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# **NATO's and Canada's Responses to Russia since the Crimea Annexation of 2014: A Critical Literature Review**

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## **NATO's and Canada's Responses to Russia since the Crimea Annexation of 2014: A Critical Literature Review**

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### Abstract:

This report seeks to better understand how NATO and Canada are adapting to new patterns of conflict involving Russia, with the goal to suggest how Canada can better respond conceptually, politically and strategically. It reveals significant “gaps” in both the academic and grey literature and policy. The four areas of NATO and Canadian responses since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 examined in this report are: diplomatic; military (conventional and nuclear); “hybrid warfare” (focusing on information and cyberwarfare); and partnership with Ukraine. At a time of flux in the alliance and in Russia's behaviour, policy makers are applying old and new concepts simultaneously, and are sometimes responding to events ahead of conceptual thinking about them.

This paper is based on a report to Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) on the findings from a SSHRC Knowledge Synthesis grant awarded to Dr. Jackson in 2017. The full online report can be accessed [here](#).

### About the author:

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# **NATO's and Canada's Responses to Russia since the Crimea Annexation of 2014: A Critical Literature Review**

## **Introduction**

NATO, the West's key alliance dedicated to peace and security, has radically transformed itself since the end of the Cold War. For almost three decades, it has been searching for a new role and *raison d'être*. Its concepts, strategies and policies have evolved in response to major geopolitical shifts, in particular to those relating to the fall of the Soviet Union and the events of September 11, 2001. The most recent phase of this evolution came in response to Russian actions beginning with its annexation of Crimea in 2014. Abruptly, Russia moved back to the centre of major global security challenges and forced NATO to once again focus on Moscow's challenge. In response, NATO readopted some of the old language and concepts of Cold War thinking (e.g. deterrence) and added them to newly adopted ones. Responses were required before comprehensive strategy was in place.

In view of NATO's radical transformation, this study seeks to better understand how NATO and Canada are adapting to new patterns of conflict involving Russia, what this means for Canada's role within and alongside its major security alliance, and to come up with ideas about how Canada can better respond conceptually, politically and strategically. Its findings reveal many significant "gaps" in both literature and policy. This is largely because we are still in a time of major flux when both old and new concepts are being deployed and where some responses (e.g. on hybrid warfare) are occurring simultaneously or ahead of conceptual thinking.

Specifically, this report examines four areas of NATO and Canadian responses since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014: diplomatic, military (conventional and nuclear), "hybrid warfare" (focusing on information and cyberwarfare), and partnership with Ukraine. We cross-reference academic and grey literature with official NATO and Canadian government policies (or 'talking points' when there was no official policy) and knowledge from interviews with officials in Ottawa and Brussels. Of course, many of NATO and Canada's policy responses are

inter-related. One of our conclusions is that they need to be addressed in a more holistic and strategic fashion.

## **Objectives and Context**

The overall objective of this project is to synthesize existing research knowledge about how NATO and Canada have responded to Russia since its occupation of Crimea in 2014. We aim to produce a synoptic overview of key issues and present these in the context of policy choices. The project reviews and critiques the academic and grey literature, cross-references the results with interviews of policy officials, and highlights what we know, don't know and ought to know. Based on this, we identify key knowledge and policy gaps. The goal is to contribute insights to answer the questions "How are NATO and Canada responding to new patterns of conflict involving Russia? What does the literature say are NATO and Canada's most promising policies and practices? What does this mean for Canada's role within and outside the alliance?"

The purpose of this review is to come up with ideas about how Canada can better respond conceptually, politically and strategically. NATO, Canada's key alliance dedicated to peace and security, has radically transformed since the end of the Cold War. Its policies and even *raison d'être* have evolved in response to major geopolitical shifts, in particular to those relating to the fall of the Soviet Union and the events of September 11, 2001. For over two decades has NATO searched for a new role and has searched for new concepts, strategy and purpose.

Today, Russia is once again at the centre of major global security challenges and NATO is once again focused on Moscow. Russia has regained its status as a global actor whose hard and soft power are perceived by many as threatening the liberal international order. In specific, NATO is concerned with Russia's military actions on its borders (snap exercises, violation of allies' airspace); the Ukraine crisis and its implications for the Baltic states; and Russian military presence in Syria (especially its attacks on Syrian opposition and civilians). NATO is therefore focused on the defence of its East European allies and has developed new policies in an effort to counter a multifaceted and hybrid current, and possible future, conflict with Russia.

In the past two decades, NATO has developed an array of tools, mechanisms and partnerships to address a broad range of security challenges. NATO responses have included: collective defence and deterrence efforts (e.g. military exercises in Eastern Europe, the development of a NATO rapid reaction force ); cybersecurity and strategic communications (including a new NATO Centres of Excellence in Latvia and Helsinki to counter Russian propaganda and hybrid warfare; and a NATO policy on cyber defence and action plan); a partnership with Ukraine (The NATO Wales Summit of Sept 2014 condemned Russian military involvement in Ukraine; demanded implementation of the Minsk agreements etc.); and limits on Russia-NATO activities (official cooperation was suspended after Ukraine, but political dialogue and military communication have started up again in a limited fashion through the Russia-NATO Council).

As a key member of NATO, Canada is playing an active role in responding to Russia's often aggressive rhetoric and military build-up and actions – which have a direct impact on Canada's allies in Europe and the Baltic states, but also on Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic, as well as our key global interests in arms control, counter-terrorism and stability in regions such as the Middle East and Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup>

Canada's official rhetoric critiquing Russia has been one of the strongest amongst the allies. Overall, Canada's responses have supported NATO's actions: immediately after Crimea there was a couple months of “wait and see”, followed in the summer of 2014 by a strategy of “reassurance” to its East European allies (air policing in the Baltics and military exercises and training in Eastern Europe), and by 2016 deterrence and collective defence (“assurance and enhanced forward presence” in the Baltics). Similar to NATO, Canada cut off almost all diplomatic contacts with Russia.

At the July 2016 NATO Summit, Canada renewed the mandate of Operation Reassurance as a key part of its contribution to NATO's deterrence and defence posture. Canada had already contributed soldiers on the ground in Central and Eastern Europe, deployed a persistent maritime presence in European waters and provided air contributions to Romania and the Baltic states, and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have participated in military exercises. Approximately 350 million dollars were recently earmarked for the renewal of this operation over the next three

years and Canada has committed to lead the 1000-strong battle group in Latvia until March 31, 2019.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Canada has placed economic sanctions on Russia and most recently passed a version of the Magnitsky Act and is making preparations to sell arms to Ukraine.

The need for NATO to “get Russia right” and pursue appropriate policies has become a dominant challenge for the organization, for Canada within NATO, and for global security. There is a dearth of academic scholarship on this issue partly because of the recent nature of this topic, fast moving events, and a profound lack of evidence-based information on Russia. Analyses of Canada’s role in relation to the “Russian threat” are especially sparse. This ‘knowledge gap’ needs to be addressed in order for policymakers to make more informed decisions. As the alleged Russian cyber-interference in the U.S. election attest, Russia’s intentions and the reach of its hard and soft power are very much in dispute. And with President Trump’s recent contradictory comments about financing and supporting NATO, there is significant confusion and uncertainty among researchers, government officials and the public about how to respond to current and future conflicts.

## **Research Approach**

We discussed the design and findings of this project with officials directly involved in debating, creating and implementing Canadian and NATO policies. It was decided to review two separate but overlapping literatures.

First, we examined NATO’s responses to Russia after its annexation of Crimea in 2014. Because there is a very large literature on this topic we focused on NATO responses that were highlighted as especially pertinent to Canadian foreign policy during our interviews with officials in Ottawa and Brussels: diplomatic; military (conventional and nuclear); “hybrid warfare” (focusing on information and cyberwarfare); and partnership with Ukraine. Of course, many of these responses are inter-related and our analysis highlights that this is somewhat of an artificial division. One of our conclusions is that these topics need to be addressed in a more holistic and strategic fashion.



Second, we reviewed Canada's responses to Russia's aggressions in Ukraine since 2014 within the same categories: diplomacy, military, hybrid warfare and the Ukraine relationship. Under military response we added a section on Canada and NORAD post 2014. We did this because recent Russian activities also directly impact Canadian involvement in this security organization and because officials in Ottawa highlighted this area as significant and sometimes intertwined with questions about Canada in NATO. Unsurprisingly, our study found the most comprehensive Canadian-related literature to be focused on the Arctic region. We briefly discuss the relevant results in the sections pertinent to the particular type of Canadian response (e.g. articles on the Arctic Council under "diplomatic responses").

Third, we analyzed the literatures, critiquing the methods employed in the scholarship, the depth of the data sources, the quality of evidence and strength of the analysis, and to what extent the literature addresses gaps in knowledge on the topic. To narrow our review, we focused on knowledge published between January 2014 and September 2017. We begin with Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 because this was a turning point for NATO in which Russia became its primary concern.

### *Sources*

We collected information from four different sources of knowledge. First, we gathered articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals, and second so-called "grey literature", consisting primarily of reports from policy think tanks. We collected this academic and policy literature via web-based searches of major academic article databases, including JSTOR Arts and Sciences, Academic Search Complete, Sage CKRN collection; EBSCOhost collections, and other publicly accessible online archives.

The academic and grey literature on NATO and Russia have grown steadily in the past decade and we discovered that it has grown exponentially since 2014. The literature on general Canada-NATO relations is also very substantial (over 2500 peer review articles since 2014). Nevertheless, and despite Canada's political and military responses within NATO, there continues to be little academic literature on our specific topic, which is Canada's role (within and alongside NATO) in response to Russia's recent actions in Ukraine.

