

## **The Military Role of the Kaliningrad Region in Security Concepts of the USSR and the Russian Federation**

### **Summary**

Vladimir Putin's Russia is a country with strong aspirations to rebuild its superpower position in the world. In this process, the Kaliningrad Region and its military strength play a significant role. At the same time, this region is an important element of the foreign policy and security of the Russian Federation, and due to its geographical location, it is a key element of Russia's political and military influence on the Western countries. The region also plays an important economic role, and the Russian Baltic Fleet often carried out activities supporting the economic development of the region and the country. After the takeover of power by Vladimir Putin, the significance of Kaliningrad increased even more, and the area itself plays an important role in the New Defense Doctrine of the Russian Federation. A tendency visible for years, relating to the region, is to increase the military position of the Kaliningrad Region together with increasing aspirations of imperial power by the Kremlin.

**Keywords:** Kaliningrad, Central-Eastern Europe, European security, Western policy of the Russian Federation

Russia has been directly controlling the largest part of the World for several hundred years. Its enormous expanses and potential for wealth, as well as the way in which authority uses these strengths, is very important in today's globalizing world. Interest in the Russian Federation is particularly stimulating the changes that have been made in the political scene in recent years, especially now after the annexation of Crimea, the Donbas War, as well as engaging in conflicts in the Middle East. Since the time of Peter I, tsarist Russia has played the role of the World Empire, which after a revolutionary cataclysm tried to change the world to its likeness, being a superpower already. This intention failed on the threshold of the last decade of the past century. The inefficient empire collapsed and the Russian Federation emerged in 1991.

After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia was faced with the need to answer a number of fundamental questions, especially about its future as a state and superpower, about the way of the future social and economic development, and finally about their relationship towards former allies from Central and Eastern Europe.

In Poland, the topic of Russia aroused many emotions, which is natural and fully understandable primarily because of the proximity of both countries and the complex history of their bilateral relations<sup>1</sup>. After 1989, Poland set a path to normalize its European status. This path leads through historical reconciliation with Germany and uses favorable geopolitical changes in the East<sup>2</sup>. Although there are still layers of misunderstandings accumulated through the years, mutual claims of injustice and accusations, the important thing for Poland is its place it in the hierarchy of Russian interests. The conviction that friendly Polish-Russian relations depend on good will and resignation from “teasing Russia” is a dangerous illusion. Communist propaganda has persuaded us for decades that Russia and the Russians were the Polish allies throughout our history. Meanwhile, even a cursory analysis points to something quite different. It is difficult to find a period of good cooperation with Russia in Polish history (unless we consider the period 1944-1994 as such). There has always been a conflict of interests between our countries throughout history. The invitation for Polish politicians to Moscow more often resembled a call than a proposal<sup>3</sup>. The whole Polish history of the twentieth century is the history of the invitation to Moscow and the dilemma of “To go or not to go?” Some politicians were coming back, showered with flowers, others with disgrace. What really vary them is a relationship to one’s own people. Some of them rode in the feeling that they represent their nation, their dignity and their good name, others went there on their own account and, as the history teaches, they always had to pay this bill.

Russia’s foreign and security policy is constantly raising discussions and controversies in the world. It changed dramatically after the takeover of power by Władimir Putin in 2000. The President’s goal is the reconstruction of the superpower position of Russia from the Soviet era, mainly based on military strength. By taking advantage of the good times on oil and gas prices, the Russian Federation allocates enormous financial resources for reinforcement. A specific increase in activity occurred after the events of 11 September 2001 in the United States, as well as after the enlargement of the European Union and NATO. There are extremely important processes within Russia that will affect the fate of Europe

<sup>1</sup> A. Stępień-Kuczyńska and J. Adamowski, *Szkice o Rosji*, Łódź–Warszawa 2000, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> P. Grudziński, *Polska – Rosja. Niezgodna i współpraca*, Warszawa 1997, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> D. Baliszewski, *Przeglądanie in Moskwa*, „Wprost”, 1 maja 2005, pp. 82-84.

and the world. The West is fascinated by Russia, but it is also fearful. It is always ready to come with help, even in the interest of its own peace. "The West refuses others, but will always help Russia", says Professor W. Roszkowski.

