

Evening conference  
23 January 2025  
17:00 - 18:30

Dr Łukasz MAŚLANKA (*senior fellow, Centre for Eastern Studies*)  
Mr Jacek TAROCIŃSKI (*research fellow, Centre for Eastern Studies*)

Dear Madam, Sir,

On the occasion of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union starting in January 2025, the **Royal Higher Institute for Defence** and the **Centre for Security and Defence Studies** are pleased to invite you to an **evening conference** organised on **Thursday 23 January 2025 from 17:00 until 18:30**.

Few countries are exposed to the security challenge posed by Russia as directly as Poland. Poland borders the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad and Moscow's ally Belarus and its national history clearly shows what risks are at stake: Russia has partially or fully occupied Poland several times in its history. After the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, the country became deeply integrated into the European and transatlantic security architecture and joined the EU and NATO.

After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Poland has played a crucial role in Europe's response. It was one of the first countries to send heavy armour in support of the Ukrainian armed forces. It relieved pressure of Ukrainian public institutions by opening its border for hundreds of thousands of refugees. Moreover, Polish logistical facilities are essential to push military support into Ukraine. Warsaw has also embarked on a stellar shopping spree of military equipment and is set to dramatically scale up the size of its armed forces.

Clearly, Poland's rise as one of the big military powers in Europe has a profound impact on the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and NATO's approach to deterrence and defence. In this conference, we will consider the extent to which Poland's remilitarisation causes challenges and opportunities for cooperation between the EU and NATO.

To address these issues, we are pleased to welcome Dr Łukasz Maślanka and Mr Jacek Tarociński, researchers of the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW) based in Warsaw.

This conference will take place **in English** on **Thursday 23 January 2025 at 17:00 in the conference room at campus Renaissance** (entrance: **rue Hobbema 8/Hobbemastraat 8, 1000 Brussels**). A simultaneous interpretation in Dutch and French will be provided in the conference room. It will not be possible to follow the conference online. However, subject to the consent of the speakers, a recording of their presentations will be made available afterwards on our website.

We thank you in advance for registering via the following link: [www.defence-institute.be](http://www.defence-institute.be). **Registration by Thursday 16 January 2025 at the latest is compulsory.**

(Signed)

Baudouin COPPIETERS DE GIBSON, MSc Eng  
Rear Admiral (LH)  
Director-general  
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

**Programme:**

16:30	Welcome
17:00	Conference and Q&A
18:30 – 19:30	Reception