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U.S. Jets Monitor Russia's North Atlantic Submarine Drills – Interfax

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Lev Fedoseev / TASS

U.S. aircraft have performed long flights over parts of the Norwegian Sea where the Russian Navy is performing submarine drills, Interfax reported Thursday, citing aviation monitoring data.

Norwegian military intelligence said last month that at least eight Russian nuclear-powered submarines sailed out to test NATO's ability to discover them. The Barents Observer reported that these were the first such maneuvers by the Northern Fleet to take place since the Cold War.

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Three Poseidon P-8A maritime patrol and reconnaissance jets took off from their base in Iceland and cruised for hours between Greenland, Iceland and Britain, Interfax reported.

Greenland, Iceland and the United Kingdom form a so-called GIUK gap, a strategic area that NATO member Norway worries Russia could seize in order to block Western troop movements and reinforcements.

The U.S.-made Poseidons, Interfax reports, have performed near-daily patrols of the area since the Russian submarines sailed out of their homeport in the far northwest Kola Peninsula.

Last week, two nuclear-powered submarines involved in the drills reportedly simulated a "duel" during the tactical drills in the Barents Sea.

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