One of the very important elements in the reconstruction of Russia's spur power position is to enhance the military strength of the Kaliningrad Region.

Kaliningrad, which after the World War II was incorporated into the Soviet Union, played and plays a very important role in the foreign policy and security of the USSR and the Russian Federation.

It is the western most part of the Russian Federation, thanks to which Russia has not only an access to the Baltic Sea with the only non-freezing Russian seaport in the Baltic, but also a border with the bulk of European Union, thereby exerting a significant influence on the geopolitical situation in Europe and the entire Western world.

After the Second World War, Kaliningrad was an unknown land. The Kaliningrad Region, the northern part of the former German enclave of Ostpreussen (East Prussia), by the decision of the Potsdam Conference was transferred to the Soviet Union in 1945. "In 1946, Königsberg was renamed Kaliningrad in honor of Kalinin, a faithful colleague of Stalin, known to the Poles for his acceptance of Stalin decisions to kill Polish military officers who were later assassinated in Katyń and other places"<sup>4</sup>. "The decisions to incorporate the city of Königsberg to the Soviet Union were the realization of Stalin's direct ideas, and their unfavourable effects on peace and economic development in this part of Europe are still visible today"<sup>5</sup>.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the region became a separate territory again, now as a component of the Russian Federation. About one million Russians live currently in the region of 15 thousand square kilometers, neighboring Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic Sea, and separated from Russia by a distance of 450 kilometers. Taking over the city, the Soviets displaced the previous German population, and they transformed the city seaport into the main base of the Baltic Fleet of the Russian Navy. From 1945 to 1989, the region was closed to the outside world. Since 1989, Russia has announced various great plans for this region, but they have come to nothing.

In the neighboring Poland, the Kaliningrad Region has always aroused curiosity and interest as something almost exotic. It was just as inaccessible as a distant country in another hemisphere. Poland had no economic, political, cultural relations with the region, and contacts between people were limited to

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, p. 267.

<sup>5</sup> M. Biskupski, *Królewiec a Polska*, Olsztyn 1993, p. 180.

occasional meetings of regional Communist Party or administrative leaders. Occasional contacts claimed to celebrate Communist Party and state holidays. There were no border crossings, and roads in the Northeastern region of Poland ended with barbed wire under tension. This was the border of two friendly countries of the so-called socialist system.

After the year 1990, thanks to wise and predictive people on both sides of the border, the Kaliningrad District was opened to Poland and Europe. The region is a small but important element of the great Russian empire, which after 1991 is an object of observation on the international arena.

In my opinion, the Kaliningrad Region as the western most part of the Russian Federation could play a huge role as a link connecting Russia's economy with other European countries.

The events of recent years have influenced the fate of the region in two ways. On the one hand, the region was separated from the rest of Russia by independent states, which made communication of citizens and transporting essential products to it, such as gas, fuel, building materials or components for industrial production, as well as food products, extremely difficult. On the other hand, the liberalization of foreign trade and the achievement of greater independence is stimulating and support the use of the free economic zone. The part of Russia still located on the Baltic Sea still needs capital and material resources.

The issue of the Kaliningrad Region has become an international problem and through its direct neighborhood with this exclave, is also an important part of Polish foreign policy. This situation is a challenge for Poland, especially in the context of building a coherent European Union strategy for the future of the Kaliningrad<sup>6</sup>.

In the course of the discussion on Kaliningrad, there are many questions about the situation of the region and its significance for the neighboring countries, the real interests and the intentions of the parties involved in the debate and the future of the region.

