

## Major deployment decisions taken by Russia, directly linked to or relevant in the context of the 2014 crisis<sup>1</sup>

*February 2016*

<p>Deployment of forces for operations against Ukraine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concentration of forces in its Western and Central Military Districts in February-March 2014 (presented as snap exercises) which enabled the deployment of Russian forces to Crimea and intimidation of Ukraine during the early stages of crisis</li> <li>- Maintenance of additional forces in the vicinity of the Ukrainian border<sup>2</sup>, with the total numbers assessed by RUSI at between 50,000 and 90,000 troops in April 2014<sup>3</sup></li> <li>- Deployment of troops into Eastern Ukraine. In August 2014 major elements of regular Russian units reportedly entered Eastern Ukraine in support of the separatist forces, in January-February 2015 they took part in a new offensive against Ukrainian forces.<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>
<p>Deployment of forces to Crimea</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deployment of additional land, air, coastal defence and combat support units to the peninsula<sup>5</sup>, with the number of Russian troops in Crimea planned to be increased from approximately 25,000 to 40,000 troops<sup>6</sup></li> <li>- Further strengthening of the Black Sea Fleet with a number of new submarine and surface ships, including six improved Kilo-class submarines, six Admiral Grigorovich-class frigates, six Bykov-class patrol ships and at least nine Project 21631 small guided missile corvettes<sup>7</sup></li> <li>- Temporary deployment of Tu-22M3 long-range dual-capable bombers during exercises in 2015, with Russian reports indicating that the bombers would be stationed permanently on the peninsula in "nearest future".<sup>8</sup></li> </ul>
<p>Increasing the military potential of the Western Military District<sup>9</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Permanent build-up of Russian military potential and infrastructure along the border with Ukraine, including re-location of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Mountain Brigade from North Caucasus and deployment of 9<sup>th</sup> Independent Motor-Rifle Brigade.<sup>10</sup></li> <li>- Reactivation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Tank Division as part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Guards Army, headquarters re-located from Mulino to Voronezh region<sup>11</sup></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- January 2016 announcement of plans to create three new divisions in the Western part of Russia (most likely includes the 10<sup>th</sup> Tank Division)<sup>12</sup></li> <li>- Re-arming of the Western Military District incl. missile regiments with Iskander missile systems, introduction of S-400 air defence systems and deliveries of new armour, artillery and aircraft to the units of the District.<sup>13</sup></li> <li>- Deployment of additional transport and attack helicopters (tripling the previous numbers) to the Ostrov base close to the border with Latvia and Estonia, used by the 15<sup>th</sup> Army Aviation Brigade, a unit (re)activated in December 2013.<sup>14</sup></li> </ul>
Extension of military cooperation with Belarus	<p>Beyond the existing military-to-military cooperation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Russian Su-27s deployed on quick alert missions to the airbase near Baranovichi from late 2013<sup>15</sup></li> <li>- Preparations to activate a new permanent Russian airbase in 2016. The airbase in Bobruysk in the Eastern part of the country (and not, as originally announced in 2013, close to the Western border in Lida), is to host up to 24 fighters.<sup>16</sup> Recent reports suggest that, due to Belorussian opposition to the airbase plans, the deployment may be postponed, scaled down, or even cancelled.<sup>17</sup></li> </ul>
Military activities in the Arctic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Activation of a new Arctic Joint Strategic Command (AJSC) on 1 December 2014.<sup>18</sup></li> <li>- Plans for construction of at least 13 airfields and 10 radar stations, as well as the reactivation of a number of Soviet-era bases, incl. airfields and ports on the Novosibirsk Islands in the Laptev Sea and the Franz Josef archipelago, and a major airbase at Tiksi in Yakutia.<sup>19</sup></li> <li>- Re-activation and / or strengthening of units in the areas including the 61st Independent Naval Infantry Brigade and the 200th Independent Infantry Brigade, to be stationed at Sputnik Base, Pechenga, inside the Arctic Circle (16 km from the Norwegian border and 65 km from the Finnish border).</li> <li>- Re-deployment of troops to the previously abandoned base in Alakurtti, 60 km from the Finnish Lapland border.<sup>20</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> The information contained in this table has been compiled by the European Leadership Network and forms part of February 2016 publication "Towards a New Equilibrium: Minimising the risks of NATO and Russia's new military postures". For more information visit [www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org](http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org) or follow us on twitter @theELN

