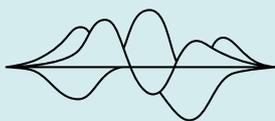


# HELSINKI SECURITY FORUM

30.9.–2.10.2022

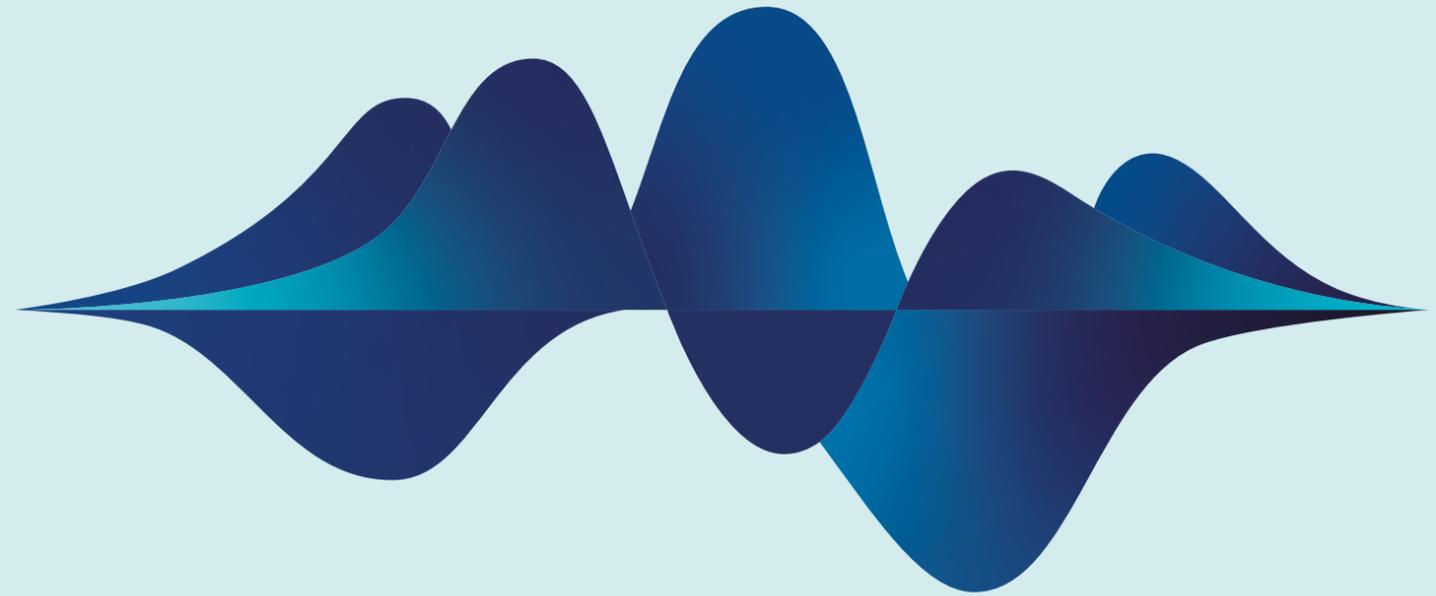
NORTHERN EUROPEAN  
SECURITY REDONE

An Introduction



HELSINKI  
SECURITY  
FORUM

**FIIA**  
FINNISH  
INSTITUTE  
OF INTERNATIONAL  
AFFAIRS



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# OUR AIM IS TO PRODUCE IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGING SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND TO OUTLINE HOW WE CAN RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES AHEAD OF US TOGETHER.

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## Dear Participants

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the very first Helsinki Security Forum (HSF), organised by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA) in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Ministry of Defence, and with support from the City of Helsinki, the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland, Arctia, ICEYE, and Nokia.

During its 61-year history, FIIA has brought together foreign policy experts to discuss a wide range of topics. However, there has long existed a sentiment that Northern Europe would deserve its very own forum in which to discuss shared regional security challenges. When we started planning HSF more than one year ago, little did any of us know just how relevant and timely such a perspective would become.

Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, leading to thousands of lives lost and shattering the decades-built European security architecture. In Finland and Sweden, Russia's aggression reignited the debate about joining NATO to bolster the two countries' security. The pending accession will have profound changes for Northern European security. Hence, the title of Helsinki Security Forum 2022 has been derived from this – we will examine "Northern European Security Redone".

**MIKA AALTOLA**  
DIRECTOR  
FINNISH INSTITUTE OF  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

For the first HSF, Helsinki will be hosting an array of decision-makers and experts, representatives of governments, military, academia, and media to discuss the profound changes that the return of war to Europe has brought about – and will bring about – vis-à-vis the geopolitical landscape of Northern Europe. We welcome open discussion, the sharing of expertise and views, and – especially – frank and rigorous debate on the topic. Our aim is to produce in-depth analysis of the changing security environment and to outline how we can respond to the challenges ahead of us together.

