



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on October 5, 2023

Lithuania Wants NATO's "Security Umbrella" to Cover Ukraine

On October 3, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis posited that NATO's security guarantees must cover Ukraine, urging the West, which has supplied hundreds of billions of dollars to Ukraine, to adopt a tougher position on aiding the Kyiv regime to triumph over Russia in the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict.

"Ukraine must become a NATO member. NATO's transatlantic security umbrella must also protect those countries that were left in the gray zone of geopolitics," Landsbergis declared at a security conference in Warsaw, based on statements from the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry.



AP Images
Gabrielius Landsbergis

Kyiv's supporters in its conflict with Russia "must do everything to keep Ukraine within its 1991 borders on this side," Landsbergis insisted, while praising Germany for agreeing to permanently deploy 4,000 troops in Lithuania. "Efforts to strengthen the eastern flank depend on our will to defend ourselves," he added.

"When we are saying that we will help Ukraine for as long as necessary, why can't we clearly state that we are seeking the victory of Ukraine? The victory of Ukraine must be a strategic goal for us all," Landsbergis contended.

Article 5 of the NATO Charter stipulates that an armed assault on one member is automatically regarded as an attack against all other members.

While NATO countries have constantly vowed to continue in their military support to Kyiv, they have yet to give Ukraine a clear blueprint to full membership in the alliance. Ukraine formally applied to join NATO more than a year ago, but still has not received a tangible roadmap for joining the bloc.

In July, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky blasted NATO's failure to offer Ukraine a roadmap to membership as "unprecedented and absurd." At that time, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken proclaimed that Kyiv could not join the bloc "in the midst of a war" with Moscow.

Russia has repeatedly stressed that NATO's eastward enlargement and the bloc's military collaboration with Kyiv were among primary reasons for its conflict with Ukraine. Moreover, Moscow has cautioned that military aid to Ukraine would mean that NATO members are also involved in its conflict with the Kyiv regime.

On October 2, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius declared in an interview with the news outlet ERR that Germany and Lithuania are cooperating on setting up a timeline for the mobilization of German soldiers to the Baltic state. Some weeks back, Pistorius previously declared that Berlin hoped to deploy as many as 4,000 troops to Lithuania, which already is host to around 1,500 German troops as



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part of a NATO battlegroup.

In the recent ERR interview, Pistorius stated that the bilateral decision was to display “solidarity and responsibility in the East Wing.”

While Pistorius admitted that there was still work to be done before the soldiers could be mobilized, he assured that Germany and Lithuania are slated to have a blueprint on how to move forward by the end of November or early December.

“For example, infrastructure. We need barracks, warehouses, training areas, in addition to civilian infrastructure for military families. This is a serious challenge for Lithuania, but also for us. This is unprecedented for the German Bundeswehr [armed forces]. We’ve never done it like that, deploying an entire brigade overseas,” the minister added, indicating that Germany hopes to see the brigade set up by the end of next year.

Also, Pistorius highlighted that German soldiers who would go to Lithuania as part of this unit must do so voluntarily, and that Berlin must explore ways to convince servicemen and their families to relocate to Lithuania. The minister continued, saying that Germany hopes to take some pointers from the U.S. and U.K. militaries in order to do so.

Referring to Germany’s views about Russia, Pistorius stated that Russia was “a temporary threat,” but did not say Berlin’s view would change in the near future. “It would be like looking into a crystal ball,” he said, adding that it will likely be this way “at least for the next few years.”

In June, Germany signed its first-ever National Security Strategy, which, quoting the Ukraine conflict, portrayed Russia as the “greatest threat to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area” and a force that undermined both the regional and global order.

Moscow, in response, has posited that it was the West’s hegemonic desire to encroach upon its interests and territories that eventually sparked the conflict in Ukraine, as well as contributed to worsening relations between Russia and the West.

On October 2, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock proclaimed that Ukraine’s future “lies in” the EU, elaborating that the bloc would soon include regions that had joined Russia in 2022 but are still claimed by Kyiv.

“[The EU] will soon stretch from Lisbon to Luhansk,” Baerbock told journalists on the fringes of the EU foreign ministers’ meeting in Kyiv.

Additionally, Baerbock claimed that “every village ... every meter” the Ukrainian troops grab from Russian forces brings Kyiv nearer to EU membership. However, the German politician did not indicate any detailed blueprint for Ukraine’s potential accession to the bloc.

Luhansk is the capital of the Luhansk People’s Republic — one of the two hitherto eastern Ukrainian regions that broke away from Ukraine in 2014 after the Western-backed Maidan coup in Kiev.

In February 2022, Russia recognized the region’s independence, right before the start of its military operations in Ukraine. In autumn 2022, the Luhansk People’s Republic joined Russia, along with three other former Ukrainian territories after a slew of referendums.

For its part, Kyiv has never acknowledged the results of the vote and slammed the referendums as a “sham.” It still deems the four territories — as well as Crimea, which rejoined Russia in 2014 after a referendum — as part of Ukraine.



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Moscow has maintained that it was ready for negotiations with Kyiv, but only if the “reality on the ground” is acknowledged, including the four regions’ choice to join Russia.

Formerly, Bloomberg reported that some EU member states have reservations about Ukraine joining the bloc. In September, Politico reported that the EU regarded Ukraine as a “very corrupt country,” elaborating that the prevalence of corruption could dampen its membership prospects.

On its end, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said that Russia would have to join the EU for Baerbock’s statements that the EU would span all the way “from Lisbon to Lugansk.”

“It’s either us joining the EU or she forgot about the requirement to turn by 360 degrees,” Zakharova posted on Telegram, alluding to some of Baerbock’s previous remarks.

Zakharova was referring to the mistake that Baerbock made in February when she called on Russian President Vladimir Putin to “change by 360 degrees” his stance on Ukraine, which was merely urging Russia to keep its current position.

Likewise, Dmitry Belik, a member of the Russian Parliament’s Committee on International Affairs, told Izvestia newspaper that Baerbock’s remarks about Luhansk being in the EU are a “figment of the sick imagination” of the German FM because the city is and will remain a part of Russia.

Belik added that Germany’s top diplomat “continues to add to her collection of absurd statements, which speaks of her incompetence and confirms the difficulty of seeking compromise with such politicians.”



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