

Introductory remarks - Online conference: THE BALTIC SEA – A SEA OF PEACE, 14 June 2025



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- Founding principles of our network: „The Peace Alliance North Germany“ and about the the purpose of the conference
- Developements in the Baltic Sea, the danger of escalation from economic warfare to a „shooting-war“ - and about the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982)
- Recommendations & questions to discuss in this conference

I. Founding principles, background and first actions of our network

The „The Peace Alliance North Germany“ is a broad, non-partisan network, a platform, founded in December 2023. We coordinate peace activities of different lokal and regional peace alliances along the four northern German federal states, along the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. - All the participating peace organizations continue to act autonomously, on their own responsibility according to their own objectives with their own actions and public appearances. In **actions of the „Peace Alliance North Germany“ expressly agreed upon together**, we limit ourselves to the positions and issues formulated in our founding declaration, which you can find on our website, also in English.

We decided in our annual meeting in November 2024 this conference THE BALTIC SEA – A SEA OF PEACE against the following background:

- The blowing up of three Nord Stream pipelines in September 2022. This was an act of war against the elementary energy supply of Germany and Europe. Together with the economic war against Russia – EU-sanctions in violation of international law – it has boomeranged into the downfall of the German economy.
- Our ports, roads, rail-lines and other civil infrastructure were abused to an ever greater extent for military purposes and transports of heavy military equipment of foreign countries.
- In 2024 NATO started huge military drills, the biggest since 1988, called „Staedfast Defender 2024“, aimed at building up military forces on the „Eastern Flank of NATO“, the border regions to the Russian Federation. The territory of Germany is intended in NATO to be a major logistic and support hub.

Against this background we decided in our annual meeting in November 2024

a. to organize this online conference to address the militarization of the Baltic Sea together with peace activists of the neighboring countries of the Baltic Sea.

b. in order to initiate and support networking activities of peace activists. We are very thankful for the help we got from the IPB (International Peace Bureau), especially our friend Reiner Braun and his broad network, which led to some of the following contributions in this conference.

II. Some words about the current situation in the Baltic Sea, the danger of escalation from an economic warfare to a „shooting-war“.

Just on Tuesday 10th of June 2025 the European Commission, since its beginning in obvious close coordination with its masters in NATO, has just unveiled its 18th sanctions package against Russia targeting again oil exports, revenue streams, and lowering the - already failed - price cap on Russian oil.

As we know, this requires the consent of all involved European countries, which is less and less the case. As the Financial Times comments, [quote] *"the EU faces an uphill battle to pass its 18th Russia sanctions package"* [end of quote]. A growing majority of the people in Europe anyway oppose more and more these unelected bureaucrats in Brussels. Macron, Merz and Starmer are isolating themselves more and more from their own electorate in the respective countries.

The perpetrators of the so-called "Russian shadow fleet" are EU politicians, starting with their 6th sanctions package, which came into force in December 2022. In this package, the EU Commission decided - as always without consulting the national parliaments - to ban

[quote] *"the direct or indirect purchase, import or transfer to Member States of crude oil and certain petroleum products originating in or exported from Russia, as well as a ban on the insurance or reinsurance of the transport of these goods by sea to third countries."* [end of quote]

The Russian response to the Western oil sanctions was not long in coming. All kinds of shipping companies were just waiting to fill their tankers with Russian oil under all kinds of colorful flags, either directly in the ports of the Baltic Sea or by pumping the oil on the high seas. - In just a few weeks, this resulted in a fleet for crude oil comprising 600 freighters. This corresponds to around a quarter of the world's available capacity.

In October 2024 the German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius - in breach of the Two Plus Four Treaty of 1990 - opened in Rostock (in East Germany) the so called „Commander Task Force Baltic (CTF Baltic)“ which in fact is a NATO naval headquarters coordinating NATO's military actions in the Baltic Sea.

