COUNTERING RUSSIAN COERCION
Strategic recommendations for NATO to counter hybrid warfare threats.

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INTRODUCTION

- **Context**: The Ukraine conflict and increased Russian aggression.

- **Research Question**: What strategies can NATO pursue to strengthen periphery states’ resilience to Russian coercion?

- **Approach**: Analysis of threats posed to three sets of case study countries.
  - Estonia and Latvia: *Vulnerable NATO members*
  - Georgia and Moldova: *Partners with legacies of frozen conflicts*
  - Sweden and Finland: *Highly integrated partner states*

- **Recommendations**: a whole-of-society approach to counter the whole-of-society threat posed by Russia’s use of hybrid warfare.
Hybrid Warfare targets all three sides of the Clausewitzian Trinity:

- Military
- Government
- The People

An appropriate response must address vulnerability in all three realms.

A “Whole-of-Society” security approach requires a collaborative effort by different arms of government and incorporates a role for civil society and the private sector.
OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

- Our model of Russian strategy holds that Russia:

1. **Aims to preserve and/or extend influence in its near-abroad.**
2. **Seeks opportunities to destabilize and delegitimize NATO.**
3. **Does not seek large-scale military conflict with NATO.**
4. **Capitalizes on opportunities to divert domestic attention from internal problems.**
OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

- Methodology:
  - Literature review.
  - Interviews with scholars and practitioners.
  - Military and political data.
  - Official government documents in English, Russian, and local languages.

- Provide actionable recommendations for implementing NATO/USG strategy.
  - Treat NATO as a unitary actor.
  - Look ahead to possible future crises.
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WHAT IS HYBRID WARFARE?

Overview

- Hybrid warfare is not a new concept.
- New adaption of Russian doctrine of force employment.

Four Key Elements Of Hybrid Warfare:

- Limited
- Unacknowledged
- Context-Specific
- Includes Kinetic Element
WHAT IS HYBRID WARFARE?

Russian Use of Hybrid Warfare

- Russian hybrid warfare includes a variety of tactics:
  1. Military
  2. Cyber
  3. Energy and Economics
  4. Propaganda
  5. Sociopolitical Exploitation
Conventional War in Georgia:

- Combined arms attacks on two fronts.
- Pretext of defending South Ossetia.
- Some cyber elements and information warfare.
- Objectives achieved at higher than expected cost.
Hybrid War in Ukraine:

- Military: Deniability from use of “little green men” and “polite volunteers.”
- Propaganda: Euromaidan protestors as “fascists.”
- Sociopolitical Exploitation: Russian ethnic population in Donbas as both *casus belli* and source of recruits.
- Cyber: Wide-ranging attacks on Ukrainian institutions.
- Energy and Economics: Periodically cut off gas to Ukraine.
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- Small former Soviet Republics.
- Large ethnic Russian minority populations.
- Members of EU and NATO.
- Concerned about more assertive Russian foreign policy.
ESTONIA AND LATVIA

Military Threat

- Small forces with limited capabilities.
- Insecure borders with Russia.
- VJTF would need 48 hours to deploy one brigade to the Baltics.
- Lack of clarity regarding potential Article 5 invocation.
Border hardening supported by Operation Atlantic Resolve.

Readiness Action Plan (Wales Summit, 2014).

Increased military exercises, air assets, and regional command-and-control centers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Strength</td>
<td>5,750</td>
<td>5,310</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reserve Strength</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>7,850</td>
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<td>Tanks</td>
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<td>APC</td>
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<td>376</td>
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<td>Strike/Fighters</td>
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</table>

Latvian tanks are T-55s; APCs are on loan from US

Fighters in Estonia are part of Baltic Air Policing Mission
Make NATO training and presence rotations under Operation Atlantic Resolve persistent.

Continue to develop the NATO Response Force brigade and ensure that it is able to react quickly and effectively.

