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# News Release

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## U.S. Navy ship encounters aggressive Russian aircraft in Baltic Sea

**STUTTGART, GERMANY** – A United States Navy Destroyer operating in international waters in the Baltic Sea experienced several close interactions by Russian aircraft on April 11 and 12. USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) encountered multiple, aggressive flight maneuvers by Russian aircraft that were performed within close proximity of the ship.

On April 11, Donald Cook was conducting deck landing drills with an Allied military helicopter when two Russian SU-24 jets made numerous, close-range and low altitude passes at approximately 3 p.m. local. One of the passes, which occurred while the Allied helicopter was refueling on the deck of Donald Cook, was deemed unsafe by the ship's commanding officer. As a safety precaution, flight operations were suspended until the SU-24s departed the area.

On April 12, while Donald Cook was operating in international waters in the Baltic Sea, a Russian KA-27 Helix helicopter conducted circles at low altitude around the ship, seven in total, at approximately 5 p.m. local. The helicopter passes were also deemed unsafe and unprofessional by the ship's commanding officer. About 40 minutes following the interaction with the Russian helicopter, two Russian SU-24 jets made numerous close-range and low altitude passes, 11 in total. The Russian aircraft flew in a simulated attack profile and failed to respond to repeated safety advisories in both English and Russian. USS Donald Cook's commanding officer deemed several of these maneuvers as unsafe and unprofessional.

We have deep concerns about the unsafe and unprofessional Russian flight maneuvers. These actions have the potential to unnecessarily escalate tensions between countries, and could result in a miscalculation or accident that could cause serious injury or death. U.S. officials are using existing diplomatic channels to address the interactions, while the incidents are also being reviewed through U.S. Navy channels.

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U.S. Navy video footage of the SU-24 incident on April 12 is available at the following links:

<https://youtu.be/e-pLgvJULOM>

<https://youtu.be/5deRj1umjM0>

<https://youtu.be/y8D48itR2cg>

<https://youtu.be/vkkCZwiENh8>

U.S. Navy photos attached/below:



**BALTIC SEA** - A Russian Sukhoi Su-24 attack aircraft makes a very-low altitude pass by the USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) April 12, 2016. Donald Cook, an Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, forward deployed to Rota, Spain is conducting a routine patrol in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe. (U.S. Navy 6th Fleet photo/Released)



**BALTIC SEA** - A Russian Kamov KA-27 Helix closely surveils the Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) while the ship was operating in international waters April 12, 2016. Donald Cook is forward deployed to Rota, Spain, and is conducting routine patrols in the U.S. 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet area of operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe. (U.S. Navy 6th Fleet photo/Released)