NATO Summit Guide

Brussels, 11-12 July 2018

A stronger and more agile Alliance

The Brussels Summit comes at a crucial moment for the security of the North Atlantic Alliance. It will be an important opportunity to chart NATO's path for the years ahead.

In a changing world, NATO is adapting to be a more agile, responsive and innovative Alliance, while defending all of its members against any threat.

NATO remains committed to fulfilling its three core tasks: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. At the Brussels Summit, the Alliance will make important decisions to further boost security in and around Europe, including through strengthened deterrence and defence, projecting stability and fighting terrorism, enhancing its partnership with the European Union, modernising the Alliance and achieving fairer burden-sharing.

This Summit will be held in the new NATO Headquarters, a modern and sustainable home for a forward-looking Alliance.

It will be the third meeting of Allied Heads of State and Government chaired by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

- Summit meetings
- Member countries
- Partners
- NATO Secretary General

I. Strengthening deterrence and defence

NATO's primary purpose is to protect its almost one billion citizens and to preserve peace and freedom. NATO must also be vigilant against a wide range of new threats, be they in the form of computer code, disinformation or foreign fighters.

The Alliance has taken important steps to strengthen its collective defence and deterrence, so that it can respond to threats from any direction. NATO does not seek confrontation and remains committed to dialogue, but will defend its members against any threat. Its deterrence aims not to provoke a conflict, but to prevent one.

NATO troops on parade during a ceremony in Lithuania to mark the first anniversary of enhanced Forward Presence

Everything NATO does is defensive, proportionate and fully in line with its international commitments.

NATO has enhanced its forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance with four multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. The Alliance is also strengthening its presence in the Black Sea region. These forces send a message that an attack against any NATO member would be an attack against the whole Alliance, and met with a collective response.

The NATO Response Force has tripled in size to approximately 40,000 troops, with a 5,000-strong high-readiness spearhead force at its core, ready to deploy in days. NATO has set up eight small headquarters in the eastern part of the Alliance to link national and NATO forces.

NATO has also reinforced its ability to respond to security challenges emanating from the Middle East and North Africa. The Alliance continues to augment Turkey's air defences; has stepped up exercises and sped up decision-making; supports the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS with surveillance flights and training for Iraqi forces; and works with other partners in the fight against terrorism. The Alliance has set up a Hub for the South at Joint Force Command in Naples, to enhance understanding of regional challenges. NATO also continues to be present in the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas, and is working to counter terrorism, combat illegal trafficking and enhance capacity-building.

NATO is ensuring that its nuclear deterrent remains credible and effective, to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression. Arms control and disarmament also continue to play an important role in the achievement of the Alliance's security objectives.

NATO is working with Allies, partners and other international organisations to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and defend against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats.

At the Brussels Summit, NATO will enter the next phase in its adaptation. Allies will take decisions to increase military mobility and the readiness of forces. They will decide on further measures in response to challenges emanating from the south.

NATO will also enhance resilience, both within Allied countries and collectively, by modernising capabilities and improving civil preparedness. It is strengthening its cyber defences, including through the creation of a new Cyber Operations Centre. And NATO is ensuring that it has the right mix of military and civilian capabilities to meet evolving security challenges, including hybrid warfare.

- Deterrence and defence
- Boosting NATO's presence in the east and southeast
- Air policing: securing NATO airspace
- Cyber defence
- Relations with Russia
- NATO-Russia – setting the record straight
- NATO's response to hybrid threats
- Resilience and Article 3
- Ballistic missile defence
- Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation
- Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)
- NATO's nuclear deterrence policy and forces
- NATO's role in conventional arms control

II. Projecting stability and fighting terrorism

To safeguard security at home, NATO must help project stability beyond its borders, and fight terrorism. When the Alliance's neighbours are stable, Allies are more secure.

Decades of experience, from the Balkans to Afghanistan, have shown that one of the best tools in the fight against terrorism and instability is training local forces. NATO has the expertise; a network of partnerships with over 40 countries across the world; and staying power – which matters for the long-term challenges Allies face.

A NATO E-3A Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft prepares for its next mission in Konya, Turkey

In Afghanistan, NATO is increasing the size of the Resolute Support Mission, with 3,000 more trainers, helping local forces to secure their country. And at the Summit, Allies will confirm NATO's enduring commitment.

NATO is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Alliance supports the Coalition with AWACS surveillance flights, and is looking at how its support within the Global Coalition could evolve.

In Iraq, NATO has already trained hundreds of Iraqi trainers, helping them to strengthen their ability to fight terrorism so that they can share their skills with thousands of members of the security forces. At the Summit, Allies will agree to launch a new training mission in Iraq, to help Iraqi forces prevent the re-emergence of ISIS or other terrorist groups. This will include building military academies and schools.

NATO is also helping Jordan and Tunisia to strengthen their defence and to provide for their own security. It stands ready to assist Libya, if requested. In addition, NATO has set up a Hub for the South at its Joint Force Command in Naples to enhance its ability to anticipate and respond to regional threats. At the Summit, NATO will consider how it can do more to strengthen its southern partners, including with enhanced planning and exercises.

