



# Wargame 3-14: Implications of Events in Ukraine for the U.S. Army Analysis

## STRATEGIC WARGAMING SERIES



28-29 April 2014



**UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE**  
**Center for Strategic Leadership & Development**  
**650 Wright Ave**  
**Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013**

The findings contained in this report are based on the results of an academic wargame conducted at the United States Army War College 28-29 April 2014. Except where expressly indicated, the ideas presented are derived directly from the comments of wargame participants. The views contained in this report are intended to inform senior Army leaders including, but not confined to, members of the Army Staff, Geographic Combatant Commands and Army Service Component Commands. This report does not express the policies or official views of the United States Government, the Department of Defense or the United States Army.

Scenario Development:	LTC Ned Ritzmann	<a href="mailto:ned.c.ritzmann.mil@mail.mil">ned.c.ritzmann.mil@mail.mil</a>
Lead Author:	Dr. Richard Winslow	<a href="mailto:richard.l.winslow.civ@mail.mil">richard.l.winslow.civ@mail.mil</a>
Lead Analyst:	Mr. Chip Cleckner	<a href="mailto:william.h.cleckner.civ@mail.mil">william.h.cleckner.civ@mail.mil</a>
Chief, Strategic Wargaming Division:	COL Scott Forsythe	<a href="mailto:scott.a.forsythe.mil@mail.mil">scott.a.forsythe.mil@mail.mil</a>

# STRENGTH *and* WISDOM

# Report Documentation Page

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**United States Army War College Strategic Wargaming Series**  
**Wargame 3-14: Implications of Events in Ukraine for the U.S. Army**

**Executive Summary**

On 28-29 April 2014, the U.S. Army War College Center for Strategic Leadership and Development (CSLD) conducted an unclassified strategic Tabletop Exercise (TTX) to develop implications for the U.S. Army of ongoing events in Ukraine. Subject matter experts from the U.S. Army War College faculty, U.S. students and International Fellows from Europe and other scholars from academia and think tanks participated in the TTX. The participants were given scenarios of how events in Ukraine could evolve to determine the likelihood of actions by Russia, and identify reactions to those Russian actions by other stakeholders and counter-responses by the Russians to those reactions. The results were then analyzed to extract potential requirements for Army capabilities and implications for the U.S. Army.

**Key Findings**

- The crisis in Ukraine has evolved from a domestic political dispute into a confrontation between Russia and the United States and its NATO partners over the political order in Europe.
- Understanding the Russian perspective will be critical to crisis resolution.
  - Russian objectives regarding Ukraine almost certainly include:
    - Signaling to the West that NATO and EU expansion eastward is over and that Russia will not tolerate any further accessions to either NATO or the EU of any additional former Soviet Union states;
    - Maintaining its naval facilities on the Black Sea; and
    - Having a government in Kiev that is politically oriented toward Moscow, not NATO, and that remains economically tied to Russia, not the European Union.
  - Russian objectives regarding Ukraine may include dominating or controlling the near abroad; if so, its aggression toward Ukraine is likely to continue and may expand toward other neighbors.
  - Because of his control over Russia, Putin has a much greater impact on the country's behavior than governments that are more accountable to the public.
  - Putin's perspective and personality are major factors in the Ukraine crisis. He appears to be motivated by fear (of NATO/Western penetration of the near abroad, seeing the Black Sea as becoming a "NATO lake"), honor (restoration of Russian pride and influence) and interests (as identified above). He views relations with the West as a zero-sum game,<sup>1</sup> and values personal relationships with other world leaders built on trust and mutual respect. Considering these factors, Putin is likely to stop only when he has achieved his strategic objectives or when the costs become too high.
  - Rotational forces are likely to be seen by Russia as less provocative than forward stationed forces; Western provision of significant weapons capabilities represents an enduring and unacceptable threat to Russia.
- Future U.S. actions should focus on reassurance of NATO allies more than deterrence of Russia.

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<sup>1</sup> A zero-sum game is a situation (as a game or relationship) in which a gain for one side entails a corresponding loss for the other side.

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- Each of our NATO allies and regional partners will tend to request the same capabilities in all scenarios but will want greater quantities of those capabilities in response to circumstances they see as more threatening (See Annex A for a country-by-country list).
- Reassuring our allies without provoking Russia to be more aggressive will require a careful balance.
- Actions taken by NATO as a whole are likely to be more effective than U.S. actions taken alone, but NATO consensus may not be achievable quickly enough to be responsive.
- Even when tensions between the West and Russia over Ukraine abate, there will be a continuing requirement to reassure NATO allies of U.S. commitment to European security.
- Europe has been and will remain predominantly a land theater; therefore, the Army as the Nation's primary provider of Landpower can expect to provide a very large portion of U.S. military support used to reassure NATO allies and deter Russia.

