johan Jørgen Holst, "Norsk sikkerhetspolitikk i strategisk perspektiv [Norwegian security policy in a strategic perspective]," *Internasjonal Politikk* 24, no. 5 (1966).

[6] Frank Bakke-Jensen, "Change and Stability in the High North," *Defence News*, December 2, 2019.

[7] Thorvald Stoltenberg, *Det handler om mennesker* [It's about people] (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2001), 249–258; and Bjorn Tore Godal, *Utsikter* [Views] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2003), 104–119.

[8] Norwegian Defence Commission of 1990, *NOU 1992: 12*; *Forsvarskommisjonen av 1990* [Norwegian Defence Commission of 1990] (Oslo: Statens forvaltningstjeneste, 1992); Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Hovedretningslinjer for Forsvarets virksomhet og utvikling i tiden 1994–1998* [Main guidelines for the armed forces' activity for the years 1994–1998], Report to the Storting, no. 16 (1992–1993); and *Hovedretningslinjer for Forsvarets virksomhet og utvikling i tiden 1999–2002* [Main guidelines for the armed forces' activity for the years 1999–2002], Report to the Storting, no. 22 (1997–1998).

[9] *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005* [The restructuring of the armed forces in the period 2002–2005], Proposition to the Storting, no. 45 (2000–2001), chap. 4 and chap. 5; and *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008* [The further modernization of the Norwegian armed forces 2005–2008], Proposition to the Storting, no. 42 (2003–2004), chap. 1.

[10] Norwegian Chief of Defence, *Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2000: Sluttrapport* [The chief of defense's defense review 2000] (Oslo: Forsvarets overkommando, 2000), 7–9; *Forsvarssjefens militærfaglige utredning 2003* [The chief of defense's defense review 2003] (Oslo: Forsvarets overkommando, 2003), 3–4; *Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2007: Sluttrapport* [The chief of defense's defense review 2007] (Oslo: Ministry of Defence, 2007), 5–6; and Gen. Sverre Diesen, "Security and the Northern Region," in *High North: High Stakes: Security, Energy, Transportation, Environment*, ed. Rose Gottemoeller and Rolf Tamnes (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2008).

[11] Clive Archer, "Nordic Involvement in the Baltic States Security: Needs, Response and Success," *European Security* 7, no. 3 (1998); "Nordic Swans and Baltic Cygnets," *Cooperation and Conflict* 34, no. 1 (1999); and Rolf Tamnes, *Oljealder, 1965–1995* [Entering the oil age, 1965–1995], vol. 6, *Norsk utenrikspolitikks historie* [The history of Norwegian foreign policy] (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1997), 145.

[12] See, for example, a book by permanent representative to NATO Leif Mevik (1992–1998), *Det nye NATO: en personlig beretning* [The new NATO: a personal account] (Bergen: Eide forlag, 1999), 51–56, 61–62.

[13] For a historical comparison of Norwegian and Danish defense policy, see Håkon Lunde Saxi, *Norwegian and Danish Defence Policy: A Comparative Study of the Post–Cold War Era*, Defence and Security Studies no. 1 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2010).

[14] See interview with Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen (1982–1993), in Jakob Kvist and Jon Bloch Skipper, *Udenrigsminister: Seks politiske portrætter* [Foreign Minister: Six political portraits] (Copenhagen: People's Press, 2007), 227–228. See also the biography by the Danish Minister of Defense (1993–2000), Hans Hækkerup, *På skansen: Dansk forsvarspolitik fra Murens fald til Kosovo* [On the redoubt: Danish defense policy from the fall of the wall to Kosovo] (Copenhagen: Lindhardt og Ringhof, 2002), 15, 66; and Archer, "Nordic Swans and Baltic Cygnets," 59.

[15] These themes, which formed the leitmotif of Jonas Gahr Støre's tenure as minister, are well reflected in his book *Å gjøre en forskjell: Refleksjoner fra en norsk utenriksminister* [Making a difference: Reflections from a Norwegian Foreign Minister] (Oslo: Cappelen Damm, 2008).

[16] Jonas Gahr Store, "Most Is North: The High North and the Way Ahead—an International Perspective," lecture at the University of Tromso, April 29, 2010 (Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010), available at <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/Most- is- north/id602113/>.

[17] *Norway: Selected Issues*, IMF Country Report no. 13/273 (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, September 2013), 21.

