

COMBAT CAPABILITY OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S MILITARY FORCES - MYTH OR REALITY?

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Abstract *The annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, the military actions in eastern Ukraine in what is commonly known as hybrid warfare, the power demonstration of the Russian Armed Forces in Syria and the reported incidents in different places at the NATO borders have been and continue to be so many concerns for the Alliance, USA and many European chancelleries.*

How justified are these fears? What is the real combat capability of the Russian Armed Forces?

The study aims, by comparative analysis of data published by recognized experts to identify with reasonable accuracy, the scale and potential effects of the current Russian military power.

Keywords: Russia, NATO, military forces, combat capability, power.

Introduction

Misunderstandings that have dragged on between Russia and NATO remain unresolved for decades. Meanwhile, the “great bear of the East”¹ has accumulated a number of complaints (related to Euro-Atlantic structures eastward enlargement, including former Communist states) which

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¹ The brown bear in Russia’s vast territory is one of the symbols of Russian rule since the sixteenth century. See details: A. Rossomahin, D. Khrustalyov, *Russia Medvedev: Origins imaging (XVI-XVIII centuries)*, in: *Borders: Almanac of the Center for Ethnic and National Studies of ISU*, Vol. 2: Visualization of the nation, Ivanovo, Ivanovo State University, 2008, URL: <http://cens.ivanovo.ac.ru/almanach/rossomahin-khrustalev-2008.htm#2>, accessed on 24.05.2016.