Since the end of the Second World War, the Soviet Army and then the Russian Army played an extremely important role in the Kaliningrad district. Joseph Stalin, when demanding the northern part of East Prussia into the USSR, was well aware of the fact that it would acquire the only non-freezing seaport on the Baltic Sea, through which the entire Baltic Sea and Poland can be controlled. Immediately after liberation from Nazi Germany, Königsberg was a closed war district. A decision by the State Defence Committee of the USSR on 10 June 1945 created

<sup>6</sup> A. Żukowski, *Polska wobec Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego*, Institute of Political Science, Warmian-Masurian University in Olsztyn, Olsztyn 2004, p. 88.

a Königsberg Special Military District. This decision has become the basis for developing the military future of the region. The establishment of this administrative unit indicated a very important role for the armed forces in preparing the integration of the region into the USSR administrative and economic structure. A provisional management board for civil matters was established in the district.

From the very beginning, the military authorities were in favor of dismantling the surviving industrial facilities and sending them into the depth of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the Provisional Board for Civil Matters was in the position to rebuild the sectors important for the entire economy and create the basis for economic existence here. These differences of interest between the military and the civil authorities were particularly evident during the period of the temporary Civil Administration by V.A. Borisow and First Secretary of the Communist Party's regional committee, P.A. Ivanov. Both were opponents of the "wild disassembly" of the post-German economy and supporters of including the undamaged part of the region's economy into the bloodstream of the Soviet economy. However, the military option prevailed and decided the nature of the region. For military purposes, this option worked for the economy of cities and villages of the Region as well as other industrial enterprises and scientific and research teams that stood out in the USSR with the quality of their products and modern technology. For example, the Kwarts conglomerate of electronics industry produced the most modern rocket electronics and participated in the production of elements for the space program.

From the outset, the Kaliningrad Region was saturated with military structures. In the same regional office of the Ministry of Interior, 2.5 thousand officers served at the end of 1946, and their numbers grew in the following years. The total military personnel in 1947 was estimated at over 100 thousand people. Barbed wire was placed in the regions's borders with Poland and the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic of the USSR. These borders were carefully controlled and this situation lasted until 1990. Some cities of the region have been closed for civilians, for example Baltiysk (formerly Pilau), which was renamed as the headquarters of the Baltic Fleet. For resettled people arriving to the Region, ID cards were issued that were single entry passes. Because of the geographical location, from the military point of view, having the nature of the strategic boundary and the geophysical conditions for stationing all types of armed forces, the Kaliningrad Region began to play one of the main roles in the strategic defense concept of the USSR. From this area, it was possible to conduct combined land, air and sea operations.

One of the first tasks of the army was to rebuild the port in Baltiysk, as well as reconstruction remaining, the post-German Military infrastructure. The military also used a network of German airports that were renovated and modernised. In 1946, 4 air Divisions – 8 MTAD, 1 GSZAD, 9 SZAD, 11 GSZAD – were transferred to the Kaliningrad Region. In total, they constituted 17 air regiments. The flight command was transferred on 25.04.1946 from Palanga (Lithuania) to Kaliningrad. The 1950's were characterized by a new stage for the development of aviation in the Kaliningrad Region. Most of the regiments and divisions were equipped with new MiG15 and MIG17 attack aircraft, as well as the Il28 bombers, and TU16. At the same time in 1952, aviation was equipped with new torpedoes, mines and bombs. The airports, such as Chkalovsk, Dunayevka and Khrabrovo, were also modernized and modernized. The planes were successively equipped with modern weapons. At the end of the 1980's, there was further strengthening of aviation and replacement of aircraft for airplanes SU-24-MP and SU-24-MH. It is also necessary to mention that many aviators from Kaliningrad took part in the space program, and four of them – A. Leonov, B. Patsayev, Y. Romanenko and A. Viktorenko – became cosmonauts. Sixty-threere streets in forty cities of the former Soviet Union were named after the Kaliningrad Regionpilots. Aviation has played a huge role in the combat strategy of the Kaliningrad Region.

