

Current Intelligence Report Circular

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Report Topic: Possible Belarusian Incursion into Northern Ukraine

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Russian-Belarusian joint military exercises begin preparation in Belarus

On 02 NOV, Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin announced the start of preparations for Belarus and Russia's new joint military exercise, "Union Shield", set to begin in 2023. Khrenin stated during the joint collegium of the Ministries of Defense of Belarus and Russia that these exercises will be "the next year's main event [in terms] of the joint training of the military administration and troops." The plans for Union Shield have not officially been released, however, we know Belarus and Russia plan to make improvements on the Joint CIS Air Defense System. The Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation, Sergei Shoigu, is set to meet via video call on NOV 2 with the Belarusian military to discuss countering "attempts to falsify history", as well as plans for Union Shield 2023. END

CMCD Note

We can predict with moderate confidence that a joint Russian-Belarusian incursion into Northern Ukraine by 30 NOV is unlikely given the expected start dates of the military exercise project Union Shield. The statement by the Ministries of Defense of Belarus and Russia stating that joint exercises will not begin until 2023 points to the likelihood that these militaries are not prepared to fight in the Russo-Ukrainian war. It is highly unlikely that Russian conscripts are trained properly in military combat. Preparations began at Machulishchy Airfield in the Minsk region, however, as President Lukashenko continues to await the arrivals of Russian troops, aircraft, and infantry fighting vehicles, it is highly probable that these exercises will not begin until later this year, or until 2023 as Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin stated. This joint military exercise 'Union Shield' is likely for now just a way for Russia and Belarus to demonstrate their potential capabilities as an allied force. With 28 days until 30 NOV, we can predict with high confidence that a Russian-Belarusian incursion is highly improbable.

Sources

Yahoo, Russias Minister of Defense to meet with Belarusian military Wednesday about joint measures

<https://news.yahoo.com/russias-minister-defence-meet-belarusian-22220710.html>

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<https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-unannounced-military-exercises-eu-border/32023983.html>