On behalf of the whole HSF team, I would like to welcome you all to Helsinki Security Forum and hope that you find the event insightful, beneficial, and inspiring. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our partners and those involved in making the HSF happen.

# WHAT IS FIIA?

The Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA) is an independent research institute operating in connection with the Finnish Parliament. The Institute produces high-quality research for use by the academic community and decision-makers, as well as the general public.

**THE INSTITUTE'S MISSION IS TO PRODUCE RELEVANT, EVIDENCE-BASED INFORMATION OF A HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARD ON FOREIGN POLICY, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY, AND THE EU.**

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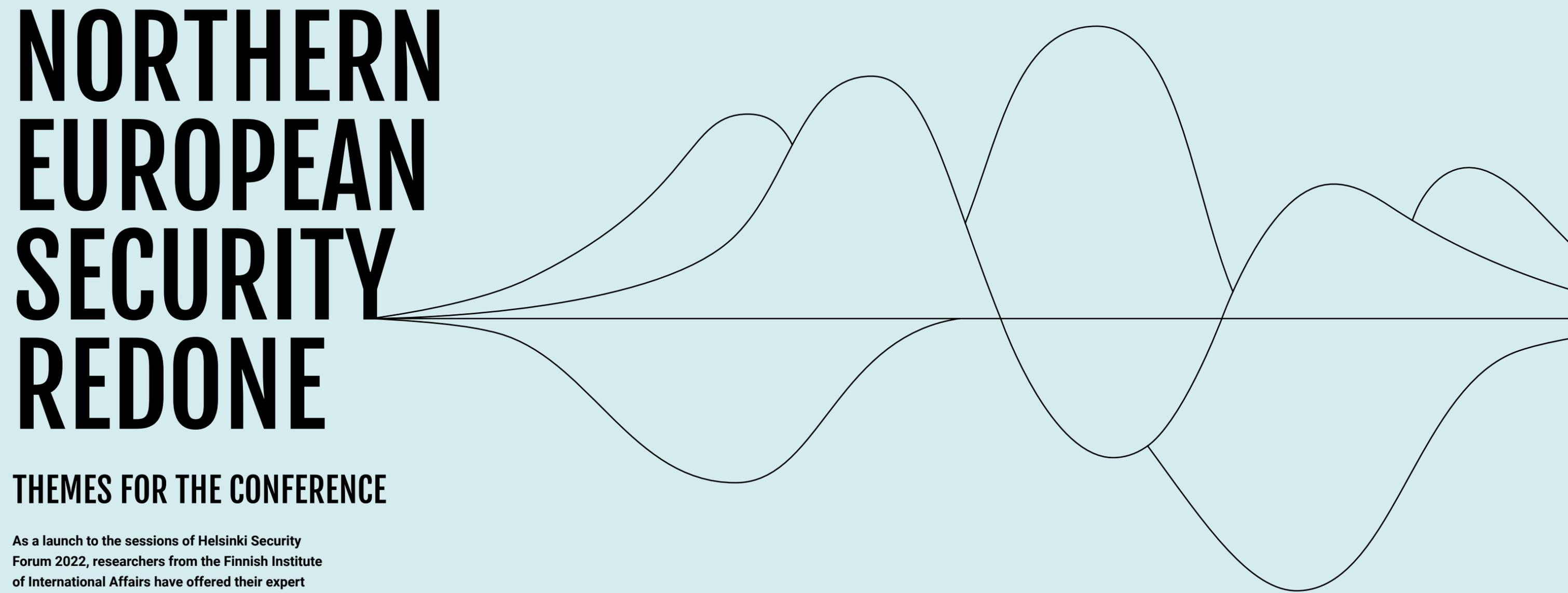
## **FIIA'S PRINCIPAL TASKS ARE TO**

- » **conduct scientific research**
- » **support political decision-making**
- » **participate in public debate**

The Institute was established by the Parliament of Finland in its centennial plenum in June 2006 and the Parliament also provides the Institute's basic funding. The Institute is autonomous in its research activities and is governed by a nine-member board, assisted by an advisory council and a scientific advisory council. Mika Aaltola has been the Director of the Institute since 2019.

From 1961 to 2006, FIIA functioned as an independent research institute run by a private foundation.

# NORTHERN EUROPEAN SECURITY REDONE



## THEMES FOR THE CONFERENCE

**As a launch to the sessions of Helsinki Security Forum 2022, researchers from the Finnish Institute of International Affairs have offered their expert perspectives on the multifaceted theme of "Northern European Security Redone".**

Please find the detailed programme and other practical information in the conference folder.