In the first years after the war, a unit of the Baltic Fleet was mine clearing the Baltic Sea. From 1945 to 1962, more than 8364 sea mines were destroyed with the help of trawlers.

Very important combat tasks were given to the Soviet Navy after the war. Type C188 and C364 submarines patrolled the Baltic Sea and the North Atlantic. Over time, these boats were exchanged for more modern ones in 1976, new submarines with ballistic missiles, Type A629, were launched for the Baltic Fleet. They were equipped with 3 nuclear combat missiles. The Baltic Fleet was also equipped with 50 type patrol ships, as well as destroyers, missiles and landing ships. Therefore, the operational activities of this Fleet were also intensified and expanded. The Fleet that patrolled the Baltic Sea began to serve in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The special brigades of the Baltic Fleet Track submarines and the TU16 aircraft were used for the tracking of NATO's major forces. At the beginning of the 1960's, the Baltic Fleet was equipped with nuclear cargo. It received submarines, missile ships and aircraft equipped with nuclear weapons. This was a response to the appropriate nuclear equipment of NATO troops. The troops of the Baltic Fleet as well as the land forces were innovated all the time. In 1975, 50 percent of naval and terrestrial units were equipped with such armament.

Underwater project boats, Type 613, were exchanged for atomic submarine Project 641 and 661, and patrol ships Project 50, for patrol ships Type 70. In this way, the Baltic Fleet comprehensively fulfilled the task of combat service in the armed forces of the USSR. NATO treated the Fleet as a very dangerous opponent.

Ground troops were formed from the 11th Guards Army, under the command of Gen. Col. K. N. Galitskiy, who took part in the assault and the capture of Königsberg. Initially, they consisted of 23rd Guard Armored Brigade, and 260th, 348th and 338th motorized artillery brigades. The main command of the 11th Army was located in Kaliningrad on Komsomolskaya Street. These troops, in accordance with the military doctrine of the USSR, were used to defend the coast, ports, shipyards and air bases against possible enemy landing. In a short time they were ready to take offensive actions in case of danger. Throughout the period of 1945-1990, they were successively equipped and armed with more and more modern equipment. In the 1960's, rocket troops were equipped with nuclear weapons.

The military potential found in the Kaliningrad Region far outweighed the defense needs of this region. In favor of the Kaliningrad group front aviation units based on the areas of the neighboring military districts (Moscow and Leningrad) could also work. Such a large grouping of military forces in the perimeter has always aroused concern among Western states. At all disarmament conferences, talks on the demilitarization of the district were made. The USSR, however, responded to all these pressures that the military presence there is several times lower than that allowed by the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE).

In the period 1945-1990, all types of stationed troops in the Kaliningrad Region were successively modernised and trained. Claimed them all the time in combat readiness. Only the end of the 1990's, the Soviet economic crisis led to a gradual deterioration of their technical condition. Until 1990, this military Region and the Soviet Army stationed there were practically completely cut off from the outside world. The new geopolitical situation, as well as the democratic world's emphasis on the Russian Federation, have begun to bring positive changes also in the region. The military also had to face a new geopolitical reality.

Until 1990, the region played a particular role in the implementation of the Soviet geostrategy in the Baltic area. In the view of European countries, the Vienna Conference on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe was carried out too slowly in the Kaliningrad Region. The Soviets explained it with the necessity to transforming the region into a kind of stage point for the retired Soviet troops from Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland. During this period, according to experts, approximately 180 thousand soldiers stationed in the region. It should

be mentioned that Poland held a balanced position regarding the saturation of the region with armed forces during this period.

