



5th Kiel Security Conference

Between Fresh Breeze and Cold Freeze: Navigating the Future of European Security

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in cooperation with

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and Hermann-Ehlers-Stiftung (HES)

Friday, 19 June 2026, 09:00-16:00

Maritim Hotel Bellevue Kiel, Bismarckallee 2, Kiel, Germany

The annual Kiel Security Conference serves as a high-level platform for dialogue among policy makers, military leaders, experts and civil society representatives on pressing international security challenges.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine remains the most significant and direct challenge to Europe's security and continues to reshape the continent's strategic environment. Beyond the battlefield, Russia has intensified hybrid operations across Europe – including cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, sabotage, and persistent threats to critical infrastructure – identified as top-tier risks for the EU in 2026.

The maritime domain has become particularly vulnerable. The Black Sea remains a focal point of military confrontation, blockades, and attacks on civilian shipping, with direct repercussions for regional and global security. At the same time, hybrid operations, threats to critical undersea infrastructure, and the use of shadow fleets keep destabilizing the Baltic Sea. New geostrategic pressure is also emerging in the Arctic and the High North. Russia is expanding its military footprint and hybrid threat activities in the region, while China is increasing its presence through dual-use research, military-civil fusion initiatives, and strategic economic engagement.

Simultaneously, Europe faces additional global risks that compound its security environment: a potential U.S. retrenchment from its role as Europe's primary security guarantor, the rising likelihood of a China-Taiwan conflict with direct implications for European stability and mounting cyber vulnerabilities and disinformation threats. These developments highlight Europe's increasing exposure to extra-regional crises.

Against the backdrop of these converging challenges – and shifting U.S. security priorities – European countries must accelerate efforts to build credible deterrence and defence against Russia as the primary threat, while strengthening resilience against hybrid, cyber, and infrastructure-related risks and enhancing their capacity to respond to global crises.

19 June 2026

08:00 – 09:00

Registration and Welcome Coffee

09:00 – 09:15

Conference Opening and Welcome Remarks

Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer

Chairwoman of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Dr Ben Schreer

Executive Director, The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Europe

09:15 – 09:45

Keynotes and High-Level Conversation

H.E. Dr Johann Wadephul

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany

H.E. Oana-Silvia Țoiu

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania

Moderation:

Dr Ben Schreer

Executive Director, The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Europe

09:45 – 11:00

Panel I: Baltic Sea – Black Sea: Different Challenges, Connected Solutions

Europeans are assuming greater responsibility for the defence of their maritime domains. From the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, both regions face increasingly dynamic and complex threats. In the Baltic Sea, these are predominantly hybrid, whereas the Black Sea is characterized by direct kinetic warfare. This panel will explore how lessons learned, best practices, and coordinated approaches can strengthen maritime deterrence and defence across both regions, identifying common solutions to different challenges.

Niclas Herbst MEP

Member of the European Parliament
Committee of Security and Defence
Chairman of the CDU/CSU Group

Vice Admiral Jeffrey T. Anderson

Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet
Commander, U.S. Striking and Supporting Forces NATO

H.E. Audra Plepytė

Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania

Lesya Orobets

Director NGO Price of Freedom,
Former Member of the Parliament of Ukraine

Prof. Mitat Çelikpala

Vice Rector, Kadir Has University, Türkiye

Moderation:

Thomas Birringer

Head of KAS Ukraine

11.00 – 11:30

Coffee Break and Networking

11.30 – 11.45

High Level Keynote

H.E. Thorgerdur Katrin Gunnarsdottir

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

11:45 – 13:00

Panel II: Protecting the Arctic and the High North

Increased military activity of China and Russia in the Arctic and the High North are of concern to NATO allies. This panel examines the concrete activities and risks posed by Russia and China in the Arctic and the High North, including military posturing, hybrid tactics, and challenges to freedom of navigation and critical infrastructure. It will also explore how the United States and European allies can jointly ensure stability and security in the North Atlantic.

H.E. Eivind Vad Petersson

State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

James Bezan MP

Member of the House of Commons of Canada,
Vice Chair of the National Defence Standing Committee,
Shadow Minister for National Defence

Vice Admiral Jan Christian Kaack

Chief of the German Navy

Vice Admiral Robert G Pedre CB

Commander, Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM), NATO

Moderation:

Nick Childs

Senior Fellow for Naval Forces and Maritime Security,
The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch Break

14:00 – 14:15

High Level Keynote

H.E. Margus Tsahkna

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia

14:15 – 15:30

Panel III: The Future of Europe's Deterrence Posture

In light of shifting US security priorities, Europeans are assuming greater responsibility for the defence of the continent. European allies must quickly fill capability gaps in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, strengthen deep precision strike potential and rethink future conventional and nuclear force requirements as part of a new transatlantic deterrence arrangement. This panel will examine how European allies can strengthen multi-domain deterrence in a NATO framework and develop a more effective division of labour.

H.E. Margus Tsahkna

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia

Thomas Röwekamp

Member of the German Bundestag,
Chairman of the Defence Committee

Georg Georgiev

Member of the Bulgarian National Assembly,
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria

H.E. Kai Sauer

Ambassador of Finland to Germany

Moderation:

Dr. Christina Krause

Head of Department International and Security Affairs
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

15:30

Closing Remarks