### **Recommendations**

- Evaluate potential U.S. actions through Russian eyes, do not mirror image U.S. thought processes.
- Find the right mix of FDOs that is sufficient to reassure our NATO partners and deter Russia without provoking Russia to continue its aggressive behavior.
- Use NATO as a hub for requests for support and multilateral coordination.
- In addition to responding to allies' requests, the U.S. Army should consider:
  - demonstrating restraint in providing weapons capabilities that the Ukrainians are not prepared to employ, or capabilities to allies and partners that Russia perceives as a provocation to act aggressively;
  - increasing availability of PME seats for Eastern European NATO and PfP countries;
  - increasing the use of USAREUR's (and FORSCOM's) Digital Liaison Detachments with our NATO allies;
  - aligning a U.S. Corps HQ to NATO for Article V contingency planning;
  - allowing selected Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) rotations to count as CTC credit [such as a BCT-sized NATO Response Force (NRF)];
  - assisting partner nations to develop niche specialties such as the water purification specialty of Lithuania;
  - providing USAREUR HQs with increased capability and capacity for security cooperation, such as a larger Security Cooperation Division with more FAOs; assignment of a CA Bn directly to USAREUR; PCS assignment of an officer-NCO heavy "security cooperation" unit to provide more responsive capability than from rotational RAF elements to support TDY teams for in-country training missions; and
  - prepositioning battalion-sized mission- and unit-tailored equipment sets in lower risk countries (Poland; Romania).

## **Report on WG 3-14: Implications of Events in Ukraine for the U.S. Army**

### **Overview**

On 28-29 April 2014, the U.S. Army War College Center for Strategic Leadership and Development (CSLD) conducted an unclassified strategic Tabletop Exercise (TTX) to develop insights into implications for the Army of how ongoing events in Ukraine affect the region. Sixteen subject matter experts from the U.S. Army War College faculty, U.S. students and International Fellows from Europe and other scholars from academia and think tanks participated in the TTX. The participants were divided into two groups that were similar in composition and experience. Both groups were given three scenarios of how events in Ukraine could evolve and were led through discussions of each scenario to determine the scenario's likelihood, actions by Russia, reactions to Russian actions by other stakeholders, and counter-responses by the Russians to those reactions. The scenarios were:

- Russia appears to stop at Crimea and deescalates (not a return to normal)
- Russia appears to pursue expansion of the Russian Federation
- "Bullets Fly" - Violence in Ukraine escalates in one of two ways, each of which could occur in isolation or in simultaneously with the other.
  - Direct combat between Ukrainian and Russian forces
  - Internal factional disputes, probably ethnically based, escalate to armed violence

### **Results**

This report will identify Army capabilities that NATO partners may request in response to aggressive Russian actions in and around Ukraine and the potential impact on the Army if it provides those capabilities. Before listing those capabilities, we will describe the security environment in which they might be employed using the ends/ways/means paradigm.

### **Strategic Environment**

In the course of their dialogs both groups identified some critical elements of the strategic environment that contributed to the emergence of the crisis in Ukraine:

- Europe has been and will remain predominantly a land theater;
- EU dependency on Russian gas has, and will continue to temper partner willingness to confront Russia forcefully.
  - This dependence on Russian natural gas, much of which is supplied through Ukraine, can only be reduced gradually.
  - In the future, Russia could partially offset the revenue loss from European markets by exporting its natural gas to China.<sup>2</sup> In that case, Russian revenues would decline significantly but not as much as its leverage over Europe would decline;
- U.S. force reductions in Europe reflect the United States accepting risk in theaters outside of the Asia-Pacific region and the CENTCOM AOR;

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<sup>2</sup> The Institute for Energy Research reported on June 4, 2014 that China and Russia negotiated 30-year \$400 billion agreement to export Russian natural gas to China with exports expected to begin in 2018. "China Signs Natural Gas Deal with Russia," accessed June 5, 2014 at: <http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/63562>

- The perception in Europe that the U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region has resulted in a reduction in the U.S. commitment to European security, or in its more extreme expression, the abandonment of Europe;
- The current crisis is the most recent manifestation of a long-standing dispute between Russia and the United States and its NATO partners over the interpretation of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty and NATO expansion. The Russians believe that the West has violated the 2002 'agreement' on NATO expansion which put Georgia and Ukraine off-limits; NATO denies that any such agreement was ever reached.<sup>3</sup>
- The crisis in Ukraine that started out in November 2013, as protests over the rampant corruption and mismanagement of Yanukovich's presidency, first evolved into a dispute between Russia and the EU over Ukraine's economic alignment and then into a confrontation between Russia and the United States and its NATO partners over the political order in Europe.
- Putin is likely to stop his aggressive actions only when he has achieved his strategic objectives or when the costs to Russia become too high.