The Soviet economic crisis also influenced the problems of the Soviet Army in the Kaliningrad Region. Ahead of the economic and financial management of the fleet, Colonel V. Leonev stated in the early 1990's, the Fleet received only 30-50 percent of the necessary financial resources from the state. This resulted in delays in the payment of wages for army civilian workers. These problems also affected the payment for municipal services such as water, electricity and wastewater management. During this period, electricity in the bases in Baltiysk and Chkalovsk was often cut off. The most severe was the lack of housing for the military released from the reserve, as well as dislocated from the Baltic States. There were more and more voices about the need to change the structure and size of troops stationed in the Kaliningrad Region. In March 1994, the then Russian Minister of National Defense Paweł Graczow arrived in Kaliningrad with a proposal, developed by the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, a proposal to establish the a Kaliningrad Special Region. The essence of this proposal was to subordinate all types of armed forces to a uniform command, to reduce their numbers and modernize them. The organization of the Kaliningrad Special District was entrusted to the Russian Baltic Fleet under the command of Admiral Vladimir Yegorov. Minister Graczow stressed the great importance of this military district for the security of Russia, stating that the strategic operational forces stationed in the district should be able to conduct counterattacks, not only from the sea but from the hinterland.

In April 1994, the special Kaliningrad Military District was created and directly subordinated to the Defence Minister of the Russian Federation and to the Russian General Staff. All land and air units of the 11th Guard Army and the Baltic Fleet were grouped under one command led by Admiral Vladimir Yegorov. He stated that due to its specific geopolitical position, the Kaliningrad Region plays a special role in securing Russia's national interests in the Baltic region and across Europe. The defensive role of the region is to maintain control, with naval and air forces, of the Baltic Sea and a large part of Central and Eastern Europe. Kaliningrad became the headquarters of fleet command. Some observers perceived these actions as an attempt to militarize the Kaliningrad Region.

It turned out, however, that it was under the command of Admiral Yegorov that the systematic reduction of personnel started, while the equipment of the Fleet was modernized. It is primarily due to him that the Baltic Fleet owes its thorough reorganization. Reforms have eliminated the majority of administrative structures and reduced permanent land units by about 40 percent. The army



began to withdraw obsolete equipment, replacing it with a new and modernizing the army. Payouts and salaries stabilized. As a result of all these changes, the Baltic Fleet was transformed into one of the most modern tactical units of the armed forces of the Russian Federation. Although reduced in numbers, it has become more mobile and modern.

In the new military doctrine of the Russian Federation, the Baltic Fleet is strengthened in importance in a transparent offensive way, and during a hypothetical conflict it can make a long-term impact on selected targets, as well as destroy NATO's ships in the Baltic Sea. By the words of the Russian Minister of Defence, Sergei Shoigu: "The Baltic Fleet is Russia's fist in Central Europe".

One of the tasks of the Baltic Fleet in recent years has been the participation in the construction and subsequent protection of the Nord Stream gas pipeline on the bottom of the Baltic Sea. The hydrographic ships of this fleet are involved in determining the route of the gas pipeline and unmanned subsurface vehicles will be used in its installation. During the period of command of the Baltic Fleet by Yegorov, with the approval of the authorities in Moscow, the fleet began cooperation with its closest neighbors, as well as with NATO countries (joint exercises in the Baltic Sea, exchange of military artistic and sport teams). Partnership meetings with Poland at the level of the district commanders took place on the basis of an annual schedule agreed by the defense ministries of both countries. Admiral Yegorov himself, together with the fleet commanders, visited Poland, Germany and Lithuania many times, and was open to cooperation, which the Poles often unable to use. Subsequent inspections carried out by the Committee on Reducing Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) ended successfully for the Baltic Fleet, while experts from Scandinavia, Germany and the United States confirmed a systematic decrease in the number of troops in the region and its modernization. A firm opposition to NATO enlargement plans for Poland and the three Baltic countries reconciled all political factions in Russia and raised the rank and significance of the Kaliningrad Region in the war strategy of the Russian Federation. Since 2000, when President Putin came to power, the military potential of the Kaliningrad Region began to gain strength and importance.