In sum, we found 55 academic articles about NATO's responses and 46 academic articles related to Canadian foreign policy in response to Russia, with most Canada-related articles focused on a broader contextual framework of either NATO, NORAD or bilateral (Canada-US) response. We evaluated and referenced these in relation to 14 policy reports published since 2014 by for the key global think tanks such as Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Chatham House as well as 14 policy reports (and some commentaries) by leading Canadian think tanks including, the Canadian Global Affairs Institute (CGAI), Open Canada (OC), the Canadian Institute for Political Studies (CIPS). Because there are so many recent reports pertinent to overall NATO policy we narrowed down our sample to those that related to specific knowledge gaps pertinent to Canadian foreign and defence policy.

The third source of knowledge was official NATO and Canadian government reports and policies in order to determine whether policies accurately reflect and address the academic and policy literature (and vice versa), to discover and assess knowledge and policy gaps, and to better understand how the government is adapting and responding to these gaps. When official policy documents were missing we also considered "talking points" and public rhetoric from key government officials e.g. Prime Ministers Harper and Trudeau and our Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers. In doing this, we discovered that Canada lacks detailed policy in some of our response areas (e.g. some aspects of hybrid warfare). In other areas, the government has articulated its intentions but done little to operationalize them.

The fourth source was interviews. We cross-referenced the above findings with the most recent and salient knowledge on the same topics gained from interviews conducted with officials in Ottawa (from DND, Global Affairs, PCO) and at NATO Headquarters (Canadian Delegation to NATO, and Russia and Ukraine External Action Commission) in Brussels, and other NATO and government officials at a NATO-sponsored conference on "responding to Russia's narratives" in The Hague and at the CASIS conference on Russia in Ottawa.<sup>3</sup> This allowed us to discover topics not being addressed in the academic and policy literatures, and to highlight knowledge gaps between these literatures and the responses being discussed and implemented by policy officials and decision makers. Largely because of the recent nature of the topic and fast-moving events, there is a dearth of academic contributions and only a small but growing think-

tank knowledge on the specific topic of Canada's role in relation to the "Russian threat". On the other hand, Canadian bureaucrats, military officials and policy-makers are actively debating and responding to Russia's actions both within and outside NATO. This gap between research knowledge and government/bureaucratic knowledge (and action) is one of the largest gaps that we discovered.

## **'Methodological Gaps' in the Literature**

### ***Lack of Methods***

Overall, most of the peer reviewed articles examining Canadian responses are historical or background pieces. Few develop a careful methodology or test hypotheses based on empirical evidence. Most of the literature is based on assumptions about Canadian interests and/or historical analysis as presumptive of Canada's future policy decisions. A much more comprehensive academic literature focuses on NATO responses, but still only a very few develop comparative studies, test theories, or employ specific methods such as discourse analysis or quantitative methods. Most of the collected literature's sources come from newspapers, NATO or government statements but few examine these systematically and only a couple use in-depth interviews or statistics.

Russian documents were referenced in some of the articles, but overall there are few Russian authors or Russia area-specialists writing specifically about NATO responses (as opposed to about Russian foreign policy). This leads to one of our conclusions which is that the academic (and grey) literature could fruitfully bring together expertise on NATO with Russia-specific expertise and that this would lead to more informed analysis. At the moment, there is a gap in that these literatures generally do not speak to each other.

### ***Discrepancies in the NATO versus Canada-specific literatures; and Academic versus Grey***

Overall, we discovered that the Canadian literature reveals an especially uncritical (in terms of methods, analysis and sources) state of knowledge about the topic. The NATO literature is more critical of current and past policy, and evidence of NATO's apparent failure to successfully engage with Russia tends to be met policy suggestions. Second, because of the current nature of

this subject and rapidly moving events, it is not surprising that there is a richer knowledge expressed in the grey literatures than in the academic literature on both NATO and Canadian responses. However, even here the Canadian literature is still quite sparse, mostly consisting of short commentaries, which is remarkable considering the depth of the country's involvement in Latvia and Ukraine.

### *Narrow Scope*

In both the NATO and Canadian think-tank literature, many of the reports have a narrow scope (focus on one or two key factors or issues) which leads them to neglect other important factors in their conclusions about policy. These omissions are especially dominant in the academic literatures on NATO's conventional military responses and will be highlighted. Second, much of the literature does not consider the larger context. The reality is that while NATO is focused on Europe, it is simultaneously confronting many other challenges with ISIS, piracy etc. There is increasing recognition in the literature and our interviews that, despite Russia's declining credibility on some issues post Crimea, NATO and Western states (including Canada) need Russia's help on issues such as terrorism and arms control and in other regions ranging from the Middle East to Afghanistan, North Korea, and for Canada, the Arctic.

## **Major 'Knowledge Gaps' in the Literature**

### *1. Gap in Knowledge about Russia*

Most of the literature perceives Russian (or Russia-sponsored) actions in and outside Ukraine since 2014 as a threat to international law and Western states and societies. Authors debate Russia's responsibility in, and for, the conflict in Ukraine and its ultimate intentions (and even if it has any) for Ukraine, the Baltic states and beyond. The majority agree that NATO should respond, but there is significant disagreement about the details. Scholars (and also most of the bureaucrats and policy-makers that we interviewed) highlight that they are (increasingly since 2014) aware of Russia's (military and other) capabilities and even have knowledge about Russia's broad intentions and rhetoric. However, there remain significant unknowns about Russia's specific 'red lines' and about whether, when and how Russia might make its next

aggressive move. There are also many unquestioned assumptions about Russia and its intentions that influence scholarly and official opinions. These are, in part, the result of a methodological gap whereby the literature on NATO responses rarely confronts the (rich) literature/expertise on Russian domestic and foreign policy.

Few academics writing on NATO or Canadian foreign policy have the in-depth expertise required needed to evaluate Russian perspectives and specific intentions. One result is an academic and policy gap regarding the root causes of Russia's discontent and actions, and how to tackle them. Since the end of the Cold War, Canadian academic expertise on Russia in Canada has dried up and this is reflected within government and military circles, where there has been a parallel loss of knowledge about Russia and the former Soviet Union (as well as about concepts such as deterrence and containment). The point here is that experts do exist but they have not been writing on these topics for a variety of reasons: for example, policy work in academia is not rewarded; the gap between government and academia generally; and the lack of financing and prioritization for Russian studies in Canada since the end of the Cold War. In today's context of heightened and polarized rhetoric about Russia, the few experts who do try to explain Russian perceptions and actions are often ignored or are (rightly) worried about being labelled as Putin apologists.

## ***2. Knowledge Gap: What is the “threat” or “significant challenge”?***

Second, the academic and think-tank literature reveal a lot of new knowledge but also much uncertainty about the changing nature of conflict and warfare. In particular, there are unknowns about how new technologies and a whole array of more traditional methods are being used by state and non-state actors in novel and more coordinated ways to influence other states. As will be shown below, there are unknowns about the details of Russia's use of these tactics (e.g. hybrid warfare) and how they threaten or could threaten Eastern Europe and the West.

This is made even more complicated because of the interrelatedness of the tactics and responses (i.e. hybrid, conventional, cyber, nuclear, and diplomatic). In the Canadian literature, a major (public) unknown is how exactly Canada (and our “friends and allies”) are being threatened by a whole array of Russian activities, and especially hybrid ones. Many

generalizations exist in the literature but often the empirical details, evidence or context are missing.

### ***3. Rethinking Deterrence, Collective Defence and Diplomacy: How can or should NATO/Canada Respond to Russia?***

This study discovers general confusion in the literature over what military (conventional, nuclear, hybrid) and diplomatic tactics can or should be used in response to Russia's multifaceted actions, and questions about how credible responses have been so far and how successful they are/may be (and even how to define success). There is a lack of knowledge about NATO and Canada's specific red lines – when and how exactly it will respond to Russia (and other states) the largest one of which is in the area of hybrid warfare. We focused on cyber and information warfare: What activity exactly would trigger Article 5? There is even a gap in understanding whether or not these red lines should be clarified to prevent misperceptions and accidents, or should be left vague to allow for flexibility, as well as about their effectiveness.

In terms of diplomacy, there is a major policy gap in that NATO and Canada have broken off most bilateral diplomatic contacts. Would a less confrontational stance with Russia bring more benefits? Part of the confusion in answering this stems from NATO's dual political and military role, and differences in opinion about whether Russia's involvement in Ukraine is a diplomatic or military challenge or both; as well as from acknowledged unknowns about Russia's specific intentions and the 'changing nature of warfare' mentioned above.

There is a lack of academic research about Canada's role in NATO in responding to Russia. The literature that does exist suggests that Canadian responses will continue to be limited and cost-effective but do not consider the unintended consequences of such actions. On the other hand, there is a lot of evidence from our interviews that the "whole spectrum of deterrence" is being reconsidered and that Canada is supporting new projects alongside our allies.

### ***4. Canada's strategic thinking: what are our objectives and how will we meet them?***

Canada adopted a comprehensive and remarkably transparent new defence policy in June 2017. Also in June, Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland forcefully stated during her speech to the House of Commons that there is "no clearer sign that NATO and Article 5 are at the heart of

Canada's national security strategy" than the decision to send troops to Latvia, and that "Russian military adventurism and expansionism" is a "clear challenge" and "clear strategic threat" to Canada. This study proposes that the next step is to go beyond broad pronouncements and develop and operationalize a more nuanced and long-term strategy on Russia. If Russia does stay the course (and Putin or someone similar continues in power) what does this mean for Canada and our role within NATO? The reality is that global governance is evolving and a key question remains: how can Russia fit into this new world, and how can/should we engage with it in the long term?