### **Russian Objectives**

The three scenarios provided a vehicle to explore possible Russian objectives behind their actions. Having a common understanding of Russian objectives enabled the participants to assess likely counter-responses by the Russians to NATO member reactions to Russia's aggressive behavior. The participants linked Russian willingness to deescalate after the annexation of the Crimea (scenario 1) to three Russian objectives; (1) signaling to the West that NATO and EU expansion eastward is over and that Russia will not tolerate any further accessions to either NATO or the EU of any additional former Soviet Union states; (2) maintaining its naval facilities on the Black Sea, and (3) having a government in Kiev that is politically oriented toward Moscow, not NATO, and that remains economically tied to Russia, not the European Union.

The participants believed that the second scenario in which Russia appears to pursue expansion of the Russian Federation portrayed the current "real world" situation and Russian

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<sup>3</sup> Negotiations that led to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) began in 1989 before the break-up of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. The treaty set numerical limits for five categories of conventional weapons systems within the "area of application"—the entire land territory of the States Parties in Europe from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains. The States Parties were all members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact at that time and limits were aggregated into two 'groups of States Parties'—NATO members and the Warsaw Pact members. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, CFE limits continued to be adhered to by all parties but differences of interpretation arose between Russia and the other parties as former Warsaw Pact states such as Poland and former Soviet Union states such as the Baltic States joined NATO. Despite efforts to create new cooperative mechanisms such as the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) in 2002, these differences over NATO expansion have continued and intensified to the point that on November 22, 2011, the United States announced that it would cease carrying out certain obligations under the CFE Treaty with regard to Russia.

For a more complete accounting of this dispute, one should refer these sources documents: (1) the CFE Treaty; (2) Victoria Nuland, Department of State Press Statement, "Implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces In Europe," November 22, 2011, accessed June 6, 2014 at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/11/177630.htm>; and (3) NATO Fact Sheet - April 2014, "Russia's accusations - setting the record straight," accessed June 6, 2014 at: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_109141.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_109141.htm?selectedLocale=en)

strategy. They felt the third scenario, escalating violence in Ukraine, was unlikely in the form of direct combat between Ukrainian and Russian forces. However, they foresaw increased factional violence in Ukraine as increasingly likely, and they believed that internal violence could spin out of control of the party that initiates it. They attributed the low risk of a clash between Russian and Ukrainian forces to Ukrainian awareness that Russian forces adjacent to Ukraine can overwhelm the small and poorly equipped Ukrainian forces and concluded that Ukraine would attempt to avoid provoking Russia into striking a fatal blow to Ukrainian independence. Furthermore, they saw many disincentives for Russia taking control of all of Ukraine, the most important being that it would become responsible for Ukraine's economic and financial woes. In both of these scenarios they believed protecting ethnic Russian populations would be both a Russian interest and a tool for manipulating the situation.

One group developed an alternative scenario in which Russia creates 'indefinite instability' in the states on its periphery through various means when opportunities to do so present themselves. For example, it may foment unrest among pro-Russia factions, primarily but not exclusively ethnic Russian minorities, as a way to gain influence and leverage throughout the near abroad<sup>4</sup> much like the current situation in Ukraine, but without an invasion of sovereign territory. In scenarios with a more aggressive Russia, the participants included dominating or controlling the near abroad as a Russian policy objective. Neither group thought that Russian objectives included integration of the entire near abroad into the Russian Federation.

Because of his control over Russia, Putin has a much greater impact on the country's behavior than governments that are more accountable to the public. The participants also considered Putin's perspective and personality as major factors in the Ukraine crisis. They believe he is motivated by fear (of NATO/Western penetration of the near abroad, seeing the Black Sea as becoming a "NATO lake"), honor (restoration of Russian pride and influence) and interests (as identified above). He views relations with the West as a zero-sum game,<sup>5</sup> and values personal relationships with other world leaders built on trust and mutual respect.

Considering these factors, the participants concluded that Putin is likely to stop only when he has achieved his strategic objectives or when the costs become too high. Regarding Ukraine in particular, some participants contended that the economic costs of taking all of Ukraine made doing so unattractive; however, seizing all or part of Eastern Ukraine, which is predominantly Russian, heavily industrialized and produces 70% of Ukrainian GDP, would be advantageous to Russia. Putin will want to avoid doing anything to trigger the remilitarization of NATO over further encroachments into Ukraine.<sup>6</sup>

### **U.S. Ends, Ways and Means**

The Army's role in ending the Ukraine crisis on terms acceptable to the United States will be to provide some of the means (Army capabilities) to implement the ways (postures, activities and interactions) Commander United States European Command adopts to achieve

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<sup>4</sup> Near abroad refers to the newly independent republics which emerged after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It includes Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Central Asian states.