Admiral Yegorov commanded the Baltic Fleet until 2000, when he became the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region. After his departure, and until 2006, Vice Admiral V. Voluyev commanded the fleet. Since 2006, the function was performed by K. Sidenko. Since 2016, Vice Admiral Aleksandr Nosatov has been in charge. The Baltic fleet is deployed in bases in Baltiysk, Kaliningrad and Kronstadt (submarines). The flagship of the Baltic Fleet is the missile destroyer *Nastochivyi*.

In 2014, the fleet comprised about 100 warships (3 Slava type cruisers, 3 Sovremennyi type missile destroyers, 26 missile frigates, 9 tactical submarines and 80 auxiliary ships: hovercrafts, patrol and amphibious ships). According to unofficial data, about 50 thousand soldiers are stationed for the shield of fleet operations in the region. Stationing such a large number of soldiers in such a small area contributes to the degradation of the natural environment, and raises the concerns of the nearest neighbors – Poland, Baltic countries and Scandinavian countries.

In January 2001, the American daily newspaper *The Washington Times* reported a transfer of nuclear weapons to the Kaliningrad Region. However, these reports were not confirmed. Nuclear ballistic missile warheads were stored in the Kaliningrad district in the Soviet era, and a large number of them were placed in this region at the withdrawal of Soviet troops from East Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. By introducing new weapons, after 1990, to equip the Baltic Fleet (including Iskander short-range missiles), the Russians used the fact that the limit established by the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe does not apply to such units at all, and that intermediate-range (INF) missile ban applies only to missiles with a range of more than 500 kilometers. Russia, according to these treaties, has been granted the right to deploy around 3 000 tanks and 1500 artillery pieces (the Russians do not fully use these possibilities). Despite this, the saturation of various types of armies is still astonishingly large for such a small area.

Currently in the region, in the town of Ladushkin, the 152th brigade of rocket forces is deployed. It is equipped with tactical and tactical-operational short-range missiles OTR 21 (SS 21), with a range of 70 km, and OTR 21Tochka 4, with a range of 124 km. The brigade's weaponry also includes modern Iskander-E missile systems with a range of 400 km, and Iskander M. For the protection of these installations, long-range S200 Vega, S 300 and S 400 long-range air defense systems are also deployed with the 244th Artillery Brigade and the 25th Independent Coastal Missile Regiment. Stationed in the region also are the 79th Independent Guard Mechanized Brigade and the 7th Guard Regiment of Coastal Defense. The Baltic Fleet also includes the 128th Naval Ship Brigade, the 71st Landing Ships Brigade and the 336th Marine Infantry Brigade. According to Russian military doctrine, the mission of the land forces of the Baltic Fleet is to defend the coasts, ports and shipyards against possible enemy landing. They are formed in the forces of coastal defense. In case of conflict, these forces may link up with the Russian troops stationed in Belarus. At the town of Vileyka in Belarus, there is also a Naval Communications Centre reporting to the command of the Baltic Fleet. Air forces stationed in the district are intended to destroy enemy submarines, to provide and

air defence shield to naval operations, and to maintain naval and air bases until the arrival of the main forces from Belarus.

Air Force units are deployed in Chkalovsk: large numbers of SU-24s, MIG-29 multirole aircraft and SU-27 interceptor fighters. Also deployed are helicopter squadrons of MI-8 and MI-24, and an Independent Regiment of Maritime Aviation with assault SU-24 helicopters. SU-57 aircraft are also introduced into the region. In Baltiysk, the elite 336th Marine Brigade is stationed. The core of the land forces is the 79th Stand-Alone Motorized Brigade Motorized at Gusev and the 7th Independent Regiment of Motorized Infantry in Kaliningrad.