Provide advanced communications, cyber, and reconnaissance assets to include strategic surveillance UAVs.

Facilitate further training and cooperation with Swedish and Finnish militaries.
**Cyber Threat**

- “E-stonia”: high-tech emphasis is a strength and a vulnerability.
- Estonia 2007 cyber attack.

**Cyber Defense**

- NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCD CoE).
- Cyber cooperation agreement with NORDEFCO.
- Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in Estonia and Latvia.
- Digital Continuity.
Russian propaganda promotes an image of Russia as the liberator of the Baltics from fascist governments during WWII and accuses current governments of fascist sympathies.

Estonia and Latvia’s ethnic Russian population is highly susceptible to Russian propaganda.

Russian-language television is highly trusted among the ethnic Russian population.
ESTONIA AND LATVIA

Counter-Propaganda

- NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (StratCom).
- Public broadcasters cooperating on Russian-language television, but worries persist about its independence.

Propaganda Recommendations

- Support objective and independent Russian-language media outlets.
ESTONIA AND LATVIA

Sociopolitical Exploitation

- Politicized Russian minorities.
- “Gray passport holders.”
- Suspect funding of anti-Western political parties.
- Links to Russian intelligence and organized crime.

[Map of the region showing population and Russian ethnicity]

The Economist
GlobalSecurity.org
ESTONIA AND LATVIA

Sociopolitical Resilience

- New legislation improving opportunities, access to services, and pathways to citizenship for Russian minority population.
- New anti-corruption legislation passed in both countries.

Sociopolitical Recommendations

- Expand efforts to reach out to ethnic Russian minority groups through media, citizenship reform legislation, and political representation.
ESTONIA AND LATVIA

Energy and Economic Leverage

- Highly dependent on Russian energy and trade.
  - Sole supplier of gas and major trade partner.
  - Gazprom heavily invested in Estonian and Latvian natural gas companies.

- Infrastructural vulnerabilities.
  - Soviet-era infrastructure linked to Russia.
  - New pipelines to bypass Baltics.
Develop strategic natural gas reserve to deliver in the event of Russian cutoff to supply.

Support BEMIP, currently in project phase, which includes proposals for:

- LNG import facility.
- Pipeline connection to Finland.
- Reverse flow capability from Poland.
- Gas storage facility in Latvia expanded.
GEORGIA AND MOLDOVA

Background

- Developing former Soviet Republics.
- Lower levels of Euro-Atlantic integration.
- Breakaway regions backed by Russian “peacekeepers” (Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia).
GEORGIA AND MOLDOVA

Military Preparedness

- Georgian forces substantially degraded in 2008.
- War exposed vulnerabilities in mobilization and coordination.
- Since 2008, Georgia has heavily invested in training, intelligence, anti-air, and anti-armor systems.
- Moldova military is chronically underfunded and undersupplied.
- Dilemma in hardening *de facto* borders; encourages smuggling, trafficking, and corruption.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Moldova</th>
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<td>Active Strength</td>
<td>20,650</td>
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<td>Reserve Strength</td>
<td>11,700</td>
<td>58,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>123</td>
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<tr>
<td>APC / AIFV</td>
<td>&gt;270</td>
<td>206</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artillery Pieces</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>148</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strike/Fighters</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
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*Jane's IHS / IISS Military Balance*
GEORGIA AND MOLDOVA

Military Recommendations

- Tread carefully on assistance, remembering Russia’s escalation dominance.
- Deliver aid and training for civilian and military police forces to fight corruption.
- Expand the Building Integrity Programme, NATO’s security sector reform support program, to deepen commitment to whole-of-society security.
- Agree on the future of NATO-Georgia relations and communicate this clearly to Georgia.
GEORGIA AND MOLDOVA

Cyber Threat

- Georgia suffered broad cyber attack during 2008 war.
- Moldovan organized crime groups involved in cyber crime; have links to Transnistria and likely to Russia.