<sup>5</sup> Being a situation (as a game or relationship) in which a gain for one side entails a corresponding loss for the other side

<sup>6</sup> The remilitarization of NATO would entail increased forward deployed U.S. forces, a halt or reversal of NATO member defense budget and force structure reductions, and returning the focus of the alliance from political and economic cooperation to security issues.

the established political ends (strategic objectives) the U.S. political leadership establishes. It is assumed that this would take place in conjunction with forces provided by the other Services and the employment of diplomatic, informational and economic instruments of national power, working in concert with NATO allies and other partners with a stake in favorable resolution of the Ukraine crisis.

### Ends

Both groups agreed that the U.S. national security interests at stake are regional stability and maintenance of a favorable world order. The participants identified the conditions necessary to protect these interests as: all current NATO members must remain in the alliance; the threat of Russian military action against NATO members in the near abroad—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—must be reduced; and Ukraine (without Crimea) should remain independent and unified. Currently, however, NATO allies in Eastern Europe contiguous to the Russian Federation or Ukraine—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania—fear that Russia will shift its aggressive focus from Ukraine to them and must be reassured that the United States and other NATO members will honor their NATO commitments. Based on these considerations, they identified U.S. policy objectives as (1) reassure NATO allies (2) bolster NATO and (3) deter Russia.<sup>7</sup>

Not surprisingly, both groups acknowledged a significant asymmetry in the intensity of Russian and U.S. national interests. Simply put Russia cares much more than the United States about the political alignment and economic integration of states in the near abroad. This asymmetry gives Russia considerably more leverage than the United States has.

### Ways

The United States should seek to deescalate the situation in Ukraine while maintaining NATO as a viable alliance. To do so it and its alliance partners must deter Russia from attacking Ukraine with military forces and from destabilizing Ukraine through other means or manipulation of ethnic Russians in Ukraine, and simultaneously reassure NATO members in Eastern Europe, that it will honor its NATO commitments. Although acting bilaterally with individual NATO members in Eastern Europe is possible and can probably be executed more quickly, acting together under the NATO umbrella would send a much stronger signal to both Russia and the threatened NATO partners. As is already happening, the United States will use a combination of military flexible deterrent options (FDO), targeted economic sanctions and other diplomatic and informational means to try to resolve the crisis on favorable terms. A clear and consistent message of U.S. commitment to NATO and the desire to reduce the tension must be sent to all parties.

### Means<sup>8</sup>

Any deployment and employment of Army forces and other capabilities should occur in conjunction with other FDOs. Host nation agreement will be required for any deployment.

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<sup>7</sup> The group of very knowledgeable regional experts who participated believes this description accurately portrays current U.S. policy. Some participants were extremely frustrated at the lack of clear declarative public statements of this U.S. policy, asserting that the lack of clarity was contributing to Russian aggressiveness and NATO partner anxiety.

<sup>8</sup> Although many means were discussed, non-military means are listed but not discussed in this report.

Therefore, being aware of what forces or other capabilities each potential host is likely to request makes it possible to match the U.S. need for deployment sites with host nation requests for specific capabilities. This will be critical for quickly reaching agreements with host nations if the United States must act bilaterally with individual countries. However, because actions taken by NATO as a whole will be more effective than U.S. actions taken alone, we should seek a NATO umbrella for all force deployments and use a NATO clearing house approach to coordinate security assistance for Ukraine. However, the United States should recognize that building the requisite consensus will take time that may not be available. Bilateral action outside the NATO umbrella may be required.

Participants were quick to point out that the United States could not or should not fill all of these requests bilaterally and should engage the EU and NATO on all requests. The participants identified expected requests for U.S. military support from our allies and friends in the region. Each of our NATO allies and regional partners will tend to request the same capabilities in all scenarios but will want greater quantities of those capabilities in response to circumstances they see as more threatening (See Annex A for a country-by-country list).

While the majority of participants did not advocate any deployment of lethal assets into Ukraine, a few suggested that Ukraine might request air and missile defense assets, anti-tank capabilities, a package of ground forces, fixed/rotary wing packages, cyber support and assistance, CA/PSYOP forces and capabilities<sup>9</sup>. Participants with extensive knowledge of Ukrainian readiness indicated that they have very little capacity to employ these capabilities and regarded provision of these capabilities as having questionable utility. Participants also cautioned that Russia is likely to view introduction of lethal capabilities as an unacceptable provocation. Most participants in one group viewed professional military education and ministerial-level institution building as high payoff ways to support Ukraine; however, they acknowledged that the return from these programs occurs over the long-term and they have very little short-term value as deterrents. The other group saw military training and institution building in Ukraine as a 'black hole' in part because they were skeptical of Ukraine's capacity to absorb the assistance they are seeking.

In addition to potential requests from Ukraine, the United States should expect requests for U.S. military support from NATO allies and other friends in the region that feel threatened by Russia's aggressive behavior toward Ukraine. Because they are seeking reassurance of the U.S. commitment to defend NATO Europe, we should expect their desire for visible signs of that commitment beyond the end of the immediate crisis over Ukraine and NATO-Russia tensions.