The Canadian academic and think-tank literature on the topic is sparse because compared to the US or Britain there are few academics working in this area, and there are only a couple that deal with Canadian foreign and security policy generally. Also, overall the NATO literature is dominated by American perspectives. This makes it difficult to identify uniquely Canadian interests. While Canada has played an important part in the military response to Russia, it is still a "middle power" and less directly affected by Russian actions than European states. However, the lack of knowledge about Canada's role in the academic literature does correspond with the need to better clarify Canadian objectives within NATO and to the Canadian public and to better highlight Canada's positive contributions. Some recent efforts have been made in this area both through the NATO Association of Canada and NATO's public diplomacy organs (e.g. through social media such as #We Are NATO and through education including SFU's very successful NATO field school). However, as Robert Baines, President and CEO of the Canadian NATO Association reported to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence this November: "The next generation of Canadians does not know what NATO is. They have no idea".<sup>4</sup> This report agrees that Canada needs to better explain what NATO is doing and why, and further that it should engage Canadians in an open but rigorous and systematic conversation about changing policies, context and objectives. Part of the response to Russian actions post Crimea should include evidence and democratic debate (including questioning NATO and Canada's responses to Russia).

### ***5. Institutional and Organizational Constraints***

Finally, our study reveals that the multiple challenges facing Canada and NATO in responding to Russia are increasingly exacerbated by many well known organizational and institutional challenges. Many of these stem from the fact that NATO is comprised of 29 democratic member states whereas Russia is one semi-authoritarian and seemingly ideologically flexible state. NATO is constrained by slow and rules based decision-making and is comparatively responsive to its member states domestic opinion. Although academics and officials are all acutely aware of these challenges, there are no studies that systematically focus on decision-making or responsiveness to domestic opinion and how they inform responses to Russia. On the other hand, there is an awareness that NATO cannot “do it all” and that in many instances it should be ‘outsourcing’ challenges (which it is doing, for example on hybrid issues such as information warfare).

Other known constraints that are only given passing commentary in the literature include lack of funding (often the focus of news commentaries) and questions about political will; coordination challenges and ‘turf wars’ (e.g. between member states and among different NATO institutions – civilian and military, NATO headquarters, field missions etc.). Interviews with Canadian officials reveal similar policy silos (e.g. DND, Global Affairs). A conclusion is that we need more creating thinking to actively address these constraints.

## **The State of Knowledge on NATO and Canadian Responses to Russia Post 2014**

### ***Diplomatic Responses***

#### ***1. NATO and Canadian Bilateral Diplomatic Responses***

NATO and Canada have consistently called for a return of Crimea to Ukraine and a de-escalation of Russian military activity in Eastern Ukraine. However, neither has a comprehensive plan to achieve such objectives. To date, NATO has approved a commitment of solidarity with Ukraine (Resolution 422), which urges NATO members to place diplomatic, political, and economic pressures on Russia and to offer assistance to the government of Ukraine to restore its sovereign



borders (2015). NATO states are not formally bound to take any particular action on Ukraine, though many have made efforts to align their foreign policies with Resolution 422.<sup>5</sup>

One of the most widely discussed topics in the NATO literature is the lack of effective diplomatic responses that NATO has taken in response to Russian actions. This literature corresponds with a significant policy gap which is that almost all diplomatic relations between NATO and Russia have been broken off since 2014. Two opposing assessments are given by academics writing in this area. The first argues against dialogue and favours some kind of punitive response. The second argues for a more pragmatic or realistic approach that includes dialogue in the search for “common ground”. This is reflective of a larger debate within NATO and the literature about how much weight should be given to “pragmatism versus values” as underlying principles of the organization.

Canada's initial diplomatic response to Russia's aggressions in Ukraine was to openly condemn Russian actions as illegal, signalling support for international efforts to bring about economic sanctions against Russia. Relations between Canada and Russia were already strained, when Prime Minister Stephen Harper argued that Russia's annexation of Crimea was in contravention of established international law regarding state sovereignty and criticized Russia for inappropriate use of military force, likening Russia's invasion of Ukraine to Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939.<sup>6</sup> The current Liberal government under Prime Minister Trudeau continues to date (October 2017) to maintain that the annexation of Crimea was an illegal act. As mentioned earlier, Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland, stated in June 2017 during her speech to the House of Commons that “Russian military adventurism and expansionism” is a “clear challenge” and “clear strategic threat” to Canada.<sup>7</sup> Notably Canada has imposed significant economic sanctions against Russia since 2014<sup>8</sup> (however measuring the effectiveness of such sanctions is a matter of speculation in that Russia has yet to withdraw from Ukraine and many believe that the sanctions are mostly a political statement of disapproval).

While there is no academic literature focused on Canadian diplomatic responses, Canadian think tanks have produced papers and commentaries that discuss Canadian objectives but exclusively as part of NATO's broader aims.<sup>9</sup> As such, any Canadian independent diplomatic strategies or intent are hidden within the broader NATO initiatives. This gap in the academic

literature reflects the fact that aside from broad assertions of political solidarity and pronouncements of Russian wrongdoings, Canada has broken off most diplomatic ties with Russia and has not taken a diplomatic role to resolve the Ukraine crisis. The latter will be examined below in the section on the “partnership with Ukraine”. The literature that does exist is mostly uncritical of Canada’s diplomacy (and the lack thereof). However, the lack of diplomacy is in contrast to the sentiment of the most recent national defence policy (June 2017), which states that Canada is committed to employing diplomatic resources to arrive at an equitable and timely resolution to the crisis in Ukraine.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, Canada has just (October 2017) added Ukraine to the list of countries to which it can export weapons, and the House has passed its own version of the Magnitsky Act (explored further below). All these actions make any negotiation with Russia even more unlikely for now. Thus, and despite Prime Minister Trudeau’s promise to change the government’s tone on Russia, there is no real relationship to speak of between Canada and Russia and almost no contacts. The exceptions are search and rescue cooperation (continued with some low level informal conversations) and engagement in the Arctic Council, as will be seen below. In return, Russia has accused Canada of being Russo-phobic and has added to the list of Canadians on its sanction list.<sup>11</sup>

From our review of the literature, it is evident that more in-depth, critical and balanced research is needed on the exact nature of Canada’s diplomacy and bilateral ties with Russia and Ukraine, on Canada’s role in decision-making within NATO, and on whether Canada should consider taking a less confrontational stance with Russia. It suggests that a benefit of Canadian diplomacy on Ukraine is that it is consistent with other Western powers, and that the advantage of a unified NATO strategy is that it incorporates the full resources and expertise of the alliance. Recently, however, a vocal minority is questioning this approach. They argue, for example, that deploying troops to Latvia will have few tangible benefits for Canada, that it will too drastically decrease trust and that it will inhibit any possible (and, they argue, necessary) future cooperation with Russia.<sup>12</sup>

A significant gap in the literature concerns Russia’s interests in stability (regional and state). We found little careful and detailed articulation of the argument that NATO’s strategic thinking should take into account Russia’s concerns (real or not) and therefore should consider

how to decrease Russian fears of NATO military presence and maneuvers, for example through regional conventional weapons control. In other words, while many authors are beginning to re-examine the applicability today of the older literature on (Soviet) deterrence, they do not similarly consider the literature on containment (Kennan), or systematically analyze options to improve strategic dialogue to increase trust (e.g. on arms control), or creatively consider how individual states (or organizations such as NATO and EU) can provide incentives for Russia to work closer with the West. In other words, if we want something from Russia, maybe NATO/Canada need to be prepared to give something in return. Despite both sides blaming each other for the weakening of the global security architecture, Canada should still try to avoid the “us versus them” mentality and look for issues on which Russia may be prepared to make a serious effort.

## *2. Multilateral Diplomatic Responses: The NATO-Russia Council and the Arctic Council*

The NATO literature critiques the lack of diplomacy within the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), while the Canada-focused literature shows that, despite the Ukraine conflict, dialogue has continued in the Arctic Council.

For the past two decades, NATO and Russia have worked to build a relationship within the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). NATO's assumption was that “the more they (talked) to the Russians through the NATO-Russia Council or associated meetings and working groups, the more an understanding could be developed”. Through this dialogue it was thought that Russia would gradually transform and begin to mirror the NATO member states in their concerns and values. In reality, NATO and Russia were often on very different pages when negotiating. After Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, civilian dialogue and military cooperation were suspended, with dialogue only continuing at higher-levels such as amongst ambassadors. It is only recently that political dialogue and military have started up again in a limited fashion.<sup>13</sup>

Even before 2014, most of the literature on this topic argued that both Russia and NATO needed to find new diplomatic approaches. Since then, a few articles discuss how to kick-start dialogue.<sup>14</sup> The dominant suggestion is that both sides concentrate on discussing smaller matters of mutual interest, although those advocating this not very original proposal do not tend to

carefully consider Russian perceptions and concerns. NATO officials worry that Russia will (continue to) use any and all such opportunities to publicly air their complaints about NATO's actions and put forth their spin on the Ukraine conflict. Another proposal, that the NRC establish procedures to reduce the risks of military confrontations and miscalculations, is comparatively uncontroversial. However, few articles consider wider strategic consideration or confront the reality that NATO-Russia relations do not occur in a vacuum.<sup>15</sup> The literature, for example, could benefit from addressing the role of China or Russia's role in Syria as both of have significant implications when discussing the possibility of renewing diplomatic (and other) relations.