Cyber Defense

- Georgian attempts to harden cyber infrastructure have been largely local and uncoordinated with NATO.
- NATO recently held a conference in Chisinau to highlight the risks posed by cyber.

Cyber Recommendations

- Expand training for cyber defense experts in Moldova.
- Establish links between cyber experts in Georgia and CCD CoE.
GEORGIA AND MOLDOVA

Propaganda

- Moldovans trust Russian public broadcasts as objective source of news.
- Anti-Western media stokes fear of forced reunification with Romania in minority community.

Propaganda Recommendations

- Emphasize that a closer relationship with Moldova does not mean membership and that NATO’s goal is ensuring Moldova’s sovereignty.
Moldova has not made a definitive choice to move towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

Minority groups in Moldova staunchly pro-Russian.

Georgia is focused on NATO membership, but cleavages remain.

Limited minority politics in Georgia.

Georgian Orthodox Church remains closely linked to Russia.
The “Georgian Dream” coalition remains committed to Euro-Atlantic integration, while trying to reduce tensions with Russia.

The Moldovan political system is highly fractured. Minority government supports Euro-Atlantic integration; opposition seeks to join Eurasian Customs Union.

Leverage the help of Turkey to build bridges to the Gagauz community, possibly by opening a consulate in Comrat.

Foster dialogue with the Georgian Orthodox Church.
GEORGIA AND MOLDOVA

Energy and Economic Leverage

- Moldova is entirely dependent on Russia for natural gas supplies.
- Gazprom owns a majority stake in Moldovan gas.
- Russia is Moldova’s largest trading partner.
- Georgia sources energy supplies from Romania, Azerbaijan.

Moldovan Import Sources, 2012

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>27.79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>9.32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>5.93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3.51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>3.07%</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>3.06%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>3.02%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>2.07%</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>0.77%</td>
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Observatory of Economy Complexity, MIT
WikiMedia Commons
Georgia has a diverse array of trade partners; trade with Russia representing a small share of the total volume.

Moldova inaugurated in 2014 a pipeline to import natural gas from Romania.

In response to Russian sanctions, EU abolished tariffs on Moldovan wine.
- Develop creative funding options to complete the natural gas pipeline that will allow Moldova to source gas from Romania.
- Provide aid to Moldova to implement the sanitary provisions of the DCFTA and allow speedy access to European markets.
- Work to increase trade volume and foreign direct investment in Georgia.
- Work to encourage integration and peaceful dispute settlement in the Caucasus region.
SWEDEN AND FINLAND

Background

- Active members of the Partnership for Peace program.
- Among the most developed countries in the world.
- Fully integrated in the Euro-Atlantic community.
- History of neutrality and non-alignment.
Recent Russian violations of airspace and territorial waters.
Rear area for a Russian campaign in the Baltics.
Gotland commands the Baltic Sea commons.
Long border between Finland and Russia.
SWEDEN AND FINLAND

Military Preparedness

- Well-trained active forces with a high degree of interoperability with NATO.
- In August, both signed Host Nation Support memos with NATO.
- Swedish defense budget increase in 2015 and troops were reintroduced to Gotland island.
- Large Finnish reserve force of questionable military readiness.
- Members of NORDEFCO and the EU Nordic Battle group.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Finland</th>
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<tr>
<td>Active Strength</td>
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<td>Reserve Strength</td>
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<td>Tanks</td>
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<td>925</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artillery Pieces</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strike/Fighters</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>62</td>
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Jane’s IHS / IISS Military Balance
Military Recommendations

- Implement strategic lift and Special Forces aspects of Wales Summit Declaration.
- Capitalize on Sweden’s reintroduction of troops on Gotland to coordinate exercises on the defense of the Baltic Sea commons.
- Facilitate procurement of ASW and other capabilities as Sweden increases its military budget.
- Work with Finland to increase the readiness of its reserve force.
- Facilitate cooperation and interoperability between Sweden, Finland, and the Baltic States.
- Be prepared to facilitate the ascension to NATO membership of Sweden and Finland, but do not actively promote it.
SWEDEN AND FINLAND

Cyber Defense

- Computer Emergency Response Teams.
- National Cyber Security Strategies.
- In 2010, Sweden organized cyber defense exercise with NATO CCDCOE dubbed Locked Shields.
- NORDEFCO includes cooperative cyber defense.

