

Statement of the National Defence Committee of the Riigikogu on Protecting the Baltic Sea Underwater Infrastructure

27 December 2024, Toompea

The National Defence Committee points out that a pattern of physical hybrid attacks against the Baltic Sea underwater infrastructure has emerged, which poses a threat to NATO and the European Union. This is a deliberate, repeated and intentional activity.

We must immediately take forceful measures together with the Allies, to whom we will propose to place the Baltic Sea under 24-hour surveillance, in particular in those areas where critical underwater infrastructure is located. We will not tolerate any damaging of underwater infrastructure with impunity.

Similarly to NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission, the Standing Naval Force Baltic, one of the key tasks of which is the protection of underwater infrastructure, must be more effectively enforced.

Estonia's decision to deploy a naval patrol vessel to protect the operational power link (Estlink 1), to complement Finland's commendably swift and effective response, is a step in the right direction, but allied efforts need to be on a much larger scale.

This would ensure both an increase in deterrence and a rapid response capability. No marine vessel suspected of terrorism against infrastructure should be allowed to leave before post-crime procedures have been completed.

The Baltic Sea is first and foremost the home territory of NATO and the Member States of the European Union. International law is on our side and we have sufficient capabilities for protecting ourselves.