The sparse academic literature on Canada's diplomatic responses to Russia post 2014 is focused the Arctic Council. This recent literature continues the earlier trend of either conceptualizing the thawing Arctic space as a potentially volatile region where an intense security dilemma could emerge among countries with substantial territorial claims<sup>16</sup> or as an area in which disputes among Russia, Canada and other states are overblown.<sup>17</sup> However, there is agreement that while much aggressive posturing has occurred in recent years, significant cooperation among Arctic states, including Russia, is in fact the norm<sup>18</sup> and that no significant changes have been made to the status quo.<sup>19</sup> Using descriptive statistics, Chater finds that Russian diplomacy through participation within the Arctic Council has actually increased since 2014. Rahbek-Clemmensen empirically measures fluctuations in assertive policy measures following Russia's annexation of Crimea and concludes that the spill-over to the Arctic is less severe than in other regions, even as states have been increasingly critical of Russia and increasingly assertive in their rhetoric about the Arctic.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Military Responses: Rethinking Deterrence and Collective Defence***

NATO claims that its military presence in the Baltics will serve as a 'tripwire' to deter Russian aggression - because Russia will not want a broader confrontation with NATO. However, as will be discussed below there are debates over how much and what kind of military presence NATO should be providing, as well as whether NATO and Canada's responses are (or could be) credible and effective, and even whether NATO's red lines should be left vague to allow for future flexibility or should be well-defined to prevent misperceptions.

Of course, deterrence is predicated on understanding Russia, its capabilities and intentions, and we find that considerable confusion remains on this topic. There is knowledge in the literature reviewed about Russia's growing military capabilities, however, questions such as the depth and sustainability of Russia's militarization and military reform are debated.<sup>21</sup> There is also a growing understanding about Russia's general stated intentions, which have been emphatically, if vaguely, defined in official statements and doctrines. These include, for example, an ambition to be key global player and to maintain influence in some areas of the post-Soviet space. However, specifics such as how susceptible individual Baltic and Eastern Europe states are to attack, and the details and timing of (potential) aggressive Russian actions, are very controversial. Overall, our study shows that an understanding about the variability of the "Russia threat" towards different regions (e.g. the Baltics versus Ukraine versus the Arctic) is often missing. Also missing is consideration of Russia's security concerns which are clearly stated in Russian security documents.<sup>22</sup> These include Russian concerns about NATO's growing offensive capabilities and military presence on Russia's borders, as well as about NATO and EU "expansion" (as they see it) into Russia's "sphere of influence" and perceived Western attempts to provoke regime change (inside and outside the former Soviet space).<sup>23</sup> One of our conclusions is that the (parallel) literature focused on analyzing Russian (and Eurasian) domestic, foreign and security policy could be more carefully incorporated to inform the literature on 'NATO responses'.

### *1. NATO's Conventional Military Responses*

Since 2014, NATO has increased its overall conventional ability to deter Russia on its 'eastern flank'. To accomplish this, NATO has enhanced its forward presence in Eastern Europe with four multinational battalion-size battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, on a rotational basis.<sup>24</sup> These battlegroups, led by the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and the United States respectively, are composed of multinational, combat-ready forces and together form a 5,000-strong Spearhead Force.<sup>25</sup> NATO has also created a larger and more varied Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) designed to support these Spearhead deployments should the need for a greater response arise.<sup>26</sup> NATO has been conducting military exercises in

Eastern Europe. In total, there are “around 100 NATO exercises planned for this year, as well as 149 national exercises led by Allies”<sup>27</sup>.

The academic and policy literature has overwhelmingly focused on NATO’s ability to deter Russia from further acts of aggression and to “reassure” its East European allies. The main argument in favour of sending troops and airpower to the Baltics is that they reassure allies by “complicating the math” for Russia. These actions help to stop Russia from thinking that it can overwhelm NATO and thus prevent Russia from taking action. Many authors, some using quantitative methods,<sup>28</sup> argue that there is an increasing need to move significant conventional armed forces to the eastern flank of the Alliance and in particular to the Baltic states. Others specifically focus on the need for more capable airpower in the region,<sup>29</sup> believing that a future conflict would largely be based on new developments in the high-tech revolution in warfighting such as anti-access aerial denial (A2AD) systems.<sup>30</sup> Still others focus on the need for further maritime presence in the Baltic Sea, the Arctic and/or the “forgotten waters” of the North Atlantic.<sup>31</sup>

Those who argue for greater military presence believe that Europe needs to be defended and that NATO can best do so. They argue, counterfactually, that if NATO had sent in troops earlier that they could have prevented Russia from invading Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. Most, however, seem to be in agreement that NATO’s military presence in Eastern Europe and the Baltics is largely a political statement about NATO’s unity in front of Russia, while at the same time making it difficult for Russia to use force in the Baltics and thus preventing Russia from “thinking that it can get away with it”. Our interviews and some of the think-tank literature are in agreement with NATO statements that a military presence is also useful because it allows NATO to deter, learn about, and respond to any smaller Russian incursions (such as those by Russian special forces or local proxies) and other forms of hybrid warfare, including cyber and information warfare.

Those arguing against a increase in troops write that sufficient measures have already been taken, that the nature of the threats facing NATO are constantly evolving and that Russia is not the only one. Some argue that a few more hundred troops would not significantly (further) deny Russia access to the Baltics, and also that individual NATO member states have varying

and evolving interests and “threat assessments” about Russia. Few argue that NATO should not be there at all, although that line of thinking is found newspaper articles – Stephen Walt, for example, argues that it is not in the United States’ vital interest to be involved and that the US should sit back and “not make things worse”.<sup>32</sup> One speculation that does come up in the think-tank literature is that the threat of troop deployment (rather than actual deployment) should have been, or could be, used by the West to influence Russia.

When discussing future military presence, unknowns mentioned in the literature include the questionable political will of individual NATO states and whether NATO will remain steadfast or constantly renegotiate ‘red lines’. (Of course, by placing troops from different countries in the Baltics, even if NATO was slow to respond, those countries would be basically automatically at war with Russia if attacked). Our interviews with military officials further highlights their concern for “aligned messages” and “unity of effort and command”. There is frustration over the lack of a clear strategy (aim) and a desire to not simply be reactive to Russia but also to retain legitimacy and the “moral high ground”. (This is apart from the question of whether NATO will be able to deter Russia with a sufficient threat of real damage or act fast enough in response.) One area of agreement in the literature is that the close proximity of growing (NATO and Russian) military presence increases real possibilities for miscalculation and possible accidental encounters between militaries, in the Baltics, Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

## *2. Canada's Conventional Response in Latvia and Eastern Europe*

On Canada's conventional military responses, we discovered some think tank papers but no academic literature. This is despite the fact that Canada's role in 2016 (officially) shifted from “reassurance” to “deterrence” and “reassurance”, in parallel with NATO's. Canada has now committed forces from all three divisions of its armed forces to NATO's Operation Reassurance. The Canadian Armed Forces has deployed 450 Canadian Army members to Latvia where they are leading a 1000 strong NATO battlegroup comprising military members from other nations such as Albania, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Spain. Canada has sent the HMCS Charlottetown to join Standing NATO Maritime Group One. Canada has also committed “135 CAF members and four CF-188 Hornets [to take] part in Block 45 of NATO enhanced air policing in Romania”.

The policy literature tends to assess Canada's contribution as largely a political move that demonstrates Canada's commitment to NATO, and one with potentially significant political benefits (e.g. it may lessen the pressure on Canada to raise its defence spending to NATO's two percent target). Interviews at NATO Headquarters stressed how Canada's presence has been warmly welcomed by its allies, and especially Latvia and Ukraine. Some critique the Canadian forces as lacking equipment or having inferior equipment.<sup>33</sup> However, there is no serious analysis of different long-term options nor a serious debate about Canada's overall or specific involvement in NATO (e.g. could Canada's military presence allow us to pursue "diplomacy with leverage?").

The debates over the effectiveness and the future of Canada's military responses instead mostly repeat or mirror the broader debates over NATO's actions. They reveal that while Canada is playing a significant role (that is widely praised in NATO), there is uncertainty and a lack of knowledge about whether or not Canada is really helping to deter against (current or future) Russian conventional, nuclear or hybrid threats (let alone whether Canada is helping to end the conflict or stabilize the region). If Russia did overrun the Canadian-led NATO brigade in Latvia, it is not certain whether Canada and NATO would be ready to enter into a full-scale conventional war given enormous political, human and economic costs. As mentioned above, it is also probable that some NATO members would disagree and break NATO's unity.

Officials claim that Canadian and NATO troops in the Baltics are also deterring non-conventional threats. However, NATO's claims to be deterring Russian hybrid warfare through its positioning of forces in the Baltics pose even more significant unknowns. As will be examined below, NATO defines hybrid warfare as the combination of conventional military power, irregular tactics, political and informational warfare, and economic and diplomatic pressure that Russia is understood to have used when occupying Crimea. The many unknowns about Canadian and NATO (conventional) responses to hybrid warfare include: What combinations of which Russian (or Russian-sponsored) actions exactly will it take for Canada/NATO to be at war? How will Canadian troops react and what are the rules of engagement? We found no literature that discussed how Canada/NATO would respond after Russia's incursions, and this is matched by a lack of NATO or Canadian specific policy on this



topic. Our conclusion is that this points to the need for absolute clarity in NATO's doctrine of hybrid warfare and for Canada to develop one. This is examined further below in the section "NATO and hybrid responses".

