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Russia Escorts U.S. Bomber Over Baltics

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Russia's National Defense Management Center said crew members on a Sukhoi Su-27 fighter identified two B-1B strategic bombers and escorted them over the Baltic Sea. **Vitaly V. Kuzmin / Wikicommons**

A Russian fighter jet on Wednesday was scrambled to escort nuclear-capable, long-range U.S. bombers flying over the Baltics, the Russian military said.

The U.S. Air Force said earlier that one bomber had flown over the capitals of NATO members Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in a show of solidarity with allies.

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Russia's National Defense Management Center said crew members on a Sukhoi Su-27 fighter identified two B-1B strategic bombers and escorted them over the Baltic Sea, Interfax reported.

"The Russian fighter jet returned safely to its home airfield after the foreign military aircraft turned away from the state border," the defense center added.

The Russian defense center noted that the U.S. Air Force bomber flew over neutral waters and did not cross into Russian territory.

The Russian military also stressed that the Su-27 flew "in strict accordance with international airspace rules."

Reuters reported Wednesday that the B-1B bomber is one of four, and the first aircraft of its type, deployed to NATO founding member Norway last month to operate in the Arctic.

"We're in this together," Gen. Jeff Harrigian, U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa commander, was quoted as saying.

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