[18] *Government Pension Found Global: Annual Report 2020 (* Oslo: Norges Bank Investment Management, 2021).

[19] Rolf Tamnes, "Et lite land i stormaktspolitikken," [A small country in great power politics] *Internasjonal Politikk* 73, no. 3 (2015), 389; Svein Efjestad, "Norway and the North Atlantic: Defence of the Northern Flank," in *NATO and the North Atlantic: Revitalising Collective Defence*, ed. by John Andreas Olsen (London: RUSI, 2017), 62-66. See also Olav Bogen and Magnus Håkenstad, *Balansegang: Forsvarets omstilling etter den kalde krigen* [Balancing act: the reforms of the Norwegian Armed Forces after the Cold War] (Oslo: Dreyers forlag, 2015), chap. 6.

[20] Paal Sigurd Hilde and Helene F. Widerberg, "NATOs nye strategiske konsept og Norge," [NATO's new strategic concept and Norway] *Norsk Militært Tidsskrift*, no. 4 (2010), 13-19.

[21] See maps at the very beginning and end of Støre, *Å gjøre en forskjell*.

[22] On the "surge" and the founding of NORDEFCO, see Håkon Lunde Saxi, *Nordic Defence Cooperation after the Cold War*, Oslo Files on Defence and Security no. 1 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, March 2011), and Thorvald Stoltenberg, *Nordic Cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy* (Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, February 9, 2009).

[23] Ultimately, this military-driven integrationist experiment proved unsuccessful. Håkon Lunde Saxi, "The Rise, Fall and Resurgence of Nordic Defence Cooperation," *International Affairs* 95, no. 3 (2019).

[24] Paal Sigurd Hilde, "Nordic-Baltic Security and Defence Cooperation: The Norwegian Perspective," in *Northern Security and Global Politics: Nordic-Baltic Strategic Influence in a Post-Unipolar World*, eds. Ann-Sofie Dahl and Pauli Järvenpää (London: Routledge, 2014), 93–94, 103.

[25] See proposals 2-6 in Stoltenberg, *Nordic Cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy*.

[26] Saxi, *Nordic Defence Cooperation*, 37-39, 43-44.

[27] *NB8 Wise Men Report* (Copenhagen and Riga: Danish and Latvian Ministries of Foreign Affairs, 2010).

[28] Saxi, *Nordic Defence Cooperation*, 43–44. See also the SUCBAS and BarentsWatch webpages, available at <http://sucbas.org/> and <https://www.barentswatch.no/en/about/>.

[29] *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2013* (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2014), 21. Note that Baltic air-policing began in 2004. The NATO air-surveillance mission over Iceland began in 2008.

[30] Mick Krever, "Norway: 'We Are Faced with a Different Russia,'" CNN, February 26, 2015.

[31] *Forsvarets årsrapport 2014* [Annual report 2014] (Oslo: Norwegian Armed Forces, 2015), 62, 94.

[32] Quoted in Rune Thomas Ege, "Tydelig beskjed til Russland," [Clear message to Russia] *Verdens Gang*, November 19, 2014.

[33] Quoted in Håkon Eikesdal, "Her øver norske soldater i Putins nabolag," [Norwegian soldiers on exercises in Putin's neighborhood] *Dagbladet*, October 1, 2014.

[34] Tamnes, "Et lite land i stormaktspolitikken," 392.

[35] Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Interesser, ansvar og muligheter: Hovedlinjer i norsk utenrikspolitikk* [Interests, responsibilities and opportunities: the main features of Norwegian foreign policy], Report to the Storting, no. 15 (2008–2009), 37, 43.

[36] See, for example, Jens Ringsmose, "NATO: A Provider of Public Goods," in *Theorizing NATO*, eds. Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price (London: Routledge, 2016), 214–215. See also Hilde, *Nordic-Baltic Security and Defence Cooperation*.

[37] The United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and the Netherlands were subsequently identified by Norway as key Allies with whom it hoped to build especially close military relationships. *Veivalg i norsk utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitikk [Setting the course for Norwegian foreign and security policy]*, Report to the Storting, no. 36 (2016–2017) (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017), 33. On Norwegian military cooperation with the UK and Germany, see Håkon Lunde Saxi, "British and German Initiatives for Defence Cooperation: The Joint Expeditionary Force and the Framework Nations Concept," *Defence Studies* 17, no. 2 (2017), 171–197.

