



By: TA | AP Brief

# EU agreed to develop a “drone wall” along its eastern borders



European defense ministers agreed to develop a “**drone** wall” along their borders with Russia and Ukraine to better **detect**, track and intercept drones violating Europe’s airspace.

The decision comes after a spate of **incidents** in which Europe’s borders and airports have been tested by rogue drones. Russia has been blamed for some of them but denies that anything was done on purpose or that it played a role.

“Russia is testing the EU and NATO, and our response must be firm, united and immediate,” EU Defense Commissioner Andrius Kubilius said after chairing a virtual meeting of 10 countries on Europe’s eastern flank. Ukrainian and NATO officials also took part in the talks.

Kubilius said the drone shield could take a year to build, and that envoys from the countries would meet soon to develop “a detailed conceptual and technical roadmap” on the way ahead. The top priority is an “effective detection system,” he said.

The drone wall is likely to be discussed by EU leaders at a summit in Copenhagen next week, and later again in October when they meet in Brussels.

Kubilius said that Europe’s defense industry would also be brought onboard.

“Today’s meeting was a milestone – now we focus on delivery,” he said.

Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland have been working on a drone wall project, but in March, the European Commission, the EU’s executive branch, rejected a joint Estonia-Lithuania request for funds to set one up.

Things have changed this month, though.

## The hybrid war

NATO jets scrambled on Sept. 10 to **shoot** down a number of Russian drones that breached Polish airspace, in an expensive response to a relatively cheap threat.

Airports in Denmark were temporarily **closed** this week after drones were flown nearby.

“The hybrid war is ongoing and all countries in the European Union will experience it,” Polish Defense Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz told reporters in Warsaw after the drone wall talks. “The threat from the Russian Federation is serious. We must respond to it in a very radical manner.”

He urged all EU partners to get involved in the project, saying that the incidents at Danish airports in recent days made it clear that “the threat is not only to the eastern flank, that the launch of drones may occur from a ship or vessel that is nearby.”

**6 billion euros (\$7 billion) would be earmarked to set up a drone alliance with Ukraine**

On Thursday, in a social media post addressed to the nation, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said the drone incidents in her country were part of a new reality facing Europe, in which hybrid attacks were fiercer and more frequent.

She said that Danish authorities still have not determined who was behind the incidents, but that Russia was currently the primary threat to European security.

Neighboring Sweden has offered to loan Denmark a military anti-drone system ahead of the two summits involving dozens of EU leaders in Copenhagen next week, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson told broadcaster TV4.

He said the system has the capability to “shoot down drones.” It was not immediately clear whether Denmark accepted the offer.

The 27 EU leaders meet on Wednesday, with the drone security threat likely to be high on their agenda. They will be joined by more than a dozen other leaders for a European Political Community summit on Thursday.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said earlier this month that Europe “must heed the call of our Baltic friends and build a drone wall.”

“This is not an abstract ambition. It is the bedrock of credible defense,” von der Leyen told EU lawmakers.

It should be, she said, “a European capability developed together, deployed together, and sustained together, that can respond in real time. One that leaves no ambiguity as to our intentions. Europe will defend every inch of its territory.”

Von der Leyen said that 6 billion euros (\$7 billion) would be earmarked to set up a drone alliance with Ukraine, whose armed forces are using the unmanned aerial vehicles to inflict around two-thirds of all military equipment losses sustained by Russian forces.