International Relations · GS - II

Examine how NATO's eastward security posture has influenced strategic stability in Europe.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 24/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

NATO enlargement, collective defence, Russia-West tensions, deterrence, security dilemma, European security architecture

Model Answer

Introduction

The security environment in Europe has become increasingly complex due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO's eastern deployments and diplomatic tensions between Moscow and countries bordering Russia, including Estonia.

Impact on Strategic Stability

1. **Strengthening Collective Defence:** NATO's eastern presence reassures member states such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania by reinforcing the alliance's collective-defence commitment under Article 5.

2. **Deterrence against Military Aggression:** Forward deployments, military exercises and enhanced defence preparedness are intended to raise the costs of potential military action against alliance members.

3. **Russia-West Strategic Rivalry:** Moscow views NATO's expansion and military presence near its borders as security concerns, while NATO members describe these measures as defensive responses to regional threats.

4. **Risk of Escalation:** Military deployments, diplomatic expulsions and confrontational rhetoric can increase mistrust and create possibilities of miscalculation.

5. **Hybrid Security Challenges:** Cyberattacks, disinformation, border incidents and interference in critical infrastructure complicate conventional security calculations.

Way Forward

1. **Strengthen Diplomatic Channels:** Military-to-military communication and crisis hotlines can help prevent accidental escalation.

2. **Respect International Law:** All states should respect sovereignty, territorial integrity and the UN Charter.

3. **Promote Risk Reduction:** Confidence-building measures, transparency in military exercises and arms-control dialogue can reduce uncertainty.

4. **Support Regional Dialogue:** Diplomatic engagement should complement deterrence to prevent prolonged confrontation.

Conclusion

European security requires a balance between credible collective defence and diplomatic risk reduction. Sustained dialogue, restraint and adherence to international law remain essential for preventing regional tensions from escalating into wider conflict.

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