### *3. NATO and the Nuclear Deterrent to Russia Post Crimea*

To understand the range of NATO's responses to Russia one also has to consider NATO's nuclear deterrence and developments in its nuclear capabilities. "As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance".<sup>34</sup> The literature is mostly in agreement that the probability of a strategic nuclear exchange between Russia and NATO has increased. In the past, the threat of mutually assured destruction prevented conflict. As the strategic balance evolves towards the point where destruction might no longer be mutual, this mirrors a (possibly) drastic change in stability between the two powers.<sup>35</sup> Of particular concern to NATO and Canadian government officials is that Russia's 2014 military doctrine outlines Russia's willingness to use nuclear weapons against a conventional attack (although the specifics are unclear).<sup>36</sup> There is also concern that Russia could use (tactical) nuclear weapons as a first option against our allies.

Much of the recent academic literature on NATO's nuclear options in response to Russia combines classical deterrence literature with detailed exploration of the technical side of NATO advancements including in intelligence gathering,<sup>37</sup> the accuracy of counter-force missiles<sup>38</sup> and the expansion of the NATO ballistic missile defence (BMD) program.<sup>39</sup> Despite these technical advancements, the literature and our interviews point to a dramatic decline of expertise and knowledge about strategic nuclear dynamics between peer adversaries Russia and NATO/US. Here, again, the most helpful literature borrows from in-depth analysis of Russian perceptions and actions found in the (mostly separate) Russia-focused literature. Russia views its nuclear weapons as an equalizer in a situation of US conventional weapons superiority. It also believes that its second strike capability is now compromised due to technological developments since the 1990s (including some cyber and space-enabled developments). In this context, Russia is constantly reassessing its ability to deter NATO because of its concerns about current and future technological advances (including more usable weapons<sup>40</sup> such as hypersonic glide vehicles and an increasing ability to find previously hidden targets,<sup>41</sup> backed-up by a missile defence system<sup>42</sup>). Although Russia's fears may be over-stated as justifications for its own buildup, they

help analysts understand and explain its strategic thinking and would be particularly helpful in time of crisis.

In sum, there remains a significant gap in NATO's understanding about when Russia might use nuclear weapons particularly in a time of escalating conflict between both sides and when there is no functioning forum for dialogue between Russia and NATO. Few take into account that Russia perceives nuclear weapons as necessary in response to perceived asymmetries with the West.

#### *4. Canada's Defensive Responses and NORAD*

Canada, of course, is also concerned with protecting North America from Russian nuclear and conventional military threats. Academic literature on Canada's responses here centres on the usefulness of the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) and Canada's evolving role within this bilateral arrangement. Originally developed during the Cold War as a joint security agreement between the US and Canada to safeguard the North American continent from airborne threats, particularly those emanating from Russia, NORAD is now charged with coordinating missions of aerospace warning and aerospace control, including detection, validation, and warning of attack against North America whether by aircraft, missiles, or space vehicles. The post 2014 scholarship on this subject is primarily approached from a realist perspective and is highly technical and qualitative in nature.<sup>43</sup> The literature is in broad agreement that NORAD constitutes, and will continue to be a key part of, Canadian strategic defence and it continues to designate Russia as a serious threat because of its emergence as a perceived provocative nuclear power.<sup>44</sup> Although Canada formally refused to participate in a continental ballistic missile defence system in 2005, Canadian personnel still play active roles in coordination with US military forces, and the literature positively highlights new monitoring technology and capacity of the Canadian defence staff.

Overall, the literature on NORAD appears to reflect current policy. However, crucial questions remain unanswered. What is Canada's domestic threat-assessment about Russia? How much independence do we and should we have from the US? What does Canada's relationship with the US (in NORAD and NATO) mean for our protection from "strategic competitors" (such

as Russia)? The government of Canada's most recent national defence policy (July 2017) states that Canada is poised to bolster its commitment to NORAD. However, a recent news report tells us that technically US policy directs its military not to defend Canada if it is targeted in a ballistic-missile attack.<sup>45</sup> Canada can assume that it will almost certainly be protected, but the comments made by the top Canadian officer at NORAD are confusing. Meanwhile, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland, has stated that Canada will forge its own path, "not rely on the US for global leadership" and "set our own clear and sovereign course" while promising a major investment in Canada's military.<sup>46</sup> More clarity about our relationship with the US is needed.

### *NATO and Hybrid Responses*

Aside from the above "traditional" diplomatic and military responses, NATO has also been developing its own "hybrid responses" to Russia post 2014.<sup>47</sup> Since mid-2014, NATO has been using the term 'hybrid warfare' to include the use of both conventional tactics traditionally associated with violent warfare and so-called non-conventional or non-violent tactics. The literature on the "changing nature of warfare" was already flourishing before Russia's annexation of Crimea, but since then there has been an even greater focus on the aptly-termed 'grey zones' of international relations that lie between peace and war.<sup>48</sup> The tactics discussed in this literature include the use of special forces, military intelligence, propaganda or information warfare, agitation, cyber-attacks, and the use of nationalist actors and unmarked soldiers to cause disorder or enact change within a state. The secrecy and subterfuge of some of these tactics, and the lack of clarity about others, adds uncertainty about what exactly is or is not occurring (whether one is really under attack or not). There are debates in the academic literature about definitions of war and controversies over whether and how to respond to a wide range of activities.<sup>49</sup> This confusion in turn is mirrored by some ill-defined or vague responses.

NATO (and the EU) defined hybrid issues a strategic priority at the Warsaw Summit in 2016. Section 72 of the Warsaw document states that the Alliance and the allies will be prepared to counter hybrid warfare as part of collective defence and that the Council could decide to invoke Article 5 of the Washington treaty in response.<sup>50</sup> However, although our interviews in Brussels revealed that hybrid activities are perceived as the number one threat emanating from

Russia, the policy momentum in countering them has since faltered. On the other hand, Russian hybrid warfare has continued to garner a lot of attention. Overall, and borrowing from the Russia-specific literature, there is some agreement and evidence that while hybrid warfare is not new (and is practiced by most states and increasingly non-state actors) Russia's use of a wide range of these tactics is now increasingly sophisticated and strategically coordinated. A variety of hybrid tactics is commonly understood to be deployed by the Russian state (and non-state actors) both domestically and externally. The mostly grey literature highlights that NATO has, and will continue to have, great difficulty in countering hybrid warfare efforts.<sup>51</sup> This is partly because of the very nebulous and secretive nature of hybrid activities and because NATO is a large, rules-based organization made of democratic states which do not have the same flexibility as authoritarian Russia.<sup>52</sup> It should be emphasized that Russia claims that the West itself has been using a mix of non-military instruments around the globe, in particular in the so-called "colour revolutions". Russia's hybrid (or ambiguous) activities are thus understood as rational means of response that correspond to Western activities and that counter perceived asymmetries with the West.<sup>53</sup>

Overall, we found there is an active debate about hybrid policy responses and much uncertainty once again about whether or not, and how exactly to respond to a whole array of non-military activities and what are NATO's 'red lines'. Most of the literature asserts that in response to Russian actions, NATO, but especially individual states, need to make their publics more aware of what is happening and to develop, for example, better cyber and information warfighting capabilities. This is in fact what is occurring as NATO has increasingly turned to other partner organizations such as the EU and the private sector for assistance.<sup>54</sup> However, researchers could further explore whether NATO needs more clear policy in this area. While there is an argument to be made for not telling your potential adversaries what your plans and red lines are, this vagueness may also strengthen hybrid warfare and the probability of conflict. Clarity could help prevent these accidental flashpoints and promote general stability. In September 2017, the U.S. put forward an army concept paper which calls for a new approach for conflicts that are "short of all-out war" or occur in "uncertain situations".<sup>55</sup> One question being examined is how to fight once deterrence has failed, but also how to pre-empt armed attacks

(given that hybrid conflict tends to take place before war is declared). These scenarios bring up a host of questions worthy of further exploration by academics and policy-makers.

We found little Canadian academic literature on Russian hybrid activities, even though Canadian officials were clearly aware of these issues and Canadians are working multilaterally alongside their allies at confronting them. Canada's new defence policy, Strong, Secure, Engaged (June 2017) addresses the challenges for Canada of detecting, attributing and responding to "hybrid warfare" and allocates new resources to cyber operations, intelligence, and information operations (including "influence activities", ones that may have psychological or behavior affects). In our interviews, some stressed the importance of confronting hybrid issues as part of the "full spectrum of deterrence", while others (including many in DND) argued that Canada ought to remain focused on more traditional military threats and responses. A large part of the controversy is that "hybrid" refers to so many tactics. Below we will examine two of these: cyberwarfare and information warfare.

### *1. Cyberwarfare and Information Warfare*

There is much evidence that NATO and NATO allies have been increasingly targeted with cyber-attacks. In response, NATO has developed cyber defence capabilities, including the NATO Computer Incidence Response Capability (NCIRC), which protect NATO's own networks and a NATO accredited Center of Excellence in Tallinn, Estonia. At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO officially recognized that cyberspace is a 'domain of operations' in which NATO must *defend* itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea.<sup>56</sup> This has led to speculation that some kinds of cyber-attacks could or should trigger Article 5. This is very controversial and brings up many questions. Cyber weapons add a lot of uncertainty about what constitutes an attack and how to respond. First, cyber-attacks are difficult to attribute. For example, Russia's cyber capabilities are linked to cyber mercenaries and patriotic hacktivists, military intelligence, and others, which the government may not be able to control. Their effects are also difficult to predict and they are complex in that they may be linked to nuclear or conventional responses (for example, if they target command and control). At present, the point at which a cyber-attack meets the standard of an 'armed attack' has been left deliberately vague,

but this stance may be counterproductive if one wants to bring some predictability and moderation to bear in any future cyber conflict.

