

Russians Fear Clashes With Islamic State More Than With NATO – Poll

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NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg (L) and Supreme Allied Commander Europe General Phillip Breedlove hold a joint news conference at the Supreme Headquarters Of Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE) in Mons.

Nearly one in five Russians believe their country could become the site of “major clashes” with NATO forces within the next decade, a recent poll indicates.

According to the poll, 19 percent of respondents said battles against NATO were possible on Russian territory.

An even higher number, 28 percent, think that battles between Russian and NATO forces could occur outside of Russia's borders during the next decade, a survey released on Saturday by the independent Levada Center pollster indicated.

About half of respondents for both questions said such conflicts were unlikely, while the rest were undecided.

The possibility of battles with Islamic State militants was considered more likely by Russians.

“Major clashes” taking place overseas between the Russian army and Islamic State were viewed as a possible development by 59 percent of respondents, the poll indicated.

Battles against Islamic State within Russia were considered possible by 33 percent, Levada reported.

Some Russians also feared an armed conflict with China. Major clashes with Chinese forces beyond Russia's borders were viewed as possible by 13 percent of respondents, while clashes within Russian territory were viewed as possible by 11 percent, the poll indicated.

The poll was conducted on Nov. 13-16 among 800 adults in 134 cities and towns around Russia, and gave a margin of error of no more than 4.1 percentage points.

Islamic State is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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