DISKUSSION & DEBATT

The Security of the Nordic Countries in a Multipolar World

by Jan Foghelin

There are already a number of unsolved conflicts in the High North of concern for the Nordic countries. Climate change/ global warming in combination with e.g. an increasing competition for natural resources could generate new conflicts.[1]

A re-emerging assertive Russia could also cause complications in the Nordic area and its vicinity.[2]

A multipolar world

The not so successful Iraqi operation and the ongoing financial crisis have reduced the USA influence in the world. Simultaneously the powers of China, India and Russia have been increasing. The world order is moving in a multipolar direction.

External support to the Nordic countries in case of conflict

EU:s solidarity clause and NATO:s article 5 seem to guarantee support in case of conflicts. There must however be a will to give support and – most important – available resources, which could be used (adequate type of resources, suitable readiness, and means of strategic transport). Shrinking military resources and engagement in other

1 Bill, H.: "Machtdemonstrationen in Eismeer. Die Arktis und die Interessen der Anrainerstaaten",*ÖMZ* 3/2008 p 275-288.

Granholm, N (ed); *Arktis – strategiska frågor i en region i förändring* (in Swedish. The Arctic – Strategic Issues In a Changing Region) FOI-R–2469–SE. Underlagsrapport, January 2008.

Strategic Survey 2008. The Annual Review of World Affairs. IISS. Routledge. London, pp 58-72. Towards a Wider High North? Strategic Issues in a Changing Arctic.

2 Larsson, R.L.(ed.): *Det kaukasiska lackmustestet: Konsekvenser ochlärdomar av det rysk-georgiska kriget i augusti 2008*. (In Swedish.The Caucasian Test Case: Consequences an Lessons Learned of the Russian-Georgian War in august 2008) FOI-R--2563--SE Underlagsrapport. September 2008

Lukyanov, F.: "Implications of the Georgia-Russia War for Global Politics. # 3, 2008", *Moscow Defense Brief*, pp 7-8.

Rothacher, A.: "Russlands Militär heute. Der Aufbau der russischen Streitkräfte als neue strategische Herausforderung für den Westen". *ÖMZ.* 5/2008 pp 577-584.

places could make support difficult even if there is a good will.[3]

A three layer strategy for security of the Nordic Countries

- Layer 1: Conflict resolution by peaceful agreements negotiated in adequate fora.
- Layer 2: Strong territorial defences. [4]
- Layer 3: Memberships of EU *and* NATO. Persuasion of EU-members and NATO nations to get support in case of need.[5] Only will is not enough. Contingency planned resources are also necessary. It is time for NATO (and EU) to return home.[6]

To really improve the security all three layers are needed not only one or two.

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3 Held, B. and Quinlivan, J T: "Reality Check for Defense Spending". *RAND REVIEW*/Summer 2008 p 21.
Kirkpatrick D.: "The Gathering Economic Storm and its Impact on UK Defence". *RUSI*, Commentary 2008-10-15.

4 This is not the same as sending troops to Africa taking part in international operations.

5 Offerdal, K.: "Det norske nordområdeinitiativet og USA: Utenriks- eller energipolitikk?" (In Norwegian. The Norwegian High North Initiative and the USA: Foreign or Energy Policy?) *Internasjonal POLITIKK*. Vol 66/nr 2-3/September 2008: 349-372.

6 Coker, C.: "Why NATO Should Return Home. The Case for a Twenty-First Centuary Alliance". *RUSI* August 2008. Vol 153 No. 4 pp 6-11.