[38] Paal Sigurd Hilde, "Norway, the Ukraine Crisis and Baltic Sea Security," in *Baltic Sea Security: How Can Allies and Partners Meet the New Challenges in the Region?* ed. Ann-Sofie Dahl (Copenhagen: Centre for Military Studies, 2014).

[39] Quoted in Julian Borger, "Norway to Restructure Military in Response to Russian 'Aggression,'" *The Guardian*, February 25, 2015.

[40] Thomas Frear, Łukasz Kulesa, and Ian Kearns, *Dangerous Brinkmanship: Close Military Encounters between Russia and the West in 2014* (London: European Leadership Network, November 2014); Thomas Nilsen, "Norway Says Russia's Mock Attack on Vardø Radar Troubles Stability in the North." *The Barents Observer,* March 13, 2018, available at <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2018/03/oslo-such-behavior-does-not-promote-good-neighborly-relations>.

[41] See, for example, *FOCUS 2013: Annual Assessment* (Oslo: Norwegian Intelligence Service, 2013), 8–13. On the Russian bastion defense concept today and during the Cold War, see Rolf Tamnes, "The Significance of the North Atlantic and the Norwegian Contribution," in *NATO and the North Atlantic: Revitalising Collective Defence*, ed. John Andreas Olsen (London: RUSI, 2017).

[42] *Forsvarets årsrapport 2014*, 68.

[43] Håkon Lunde Saxi, "So Similar, Yet So Different: Explaining Divergence in Nordic Defence Policies," in *Common or Divided Security? German and Norwegian Perspectives on Euro-Atlantic Security*, ed. Robin Allers, Carlo Masala, and Rolf Tamnes (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014), 257–259.

[44] Quoted in Alf Bjarne Johnsen, "Derfor holder hun F-16 hjemme," [That's why she's keeping the F-16 at home] *Verdens Gang*, October 22, 2014; "Solberg: Naturlig at norske kampfly blir i Norge," [Solberg: only natural that Norwegian combat aircraft remain in Norway] NTB (Norwegian news agency), October 17, 2014.

[45] Quoted in Borger, "Norway to Restructure Military in Response to Russian 'Aggression.'"

[46] "Norge vokter baltisk luftrom," [Norway is guarding Baltic airspace] NTB, March 21, 2015.

[47] Øystein Kløvstad Langberg, "Norske styrker sendes til Øst-Europa: Skal lage 'snubletråd' mot Russland," [Norwegian forces are being sent to Eastern Europe: to constitute tripwire against Russia] *Aftenposten*, July 9, 2016.

[48] Expert Commission on Norwegian Security and Defence Policy, *Unified Effort* (Oslo: Ministry of Defence, 2015), 57.

[49] *FOCUS 2018: The Norwegian Intelligence Service's assessment of current security challenges* (Oslo: Norwegian Intelligence Service, 2018), 23.

[50] Thomas Nilsen, "Increases in NATO Scrambled Jets from Norway," *The Barents Observer*, September 14, 2020.

[51] Hallvard Norum, "Russland simulerte angrep på Vardø-radar" [Russian simulated attack against radar in Vardø], *NRK*, March 5, 2018.

[52] *FOCUS 2019: The Norwegian Intelligence Service's Assessment of Current Security Challenges* (Oslo: Norwegian Intelligence Service, 2019), 27.

[53] In 2016 and 2020, the Norwegian Government presented new long-term plans for the armed forces to the Storting (Parliament). Each long-term plan recommended increasing defense spending and emphasised deterrence and defense in the High North.

[54] Ine Eriksen Søreide, "Strategic Shift in the North: A Call For NATO Maritime Power, Presence," *Defense News International*, December 14, 2015, 15.

[55] Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Kampkraft og bærekraft: langtidsplan for forsvarssektoren* [Capable and sustainable: long-term defense plan], proposition to the Storting, no. 151 (Oslo, 2016), 29.

[56] Expert Commission on Norwegian Security and Defence Policy, *Unified Effort*, 20–23; Tamnes, "The Significance of the North Atlantic and the Norwegian Contribution"; Rolf Tamnes, "The Hight North: A Call for a Competitive Strategy," in *Security in Northern Europe: Deterrence, Defence and Dialogue,* ed. John Andreas Olsen (London: RUSI, 2018).

[57] Efjestad, "Norway and the North Atlantic," 66–68.

[58] NATO Heads of State and Government, *Warsaw Summit Communiqué* (Brussels: NATO, 2016), para. 23.

