



Wolf in Bear's Shadow: Baltic States Crisis Simulation



GREY ZONE CRISIS SIMULATION
6-7TH APRIL 2017 – UNIVERSITY OF HULL
BRETT THOMAS

UNIVERSITY OF HULL WAR STUDIES SOCIETY

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Simulation Overview	3
Overview of the “Grey Zone”	4
Structure of the Simulation.....	5
Operation of Turns.....	5
Press Team	6
God Team Structure.....	7
Delegation Structure	8
Simulation Timing	9
Thursday, 27 th of April:.....	9
Friday, 5 th of May:	9
Saturday, 6 th of May:.....	9
Sunday, 7 th of May:	10
Crisis Simulation Delegation Awards	11
Contact Information.....	11

Introduction

This crisis simulation aims to engage delegations in the matters of geopolitics, foreign policy, international relations, and grey zone warfare in specific regards to the Baltic Region. The Baltics has been a historical point of contention for Russia and remains so in today's contemporary political environment. With Russian gains in Crimea and marked involvement in the Syrian civil war, attention has been drawn towards other areas of potential competition.

Hull University War Studies Society is a pioneer regarding interactive crisis simulations. In the past, we have conducted simulations on the Ukrainian Crisis, the Horn of Africa, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and the liberation of Mosul. As a society, we strongly believe that the crisis simulations we hold help develop knowledge and understanding in the field of politics, IR, and strategic studies. This crisis simulation will provide you with much needed skills such as leadership, strategic planning, interpersonal communication, and project oversight. In addition to that, crisis simulations are always a fun experience where you get to meet lots of new people, expand your personal and professional network and gain new insight on a variety of topics.

You will be working as a team, discussing issues, and constructing policy and strategy. Remember your nations best interests, consider your aims and act rationally. Be sure to remember that other delegations will be working actively, often contrary to your aims and objectives. Consider your actions carefully and don't automatically consider escalation as being in your best interests. Much is at stake for your delegation, it is your duty to pursue a positive outcome for your nation, good luck.

Simulation Overview

The matter of the Baltics has been of some consternation for some time, but has never arisen as a prominent issue. There is increasing concern however during the contemporary climate towards potential Russian ambitions in the area.

The Baltic states are composed of Estonia – known to have Finnic related ethnicity – and Latvia and Lithuania – of ‘true’ Baltic ethnicity. All three nations are members of NATO & the EU as well as being liberal democracies. Both sides in the simulation have historically seen the region in very different lights. Western states see them as true independent states that were never part of the Russian state or Soviet Union, Russians however may perceive these matters differently.

Seeing Grey Zone Operations as a distinct threat in the contemporary environment, NATO has reaffirmed an approach befitting of global dominance. The US continues particularly to play a crucial role as the major superpower in the International System supported by other valuable allies. The US and western allies such as the UK have all deployed forces to the Baltic Region, this comes under NATO Operation Enhanced Forward Presence. These forces operate in several key roles in support of their local allies. However, their numbers are still quite small, not truly intended to hold back a full tilt Russian incursion. In this role, they serve an important function in reassurance of Baltic allies and in deterrence against Russian offensive action. It isn’t a large force, but it may well reaffirm the notion that should aggressive Russian action occur, there will be a definitive NATO response¹. However, there have been clear criticism of the plan, suggesting that it serves neither as a legitimate deterrence due to the small size, nor could it at all effectively prevent a rapid overrunning of the Baltic States². Indeed, RAND has voiced concern, stating “NATO’s current posture is woefully inadequate to resist a Russian attack on the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania³”. Apparently, more needs to be done to be truly effective in both deterrence and reassurance, as well as assuring legitimate capability to NATO forces should the worst-case scenario occur.

Russia in light of the affairs surrounding Syria and the Crimea has continued to press against NATO utilising the “Grey Zone”. The Baltics is just one region in contention, Russia has been employing slow but steady measures in the Arctic region to name one. Indeed, it would be wrong to think there is a desire to launch a large, conventional campaign across the European plains, which could well occur with any large-scale action in the Baltics. Therefore, as policy: “Russia is using multiple instruments of power and influence, with an emphasis on non-military tools, to pursue its national interests outside its borders⁴”. This is prevalent in the contemporary environment, with Russia utilising Information Warfare, Cyber capabilities, proxies, economic influence, clandestine measures, and political influence⁵. These efforts must be tempered with consideration of increasing measures employed by the Baltic States to counter and improve defences against these measures.

