Russia says NATO is its biggest threat

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Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a new military doctrine that says NATO is one of Russia's biggest dangers. NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is a defence treaty that started in 1949. It consists of North American and European countries who guarantee to act if any member state is threatened militarily. Tensions between Russia and NATO have existed since the end of WWII. The rival, Russian-led Warsaw Pact started in 1955 and led to the Cold War between the East and West intensifying. Strained relations have surfaced once again with former Russian ally Ukraine making fresh steps to join NATO. Russia accused NATO this week of turning Ukraine into a "frontline of confrontation".

The new doctrine has stated that for the first time, Russia would use conventional weapons "as part of strategic deterrent measures" if it sees its territory is under threat. A NATO spokeswoman said the organization was complying with international law over Ukraine and was not threatening Russia in any way. She said: "Should Ukraine decide to apply for NATO membership, NATO will assess its readiness to join the alliance in the same way as with any candidate. This is an issue between NATO and the individual countries aspiring to membership." She added: "It is Russia's actions…in Ukraine which are breaking international law and undermining European security."

Sources: *Moscow Times / Tehran Times / VOA News*

Writing

Tensions between Russia and NATO can be easily resolved. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

> *military / doctrine / dangers / guarantee / threatened / tensions / Cold War / frontline / conventional weapons / deterrent / international law / membership / security*

True / False

a) Russia's president signed a document stating the danger of NATO.   T / F

b) NATO started as an organization in 1994. T / F

c) The rival to NATO used to be the Warsaw Pact. T / F

d) Russia said NATO is using Ukraine as a basis for confrontation. T / F

e) Russia said it will use conventional weapons as a deterrent. T / F

f) NATO said it knew its actions were outside of international law. T / F

g) NATO said it will treat Ukraine's membership application differently. T / F

h) NATO said Russia's actions over Ukraine reinforced European security. T / F

Synonym Match

1.	doctrine		a.	orthodox
2	dangers		b.	promise
3.	guarantee		c.	hostility
4.	intensifying		d.	evaluate
5.	confrontation		e.	set of beliefs
6.	conventional		f.	weakening
7.	complying with		g.	escalating
8.	assess		h.	matter
9.	issue		i.	abiding by
10.	undermining		j.	threats

Discussion – Student A

a) What do you know about NATO?

b) Is Russia right to view NATO as a danger?

c) What do you know about the Cold War?

d) How dangerous is the tension between Russia and NATO?

e) What can other countries do to ease relations?

f) Why is Russia so against Ukraine joining NATO?

g) How would the balance of power change with Ukraine in NATO?

h) What advice would you give to Ukraine's leader?

Phrase Match

1. President Vladimir Putin has signed	a. surfaced once again
2 a defence treaty that	b. measures
3. guarantee	c. of confrontation
4. Strained relations have	d. to join the alliance
5. a frontline	e. weapons
6. use conventional	f. a new military doctrine
7. strategic deterrent	g. international law
8. complying with	h. started in 1949
9. NATO will assess its readiness	i. European security
10. undermining	j. to act

Discussion – Student B

a) Do you think any part of Russia is under threat from NATO?

b) Can the issues between Russia and NATO be resolved in court?

c) What are the good and bad things about NATO?

d) Why are Russia and NATO still seemingly on Cold War terms?

e) What three adjectives best describe this situation (and why)?

f) What do you think will happen over the next few years?

g) Is Russia breaking international law?

h) What questions would you like to ask Vladimir Putin?

Spelling

1. a new military tocdrnei

2. a defence ettayr

3. countries who etaeugnra to act

4. threatened rmiitllyai

5. eidatsnr relations

6. a frontline of aonntciortfno

7. ctnnolnvaoei weapons

8. strategic redtntere measures

9. gmcynloip with international law

10. join the lcaeanli

11. dlvniduiai countries

12. srpnigia to membership

Role Play

Role A – Religion
You think religion is the biggest threat to international relations. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as big a threat. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): terrorism, nuclear weapons or territorial disputes.

Role B – Terrorism
You think terrorism is the biggest threat to international relations. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as big a threat. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): religion, nuclear weapons or territorial disputes.

Role C – Nuclear weapons
You think nuclear weapons are the biggest threat to international relations. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as big a threat. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): terrorism, religion or territorial disputes.

Role D – Territorial disputes
You think territorial disputes are the biggest threat to international relations. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as big a threat. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): terrorism, nuclear weapons or religion.

Speaking – Dangers

What are the biggest dangers that threaten international relations? Rank these. Put the most dangerous first.

- Territorial disputes
- Religion
- Water
- Terrorism
- Drugs
- Nuclear weapons
- Crazy leader
- Oil

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.

Answers – Synonym Match

1.	e	2.	j	3.	b	4.	g	5.	c
6.	a	7.	i	8.	d	9.	h	10.	f