

Swedish Military Chief Says Russian Jets Released Flares

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Supreme Commander Sverker Goransson

STOCKHOLM — Sweden's top military commander says Russian fighter pilots are behaving in an increasingly aggressive manner in northern Europe, flying dangerously close to Swedish Air Force jets and in some cases even releasing flares at them.

Supreme Commander Sverker Goransson told a seminar on the Swedish island of Gotland on Monday that the Russians are breaking the normal rules of conduct for when military aircraft meet in the air.

He said examples include Russian planes breaking formation, flying at unsafe distances and using "countermeasures" that "nearly bounce off the metal" of the Swedish aircraft.

The Swedish military on Tuesday confirmed he was talking about decoy flares designed to divert incoming missiles.

Goransson said he believes their behavior is "sanctioned at the highest level. Otherwise they

wouldn't act this way."

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