# MAJOR WAR RETURNS TO EUROPE

For many politicians and ordinary citizens in Europe, major war returned to the continent at the end of February 2022 as Russia expanded its attack against Ukraine.

This limited view and understanding of history ignores the many wars that European states have been involved in since the end of the Cold War. During past decades, many Europeans also seem to have mistaken the evolving character of war for the nature of war itself having changed. Whether seen on the nightly news or in social media feeds, the daily reminders of the realities of industrial warfare have given rise to both personal and national reappraisals. It remains to be seen whether inflation or the looming energy crisis will make major war disappear from the collective consciousness of Europe before the war itself ends.

In 2014, Russia's attack against Ukraine brought war with tanks and artillery back to Europe for the first time since the 1990s. The February 2022 expansion by Russia added indiscriminate air strikes and the mass slaughter of civilians and brought these realities to everyone's home screen. Russia's attempted full-scale invasion and elimination of Ukraine as a sovereign state and cultural entity reminded most citizens and politicians of what large-scale mechanised and industrial war looks like. Many people elsewhere in the world have had more recent experiences of it.

Russia's frequent threats to use nuclear weapons, and heavy-handed nuclear signalling to deter others from coming to the aid of Ukraine, also reminded many of the role that nuclear weapons and credible deterrence play in international politics.

Russia's attack also heightened people's awareness that having a nation worth defending is a prerequisite for the will to fight. While the will to defend one's homeland is critical, it is also meaningless if there are few tools to fight with. To their credit, most European countries have risen to the call of history and provided Ukraine with much-needed weapons. However, as has been seen in NATO circles for too many years, it is the United States that has been willing and able to do most of the heavy lifting. The bulk of the weapons and military capabilities delivered to Ukraine have been donated by Washington.

Those Europeans who only realised in 2022 that war had returned to Europe – including far too many political decision-makers – had generally bought into the idea that war would never again ravage Europe. The sentiment was that the European Union had tamed the historic rivalries that for millennia had consigned Europe to be a battleground, and that states which were not EU members would be economically irrational to attempt to solve political problems through warfare. Obviously, those harbouring this view had chosen to

## THOSE EUROPEANS WHO ONLY REALISED IN 2022 THAT WAR HAD RETURNED TO EUROPE – INCLUDING FAR TOO MANY POLITICAL DECISION-MAKERS – HAD GENERALLY BOUGHT INTO THE IDEA THAT WAR WOULD NEVER AGAIN RAVAGE EUROPE.

ignore a number of lessons from history, as well as engaged in "mirror-imaging" – an irrational hope against all evidence that the actions of others were predicated on the same beliefs about economic interdependence and risk appetite as one's own actions.

Seeing what major war entails – whether in terms of humanitarian suffering, war crimes, or the volume of weapons needed – served to galvanise action across a broad range of actors. Finland and Sweden sought NATO membership, unprecedented sanctions were levied against Russia, arms were provided for Ukraine, and many European countries finally recognised the need to ensure that their national defence forces could actually defend themselves or their allies.

Alas, early signs suggest that the generally more than welcome changes to various national defence policies – such as the German "Zeitenwende" – may turn out to be a mere chimera in the vast desert of political declarations about capability development. For the declarations and strategies to result in actual and additive military capabilities, most European states will have to rearrange how they implement national defence policy and become more assertive in their relationship with the defence industry. The ability to carry out



genuine long-term planning and development, as well as pragmatic multinational cooperation, are necessary to enable the creation of military forces that are suited to large-scale industrial war in the European operational area. The purpose of such forces is, of course, primarily to serve as a conventional deterrent against potential adversaries. Serious discussions about what Europe's nuclear deterrence should look like in the future are also needed.

The European Union, NATO, and the United States all have a role to play in this. The United States must make it clear that it expects other NATO members to jointly develop and, in a clear timeframe, field critical enablers for use in any European defence scenario. European political leaders have the responsibility to remind their constituents that it is possible to do this without neglecting other issues, such as climate change. NATO and smaller groupings of its members is the only reasonable framework within which such Europe-wide critical enablers can be fielded. At the same time, the European Union has a key role to play due to the nature of the European defence industry.

All of these efforts must, however, be integrated into a broader view of security. Societal well-being and resilience are the core of future security, and here, the European Union has an even more critical role. If citizens in Europe do not see that the state – or the EU – provides the building blocks of a society worth defending, then no amount of military equipment will be enough; there will be no society or country perceived to be worth defending.