As we speak - the annual NATO naval drills BALTOPS takes place, of course coordinated by the CTF Baltic staff in the Hanseatic Barracks in Rostock. - We should not be surprised about the Russian reaction: Naval military drills in time also in the Baltic Sea. - As always the official narrative uses these reactions to western provocations as evidence for an alleged intrinsic Russian aggression.

Remember: In December 2024, 2.000 soldiers from NATO countries practiced a blockade of the Gulf of Finland. The obvious aim of the operations, known as “Pikne” (“Lightning”), was to control the departure of ships from St. Petersburg, Kronstadt and Ust-Luga or, in an emergency, to prevent them from leaving. NATO already sees this emergency as a given in connection with the so called „oil shadow fleet“.

The next decision came into force in January 2025 at a summit of NATO member states in Helsinki, with military measures against Russia

[quote] *“to protect critical underwater structure”* [end of quote].

The so called „NATO-Operation „Baltic Sentry“. - Bare in mind: Damage to submarine cables worldwide is not uncommon, in contrast to the capture of ships by NATO-countries, using this argument.

NATO is accusing Russia of sabotage against „critical underwater structure“?

Let us remember: The CIA, on the orders of the President of the United States Joe Biden, blew up the North Stream pipelines near the Danish Island of Bornholm in September 2022. According to Seymour Hersch we can be quite sure about that. By the way – Biden publicly announced the destruction of North Stream on February 7, 2022 in the presence of the duped German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Washington.

War propaganda just repeats on and on such absurd, one-sided accusations in order to achieve a turnaround in public mind and build an image of an aggressive Russian enemy. Against this constructed enemy – European power elites tell us - we have to defend ourselves with extensive armament with billions of our tax money and simultaneous cuts in pensions and wages, education and social services.

NATO countries are already using its Coastguard and even warships to control and possibly capture merchant ships with oil coming from Russia in international waters in the Baltic Sea. The actual propaganda – shamelessly even using Greenpeace investigations and publications - declare those merchant ships – designated as „shadow fleet“ - to be too old and a danger to our environment. - Of course we agree to **international and commonly agreed** measures to protect our Seas and Oceans.

But in this case these measures are ONLY a cheap pretext for acts of piracy in the Baltic Sea without any international legal base, violating the Freedom of the High Seas.

Incidentally, Russia can look back on 550 years of history in the dispute over open sea access. The Russian reaction is now the accompaniment of merchant ships by Russian Naval Forces in the Baltic Sea, so that now every conflict in the Baltic Sea on this issue could escalate into acts of war.

What is completely missing, is diplomacy and the will to negotiate about international rules. EU and NATO is violating the Freedom of the High Seas, also in the Baltic, codified in the Articles 87–90 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, UNCLOS from 1982. This is the primary international treaty, governing maritime rights and navigation, allowing free an unhindered passage of all ships, even naval vessels, also in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ, 12–200 nm) in the narrow passages in the Baltic Sea.

The Peace Alliance Northern Germany resolutely opposes the further militarization of our Baltic Sea by NATO. Instead of economic war and acts of piracy, the people in Europe need diplomacy, negotiations, global economic cooperation, and finally a peace agreement with the Russian Federation.

III. Finally some recommendations and questions to discuss in this conference:

- What countries are involved in provoking and escalating? What interests play a role? What kind of war preparations can be observed in the countries around the Baltic Sea.
- What kind of propaganda are we confronted with? What is real, what is pure constructed manipulation?
- Why did the governments of countries with good experiences in neutrality in the past decades, like Sweden and Finland, decide to join NATO and allow US-troops to be stationed on their territory, i.e. allow the use their ports and airports by foreign troops?
- What is the historical, the geopolitical and the socio-economic background?
- How can diplomacy and negotiations prevail again, as 1975 and 1990?
- How can win-win-trade and cultural exchange be promoted?
- How can peace-loving people in the countries bordering the Baltic Sea work together to free the Baltic Sea from the grip of NATO and – in the long run - make the Baltic Sea a sea of peace?
- How can the peace movement in the countries bordering the Baltic Sea promote the peaceful perspective of an effective and common security architecture in Europe and in the Arctic as well?

Thank you for your attention!