

German Army and NATO begin major military exercises against Russia

By Johannes Stern
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One of the largest multinational exercises in years on German territory, Swift Response, began on Monday, according to a German army report. “Large,” “significant,” and “challenging” are the words being used to describe the exercise, which runs until August 29.

A total of 5,000 soldiers from 11 countries are participating, including from the Netherlands, Italy, Britain, Spain, France, Poland, Portugal and Greece. After the US Army, the German army provides the second largest contingent of troops.

The official description leaves little doubt that the target of the exercise was Russia. The goal was “the mobilisation of combat ready, multi-national intervention forces, which can be deployed within a few hours and days to support alliance partners in crisis situations with their rapid reaction capabilities.”

An even larger military exercise, Trident Juncture 2015, is set to begin at the end of September, with an even clearer anti-Russian focus. Official sources describe it as a “full military exercise” involving 36,000 troops. In addition, there will be around 160 aircraft, 60 ships and submarines and thousands of tanks and other military vehicles.

According to NATO’s official script, the exercise, which will run over several weeks, concerns “a border war” in the fictional territory of Cerasia “to an end before it expands to the entire region.” Kamon, “the aggressor country in the region, refuses international arbitration and invades southwards in order to seize key dams in Lakuta, which was caught ill-prepared to counter the invasion.”

The scenario “sees a stand-off in East Cerasia and a legion of problems caused by the stand-off, including increasing regional instability, violation of territorial integrity and a deteriorating humanitarian situation.”

Even though NATO sources claim the scenario takes place in Africa, it reads like a possible preparation for a military intervention by the Western allies against Russia in Ukraine.

In the latest edition of *Bundeswehr Aktuell*, the weekly newspaper of the German Armed Forces, the commander of the operational leadership of the multinational unit in Ulm, Richard Roßmanith, drew a connection between Trident Juncture and the NATO aggression against Ukraine and Russia.

Asked about the “changed security and political situation in Eastern Europe,” Roßmanith declared that the scope of the exercise made it possible “to practice classic high-intensity combat situations, which are of course conceivable in many contexts.” He then added, “It is no secret that Russia is closely observing the preparations for Trident Juncture and has written about it in its media—including in aspects of its propaganda. But certainly also with regard to our capabilities.”

He was “proud” that he could bring his experience as commander of the operational leadership of the multinational unit into the exercise, he said, adding that “intensive exercise activities” in the East will “characterise the coming years.”

The arrogance and self-assuredness that the German general staff is displaying towards Russia, 70 years after the end of World War II, is breathtaking. During Hitler’s war of extermination against the Soviet Union, the German generals fought “proudly” in the East, claiming the lives of 27 million Soviet citizens. After the defeat of the Wehrmacht and Nazi Germany, they were compelled to restrain themselves for decades.

Roßmanith and Co. now seem to believe that nobody remembers these horrific crimes and they can revive their grand and deranged plans, which drove Europe into the abyss twice during the last century.

Roßmanith sought to claim that Trident Juncture was not “only” about Russia. It was much more concerned with making clear that “NATO is also looking to the South with this exercise, to the Mediterranean, Africa and to the Middle East. As before, the alliance has a 360 degree orientation.” The purpose was to display “ability to act and strength.” At the end of the interview, he warned, “We control our military capacity. We are sending the message: NATO is the strongest military alliance in the world...everybody should consider carefully about how they deal with us.”

The working class must recognise the real dangers posed before it is too late. Just last week, the think tank European Leadership Network (ELN) warned in a study titled “Preparing for the worst” that the constant and expanding military exercises were increasing the risk of a broad military conflagration.

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