In recognition that it currently lacks many of the capabilities needed to deal with cyber threats, NATO has begun to work much more closely with the EU to share information and exchange best practices, for example through a Technical Agreement on cyber defence and the private sector, through the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership.<sup>57</sup> At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO members also adopted the Cyber Defence Pledge to strengthen and enhance the cyber defence of national networks and infrastructures. And during the most recent NATO Defence Ministerial meeting, it was decided to create a new Cyber Operations Centre. This also seems to suggest that the Alliance is going beyond a purely defensive posture to incorporate offensive capabilities. In the literature examined, some discuss the need for more clarification of laws surrounding the cyber domain.<sup>58</sup> Others argue that NATO cyber policy is/should be intentionally vague to allow for NATO's flexibility.<sup>59</sup> Our concern here is that this 'gap' and lack of clarity creates a grey zone in which cyber-attacks could take place because adversaries think that they can get away with them. Also, there is a concern that the move from defence to offence in this sphere has the real potential for collateral damage and asymmetric retaliation. We found no academic literature on Canadian cyber responses to Russia post Crimea, but clearly government officials are working in this area whether at the DND research institute on cyber and space, or within Public Safety, CSE and CSIS. In the February 2017, the Communications Security Establishment (CSE) was asked to "analyse risks to Canadian political and electoral activities" from hackers. The resulting document gives an overview of cyber threats (from state and non-state actors) to Canada's democratic process and is discussed more below.<sup>60</sup>

A second area of hybrid warfare identified by NATO as significant is 'information warfare'.<sup>61</sup> Since 2014, Russia's digital hacking and its manipulation and dissemination of false information have been increasingly understood as real threats to Western societies. Many now believe that this disinformation is a key part of a broader "hybrid campaign" aimed to undermine social cohesion and the democratic process. From our interviews, there is consensus that while this is a controversial topic, the scale of Russian disinformation is significant and that there are multiple challenges in responding to it. At a NATO-sponsored conference on "Answering

Russian Strategic Narratives”, representatives of governments, private industry and NGOs shared evidence about three methods used by Russia: attempts to influence electoral processes, for example by using parties on the fringe of the political spectrum to discredit the political establishments (e.g. during the referendum on the Dutch EU-Ukraine Association Agreement); the spread of fake news through traditional media, online platforms and social media (over 2500 stories identified); and the targeting of specific societal groups (e.g. Russian minorities in the Baltics and Ukraine) to amplify their message. There was also agreement, at least among this community, that better analysis of Russian misinformation is needed as is increased public awareness and education about the dilemma. As in the case of NATO's military responses, there is also a desire that NATO and its member states move beyond being mostly reactive and figure out how to better anticipate attacks, take the initiative and act.

In January 2014, NATO set up a Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga as a response to Russia's 'information-warfare campaign' and is currently setting up another Centre in Helsinki. NATO also rhetorically counters what it calls Russian disinformation through its public diplomacy arm and on its website (and through social media). However, NATO officials and others widely acknowledge that individual states and NGOs, rather than NATO, need to take the lead in responding and developing further measures. Furthermore, all our interviewees argued that NATO (and other actors) must be careful to retain their legitimacy and not disseminate propaganda (which could also have the unintended effect of making Russian propaganda more appealing).

Despite the many Western NGOs and governments working to debunk fake stories and show how the mechanics of disinformation works,<sup>62</sup> we found little academic literature on this topic. Yet we need a new conceptual framework for how social media is changing conflict and war. While the evidence seems to be convincing that we need to better educate the public about how to verify the veracity of some Russian or Russia-sponsored claims, it may be dangerous and counterproductive to counter some “Russian narratives” and “dezinformatsiya” not only because of the tricky implications for freedom of speech (and the risk that engaging in our own propaganda may backfire), but because these ideas (especially the critiques about Western governments and military interventions) are already being propagated by many in the West. In

the West, trust in governments and institutions is decreasing and narratives that destabilize truths have receptive audiences. It is also the case that Russia believes that the West's promotion of democracy and human rights was responsible for the 'colour revolutions' on its borders and that Russia has had to respond by controlling what it terms "information security" both domestically and externally. Thus, engaging in informational warfare or propaganda with Russia may only fuel its discontent.

As for the Canada angle, we could not find any academic or grey literature focusing on how Russia's disinformation is affecting Canada. News reports mention Russia's attacks on our Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and that Canada is a target as a NATO member (as evidenced by hostile narratives about Canada's NATO deployment). Russia, of course, has traditionally had comparatively less (trade and other) interest in Canada. We identified some very recent Canadian responses to Russia on the topic of information warfare including a social media campaign led by NATO Association of Canada to counter online misinformation and strengthen young Canadians' understanding of the significance of NATO (#WeAreNATO); and Canada's Communications Security Establishment (CSE) discussions with provincial governments about its new "threat assessment" report that identifies key cyber threats to Canada's democratic process (elections, political parties and politicians and the media) and concludes that "technical and social elements" need to be addressed. Our interviews also revealed that Canadian officials in Ottawa and NATO Headquarters are clearly grappling with these complex topics.

### *Partnerships with Ukraine*

Above we focused on NATO and Canadian diplomatic, military and hybrid responses to Russian actions in Ukraine. Most of these responses have been about deterring Russia from taking aggressive moves in the Baltic or other East European states. However, NATO and Canada have also developed policies focused specifically on Ukraine.

#### *1. NATO and Ukraine*

While NATO has provided Ukraine with political support and continues to work together with Ukraine outside the country,<sup>63</sup> NATO cannot become directly militarily involved in the conflict.



Ukraine is not a NATO member and therefore cannot access the benefits of Article 5. NATO is also weary of accidentally engaging with Russian troops. On the other hand, NATO member states have developed individual relationships with Ukraine, and currently the U.S, U.K., Canada, Poland, Lithuania and Estonia are working in Ukraine to train Ukrainian troops to NATO standards<sup>64</sup> while refraining from providing lethal weapons.<sup>65</sup>

NATO's political narrative is that Russia's responsibility for the war in Ukraine is significant, and that it "must stop its deliberate destabilization of eastern Ukraine through its political, military and financial support for militants, withdraw its forces and military equipment from Ukrainian territory and fully support a political solution of the conflict".<sup>66</sup> At the NATO Summit in Wales (September 2014), NATO began to strengthen existing programs in Ukraine on defence education, professional development, security sector governance and security-related scientific cooperation. It also launched new programs with the help of Trust Funds – a mechanism which allows individual NATO allies and partner countries to provide financial support for concrete projects on a voluntary basis.

At the core of the academic and policy debates concerning NATO and Russia over the past four years is the question of "what to do with Ukraine". This includes whether or not Ukraine should join NATO; whether or not Russia should give up Crimea, and how to end the ongoing violence in Eastern Ukraine. On the question of joining NATO, those who argue for Ukraine to remain a 'buffer state' between NATO and Russia tend to frame this position as taking a pragmatic approach to diplomacy.<sup>67</sup> Those who believe that Ukraine should (eventually) join NATO prioritize a more value-based form of decision-making and frame their position as supporting Ukraine's "freedom of choice".<sup>68</sup> We can also divide the NATO literature (roughly) into three views: those who interpret Russian occupation of Crimea as demanding a robust confrontation; those who warn of the dangers that the confrontation could bring; and a growing number who argue that there is no chance that Russia will give up Crimea and that NATO needs to accept this. The more recent literature on NATO and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine tends to question the NATO narrative about Russia's involvement and argue that NATO should instead take further steps to work alongside Russia to resolve the crisis (although the details are debated, as seen below).<sup>69</sup>

Overall, the literature on NATO's partnership with Ukraine<sup>70</sup> once again does not carefully engage with the (substantial) literature which attempts to explain Russian foreign policy and Ukraine. The "black and white" portrayal of each side in the literature is also partly the result of a selection bias (i.e. experts on NATO write about NATO) and the result of negative and polarizing rhetoric and "spin" practiced by all actors in the conflict.<sup>71</sup> In this context, those trying to explain Russian perceptions and actions are at risk of being dismissed as "Putin apologists" and their contributions ignored (and vice versa for NATO experts). This has resulted in a NATO focused literature (and, arguably, policy) which may be criticized as one-sided. Even while this "othering" of each side continues, our study concludes that more nuanced and contextual understandings are key for addressing the conflict in Ukraine, as well the NATO-Russia relationship at the global level. Here Canada would benefit from reaching out to a wider cross-section of Canadian Russia experts, and fostering more academic and other non-governmental expertise and public discourse on Russia and Ukraine.

## *2. Canada's Partnership with Ukraine and NATO*

Overall, there is very little academic literature on the topic of Canada's partnership with Ukraine and NATO, although there are an increasingly number of short think-tank reports and commentaries. Scholars do point out that Canada has long worked to foster a close and mutually beneficial political and economic relationship with Ukraine.<sup>72</sup> Soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Canada sought to develop a 'special partnership' with Ukraine to build up strong ties between the two countries. In 2009, this relationship was further bolstered by wide-ranging bilateral security agreements that would enhance Canadian and Ukrainian military cooperation and strategic planning. Economically, the two countries have made significant strides in recent years to strengthen trade relations, including advanced negotiations on a free trade agreement beginning in 2010. Interestingly, although the role of Ukraine's diaspora in Canadian policy is often commented on and assumed, we found no academic literature that seriously or systematically examined the role of the diaspora on Canadian decision-making. The same goes for a deeper examination of other constraints such as Canada's dependence on its American relationship, the question of funding or the role of public opinion. Nevertheless, these ties suggest that Canada has a vested interest in finding a solution to the conflict in Ukraine.