In addition, Bastion missile batteries were installed in Kaliningrad to strike large ships groups or cities. From the Kaliningrad Region, Oniks missiles (of the Bastion system) with a range of about 450 km can be fired in different directions. Also deployed in the region are land-based Iskander M missiles with a range of 700 km, ship-based 3M14 cruise missiles (from the Kalibr system) with a range of 2500 km, OTR 21 Tochka ballistic missiles with a range of 120 km, and multiple launchers with BM-30 Smerch missiles of a 90 km range. The Iskander M missiles have a low and medium-altitudes trajectory. The 3M14 and Oniks missiles fly at supersonic speed (over 2 Mach). Since 2012, a Voronezh-DM radar station has been operating in the area of Pionersk, covering the airspace over the Baltic and Northern Europe, and able to detect objects at a distance of up to 6000 km. It is part of the Russian early warning system against ballistic missiles. It should also be added that besides the units of the Baltic Fleet, units of other armed services are stationed in the region: border service and border troops – about 5000, and internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs – about 1000.

In Kaliningrad, there are also military schools: a Naval High School, as well as the Kaliningrad Military Institute of the Federal Border Service of the Russian Federation. A special representative of the President of the Russian Federation for the Kaliningrad Region, D. Rogozin, stated during a meeting with the Baltic Fleet in Baltiysk that the Baltic Fleet in the region will remain forever, and it will be better and more modern. Already in 2008, he also warned Poland against the deployment of the missile shield, threatening to target all possible Iskander missiles against Poland.

In December 2007, the Russian Federation suspended its membership in the CFE Treaty. This treaty, signed in Paris in 1990, introduced restrictions on five categories of conventional arms in the territories of signatory states: tanks (a collective ceiling of 40 thousand for each military bloc), artillery systems (40 thousand), armored combat vehicles (60 thousand), combat aircraft (13,600)

and helicopters (4 thousand). Russia's withdrawal from CFE has removed an important mechanism for building trust, as the treaty requires its parties to present data and to consent to inspections. It also caused a new tension in Russia's relations with its neighbors. It is obvious that the strategic role of the region under the Russian military doctrine has not decreased – it even has increased. Another proof of this may be the words of the commander of rocket forces of the Russian Federation, Gen. Y. Baluyevskiy, who said that if Poland puts the elements of the American missile shield on its territory, the rockets in Kaliningrad will be redirected to Warsaw. In response to such actions of the Russian Federation in the Kaliningrad Region, some governments of Eastern European countries (including Poland, Romania and the Baltic countries) have asked for the increase of the presence of NATO forces. This process occurs, but its scale is not sufficient. I believe that in order to counter the threats of Russia and Kaliningrad in Europe, it is necessary to consistently modernize those countries own forces. Poland, above all, needs to rebuild the anti-aircraft and missile shield, coordinating its activities with NATO forces. After the annexation of Crimea and the hostilities in Donbas, Western countries received a clear signal from the Russian Federation that the Kremlin's policy is unpredictable and that no warming can be counted on in the near future. Warfare in Ukraine is to show neighboring countries such as Belarus, Georgia and Moldova that they should either decide to submit to Russia or they will be the subject to military aggression. The authorities in the Kremlin create the image of Russia surrounded by an aggressive Atlantic pact, and the Kaliningrad district with its military capability plays the role of the Russian military machine which is a direct threat to all Central and Eastern Europe. Moscow has always perceived Kaliningrad as a protruding post and bulwark against the West. The more the Kremlin authorities depend on strengthening Russia's superpower position, the more the military role of the Kaliningrad Region will grow.

### Bibliography

1. Baliszewski D., *Przegląd prasy w Moskwie, "Wprost"*, Warszawa 2005.
2. Biskupski M., *Królewiec a Polska*, Olsztyn 1993.
3. Grudziński P., *Polska – Rosja. Niezgodna i współpraca*, Warszawa 1997.
4. Stępień-Kuczyńska A., Adamowski J., *Szkice o Rosji*, Łódź–Warszawa 2000.
5. Żukowski A., *Polska wobec Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego*, Institute of Political Science of Warmian-Masurian University in Olsztyn, Olsztyn 2004.