

Putin's Nuclear Red Line

by Manlio Dinucci,* Italy



Manlio Dinucci
(Photo ma)

Russia has announced the transfer of nuclear weapons to Belarus. Contrary to what one might think, this is not a particularly aggressive attitude on the part of Russia, but rather a defensive countermeasure to the deployment of nuclear weapons by the United States

on Russia's borders. If Moscow had wanted to respond equally, it would have installed its nuclear warheads in Cuba.

"Russia will deploy its tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus at Minsk's request", President Vladimir Putin announced. "In reality – he clarified – we are doing everything that the United States has been doing for decades."

Moscow points out that the United States has placed its tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, in six NATO countries: Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Turkey, and Greece (they are not currently in Greece, but there is a depot ready to receive them).

The B61 nuclear bombs – in Italy they are located in the bases of Aviano and Ghedi – have now been replaced by the new B61-12, and the US Air Force is already transporting them to Europe.

Their characteristics make them much more lethal than the previous ones: each bomb has 4 power options depending on the target to be hit, is directed to the target by a satellite guidance system, and can penetrate the ground to destroy enemy command centre bunkers. The US will probably deploy the B61-12 also in Poland and other NATO countries even closer to Russia.

* Manlio Dinucci is an award-winning author, geopolitical analyst and geographer living in Pisa, Italy. He is a research associate at the Canadian Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG).

Three NATO nuclear powers – USA, Great Britain, France – and four US nuclear-armed NATO countries – Italy, Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands – participate in the "Baltic Air Policing"¹ operation in the Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland airspace, with aircraft that can carry tactical nuclear weapons.

In addition to these aircraft, U.S. B-52H strategic bombers Air Force carry on nuclear warfare training missions in the Baltic region, and other European areas bordering Russian territory. The European Allies have made 19 airports available for such missions. The United States, having torn up the INF Treaty, is also preparing intermediate-range nuclear missiles to be deployed in Europe.

To this offensive deployment, the bases and ships of the Aegis "missile defence" system deployed by the US in Europe are added. Both ships and land-based Aegis installations are equipped with Lockheed Martin Mk 41 vertical launchers which – the manufacturer itself documented – can launch not only interceptor missiles but also cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads.

After the US and NATO rejected all Russian proposals to stop this increasingly dangerous nuclear escalation, Russia responds by deploying nuclear bombs and intermediate-range missiles in Belarus close to US-NATO bases in Europe ready to be armed with nuclear warheads.

Source: <https://www.voltairenet.org/article219117.html>, 4 April 2023

¹ "Baltic Air Policing" was created in 2004 after the admission of the Baltic states Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Since then, 8-10 Nato fighter aircraft from various countries have been permanently stationed at the air bases Šiauliai in Lithuania and (since 2014) Ämari in Estonia.

Further article on this topic:
<https://swiss-standpoint.ch/news-detailansicht-en-international/nuclear-green-pass-the-bomb-for-italy-comes-out-in-may.html>