[59] On these efforts, see Håkon Lunde Saxi, "British and German Initiatives for Defence Cooperation: The Joint Expeditionary Force and the Framework Nations Concept," *Defence Studies* 17, no. 2 (2017), 171–197; Håkon Lunde Saxi, "The UK Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF)," *IFS Insights* no. 5 (2018) 1–6; Saxi, "The Rise, Fall and Resurgence of Nordic Defence Cooperation," 677–679; Håkon Lunde Saxi, "Alignment But Not Alliance: Nordic Operational Military Cooperation," *Artic Review* 13, 53–71.

[60] See the recent book chapter by the policy director at the Norwegian Ministry of Defence, Efjestad, "Norway and the North Atlantic," 66–74.

[61] See, for example, Reid Standish, "For Finland and Norway, the Refugee Crisis Heats Up Along the Russian Artic," *Foreign Policy*, January 26, 2016.

[62] The Norwegian Government has published little on this incident. Therefore, for a description of the incident and the Norwegian governmental response, see the report by the Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS), *Norway's Asylum Freeze* (Oslo: NOAS, 2019).

[63] "The Data Breach at the Storting," Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Release, October 13, 2020.

[64] *FOCUS 2021: The Norwegian Intelligence Service's Assessment of Current Security Challenges* (Oslo: Norwegian Intelligence Service, 2021), 5.

[65] Magnus Håkenstad, "Den væpnede dugnaden–totalforsvaret under den kalde krigen," in *Det nye totalforsvaret*, ed. Per M. Norheim-Martinsen (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2019).

[66] Per M. Norheim-Martinsen, "Konklusjon," in *Det nye totalforsvaret*, ed. Per M. Norheim-Martinsen (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2019).

[67] *Support and Cooperation: A Description of the Total Defence in Norway* (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Defence and Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2017).

[68] Ibid., 5.

[69] Ibid., 19–20.

[70] *National Cyber Security Strategy for Norway* (Oslo: Norwegian Ministries, 2019), 22.

[71] *Meld. St. 5 (2020–2021) Report to the Storting (white paper)* Samfunnssikerhet i en usikker verden [Societal security in an uncertain world] (Oslo: Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2020).

[72] The Norwegian Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and the Minister of Justice and Public Security presented the report at a joint press conference on October 16, 2020, along with the revised long-term plan for the defense sector (2021–2024).

[73] Norwegian Ministry of Defence and Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security, *Support and Cooperation*, 31.

[74] For official information on Svalbard, see *Meld. St. 32 (2015–2016) Report to the Storting (white paper) Svalbard* (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016).

[75] Ibid., 21.

[76] Trude Pedersen, "Chechen Special Forces Instructors Landed on Svalbard," *The Barents Oberver*, April 13, 2016.

[77] Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs (1965–1970) John Lyng, quoted by one of his successors, in Knut Frydelund, *Small country–what now? Reflections on Norway's foreign policy situation* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1982), 63.

[78] Kristian Åtland and Torbjørn Pedersen, "The Svalbard Archipelago in Russian Security Policy: Overcoming the Legacy of Fear–or Reproducing It?" *European Security* 17, no. 2 (2008), 227–251.

[79] See, for example, Saxi, "Alignment But Not Alliance: Nordic Operational Military Cooperation," 53–71.

[80] Thomas Nilsen, "Hundreds of Arctic Troops Killled, Says Ukrainian Adviser," *The Barents Observer*, March 26, 2022, available at <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2022/03/several-hundred-arctic-troops-killed-says-ukrainian-adviser#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThe%20battalion%20tactical%20group%20of,who%20were%20sent%2C%20645%20died>. [accessed 21 November 2022].

[81] "Ukraine Support Tracker," IFW Kiel Institute for the World Economy, available at <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/war-against-ukraine/ukraine-support-tracker/>.

[82] Envoy Christian Günther, quoted in Wilhelm Carlgren, *Between Hitler and Stalin: Proposals and attempts at defense and foreign policy cooperation between Sweden and Finland during the war years* (Stockholm: Militärhistoriska förlaget, 1981), 12.

[83] Thorvald Stoltenberg, "Introduction," in *One for All, All for One: New Nordic Defence Policy?* eds. Michael Funch and Jesper Schou-Knuden (Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 2009), 14.

[84] Saxi, "The rise, fall and resurgence of Nordic defence cooperation."