Military exercises will serve to assure allies, bolster NATO and deter Russia from future aggression. Exercises that are clearly geared to practice responses to a threat that would be actionable under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty will be more effective than an exercise that is only loosely tied to treaty obligations. The U.S. role could range from limited participation in or providing support for exercises planned by others to taking the lead to plan, organize and conduct exercises in which a major portion of the forces are U.S. The strength of the deterrent/reassuring message sent will depend on the exercise location, U.S. participation level and perceived commitment. Providing observer/controller teams to support a partner nation

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<sup>9</sup> The participants knew President Obama had declared 'no boots on the ground' and that other senior officials had stated, 'no lethal aid;' so the participants input may have been restrained by their awareness that these options were unacceptable to the Administration. Given that it is an unacceptable option the analysts saw no value in attempting to define or size this force package.

unilateral exercise, as an example, would be a minimal contribution with low potential payoff as a deterrent.

If NATO partners continue to need reassurance beyond the end of the immediate crisis, which is likely, and if they are willing to continue to host multilateral NATO exercises on their territory, the Army should consider increasing funding for USEUCOM/USAREUR Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) to conduct more combined exercises and other security cooperation activities. The participants believed the benefit of increased RAF presence is limited by the amount of prepositioned equipment currently available in Europe because, given fiscal constraints in place when the wargame occurred, they believe shipping equipment sets to and from Europe to support an enhanced exercise program was unaffordable. A concomitant increase in prepositioned battalion-sized equipment sets to support increased RAF deployments could be a critical enabler. Any such increases would have to fall under CFE limitations. In addition, it is significantly less likely that NATO forces would be made available to support the United States for out of area missions until the Russian threat has dissipated.

To counter the perception in Europe that the U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region has resulted in a reduction in the U.S. commitment to European security, the United States should reexamine the adequacy of current and projected U.S. forces assigned or apportioned or aligned to Europe. Doing so would support all three policy objectives (reassure NATO allies, bolster NATO and deter Russia). Any incremental increases in force capacity will provide more options. Actions required to implement this measure might include reevaluation of cuts made in response to sequestration, especially the drawdown of forward stationed forces in Europe, evaluating and comparing the costs, benefits and risks associated with an enhanced permanent (forward stationed) or persistent rotational presence in Europe, (re)establishment of PREPO sets, at least sufficient to support any rotational presence, and alignment of a U.S. Corps headquarters to NATO for planning. Although both groups identified forward stationing as an option neither of them advocated that over a rotational presence. That preference appeared to be driven by consideration of how the Russians would view those choices, rather than a financial cost, benefit analysis.

For the Baltic States, U.S./NATO forces on the ground in those countries would deter Russia by providing a tripwire for an 'automatic' U.S. response. Baltic State governments would see that action as a very strong signal of U.S. and NATO partner commitment to their security. However, it is possible that Russia, especially Putin during an ongoing tense period in Russia-NATO relations, would perceive such a move as a further violation of the 2002 'agreement'. Thus, a measure intended to deter and reduce tension could instead extend in both time and space and intensify the ongoing crisis over Ukraine.

U.S. combined CONPLAN development with NATO members could provide a low-cost, low-risk means for reassuring NATO partners that feel threatened by Russia without provoking Russia. Especially with newer NATO allies in Eastern Europe, combined planning would show continued commitment. Whether it would also serve to deter Russia would depend on all involved parties agreeing to acknowledge development of such plans publicly. This effort would primarily take place at the USEUCOM level, with USAREUR, FORSCOM and the ARSTAF developing appropriate supporting plans. Developing these plans as NATO plans would send stronger deterrence and reassurance signals than bilateral combined planning.

Other Security Cooperation measures to reassure Eastern European NATO members and bolster NATO included train and equip missions to foster NATO interoperability for Eastern European NATO members, specifically the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade. Enhancing

these countries' capability and capacity to secure their borders would raise the cost to Russia of future aggression.

Allies in Eastern Europe should be expected to request new or additional Security Assistance programs. Some will ask for Foreign Military Financing and International Military Education and Training (IMET) increases to help fund their defense programs. They are likely to request new Foreign Military Sales cases for both equipment purchases and training that cannot be procured within their existing defense budgets and FMF/IMET funding levels. They will seek both CONUS Professional Military Education (PME) and in-country training through Mobile Training Teams (MTT) and other deployed training teams.<sup>10</sup> If their list of desired equipment and training is extensive, deploying Military Assessment Teams to perform needs assessments would send a reassuring message in the short term to show U.S. commitment to NATO and foster long-term multilateral cooperation by providing a thought-out mutually agreed, multi-year plan for future security assistance program activities. In conjunction with training and education, Capacity Building should focus on Institutional Reform and Defense Sector Reform.