As mentioned earlier in the section on “Diplomatic Responses” to Russian involvement in Ukraine, the previous Conservative government gave moral support to Ukraine, criticized Russia for violating international law, and imposed economic sanctions on Russia. Prime Minister Trudeau has since continued to argue that Canada stands with Ukraine against the “illegal, illegitimate incursion of Russia into Ukraine’s territory”. As will be examined below, Canadians have also sent in police and military personnel to Ukraine to train local officers and soldiers and Canada has contributed to the above-mentioned NATO Trust funds. Furthermore, Canada has given \$16 million in non-lethal equipment and promised another 7.25 million by 2019.<sup>73</sup> Overall assistance, including development, financial, humanitarian and non-lethal, has exceeded \$700 million since January 2014.<sup>74</sup>

The mostly uncritical grey literature on the topic of ‘diplomacy and Ukraine’<sup>75</sup> is dominated by the arguments that the Canadian commitment does not go far enough and that the large gap between rhetoric and reality (in terms of financial and military commitments) under Prime Minister Harper may currently be smaller than it was but that it still exists under Prime Minister Trudeau. This is despite Trudeau’s dispatch of Canadian troops to Latvia as part of the NATO effort to deter Russia from further advances. However, this critique that Canada is not doing enough may well soften, after Trudeau moved forward in October 2017 on a Harper initiative to allow Canada to export certain weapons to Ukraine<sup>76</sup> and the House of Commons also unanimously passed a bill, Canada’s version of the Magnitsky Act, titled Justice For Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, which targets the property (assets, holdings, wealth) of corrupt officials “who have committed gross violations of internationally recognized human rights”.<sup>77</sup> Russia has responded by adding more Canadians to its sanction list, continuing the downward spiral of diplomatic relations.

Our literature review shows a clear gap (in knowledge and debate) about Canada’s policy objectives towards Ukraine, and little long-term consideration about how policy will, or should, evolve if Russia (and Ukraine) stay the course. While some continue to argue that we need to show more will and capacity to meet the “Russian challenge”, another interpretation, that the Canadian government’s rhetoric has been too aggressively negative about Russia and that the lack of diplomacy is counterproductive, is rarely addressed in the literature. Yet some are now

arguing in favour of the ‘normalization’ of Canadian ties with both Ukraine and Russia, and calling for a strategy which allows Canada to pursue long-term engagement with both.<sup>78</sup> This increasingly vocal minority (some with expertise on Russia) argues against moralizing about Russia and criticizes policies which they believe only punish or coerce Russia. Meanwhile, others argue that Canada should be more focused on the Ukrainian leadership and countering corruption; the question is how effective outside pressure can be. There seems to be less controversy to the claims that Canada needs to be careful to “mean what it does say” (i.e. not to give false promises to Ukraine), and to allow Europeans to lead any efforts in response to Russia.

The literature on Canada’s military relationship with Ukraine is also relatively uncritical. The Canadian Armed Forces has a mission in Ukraine, operation UNIFIER, which exists within the broader multi-lateral coalition framework. Since September 2015, Canada has contributed 200 CAF members to training Ukrainian soldiers in specialized military skills including medical training and explosive ordnance disposal, with plans to support institutional reform of Ukraine’s defence establishment. Canada is a lead nation supporting the NATO-Ukraine Trust fund on command, control communications and computers<sup>79</sup> and a contributor nation in the Trust fund on logistics and standardization.<sup>80</sup> The sparse literature here considers the Canadian mission useful and even indispensable<sup>81</sup>, but does not question its limited time frame or the fact that it is only serving as a supplement to what is projected to be 45,000 troops from allied countries. Though Canada has recently extended the operation through to March 2019, analysts suggest that Canadian responses will continue to be limited and cost effective. Despite being war weary after Afghanistan and generally reluctant to send large numbers of troops or engage long term in military operations, Canadian public opinion is shown to be sympathetic to the argument that we need to support our friends and allies. At least one article (by US military personnel) praises Canadian training of Ukrainian military as effective.<sup>82</sup> However, overall, there is agreement that Canada needs to stay involved longer in order to see results in terms of stabilizing the region. We found no significant literature on Canada’s role within NATO on Ukraine and no discussion about how much NATO is involved with the individual efforts of member states, how the involvements benefit the alliance, or how they affect NATO-Russian relations in Ukraine and beyond.

Here a real question remains about Canada's specific goals beyond doing what is perceived to counter future Russian aggressions. On Crimea, for example, there is some agreement that it will remain part of the Russian Federation, and many Russia experts agree that there "will be no more Crimeas" (i.e. the Baltics are very different from Crimea, which Russia could annex for comparatively low cost, low risk and high reward). If this is understood to be the case, then Canada should stop the rhetoric that we are going to "get Crimea back" (and even reconsider our involvement in Latvia). Then on the issue of Eastern Ukraine, is our goal to stop the fighting? Or to persuade Russia to leave? The reality is that the conflict in the east of Ukraine is still a civil war (80 percent of the Donbass militia are Ukrainians) even if Russia has become more involved over time, directly and indirectly. As seen above, Russia's intentions remain controversial, but many experts now agree that Russia will continue to pursue autonomy for the Donbass region by destabilizing Ukraine, as it has in past "separatist conflicts" in Georgia and Moldova.<sup>83</sup> Canada might be better off using its economic and military leverage and diplomatic persuasion (perhaps through the OSCE) to get Kiev, Donbass militias and Russia to the negotiating table and seriously consider the option of sending in peacekeepers to Ukraine. Otherwise, Canada is, in effect, supporting the continuation of the status quo (a civil war with external Russian and NATO involvement) and most likely the effective 'Transdniestriazation' of the Donbass, i.e. it will become another de facto independent state on Russia's border.

## **Conclusions**

### ***Future Research***

Our study shows that there is significant need for much more academic work on almost all aspects of "NATO and Canadian responses to Russia", and the author of this study plans to hold a future workshop to consider the merits of specific future studies. Our literature review finds that experts on NATO and Russia-specific experts need to collaborate and to engage more with each other's literature. There is a need to develop careful methodologies to answer some of the key questions, for example about Russia's specific intentions; to test assumptions about Russia upon which NATO/Canada's policies are founded; and to examine root causes of

Russia's discontent and alienation. Researchers could fruitfully examine language and concepts as consistency is required for clear strategy.

Second, Canada is already responding to a series of hybrid challenges that academics (and sometimes policy experts) are not yet carefully addressing. There is a significant lack of critical literature on both Canadian responses and on the implications for Canadian security and foreign policy of the 'changing nature of warfare'. For example, what is the proper role for liberal democratic government in responding to hybrid challenges? What can or should Canada's government do in face of hybrid threats and what can civil society do? What is the role of our special forces and intelligence? How is Canada's strategy evolving, and how should it evolve, in response to 'shifting battlefields' and what are the consequences? What are the lessons learnt from Canada's role in counter-insurgency in the Middle East and Afghanistan that have been or could be applied in new approaches to future wars?

One idea to consider is the establishment of a Canadian Centre for Hybrid Threats that would include academics and government officials and military, journalists, lawyers, members of think tanks and NGOs. Such a centre would address the multiple knowledge gaps – academic and policy – revealed in this study. It would address the lack of evidence-based knowledge and the uncertainty about challenges such as cyber-attacks and information warfare or propaganda from Russia and elsewhere, and would consider different options in response. Participants would collaborate to analyze and clarify definitional, conceptual and ethical controversies about hybrid challenges; identify and critique hybrid tactics that threaten Canada and Canadian security; examine the merits and challenges of possible responses and make recommendations; compare our strategies with those of other countries; and engage in careful, long-term assessment in a holistic fashion.

Third, there is little knowledge on Canadian decision-making and its constraints and it would be helpful for academics to critically examine other governments' decision-making processes, governing styles and their limits. What role do various constraints ("middle power", funding, public opinion, role of diaspora) play in our policy-making? What is Canada's unique role within (or alongside) NATO and NORAD? What separates Canadian from US interests?

### ***Policy Implications***

Our findings have clear implications for decision makers. The literature tends to examine each response to Russia separately. However, they are increasingly interrelated and need to be addressed holistically in order to develop better policies. Our 10 policy recommendations follow.

*Recommendation 1.* We need better understanding of Russia's strategic concerns, its specific intentions and 'red lines' in order to develop better policy responses. Russian multifaceted actions have serious ramifications for NATO and Canada, but its specific intentions, which vary by region, remain largely unknown. Our policymaking needs to take Russia's threat perceptions and interests in stability carefully into account to understand what provokes Russia and where the 'red lines' are. We also need to better understand how actions and responses by NATO or Canada will influence or provoke Russia. To be blunt, policy does not occur in a vacuum and one needs to be aware of other actors' perceptions, intentions and policies too. A first step to accomplish this would be to train, consult and hire more Russia/Eurasian experts to explore the exact nature of the "Russian threat" or challenge and the relationship between its capabilities, intentions and actions in specific regions. University programs on Russia that were cut at the end of the Cold War should be restored. Our interviewees at NATO Headquarters, Global Affairs and the Department of National Defence all recognized that diminished capacity in this regard is a serious problem for these departments/organizations, which ought to be addressed.

*Recommendation 2.* We need more strategic thinking that is specific about Canada (and Canada in NATO)'s objectives. Our current defence policy (June 2017) outlines current threats and challenges. We now need more debate and (open) detailed knowledge about how they are evolving and how exactly they affect Canadian security, interests and values. What are Canada's long-term (10 or 20 year) objectives re Russia and Ukraine? Are they to deter Russia (for how long and where and how exactly)? Should Canada's goals also be to stabilize the region and to help end fighting in Ukraine? If so, what specific policies will meet those objectives in the long-run? The challenge is to respond in a holistic manner that takes into consideration the wider context. Global governance is evolving and Russia is determined to retain influence in its former Soviet region and to be a key diplomatic global player. How can Canada help Russia fit into this new world and how can we, or should we, engage with it in the long-term?