Perhaps it is even necessary to consider a new form of national service to buttress societal resilience against natural and human-made disasters – be it a pandemic, the all too visible effects of rapid climate change, or a major war – and to marry the rights of EU citizens with responsibilities and the opportunity to contribute to a larger whole. A society worth defending and a consciously resilient design for societies will go a long way towards addressing the challenges of a major war, as well as its aftermath, both today and in the future.

The session will discuss the evolution of 21st century warfare in the light of Russia's attack on Ukraine. In addition to European responses to improve defence and deterrence, the implications of the current war on other regions' security, notably in the Indo-Pacific, will also be scrutinised. Further themes include the growing relevance of public-private partnerships, the potency of a robust and resilient society, as well as the key importance of transatlantic unity.

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## A SOCIETY WORTH DEFENDING AND A CONSCIOUSLY RESILIENT DESIGN FOR SOCIETIES WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF A MAJOR WAR, AS WELL AS ITS AFTERMATH, BOTH TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE.

### POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- » What are the key characteristics of 21st century warfare?
- » What lessons should be drawn from Russia's war against Ukraine in particular?
- » Are these lessons relevant also to the Indo-Pacific region?
- » How can we ensure that Europe develops a robust and resilient defence and deterrence?
- » How should states and the private sector cooperate to increase resilience and mitigate the consequences of major crises – including war – in Europe?
- » What roles and responsibilities should the European Union, NATO, the United States, and the United Kingdom adopt in order to maintain transatlantic unity and facilitate cooperation beyond the transatlantic space?

# FINLAND AND SWEDEN IN NATO – IMPLICATIONS FOR A RENEWED SECURITY ORDER

2022 has marked a watershed for Finland's and Sweden's security policy doctrines.

In May 2022, less than three months after Russia's attack on Ukraine, Helsinki and Stockholm officially announced that they would apply for NATO membership. Although the decisions in both countries were based on careful national deliberation processes, the level of coordination between the two capitals was striking, consolidating the already close bond between the two Nordic states.

Finland's decision was the result of two factors. First, Finnish decision-makers concluded that the deterrence effect produced by Finland's national defence efforts and international military cooperation was insufficient in relation to the increased intensity of the Russia threat. Second, Finnish public opinion dramatically shifted to support for NATO membership, a vital factor pushing the nation towards the NATO path. In Sweden, both of these factors were also present to some extent. That said, in addition to increased threat levels and pro-NATO public views, Sweden's decision was also influenced by Finland's determination to seek stronger backing for its security via NATO membership.

Finland's and Sweden's readiness to join NATO has been greeted with excitement across the transatlantic defence alliance. The process to approve Finnish and Swedish membership has progressed steadily. By mid-September, 80% of NATO allies had ratified the duo's accession protocols – only two months after they were invited to join the organisation. Moreover, both countries have received varying security assurances from NATO powers, dissuading Russia from undermining their efforts to join an alliance which Moscow considers its most formidable adversary.

Importantly, Russia's aggression has buttressed NATO's unity. The accession of two strong democracies with long traditions of non-alignment will further enhance the alliance, both politically and strategically. The strategic benefits for the alliance are particularly obvious, as Finland's and Sweden's accession will allow NATO to treat Northern Europe – the Baltic Sea region and the European Arctic – as a strategic whole. The entry of two militarily capable nations will beef up the Western deterrence posture in the region, making military conflict less likely. In the longer term, NATO may have to overhaul its command structures to better reflect the profoundly evolving Northern European security landscape.

Although the level of interoperability between NATO allies, Finland, and Sweden is already high, their comprehensive integration into the alliance will take time. Both nations must align their respective defence and operational planning procedures with NATO's corresponding efforts, further internationalising Helsinki's and Stockholm's defence and security outlooks.

Moreover, both countries must form NATO policies in relatively short order. Due to the decades-long partnership with the alliance, they do not have to start from scratch, although the difference between being a partner and an ally is notable.

As NATO allies, Finland and Sweden will resemble each other – nevertheless, they will not be identical twins. Indeed, their Defence Forces have somewhat different strengths and emphases. Sweden has notable maritime and aerial capabilities, whereas sizable land forces supported by the upcoming fleet of 5th generation fighter aircraft are clearly the core strengths of Finland. Furthermore, Finnish and Swedish geostrategic locations are divergent. Finland will be a frontline state sharing a long border with Russia, whereas Sweden, with its more secure position, will provide additional strategic depth for potential NATO operations in Northern Europe.

Lastly, there are notable dissimilarities in Finland's and Sweden's strategic cultures and foreign policy styles. Finnish strategic culture is underpinned by pragmatism and circumspection, whereas the Swedish tradition has been characterised by more vocal and open communication.