¹ International Institute for Strategic Studies, *NATO’s Enhanced Forward Presence: Reassurance and Deterrence*, (2017). Available Online: <http://www.iiss.org/en/militarybalanceblog/blogsections/2017-edcc/february-7849/natos-enhanced-forward-presence-d261>

² D. A. Shlapak & M. Johnson (RAND Corporation), *Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO’s Eastern Flank: Wargaming the defence of the Baltics*, http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1253.html

³ D. A. Shlapak, (RAND Corporation), *Deterring Russian Aggression in the Baltic States: What it takes to Win*, (2017). Available Online: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT467.html>

⁴ C. S. Chivvis, (RAND Corporation), *Understanding Russian Hybrid Warfare: And what can be done about it*, (2017). Available Online: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT468.html>

⁵ Ibid

Overview of the “Grey Zone”

The Grey Zone is essentially: ‘Operating in the space between traditional diplomacy and overt military aggression⁶. It is employed typically by weaker, more aggressive states with geopolitical ambitions – essentially a case where the West with the US, UK etc. react to enemies such as Russia, China and Iran. These techniques generally seek to attain goals in a more gradual, less obvious, and somewhat less violent means⁷. This of course aims at subverting the major conflict threshold under which Western conventional superiority could well play out to their detriment.

Of course, Grey Zone conflict represents a new branding, a new overarching concept for methods of warfare that have been around for a long time. This essentially covers economic coercion, social undermining, information warfare and so on. To further quote War on the Rocks:

“Gray zone strategies pursue political objectives through calculated and integrated campaigns to achieve specific and often quite ambitious goals within a certain period of time. In spirit and execution, they are more like military campaigns than the diffuse ebb and flow of diplomacy, but they employ mostly non-military or non-kinetic tools. They strive to remain under key escalatory thresholds. And, finally, they are willing to edge gradually toward their objectives rather than making an all-out grab.”⁸

Grey Zones, reflecting conflict in a non-kinetic manner often concerns the social dimension of warfare and competition. One particular targeting concerns social support, and its undermining in contemporary practise. When concerning wars that General Sir Rupert Smith may call “Wars amongst the people” there is significant importance in exploiting political and social factors for competitive advantage. Here one may encounter the use of information warfare and undermining of popular support for action. Certainly, when it comes to conflicts involving the grey zone, it is truly ‘neither war nor peace, but instead... somewhere in between⁹. Actions are typically, and aimed to remain, below the military response threshold. Overt warfare is typically not sought; indeed, such is too high an escalation. It is a method of reaping gains without crossing boundaries and exposing practioners to penalties and risks of aggressive escalation¹⁰.

Special Operation forces are designed, trained, and equipped to deal very effectively with the lower ‘Gray’ Conflict spectrum¹¹. Though further to this should come ‘specialised conventional capabilities¹². These capabilities are being developed to aid in effectively reacting and acting within the lower spectrum of warfare/conflict. However, due to the modern nature of how western states go about pursuing warfare, a light footprint – particularly aimed in terms of public support – is very much preferred. This can particularly be said to concern the utilisation of drones, long range missiles

⁶ M. J. Mazarr, (War on the Rocks), *Struggle in the Gray Zone and World Order*, (2015). Available Online: <https://warontherocks.com/2015/12/struggle-in-the-gray-zone-and-world-order/>

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ N. Bensahel, (Foreign Policy Research Institute), *Darker Shades of Gray: Why Gray Zone conflicts will become more frequent and complex*, (2017). Available Online: <http://www.fpri.org/article/2017/02/darker-shades-gray-gray-zone-conflicts-will-become-frequent-complex/>

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ D. Barno & N. Bensahel, (War on the Rocks), *Fighting and winning in the Gray Zone*, (2015). Available Online: <https://warontherocks.com/2015/05/fighting-and-winning-in-the-gray-zone/>

¹² Ibid

and air strikes in western doctrine around the world today. Greater attribution of men and material may be difficult in scenarios where a very much “boots off the ground” is taken¹³.

Structure of the Simulation

Operation of Turns

The main form of acting during turns will occur via God Team action requests. These requests can take several forms as indicated below. Delegation members are responsible to assisting their delegation and taking appropriate action as per their specific role.

Messages to the God Team in the simulation will take four distinct forms that must be identified in the heading of requests sent to the God Team. Requests must be made via the delegation director or given to the God Team directly with explicit approval of the delegation director. The forms consist of the following:

- Directives – Also known as action plans – are the main form of writing in a crisis committee, or the most widely recognized. They consist of orders and actions that the committee wants to take. Flowery language is frowned upon because the point of an action plan is quite clear, to act and not waste time with verbiage. Directives can consist of bullet points that delineate specific actions to be taken by the appropriate body. Directives need to be specific: vague orders can result in a variety of problems for the writer of the directive. These include looking ridiculous in front of your committee, miscommunication leading to consequences that were not intended, and more. The best directives are those that are not just approved by a large majority of the committee, but those that also prove an in-depth knowledge of the situation at hand.
- Communiqués – Are messages from the entire committee to another country, organization, person or group of people. These facilitate dialogue with relevant actors in a crisis. Communiqués often include negotiations, threats, and requests for aid or support but are not limited to those topics. Keep in mind that a communiqué needs to be just as well worded as a directive; furthermore, this is the place for your inner linguist to shine! The tone of a letter can absolutely change the meaning of it.
- Press Releases – Are similar to communiqués in the fact that they are sent from the committee as a whole; the difference lies in the fact that a press release is addressed to the public. Press releases can help sway the opinions of the public or provoke public reactions to crises at hand.”
- Portfolio requests – Are actions taken unilaterally by members of the committee. Since you are representing Sec. of Defence for the purposes of this tutorial, your portfolio requests are limited to powers that the person acting as Sec. of Defence exercises in real life. Portfolio requests are by definition taken without the consent of the committee as a whole. For example, if the committee failed the example directive above, or if you did not want the committee-at-large knowing what passed, then you could send in a portfolio request detailing the same orders. You could only do that if you had the power to do so; in other words, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve could not exercise portfolio powers associated

¹³ P. Lohaus, (War on the Rocks), *A missing shade of gray: political will and waging something short of war*, (2017). Available Online: <https://warontherocks.com/2017/01/a-missing-shade-of-gray-political-will-and-waging-something-short-of-war/>

Due to the nature of the simulation, the God Team is looking for measures short of mass military action, though remember that a situation of stable peace is certainly not in place. The grey zone, competitive nature of the simulation should be a foremost consideration when deciding how to act. Be prepared to respond directly to other delegation's actions as well as events dictated by the God Team rather than other participants.

Press Team

The Press Team acts differently to the two regular delegations, members do not follow the same procedures as the other delegates. The press team largely operates autonomously, with matters concerning publishing, querying and so forth being dealt with via the team director. It is generally encouraged that the press team utilises a private twitter handle created specifically for the crisis games that everyone involved can tap into. This is also to prevent any external confusion and isolating the reporting to the members of the crisis games only.

The Press team will need to apply through the God Team to meet specific delegation members officially, but of course can freely seek brief comments from delegation members as events begin to occur. It is additionally encouraged that Press team members seek God Team clarification and confirmation on any matters of fact on exactly what is going on. Before printing an article or piece on a specific event, check with the God Team to clarify that it is true and has occurred within the games. For matters of military manoeuvres, the war correspondents can discuss on goings with delegation members but can also enquire through the military coordinators. It will most likely be the case that military coordinators have the whole story as the delegations attempt to decipher the fog of war.

Of course, as members of the press, delegations can decline meetings and they have the right to do so, you also have the right to react appropriately of course. Particularly when significant events begin to arise quickly, the press can request clarity on the matter from the God Team. The God Team can give away as much or little information about the situation as they wish, but they will be fair in the matter.

God Team Structure

A new system of God Team organisation has been put in place, changing from the old system of one God team member per delegation. The new system utilises God Team members in numerous specialities.

Lead God Team Members: Lead Crisis Director – John Mimmack Lead Crisis Architect – Brett Thomas		
Political Coordinators: NATO – Simeon Bradstock Russia – Jack Wright	Diplomatic Coordinators: Overall – Chesney Ramsdale NATO – Michael Fischer Russia – Andreea Argenesau	Military Coordinators: NATO – Matthew Handisides Russia – David Allot-Rawson
Delegation Directors: Russia Director – Barney Sadler NATO Director – Adrian Smith Press Team Director - Vacancy		

Military Coordinators shall handle relevant military forces of both sides during the simulation. For this simulation, it is appropriate to have a dedicated coordinator for each delegation. Whilst full conventional warfare is not in the scope of this simulation, one cannot discount the utilisation of military force, direct and indirect. Military coordinators due to the less militaristic nature of the simulation will determine effects of forces via their personal expertise, research, mapping and with assisting technical aids.

Diplomatic Coordinators shall handle and process results for all diplomatic affairs, actions etc. within the simulation. A coordinator shall each be dedicated to the delegations and will have some autonomy in deciding the results from action requests etc. per their delegation. They operate as regular God Team members with an increased emphasis on advising and producing results from non-military delegation action, relevant to the wider simulation.

Political Coordinators shall largely handle domestic political affairs within the situation. Each coordinator will advise on domestic activity during the crisis and additionally be sought where relevant to implement dynamic events for the delegations to respond to, per their states domestic politics.