Humanitarian Assistance was the only role in which the participants saw U.S. boots on the ground in Ukraine as acceptable and beneficial. Providing support for internally displaced Ukrainians or providing security so that other providers could safely support IDPs may be necessary if the violence in Ukraine leads to population displacement. Were that to happen and Ukrainians flee across borders, it may be appropriate to provide refugee support in the host Eastern European countries. Other participants thought that U.S. forces might participate in an international peacekeeping force in Ukraine, but only if Ukraine were partitioned into eastern and western segments and if the U.S. presence were limited to the western segment with a similarly sized Russian force participating in the eastern segment. The analogy to Germany during the Cold War was explicitly made.

Some participants suggested a permanent naval presence in the Black Sea as a way of deterring Russia but others thought such a presence would reinforce the perception that the Black Sea has become a NATO lake and would increase Russian insecurity, thereby extending and intensifying the tensions between Russia and the United States/NATO.

### Consideration of means

The participants considered Russian and NATO ally responses to each of these FDOs. They believed that the Russians would feel more threatened by a permanent U.S. presence (forward stationing) than by a rotational presence in Eastern Europe. Provision of major weapons to Eastern European NATO allies would be even more threatening to the Russians than forward stationed U.S. forces because, from their perspective, it would permanently alter the balance of forces unfavorably.

In contrast, NATO partners would be least reassured by the provision of major weapons, reassured slightly more by a U.S. rotational presence and most reassured by a permanent U.S. presence (forward stationing) on their territories. The United States must find the 'sweet spot' of doing enough to reassure its allies and deter further Russian aggression, but not do so much that the Russians are provoked into taking a more aggressive posture. , establishing a rotational presence of U.S. forces in Eastern Europe, ideally as part of a larger NATO rotational presence, appears to be the optimal choice.

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<sup>10</sup> An MTT for Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) MTT was specifically mentioned as a highly desired commodity. The Army does not do this type of training but the USAF, USMC and USN do.

Many participants believed that both the Russians and our European NATO partners perceive the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region as either an abandonment of Europe or a weakening of the U.S. commitment to Europe's defense. Either of these perceptions could have emboldened Putin and increased the anxiety of our Eastern European NATO partners.

Many of the anticipated requests, such as ministerial level institution building and Professional Military Education have little short-term payoff other than signaling U.S. commitment, but do offer long-term payoff in the form of greater partner capacity for self-defense.

In conjunction with these military measures, options using other elements of national power were suggested to support U.S. policy objectives. These non-military actions would be part of the overall U.S. whole-of-government approach in which the military means are applied. The actions suggested included: Improve strategic communication, define and communicate a clear foreign policy; improve intelligence sharing; support legitimate elections in Ukraine; enhance Partnership for Peace programs; coordinate multilateral support, for instance with the Nordic/Baltic Block; seek opportunities to display the benefits of NATO membership; and support establishment of a regional Security Cooperation council with Russia as a member.

## Conclusions

U.S. Army War College analysts reached the following conclusions:

- The crisis in Ukraine that started out in November 2013 as protests over the rampant corruption and mismanagement of Yanukovich's presidency has evolved into a confrontation between Russia and the United States and its NATO partners over the political order in Europe.
  - Understanding the Russian perspective will be critical to crisis resolution.
    - Russian objectives regarding Ukraine almost certainly include:
      - Signaling to the West that NATO and EU expansion eastward is over and that Russia will not tolerate any further accessions to either NATO or the EU of any additional former Soviet Union states;
      - Maintaining its naval facilities on the Black Sea, and
      - Having a government in Kiev that is politically oriented toward Moscow, not NATO, and that remains economically tied to Russia, not the European Union.
    - Russian objectives regarding Ukraine *may* include dominating or controlling the near abroad; if so, its aggression toward Ukraine is likely to continue and may expand toward other neighbors.
    - Because of his control over Russia, Putin has a much greater impact on the country's behavior than governments that are more accountable to the public.
    - Putin's perspective and personality are major factors in the Ukraine crisis. He appears to be motivated by fear (of NATO/Western penetration of the near abroad, seeing the Black Sea as becoming a "NATO lake"), honor (restoration of Russian pride and influence) and interests (as identified above). He views relations with the West as a zero-sum game, and values personal relationships with other world leaders built on trust and mutual respect. Considering these factors, Putin is likely to stop only when he has achieved his strategic objectives or when the costs become too high.
    - Rotational forces will be seen by Russia as less provocative than forward stationed forces;
  - Future U.S. actions should focus on reassurance of NATO allies more than deterrence of Russia.
    - Each of our NATO allies and regional partners will tend to request the same capabilities in all scenarios but will want greater quantities of those capabilities in response to circumstances they see as more threatening (See Annex A for a country-by-country list).
    - Reassuring our allies without provoking Russia to be more aggressive will require a careful balance.
    - Actions taken by NATO as a whole are likely to be more effective than U.S. actions taken alone, but require NATO consensus that may not be achievable quickly enough to be responsive.
    - Even when tensions between the West and Russia over Ukraine abate, there will be a continuing requirement to reassure NATO allies of the United States' commitment to European security.
  - Europe has been and will remain predominantly a land theater.
    - The Army as the Nation's primary provider of Landpower can expect to provide a very large portion of U.S. military support used to deter Russia and reassure NATO allies.
    - Given the nature of the theater, an armored BCT would be a more effective deterrent than other force alternatives.
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## Recommendations

U.S. Army War College assessment resulted in the following recommendations.