The session will focus on Finland's and Sweden's NATO accession and its implications for European, particularly Northern European, security. It will assess the ramifications of the development in terms of Baltic Sea and Arctic security. The discussion will also address the potential contours of Finland's and Sweden's evolving NATO policies.

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## POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- » **What are the implications of Finland's and Sweden's NATO membership for the Baltic Sea security landscape?**
- » **How will Finland's and Sweden's accession affect the security milieu in the European Arctic?**
- » **Should NATO overhaul its evolving force and command structures in light of Finland's and Sweden's entry into the alliance?**
- » **What kind of policies will Finland and Sweden pursue as NATO members?**

# ZEITENWENDE – A TURNING POINT FOR EUROPEAN DEFENCE?

Russia's brutal war against Ukraine poses a fundamental challenge to European security. The war is the culmination of both the Russian regime's long-standing grievances against the post-Cold War European security order and of the country's subsequent attempts to alter that order.

The broader Western community has been both quick and relatively determined in its response to Russia's unprovoked and unjustified attack. Through a series of coordinated sanctions, Russia has been cut off from vital parts of the global financial market and the world economy. At the same time, members of the EU and NATO, as well as the EU as an institution, have provided Ukraine with crucial economic, humanitarian, military, and political support.

The war has also led to major changes in European states' thinking about national and European security. Members of the EU and NATO are now gearing up for a European security order in which Russia represents a long-term threat and military confrontation a tangible scenario.

Perhaps most succinctly, this shift in attitude was vocalised by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who in a landmark speech on 27 February described the Russian attack as a "Zeitenwende" – a turning point in European history that requires Europeans, and Germany in particular, to react accordingly. For Germany, this has meant, amongst others, reversing its pre-war position of not delivering arms to Ukraine and setting up a €100 billion special fund to build up its own defence capacity.

While many questions still remain open regarding the implications and sustainability of the German commitments, they are in line with decisions made elsewhere in Europe. Already after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and the start of the war in Eastern Ukraine in 2014, European states started to gradually increase their defence spending. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is now substantially reinforcing this dynamic.

Over time, the Europeans' increasing investment in defence could help alleviate the long-standing burden-sharing issues within NATO, which continue to form a major sticking point in transatlantic relations. A stronger European defence would also provide Europeans with a hedge against the possibility of domestically or externally driven changes in the US foreign and security policy posture. However, to achieve these objectives, European states need to use their resources in a much more coordinated and effective way than they do at present.

This is a field where the EU could step in and make its own contribution to developing European defence in full respect of NATO's role as Europe's primary security provider. Since 2016, the EU has launched several initiatives that aim to enhance European defence cooperation – including the European Defence Fund, Permanent Structured Cooperation, and a recent push for joint defence procurement. However, these have so far produced very modest results only. At best, available EU instruments could complement existing NATO structures and help to ensure that Europeans make

the most of the current defence momentum, to the benefit of the EU, NATO, and European defence at large, including Ukraine. In this respect, much will depend on the decisions taken by Europe's major defence spenders, including Germany.

In response to the Russian aggression, the EU and NATO – both individually and, ideally, together – will also need to invest more in their ability to counter cyberattacks, information manipulation, and other non-military threats. These efforts should be closely linked to the EU's and NATO's broader attempts at strengthening the resilience of their members. A crucial part of this endeavour is the work currently being done by the EU to manage and reduce Europe's potentially harmful dependencies in terms of energy, technology, and raw materials.

Russia is not the sole security issue facing Europe. Russia's war – together with advancing climate change – is also deepening the existing challenges in Europe's neighbourhood, such as food insecurity and social inequality. Moreover, the confrontation with Russia is likely to spill over into, and could exacerbate, diverse regional conflicts. Such developments have already been seen in the cases of the Western Balkans, Libya, Syria, and the Sahel.

In view of these developments, the EU and NATO will need novel ways to engage with and support their neighbours, partners, and potential future members. From this perspective, both the EU's decision to grant EU candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova, as well as the Union's readiness to fund military assistance for Ukraine through its off-budget European Peace Facility, may prove consequential.

The session will focus on the future of European security in light of the Russian attack on Ukraine. It will explore the implications of Russia's war for the European security order, examine the EU and NATO as key parts of that order, and take a particularly close look at Germany, whose policies are of central importance for both the EU and NATO. The session will discuss developments that have taken place in Europe since the start of the war, but also analyse longer-term developments and lay out possible future scenarios, while providing concrete policy recommendations as well.