Delegation Structure

Both delegations begin with an initial 9 places, however more roles are prepared should demand for places be higher than initial figures allow. These delegation position compose of the following:

NATO Council Delegation	Russian Cabinet Delegation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• US Secretary of State• UK Foreign Secretary• Polish Foreign Minister• German Foreign Minister• Estonian Foreign Minister• Latvian Foreign Minister• Lithuanian Foreign Minister• Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR)• Deputy Supreme Allied Commander (DSACEUR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• President• Foreign Affairs Minister• Defence Minister• Energy Minister• Intelligence Chief• Chief of Staff of the Russian Armed Forces• Aide to the President• Communications Minister• Ambassador for Belarus

Press Team Delegation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BBC Executive Director• BBC Foreign Correspondent• BBC War Correspondent• RT Executive Director• RT Foreign Correspondent• RT War Correspondent

Simulation Timing

Turns will be 30 minutes long, after which there will be a 20-minute period of God Team processing. This gives sufficient time for delegations to come up with appropriate, effective courses of action, react to events and for the God Team to adequately calculate and process said orders.

These turns will represent approximately a week in the scenario. This therefore will create an atmosphere where initiatives can be pursued and actions of all types taken appropriately. Military operations of course in this manner will not be truly real-time. However, be assured that even if no orders are given, military units will not just stand idle should a situation develop.

No action requests should be made in the first hour. The purpose of this “truce period” is to coordinate strategy and take stock of starting conditions etc. It is important to define your delegations aims and objectives, as well as perhaps considering the means and methods to go about achieving them. With strategy making, due attention must of course be paid to current postures and ongoing efforts. With sufficient background reading, a strategy can at least be generally outlined with relevance to present circumstances in the Baltics.

Thursday, 27th of April:

Guest Speaker Chris Bellamy will be discussing matters surrounding the contemporary setting that is the Baltics. He shall be providing insight into the history of the region, the political background to events in the Baltic and into matters of Russian hybrid warfare. This shall occur from 3:00PM – 5:00PM in the University of Hull Wilberforce Building.

Friday, 5th of May:

On Friday, there will be a short talk & reception including a short talk by Professor Caroline Kennedy and brief presentation on the structure of the crisis simulation and what is expected from participants. This shall occur from 6:00PM onwards in the University of Hull Wilberforce Building

Saturday, 6th of May:

Hours – 9:00 AM Start	Turn Details
9:00 – 10:00	Preparation Hour – Team Introduction, Assurance of Logistics & Delegation formation of strategy and objectives
10:00 – 10:30	Official Start, submission of first orders
10:30 – 10:50	God team processing of results & orders
10:50 - 11:20	Standard Round
11:20 – 11:40	God team processing of results & orders
11:40 – 12:10	Standard Round
12:10 – 12:30	God team processing of results & orders
12:30 – 1:00	Standard Round
1:00 – 1:20	God team processing of results & orders
1:20 – 2:20	Lunch Break
2:20 – 2:50	Standard Round
2:50 – 3:10	God team processing of results & orders
3:10 – 3:40	Standard Round
3:40 – 4:00	God team processing of results & orders
4:00 – 4:30	Standard Round
4:30 – 4:50	God team processing of results & orders
4:50	End of Day One

Sunday, 7th of May:

Hours – 9:00 AM Start	Turn Details
9:00 – 10:00	Preparation Hour – Review of Previous Day, Assurance of Logistics & Delegation Consolidation
10:00 – 10:30	Official Start, submission of first orders
10:30 – 10:50	God team processing of results & orders
10:50 - 11:20	Standard Round
11:20 – 11:40	God team processing of results & orders
11:40 – 12:10	Standard Round
12:10 – 12:30	God team processing of results & orders
12:30 – 12:45	Shortened Round
12:45 – 1:00	God team processing of results & orders
1:00 – 2:00	Lunch Break
2:00 – 2:30	Final Round
2:30 – 2:50	God team processing final of results & orders, final outcome decided
3:00	End of Day Two, End of Simulation
3:00 Onwards	Review of Results & Awards Ceremony

Crisis Simulation Delegation Awards

At the end of the simulation, each delegation will be asked to nominate one delegate to identify as the best delegate of their team. The best delegates will come to committee with a strong understanding of current events, as well as being able to effectively suggest means and methods to succeed in achieving delegation aims. Delegates should also have a clear understanding of their delegations' priorities in the contemporary environment. Undoubtedly background research and reading will facilitate this understanding.

There is no objectively "right" way to react to the situations the delegations will face. Instead, delegates will be evaluating the decision-making processes, creativity, and persuasiveness of members of the committee. Important points to consider are:

- Did the delegate do basic research on Russia/NATO, the Baltic Situation, and his/her specific area of focus?
- Did the delegate make effective choices given the information s/he was given?
- Did the delegate provide innovative solutions to problems faced by the committee?
- Did the delegate persuade others in the committee (including the chair) to adopt these solutions?

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding the scenario conceptually or mechanically, feel free to contact the Crisis Architect: Brett Thomas at bt3545@hull.2015.ac.uk

For external involvement and interest in the simulations, contact: John Mimmack