*Recommendation 3.* Canada needs a new and more realistic and balanced diplomatic approach to Russia to break the current confrontational cycle. Isolating Russia is counterproductive and opposed to the government's commitment to diplomacy and multilateralism. We need a functioning forum for dialogue at time of escalating crisis and we need to increase contacts generally between NATO and Russia, and Canada and Russia. NATO and Canada should at minimum keep the door open and reassure Russia of our intentions. We need to think creatively about how to engage with Russia in strategic dialogue long term on issue of mutual interest in global security (e.g. arms control, outer space). Canada should continue engagement in the Arctic Council, kick-start dialogue on specific issues at the NATO-Russia Council, and consider incentives (as opposed to punishments) to get Russia to engage more productively in global governance. Overall, Canada needs to balance its important critique of the Russian state with a more realistic and less zero-sum rhetoric.<sup>84</sup>

*Recommendation 4.* There are many reasons for Canada to continue to contribute troops to Eastern Europe and Latvia as part of NATO, but there are also reasons to question the effectiveness of that approach. We should take further steps to reassure Russia of our intentions there. As well, there is a need to re-evaluate our perceptions and contributions. Partly because new technologies have changed the nature of warfare, NATO and Canada need to be significantly more precise about the specifics of their own conventional and non-conventional responses and 'red lines'. How credible and effective are Canadian troops in deterring Russian military and hybrid actions, and can the rules of engagement be made clearer?

*Recommendation 5.* The probability of a strategic exchange between Russia and the West is still unlikely but it has increased. There is a significant gap in understanding when Russia might use nuclear weapons, especially in a time of increased tensions and conflict and with no forum for dialogue. Better understanding is required about how Russia perceives military asymmetries with NATO. Canada and its allies could champion a restoration of the conventional arms regime in Europe that eroded over the last years to the point that it exacerbates the poor relations with Russia. Canada could also help to launch a NATO study on deterrence in the current context, and encourage the Alliance to work toward nuclear disarmament, a policy stance it has embraced but done little to operationalize.



*Recommendation 6.* Canada should create a Canadian Centre on Hybrid Threats which would combine different government departments and agencies, academics, lawyers, journalists and NGOS to examine these complex challenges in a holistic manner. The entire spectrum of deterrence needs to be systematically re-thought and other new responses considered alongside more traditional ones. There is a large research gap here and governments are already responding. Canada should also discuss the merits of developing a doctrine and comprehensive strategy on hybrid warfare. Hybrid warfare is not just a new buzzword. It is rightly identified in the new Defence Policy (June 2017). Yet Canada is lagging behind some on this issue (which includes conventional and non-conventional warfare) and needs to continue its recent efforts to be more open and clear about what is happening in this area (for example, in information warfare and cybersecurity) in which there are multiple controversies and unknowns. The literature shows that we need more open knowledge about which are “real threats” and which are not; how they are evolving and affecting Canada (and our allies) or not; and how exactly we are going to respond (and which will trigger Article 5).

*Recommendation 7.* On cyberwarfare, at the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO officially recognized that cyberspace is a ‘domain of operations’ in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea.<sup>85</sup> This has led to speculation that some kinds of cyber-attacks could or should trigger Article 5. This is very controversial and brings up many questions. At present, the ambiguity about a cyber-attack meeting the standard of an ‘armed attack’ has been left deliberately vague, but this stance may be counterproductive if one wants to bring some predictability and moderation to bear in any future cyber conflict. Also, recent developments suggest that NATO is going beyond a purely defensive posture to incorporate offensive capabilities. Here Canada could lead a NATO study into this issue of what constitutes an “armed attack” and the Article 5 threshold, and into concerns that any moves from defence to offence in the cyber sphere have the real potential for collateral damage and asymmetric retaliation.

*Recommendation 8.* On the topic of “information warfare”, Russian digital hacking and manipulation and dissemination of false information is increasingly perceived as a real threat. This report recommends creating Centre for Hybrid Threats which would consider Canada’s

responses (in light of both Canada's recent defence policy and CSE document on cyber threats to Canada's democratic process). It would include many branches of government, think tanks, academia, journalists, NGOs and would make this a public issue in the following fashion. 1. Research: Examine the debates and controversies in the literature around information warfare and propaganda. Collect evidence about what is occurring and compare global responses. We need a new conceptual framework to understand how war is changing because of social media. States are using the internet to spread narratives and counternarratives. At the same time, power is being shifted to networks of individuals. 2. Prevention: a) education: teach critical thinking, how to identify fake news and recognize origin of narratives; train journalists and support media literacy; support cyber courses taught by NGOs. b) build resilience through positive stories about identity and soft power. Counter propaganda with truth and democratic debates. 3. Offensive Responses: Discredit and expose examples (or strategy) of manipulation or lies (expose while protecting freedom of speech) and challenge the credibility and veracity of claims. When evaluating and responding to Russia's narratives one needs to be careful about providing accurate and careful context to allegations, to support free speech and democratic debate, and not to fall into our own propaganda. Domestically, it is important for Canada to shore up its own political system and values at home.

*Recommendation 9.* On Ukraine, there are many questions about Canadian involvement. We need more sophisticated awareness of the complex dimensions of this conflict to better respond. We should consider dropping the rhetoric that Ukraine is going to get Crimea back, while at the same time continuing to support Ukraine and adopting active efforts to end the violence. Canada's non-lethal aid is important but should be continued with the overarching goal of stability with Russia. Instead of rigid posturing, Canada's value added is in diplomacy, security training and peacekeeping. Canada therefore should be trying to get Kiev, Donbass militia (and Russia) to the negotiating table, and perhaps sending in peacekeepers before Donbass becomes a de facto independent state (such as Transdnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia). To have a chance of sustained success, peacekeeping needs the agreement of all the major parties to the conflict. Compromises, including finding a way for Russia to "save face", may be needed to stop

the war and hostilities long enough to achieve a long-term solution. Canada could find a way to contribute through the OSCE.

*Recommendation 10.* NATO and NORAD face many constraints, America's global role is increasingly uncertain, and while we should sustain North American and Transatlantic cooperation and coordination, we need to clarify the specifics of our roles and relationships within these organizations, our relationship with the US, and when and where Canada can and should act independently.

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## Notes

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- <sup>3</sup> Interviews for this report took place in Ottawa on May 16-18, 2017 and on September 29, 2017; in Brussels June 27-28 2017; and in The Hague on June 22, 2017.
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- <sup>12</sup> See, for example, David Carment and Dani Belo, "Canada and Russia: No Room to Manoeuvre", Canadian Global Affairs Institute, October 2017. These views were also expressed under Chatham rules at the CASIS conference in Ottawa on September 29, 2017.

- <sup>13</sup> Details of these talks were provided at our interviews in Brussels at NATO Headquarters June 27.
- <sup>14</sup> For example, Oksana Antonenko and Batian Giegerich, “Rebooting NATO-Russia Relations”, *Survival*, 51, No. 2, 2009, 13-21; Andrej Krickovic, “When ties do not bind: the failure of institutional building in NATO Russian relations”, *Contemporary Security Policy*, 37, No. 2, July 2016, 175-199.
- <sup>15</sup> Elena Kropatcheva, “NATO-Russia Relations and the Chinese Factor: An Ignored Variable”, *Politics*, 24, No. 2, June 2014, 149-160.
- <sup>16</sup> Kristian Atland, “Interstate Relations in the Arctic: An Emerging Security Dilemma?”, *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 33, No.2, 145-166. 2014)
- <sup>17</sup> Andrea Charron, “Canada, the Arctic, and NORAD: Status quo or new ball game?”, *International Journal*, Vol. 70, No. 2, 2015, 215–231; James Manicom, “Identity Politics and the Russia-Canada Continental Shelf Dispute: An Impediment to Cooperation?” *Geopolitics*, 18, 2013, :60–76; Kari Roberts, “Why Russia will play by the rules in the Arctic”, *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 2015. Vol. 21, No. 2, 112-128.
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- <sup>19</sup> Andrea Charron, “Canada, the Arctic, and NORAD: Status quo or new ball game?” *International Journal*, Vol. 70, No. 2, 2015, 215–231.
- <sup>20</sup> Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, Jon, “The Ukraine crisis moves north. Is Arctic conflict spill-over driven by material interests?” *Polar Record*, Vol. 53, No. 268, 2017, 1–15.
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- <sup>24</sup> NATO, “Boosting NATO’s presence in the east and southeast,” NATO, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_136388.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm?selectedLocale=en) Last Updated: 11 Aug. 2017.
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- <sup>52</sup> Rod Thornton, "The Changing Nature of Modern Warfare." *The RUSI Journal*, 160, No. 4 (2015): 40-48, DOI: 10.1080/03071847.2015.1079047
- <sup>53</sup> In this context, the passing of a bill in the US Senate this September for a 700 billion dollar defence policy that includes a call to fight Russian propaganda (and start building a new cruise missile) can be assumed to negatively affect Russian security thinking and possibly lead to future aggressive moves.
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- <sup>61</sup> See Rod. Thornton, "The Changing Nature of Modern Warfare." *The RUSI Journal*, 160, No. 4 (2015): 45. NATO STRATCOM Centre of Excellence, "History," NATO (2017), <http://www.stratcomcoe.org/history>
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