**TUOMAS ISO-MARKKU**  
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## POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- » **How is Russia's war reshaping the European security order and the defence policies of European states, above all Germany?**
- » **What implications does the Russian aggression have for the role of NATO and the EU in European security, as well as the future of EU-NATO cooperation?**
- » **What are the main challenges that the EU and NATO face in the likely case of a prolonged war in Ukraine and sustained confrontation with Russia, and how should they respond to these?**
- » **How will the war affect Europe's neighbourhood beyond Ukraine and what can the EU and NATO do to avert or minimise negative consequences?**

# (RE-)EMERGING SECURITY CHALLENGES IN THE HIGH NORTH

While Russia's brutal assault on Ukraine has drawn vast international attention, developments in other key geostrategic regions continue to evolve, largely unnoticed by public audiences. One of these regions is the Arctic, where both human-made and climate-related changes continue to transform this remote and sparsely populated area.

For Russia, the Arctic is a key foreign, security, and economic policy priority, as constituted in several policy strategies and communications delivered by President Putin. In essence, Russia's objective is to make sure that it has the means to exploit its Arctic hydrocarbon reserves, limit NATO's presence, control the use of the Northern Sea Route (NSR), and maintain its comparative military advantage in the region.

Militarily, however, Russia's position is weakened because of the war of attrition in Ukraine. A major part of its stockpiles of high-precision weapons and combat aircraft has been depleted and large numbers of both artillery and tank units, deployed to Ukraine from the Arctic military district, have been destroyed. According to different estimates, it will take years before Russia can replenish its troops.

Concurrently with the pending accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO, Russia is facing a more united West in the European North. Bringing these two Nordic nations into the alliance would severely undermine Russia's capability to militarily threaten its neighbouring countries in the Arctic. As a result of enhanced planning and training, the Nordics – and the alliance as a whole

– will be far better positioned to deter and respond to any Russian aggression in the North-Eastern flank.

This will not, however, limit Russia's objective to retain the Arctic Bastion strategy, which includes layers of military capabilities to safeguard the NSR and Russian Northern Fleet, as these capabilities would be the first among those deployed in any large-scale military conflict between Russia and NATO. Russia will most likely continue its push to restrict the Western presence in the Barents Sea region, and it has already warned both Finland and Sweden that it will take military-technical measures against any military developments following Finland's and Sweden's admission to NATO.

In addition to hard-security challenges, the aggressive stance that Moscow has adopted towards Western countries will affect Russia's dependencies on other actors. By using energy as a weapon, Russia has cornered not only Europe, but also itself. As Russia has restricted the selling of natural gas to Europe, it has effectively prompted a long overdue wake-up call in many European capitals related to their energy dependence on an actor which is increasingly hostile.

As a result – and increasingly so in the future – Russia will soon have only one direction left in which to sell its energy, namely the Asian markets, where China is the biggest buyer. In fact, China is now in a position where it has more leverage over Russia than ever before, leaving Russia increasingly reliant on China in both energy revenues as well as in technological transfers. Without these, Russia's ability to challenge the West would be

severely reduced, as would its capability to continue warfare in Ukraine.

As Chinese influence in Moscow grows, so may the readiness of Beijing to use this influence to distract and challenge the West, and especially the US, also in the Arctic. In the medium term, there is a possibility that Russia and China will increase their cooperation in the region in order to limit and challenge Western cooperation. In the long term, it is plausible to assume that China will aim to build its own presence in the region.

Although geopolitical developments play a significant role in the region, climate change will shape much of the future of the region. These changes will have a global impact. Without urgent action to slash greenhouse gas emissions, the world will continue to feel the effects of a warming Arctic. For areas around the world – even thousands of kilometres south of the Arctic – this will mean rising sea levels, changing temperature and precipitation patterns, and more severe weather events.

The session will focus on the transformation of the Arctic region. The discussion will centre on key drivers of change, such as how the region will be affected by Russia's military build-up and aggression, how any form of cooperation can be continued in this geopolitical reality, and how China's role is evolving in the region.

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## POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- » **How will Russia's strategic posture and activity evolve in the Arctic?**
- » **How does NATO position itself in the Arctic to deter and counter Russian aggression?**
- » **What does the role for Finland and Sweden look like in the Arctic?**
- » **How will China continue to influence the Arctic region?**
- » **How will climate cooperation continue in the Arctic region?**
- » **What does the future of the Arctic Council look like as the main platform for cooperation?**

# THE RUSSIAN CHALLENGE

Russia remains one of the great unresolved challenges of post-Cold War Europe. Mutual distrust between the West and Russia has grown at the same pace as Russia's accelerated destructive spiral of violence and suppression, both internally and externally.