- Evaluate potential U.S. actions through Russian eyes, do not mirror image U.S. thought processes.
- Find the right mix of FDOs that is sufficient to reassure our NATO partners and deter Russia without provoking Russia to continue its aggressive behavior.
- Use NATO as a hub for requests for support and multilateral coordination.
- In addition to responding to allies' requests, the U.S. Army should consider:
  - Demonstrating restraint in providing weapons capabilities that the Ukrainians are not prepared to employ, or capabilities to allies and partners that Russia perceives as a provocation to act aggressively;
  - Increasing availability of PME seats for Eastern European NATO and PfP countries;
  - Increasing the use of USAREUR's (and FORSCOM's) Digital Liaison Detachments which are designed for multinational interoperability;
  - Aligning a U.S. Corps HQ to NATO for Article V contingency planning;
  - Allowing selected Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) rotations to count as CTC credit [such as a BCT-sized NATO Response Force (NRF)];
  - Increasing Mission Command capacity commensurate with any increase in force presence;
  - Assisting partner nations to develop niche specialties such as the water purification specialty of Lithuania;
  - Providing USAREUR HQs with increased capability and capacity for security cooperation. Such as a larger Security Cooperation Division with more FAOs; assignment of a CA Bn directly to USAREUR; PCS assignment of an officer-NCO heavy "security cooperation" unit to provide more responsive capability than from rotational RAF elements to support TDY teams for in-country training missions;
  - Prepositioning battalion-sized mission- and unit-tailored equipment sets in lower risk countries (Poland; Romania);

**Prevent:** Each of the measures identified in this report as contributing to achieving the objective of deterring Russia helps prevent the outbreak of conflict.

- Army strategic communication must support a clear and consistent message of U.S. commitment to NATO and the desire to reduce the tension must be sent to all parties.
- To the extent possible, FDOs should be executed within a NATO framework.
- If possible, match the U.S. need for deployment sites for theater setting capabilities with host nation desires for specific capabilities. The degree to which the United States is successful in achieving this alignment will significantly affect what it must do should the situation evolve to requiring shaping or winning.

**Shape:** Each of the measures identified in this report as contributing to achieving the objectives of reassuring NATO allies and bolstering NATO helps shape the USEUCOM theater and contributes toward long-term stability in Europe.

- To the extent possible, FDOs should be executed within a NATO framework.
  - Seek a NATO umbrella for all force deployments.
  - Use a NATO clearing house approach to coordinate security assistance for Ukraine.
- Expect Eastern European NATO allies' desire for visible signs of U.S. commitment to continue beyond the end the immediate crisis over Ukraine and NATO-Russia tensions.

- Reexamine the adequacy of current and projected U.S. forces assigned or apportioned or aligned to Europe. Consider:
  - Increasing funding for USEUCOM/USAREUR Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) to conduct more combined exercises and other security cooperation activities;
  - (Re)establishing PREPO sets, at least sufficient to support any rotational presence;
  - Aligning a U.S. Corps headquarters to NATO for planning and an increase of senior U.S. military personnel in NATO countries.
- Expect allies in Eastern Europe to request new or additional Security Assistance programs and higher FMF and IMET funding levels.
  - CONUS PME
  - Deployed training teams (Mobile Training Teams/Technical Assistance Field Teams)
  - Capacity Building should focus on Institutional Reform and Defense Sector Reform

**Win.** All of the measures identified in this report would incrementally contribute to setting the theater. Given current policy guidance of no boots on the ground in Ukraine, more aggressive steps to set the theater would fail the test of acceptability.

## Annex A: Individual Ally/Partner Most Likely Capability and Mission Requests

The military capabilities, and training and education listed as likely to be desired by a particular state could be provided entirely by the United States or partially by the United States with contributions from other NATO members possessing the requested capability. Listing what a country might request is not a recommendation to respond favorably to the request. The participants also provided considerations such as limited capacity of the requesting state to absorb the requested support that should be taken into account in deciding whether to respond favorably to a request, should it be made.

