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Latvia Claims Russian Military Aircraft and Vessels At Its Borders

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All three Baltic states — Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia — have repeatedly expressed their concern regarding Russia's increased military presence in the Baltic region.

Latvia's armed forces have alleged that two Russian naval ships, a submarine and a military transportation aircraft were lurking on the edge of the country's territorial waters, adding to numerous reports of Russia's military presence near its neighbors' borders.

The ships, identified as a Ropucha-class landing ship and a Parchim-class corvette, were spotted in the Baltic Sea some 5.2 nautical miles (9.6 kilometers) from Latvia's territorial waters, the Latvian military wrote Sunday on its official Twitter page. A kilo-class submarine was almost among the Russian military watercraft detected by the Baltic state.

That day, Latvia also claimed that a Russian military transportation aircraft, an Antonov An-22, was flying close to its border above the Baltic Sea.

In March, Latvia reported that two Russian submarines and a naval ship were prowling near its territorial waters. Similar incidents were also reported last month.

All three Baltic states — Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia — whose governments have been among the most virulent critics of Moscow's perceived role in the Ukrainian crisis, have repeatedly expressed their concern regarding Russia's increased military presence in the Baltic region.

Amid growing apprehension surrounding Russian military activity on its eastern border, Estonia launched Monday the largest military exercise in the history of its armed forces, local media reported.

Lithuania's Foreign Ministry said in a statement last week that it had summoned the Russian ambassador to Vilnius, Alexander Udaltsov, to complain about Russia's alleged naval activity in the country's exclusive economic zone.

Lithuanian officials claim that Russian military ships have entered their country's exclusive economic zone four times since March, incursions that have been interpreted as an attempt to disrupt the construction of the NordBalt, an underwater power cable that will link Lithuania to Sweden.

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