Not only is Russia destroying its own future and violating the human rights of its own people – it is now also slaughtering its Ukrainian neighbours and disrupting the wider regional stability in Europe. Essentially, Russia seems to be driving itself at high speed towards a cul-de-sac – and trying to cause as much collateral damage as possible. Sadly, most Russians are sitting on the back seat, eyes wide shut and uncommitted to actively pushing for change.

The West has neither been able to positively engage with Russia in a sustained manner nor to effectively deter Russian aggressive policies in the shared European neighbourhood. The current state of affairs is all the more tragic in light of thirty years of sustained European efforts to engage in a mutually satisfactory and beneficial “strategic partnership” with Russia.

Directly after the end of the Cold War, the West aspired to support Russia's transition towards a democratic market economy. It was hoped that Russia would embrace European values, norms, and institutions. Russia became a member of the Council of Europe in 1996 and pledged to respect both human rights and the OSCE's enhanced principles of territorial integrity and the sovereign rights of each and every state, also within the post-Soviet space. The Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Arctic Council, the EU's Northern Dimension, and the NATO-Russia Council were all attempts to accommodate Russia's concerns and engage with Russia in a positive manner.

But what was regarded as a generous offer in Western eyes translated into humiliation for Russia. While the newly independent states in the post-Soviet space complained about Western pro-Russia bias, the Russian leadership took the special treatment as a given and as insufficient overall. As a regional “great power”, it expected more flexibility in the interpretation of norms and rules when it came to the country itself. Most problematically, the Russian elite never quite came to terms with the notion that former Soviet republics were now completely sovereign, independent countries.

By the mid-2000s, it was already evident that Russia was neither willing nor able to embrace European values. However, it was hoped that common – primarily economic – interests would serve as a viable basis for cooperation and indirectly increase stability and security in Europe. Trade, investments, large-scale infrastructure, and energy projects created complex interdependencies and “extended the shadow of the future” – or so the Western leaders hoped. Even after Russia's military intervention in Georgia in 2008 and the initial shock that followed, Russia was given the benefit of the doubt in the West. The interdependency paradigm prevailed. However, complex interdependencies failed to work their magic on Russia's behaviour.

Already around 2012, at the start of Putin's third presidential term, the economic logic clearly yielded to great-power chauvinism and Russia's geopolitical obsessions. The West was declared a geopolitical competitor and, often, an enemy of Russia. Russia proceeded to invade Ukraine and illegally annex Crimea in 2014.

Even after these tragic events, the situational awareness and perceptions of Russia varied greatly, both within Europe and in the wider West. The West was

not able to curb Russian aggression against Ukraine. France and Germany helped mediate a ceasefire and political agreement on further steps, but in hindsight the Minsk agreements essentially granted Russia seven more years to prepare for the next round of its aggression against Ukraine. Russia invaded Ukraine again in February 2022, and full-scale war in Ukraine continues.

Although one can describe how we got to this point, it is much harder to answer the question of why this happened, and whether any of this could have been avoided by making different policy choices. It is open to debate whether a different kind of Western policy would have resulted in better outcomes. A more direct confrontation may have deterred Russia from coercive action, but it could just as easily have encouraged Russia to press harder.

Extensive West-bashing seems somewhat misplaced. The responsibility for the war and atrocities committed lies with Russia alone. Regardless of Russian and Chinese propaganda, this war is not about NATO or the West – it is about Russian great-power chauvinism towards its smaller neighbour. These are the messages that the West should communicate more clearly and more effectively towards different audiences globally. Given the history of 20th century Europe, respect for state sovereignty and the territorial integrity of states is a sine qua non that cannot be compromised.

As things stand today, the West and Europe cannot hold out much hope of the Russian leadership changing its policies. Rather, the West and Europe should concentrate on altering the circumstances in such a manner that Russia's ability to coerce and pressure other states will be diminished. Since no quick fixes are on the cards, the efficiency and unity of Western policies require a common long-term vision for Europe-Russia relations. It is important to communicate this goal clearly and coherently to Western constituencies.

The confrontation between the West – including Eastern European partners – and Russia is a long-term one, and strategies need to be adjusted to this unfortunate reality.

The session will discuss the challenge presented by Russia to Europe and the West more broadly, the future of Western deterrence and resilience against Russia, as well as long-term pathways to predictable coexistence.