<sup>2</sup> [http://osce.usmission.gov/apr\\_30\\_14\\_ukrainefscpc.html](http://osce.usmission.gov/apr_30_14_ukrainefscpc.html)

<sup>3</sup> I. Sutyagin, M. Clarke, 'Ukraine Military Dispositions', Royal United Services Institute Briefing Paper, April 2014, London, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Hiding\\_in\\_Plain\\_Sight/HPS\\_English.pdf](http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Hiding_in_Plain_Sight/HPS_English.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.mdb.cast.ru/mdb/5-2014/item4/article1/>

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- <sup>6</sup> [http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2014/11/12\\_a\\_6299261.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2014/11/12_a_6299261.shtml)
- <sup>7</sup> [http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/show-daily/sea-air-space/2015/04/12/russia-black-sea-mediterranean-navy-fleet-crimea-sevastopol/25477449/;](http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/show-daily/sea-air-space/2015/04/12/russia-black-sea-mediterranean-navy-fleet-crimea-sevastopol/25477449/)
- <sup>8</sup> [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=44218&tx\\_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=27&cHash=4c38d58819ec26e5e446c52652a94c8a#.VcjJlqTbKUk](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=44218&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=27&cHash=4c38d58819ec26e5e446c52652a94c8a#.VcjJlqTbKUk)
- <sup>9</sup> On the military potential of the Western military district, see:  
[http://www.defmin.fi/files/2840/Andrey\\_Frolov\\_Russian\\_army\\_SPb\\_25\\_04\\_2014.pdf](http://www.defmin.fi/files/2840/Andrey_Frolov_Russian_army_SPb_25_04_2014.pdf)
- <sup>10</sup> <http://bmpd.livejournal.com/1243643.html>
- <sup>11</sup> <http://bmpd.livejournal.com/1379450.html>
- <sup>12</sup> <http://tass.ru/en/defense/848904>
- <sup>13</sup> [http://sdelanounas.ru/blogs/72604/;](http://sdelanounas.ru/blogs/72604/) [http://www.sargs.lv/Zinas/Military\\_News/2015/07/15-01.aspx#lastcomment](http://www.sargs.lv/Zinas/Military_News/2015/07/15-01.aspx#lastcomment)
- <sup>14</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/latvia-wary-of-russian-moves/1949733.html>
- <sup>15</sup> [http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2013-12-11/russian-aircraft-patrol-belarusian-airspace;](http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2013-12-11/russian-aircraft-patrol-belarusian-airspace) [https://www.pism.pl/files/?id\\_plik=16744](https://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=16744)
- <sup>16</sup> <http://tass.ru/en/russia/754464>
- <sup>17</sup> <http://belarusdigest.com/story/moscow-gives-belarus-arms-and-seems-abandon-airbase-plans-24254>
- <sup>18</sup> <http://www.janes.com/article/46577/russia-activates-new-arctic-joint-strategic-command>
- <sup>19</sup> <http://tass.ru/en/russia/769867>
- <sup>20</sup> [http://yle.fi/uutiset/russia\\_moves\\_first\\_troops\\_to\\_arctic\\_base\\_near\\_finnish\\_border/7736771 ;](http://yle.fi/uutiset/russia_moves_first_troops_to_arctic_base_near_finnish_border/7736771)  
<http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/warfare/2015/03/11/russia-arctic-bases-soviet-northern-command-navy-fleet-siberian-island/24335619/>