



Russian hybrid threats: NATO urges calm. Denmark reports growing risks.

Rutte assures that the Alliance has adequate plans in place, while Danish intelligence reports a greater willingness to take risks.

Published on 25/09/2026

NATO has adequate plans to deal with sabotage and drone incidents in Europe. This was stated by Secretary General **Mark Rutte**, who urged citizens of Allied countries to remain calm.

The remarks come as the **Danish Defence Intelligence Service** warns that Russia could intensify its hybrid campaign against the West and NATO.

The Danish assessment includes destructive cyberattacks against essential functions of society and sabotage carrying a high risk of casualties. However, it does not identify open conflict as imminent.

Copenhagen flags growing risks

In its new risk assessment, published Thursday, Danish intelligence said Moscow has become **more risk-tolerant**. The campaign could include sabotage, cyberattacks, disinformation, and other unconventional tools.

Such actions may be intended to destabilize a country, test its defenses, drain its resources, or influence public opinion. Attributing responsibility can be difficult.

An interactive **Associated Press** map of incidents classified as hybrid attacks shows an increase from **59 in March 2025** to more than **200** at the time the source was published.

The Danish service also identifies a «low but increasing» risk that Russia could launch a limited military attack against one or more neighboring NATO countries. According to the assessment, this could occur in the coming months.

The presumed objective would be to divert European resources from support for Ukraine and fuel divisions within the Alliance. However, the same agency specifies that there are **no indications** of a large-scale invasion of one or more NATO countries.

Rutte: NATO has options

Rutte said the Alliance can handle sabotage incidents and those involving drones. «All response options are available, and we will use those required,» he said during a ceremony in New York.

The secretary general believes that the increase in hybrid incidents in NATO countries signals Russia's difficulties in the war in Ukraine. This is his assessment, not a conclusion contained in the Danish report.

According to Rutte, the most effective response is to provide additional weapons to the **Ukrainian armed forces**. «Putin is in a difficult situation,» he said, adding that the Russian president is not winning the war.

The conflict in Ukraine has entered its **fifth year**. Rutte directly linked military support for Kyiv to the Western response to hybrid pressure attributed to Moscow.

Warsaw fears disguised attacks

Polish Prime Minister **Donald Tusk** has also expressed concern. The previous week, he warned that Russia may be planning hybrid attacks using drones or missiles against European countries supporting Ukraine, including Poland.

According to Tusk, Moscow could portray similar incidents as «accidental.» The aim would be to paralyze, or at least weaken, the allies' willingness to intervene in defense of an attacked member country.

The Polish prime minister's forecast remains separate from the assessment of Russia's military posture. Officials from **NATO and the European Union** note that Russian forces are heavily committed in Ukraine.

The same officials report that no unusual military activity has been detected near European countries bordering Russia. This factor contributes to cautious assessments regarding the possibility of an imminent conventional attack.

Washington warns against overreaction

The U.S. ambassador to NATO, **Matthew Whitaker**, said that the current number of incidents does not indicate that a conflict is imminent. His remarks came during an event in Iowa also attended by Rutte.

«I do not believe the volume we have reached means we are at the beginning» of a conflict, Whitaker said. He added that escalation would be in no one's interest.

The ambassador also urged against overreacting to hybrid activities. «We have not reached that threshold,» he said, while not ruling out the need to closely monitor how the incidents develop.

The picture that emerges therefore combines **a growing hybrid threat** with the current absence of signs of an imminent invasion or conflict. NATO, Denmark, Poland, and the United States place different emphasis on the issue, but they distinguish the danger of sabotage from the prospect of open war.

News link: <https://www.military.com/nato-chief-calls-for-calm-as-intel-agency-warns-russia-may-ramp-up-hybrid-attacks>