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## POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- » **What is your analytical take on the strategic challenges that Russia presents?**
- » **How can we improve Western deterrence against Russia?**
- » **How can the European Union better protect itself and its close partners – particularly Ukraine – from Russia's political, economic, and military coercion?**
- » **Is the current Western consensus on Russia strong enough to sustain time and Russian pressure – and what can and should we do to strengthen such unity?**
- » **What could serve as a realistic long-term goal for relations between the EU and Russia, and the West and Russia?**

# EUROPEAN SECURITY AMIDST 21ST CENTURY GLOBAL COMPETITION

European security develops in tandem with accelerating great-power competition. While the continent's security is in its own hands, its ability to master and navigate in the tense international political landscape requires both active agency and cooperation with the United States and third states sharing the European value base. Europe must also manage its internal challenges, such as populism, which are capable of having a pejorative effect on its common foreign and security policy agency. Europe's commitment to the fundamental values of an open and free society should penetrate all of its actions, which requires concerted investments also at home.

The main direct threat to the European security architecture comes from Russia, whose aggression against Ukraine shows blatant disrespect for fundamental rules of international law and the Helsinki principles. While the containment of Russia will be in focus in the near future, Europe must simultaneously pay heed to the developing relationship between China and Russia, as it is one of the biggest question marks for European and global security. While the depth of the grouping between the two autocratic states is debated, it has the potential to deepen the rift between democratic and autocratic states. Moreover, rogue regimes like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea may be involved in this cooperation.

The relationship between Russia and China also means that China will gain strategic access to Europe's backyard and the Arctic. As a consequence, the security of Europe and the Asia-Pacific is linked via a common threat. This necessitates European cooperation with like-minded democratic states in Asia, both separately and through NATO partnerships across the globe.

The transatlantic relationship is an essential building block of European security in times of great-power rivalry. The constant attention to European security exhibited by the US administration may suffer, however, if the United States increasingly shifts its focus towards Asia and countering China. Any potential escalation of the situation in the South China Sea or the Taiwan Strait will therefore have negative consequences for European security. Developments within the US must also be closely monitored from the vantage point of democratic

resilience and the willingness of the state to engage in global affairs together with its allies.

Besides the risk and dangers of military confrontation between or among major powers, indirectly or directly, European security will be affected by the ability of the international community, as far as it exists, to address and manage global problems. Climate change and the destruction of the natural environment pose a worldwide existential threat, with increases in extreme weather events and climate-related disasters also impacting Europe. Worsening major power relations and prevailing distrust will reflect negatively upon addressing these concerns at a time when all hands should be on deck. Climate change and related concerns, such as refugees and migrants, will leave Europe vulnerable in the twenty-first century, particularly in the absence of a collective approach regarding how to tackle migration and refugee flows.

Additional strain on global governance is caused by the deterioration in multilateral cooperation, a weakening United Nations, and a paralysed Security Council. The interest that major powers have in settling global and regional challenges together, and in a spirit where

agreements are honoured, is dwindling. This will have considerable implications for Europe and neighbouring regions as peacekeeping operations may be brought to a standstill, the P5 agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons may be reversed, and food security endangered. European security cannot thrive or become stronger without sustainable development, the safeguarding of human rights, and a habitable planet.

The session will discuss Europe's future role and agency in a world increasingly defined by strategic competition and transnational challenges. It will analyse how evolving relations between great powers, notably Russia and China, and developments in other regions, such as Africa or Asia more broadly, affect Europe. Challenges of regional and global governance, for example regarding climate change and infectious diseases, will also be discussed.

**KATJA CREUTZ**  
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**EUROPE'S  
COMMITMENT TO  
THE FUNDAMENTAL  
VALUES OF AN OPEN  
AND FREE SOCIETY  
SHOULD PENETRATE  
ALL OF ITS ACTIONS.**

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## POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- » **What is Europe's role and agency in an increasingly dichotomised and competitive world?**
- » **How can Europe ensure that the United States remains engaged with the continent?**
- » **How will the Sino-Russian partnership develop and what are its consequences for European security?**
- » **In what ways is European security connected to security dynamics in other regions?**
- » **How can international law and organisations help us face transnational and interconnected challenges, such as climate change or pandemics, when distrust reigns?**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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**The Ministry for Foreign Affairs** concentrates on foreign and security policy, trade policy and development policy as well as on significant foreign policy issues and international relations in general. The Ministry also assists other branches of government in the coordination of international affairs.



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As one of the Ministries of the Finnish Government and leading authority in the area of national defence, **the Ministry of Defence** is in charge of national defence policy and national security as well as of international cooperation in defence policy matters.



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**Arctic Centre** is a national and international hub of information conducting multi-disciplinary research in changes in the Arctic. Research themes of the Arctic Centre cover for example climate change in the Arctic, Arctic anthropology, Arctic governance and politics and Arctic environmental and minority law. The Arctic Centre is located in the Arktikum House, Rovaniemi, Finland.



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