Cyber Recommendations

- Include Sweden and Finland in future cyber preparedness exercises.
Russia is Finland’s top trading partner and source of most energy supplies.

Russian tourism injects €2 billion in Finland’s economy annually.

Sweden more integrated with European market for goods and energy.

Encourage exploration of alternative energy sources for Finland.
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<th>Counter-Propaganda</th>
<th>Sociopolitical Resilience</th>
<th>Energy &amp; Economics</th>
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</table>
| Estonia & Latvia       | - Make deployments permanent  
  - Develop NRF brigade  
  - Provide recon UAVs  
  - Foster cooperation w/ Sweden and Finland | - Further ongoing cyber defense program | - Support objective Russian language news | - Create NATO strategic nat. gas res. |
| Sweden & Finland       | - Further interop.  
  - Exercise in Gotland  
  - Assist ASW procure  
  - Reserve readiness  
  - Foster cooperation w/ Estonia and Latvia  
  - Monitor debate on membership | - Enhance cooperation | - Encourage outreach  
  - Integrate minorities | - Diversify sources for Finnish nat. gas |
| Georgia & Moldova      | - Remember Russian escalation dominance  
  - Expand BI program  
  - Train police forces  
  - Decide on future of Georgian relationship | - CCD COE & Georgia cooperation  
  - Increase training in Moldova | - Ensure Moldovan neutrality/sovereignty  
  - Engage Georgian Orthodox Church | - Train police forces  
  - Expand BI program  
  - Open Turkish consulate in Gagauzia | - Fund nat. gas pipeline to Chisinau  
  - Support DCFTA compliance  
  - Increase FDI in Georgia |
| NATO                   | - Further interop. w/ EUBG/PfP  
  - Expand Atl. Resolve  
  - Expand Mil. Ed. Prog.  
  - Deepen ties, not expand membership  
  - Work for 2% target | - Facilitate work with members and partners  
  - Develop “safe data” policy  
  - Encourage local policies | - Support objective media and intellectual platforms | - Focus on fighting corruption  
  - Encourage objective media platforms | - Develop energy strategy |
NATO AND THE US: RECOMMENDATIONS

Military Preparedness

- Deepen ties with existing members and partners rather than further enlarge the Alliance (possible exception of Sweden/Finland).
- Increase collaboration with EU Battle Groups, integration of military equipment, and development of a network-centric approach.
- Expand Operation Atlantic Resolve, persistently rotating troops in the region.
- Push for members to comply with the 2 percent spending threshold.
NATO AND THE US: RECOMMENDATIONS

Cyber Defense

- Facilitate enhanced cyber defense cooperation among NATO members, key international organizations, and the private sector.
- Develop a unified policy among member state on requirements for safe transfer of data across borders.
- Encourage member state policies that are inclusive of minority populations for the purpose of cyber defense.

Counter-Propaganda

- Encourage objective media and intellectual platforms within member and partner states.
NATO AND THE US: RECOMMENDATIONS

Sociopolitical Resilience

- Address corruption for the former Soviet Republics and other middle-income countries where the issue is particularly salient.
- Widen NATO civilian and military education programs.

Energy and Economics

- Develop a comprehensive energy strategy for the Alliance during the 2016 Warsaw Summit that includes:
  - Increased LNG trading facilities
  - Reverse flow capacities for pipelines
  - Diversified sources of energy supplies
  - Investment in renewable sources
Are there any questions that you’d like us to address at this time?
thank you.

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