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Russia 'Outguns' Britain and NATO in Eastern Europe – Report

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The British military would be "outgunned" along NATO's eastern flank in the event of a conflict with Russia, according to a think tank report cited by the BBC on Wednesday.

The London-based Royal United Services Institute's assessment comes after the head of the British army warned earlier this month that Russia could inadvertently trigger a third world war. In the weeks leading up to NATO's 70th anniversary, French President Emmanuel Macron has called the military alliance "brain dead" and urged Europe to regain its "military sovereignty" from the United States.

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"NATO artillery is outgunned, outranged and outnumbered," RUSI said ahead of the full report's publication Friday.

The Russian artillery would easily overpower the 800 or so British troops stationed in Estonia and the limited NATO artillery in the region, BBC cited the RUSI report as saying.

Britain needs to upgrade its ground-based artillery as an "urgent and critical priority," the think tank was cited as saying.

Britain's defense ministry responded in a statement that it "does not stand alone but alongside its NATO allies" in deterring threats, BBC reported.

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"As the largest NATO defense spender in Europe, the UK's armed forces are well equipped to take a leading role in countering threats," the ministry was quoted as saying.

NATO members perceive Russia's missile deployments in Kaliningrad, the country's Baltic exclave between Poland and Lithuania, as a threat. Russia has accused NATO of unjustified military buildup near its borders.

Tensions between Russia and its Western neighbors have run high since Moscow's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014.

Britain has tested its ability to cause mass blackouts, including in the Kremlin, if Russia encroached on neighboring Estonia or attacked British troops, the Sunday Times newspaper reported last year. Russia promised a "severe" response in return.

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