### UKRAINE:

- Desired military capabilities:
  - Air and missile defense support
  - Anti-armor capabilities
  - Combat forces to provide a deterrent to future Russian aggression.
  - If partitioned:- U.S. forces' participation in multilateral peacekeeping mission
- Training and Education
  - Military training support to develop capable forces to provide border security. (perhaps modeled after Georgia)
  - Support for conducting military exercises
  - U.S. coordination of multilateral support to Ukraine
  - U.S. State Partnership program unit support
  - Support for the Poland-Lithuania-Ukraine Brigade
  - Institutional building and reform, especially for Professional Military Education institutions
- Factors for consideration
  - Ukraine does not have the institutional capacities to accept direct military support on a significant scale
  - The United States must consider all strategic implications, especially Russian reactions, to any direct support to Ukraine
  - Providing funding without control and direct supervision risks improper use of funds because of rampant corruption and lack of Ukrainian internal controls
  - President Obama has declared “no boots on the ground’ in Ukraine.

### POLAND:

- Capabilities
  - Air and Missile Defense Technology & Capability
  - Fixed and rotary wing lift platforms
  - Offensive and defensive cyber capabilities
  - Permanent stationing of U.S. forces – at least a Brigade Combat Team in size
- Training and Education
  - Establishment of security cooperation forums among countries in the region
  - Continue annual exercises already in place
  - Support to help facilitate the Polish military becoming a regional source of military training and expertise. These potential Polish training support teams for Ukraine military forces would relieve the United States of this requirement.

### SCANDINAVIA (Finland, Sweden, Norway)

- Factors for consideration: Participants suggested that given the current threat, Finland will desire NATO membership

## Annex A: Individual Ally/Partner Most Likely Capability and Mission Requests

### BALTIC STATES:

- Capabilities
  - Want permanent stationing of U.S. troops on the ground to provide a deterrent to Russian aggression as well as trip line that gets an automatic U.S. response
  - Capabilities, as well as training, to give the Baltic States a greater anti-access capability against Russia's ability to project naval forces into the Baltic Sea.
  - Sustain/reinforce air policing
- Training and Education
  - Use Lithuania as a training hub and integrate with TF East
- Factor for consideration
  - The Baltic States could provide NATO with niche specialties (water purification for Lithuania as an example or cyber capabilities in general)
  - The Baltic States perceive that they have inadequate defenses against Russia's ability to project naval power into the Baltic Sea

### NATO in general:

- Capabilities
  - Provide more U.S. forward deployed forces
  - The United States should fund regionally aligned forces (RAF) for Europe/NATO and allow RAF rotations to count as Combat Training Center (CTC) credit.
  - Stationing of prepositioned activity sets in low risk countries (Poland)
  - Alignment of a U.S. corps headquarters to NATO for planning
  - Maintain a permanent Black Sea naval presence and increase multilateral exercises
- Training and Education
  - Article V training deployments
    - CONPLAN updates
    - Actual force deployments from CONUS (REFORGER)
    - Make exercise objectives based on Art 5 response
  - Provide observer-controller teams for NATO exercises to improve interoperability
  - Increased availability of Professional Military Education (PME) seats for NATO countries
- Factors for consideration
  - The United States should use NATO as hub for requests for support and multi-lateral coordination
  - Maintaining a permanent Black Sea naval presence would probably confirm Putin's fear of the Black Sea becoming a NATO lake and provoke more hostile behavior

### MOLDOVA:

- Continue foreign military financing (FMF)

### ROMANIA:

- Training and Education
  - Increased use of JTF East Facilities
    - Toe to heel rotation of a Brigade which could also support the troop rotation in the Baltics and other areas.

## Annex A: Individual Ally/Partner Most Likely Capability and Mission Requests

- Used as training hub with combat training center (CTC) recognition
- Factor for consideration: Romania is likely expect the United States to increase the amount of FMF it receives

### RUSSIA:

- Keep open lines of communication with Russia by conducting military to military engagements. However, this is likely to encounter significant domestic political opposition

### Other areas for support spanning multiple stakeholders:

- Capabilities
  - Greater Intelligence Sharing within NATO and with non-NATO friends
  - Internally Displaced Person (IDP)/refugee support
  - Sustain troop commitments to Poland and Baltic States
  - Provide regional security assistance teams (both U.S. and NATO)
  - Provide Civil Affairs/PSYOP support
  - Provide defense planning assistance/advice especially at the ministerial level
  - Establish a persistent rotational presence of U.S. forces on the territories of the NATO members that feel most threatened
- Training and Education
  - Foster multilateral mil to mil efforts (Ukraine/Poland/Lithuania brigade)
  - Extensive interoperability training with allies should be the focus of our military efforts
  - International Military Education and Training (IMET) was a tool several participants (including International Fellows) thought was effective in the long term
  - Increase our training and exercise footprint. Increase levels of participation and commitment, especially by the US. Change locations of exercises to include all NATO partners.
  - Mobile Training Teams (MTT)
  - Factors for consideration: Some participants supported using NATO membership as leverage; with the current threat, there are now new countries who want to join; however, this would further anger Putin and probably be seen as a direct challenge to Russia's interest. It is more likely to escalatory than de-escalatory.