In the Balkans, NATO continues to support its partners, including through the KFOR mission. In the Aegean Sea, NATO is assisting international efforts to stem illegal trafficking and illegal migration, by providing real-time information to Greece, Turkey and the European Union's border agency Frontex. In the Mediterranean, NATO's broader maritime security operation Sea Guardian is supporting situational awareness, countering terrorism and contributing to capacity-building.

To the east, NATO will continue to boost the defence capabilities and build the resilience of its partners Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to advance reforms.

NATO will continue to work closely with partners such as Finland and Sweden, who have a significant contribution to make to security in the strategically important Baltic Sea region.

Projecting stability and being resilient go hand-in-hand with efforts to limit the negative impact of conflict on civilians. The Alliance is committed to protecting children and preventing conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

Iraqi bomb disposal experts train in defusing improvised explosive devices

NATO's Open Door Policy, together with EU enlargement, has helped to spread stability and prosperity in Europe. In 2017, Montenegro became NATO's 29th member, demonstrating that the Alliance's door remains open to European states able to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership, and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

- Operations and missions: past and present
- NATO and Afghanistan
- Countering terrorism
- AWACS: NATO's eyes in the sky
- NATO's maritime activities
- NATO's role in Kosovo
- Assistance for the refugee and migrant crisis in the Aegean Sea
- Troop contributions
- Partnerships: projecting stability through cooperation
- Partnership Interoperability Initiative
- Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative
- Defence Institution Building
- Partnership tools
- Relations with Finland
- Relations with Georgia
- Relations with Iraq
- Relations with Moldova
- Relations with Sweden
- Relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1]
- Relations with Ukraine
- Mediterranean Dialogue
- Istanbul Cooperation Initiative
- A 'comprehensive approach' to crises
- Cooperation with the African Union
- Enlargement

[1]   Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

III. Stronger cooperation with the European Union

Closer cooperation between NATO and the European Union (EU) is key to dealing with current and emerging security challenges, wherever they may arise.

The two organisations cooperate closely: NATO's ability to do both collective defence and crisis management complements the wide range of capabilities the EU has to offer.

NATO and the EU have made unprecedented progress in many areas, including maritime cooperation in the Aegean and Mediterranean, in capacity-building for NATO partners, cyber

President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and President of the European Council Donald Tusk exit a working dinner

defence, and countering hybrid threats. In 2017, a European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats was jointly inaugurated in Helsinki, Finland.

At the Brussels Summit, NATO and the EU will take stock of the progress made since the 2016 Warsaw Summit. Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is expected to sign a new Joint Declaration with European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, setting out a shared vision of how NATO-EU cooperation can help address most pressing security challenges.

- Relations with the European Union
- A 'comprehensive approach' to crises
- Assistance for the refugee and migrant crisis in the Aegean Sea
- Resilience and Article 3
- Civil preparedness
- Cyber defence

IV. Modernising NATO

Modern challenges require a modern Alliance, with the resources and capabilities to keep Allies safe.

At the Brussels Summit, Allies will agree on a major update of the NATO Command Structure, including two new commands to ensure NATO forces can move quickly across the Atlantic and within Europe.

NATO is also continuing to develop its Ballistic Missile Defence system, and delivering other key capabilities such as Joint Intelligence,

NATO's Global Hawk Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) aircraft

Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Alliance Ground Surveillance and anti-submarine warfare. It is investing in science and technology and is working with industry to produce capabilities that are innovative, interoperable and affordable.

NATO also helps nations decide how and where to invest in their defence and supports Allies in identifying and developing multinational cooperative projects to deliver defence capabilities that Allies need. It also conducts regular military exercises to test the Alliance's decision-making processes, systems and tactics to make sure that NATO and its partners can work well together.

- NATO's capabilities
- Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
- Alliance Ground Surveillance
- AWACS: NATO's eyes in the sky
- Exercises
- NATO Defence Planning Process
- NATO headquarters
- Rapid Deployable Corps
- Civil preparedness
- Education and training
- Military organisation and structures
- Allied Command Transformation
- Allied Command Operations
- Women, Peace and Security
- Protection of civilians

V. Fairer burden-sharing

A more uncertain security environment requires more investment in defence, modern military capabilities, and contributions to NATO military operations and missions. Investing more in defence is also vital to achieve fairer burden-sharing between Europe and North America.

In 2014, all Allies pledged to stop cuts to defence, increase spending, and move towards spending 2% of GDP on defence within a decade. Since 2014, NATO has seen three consecutive years of growth in defence expenditure across European Allies and Canada, amounting to an additional USD 87 billion.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg presents his Annual Report for 2017, highlighting efforts towards fairer burden-sharing within the Alliance

So we have turned a corner, but we still have a long way to go.

The Summit will be an opportunity to review Allies' progress and look at future plans.

- Information on defence expenditures
- Funding NATO
- NATO's capabilities
- Troop contributions
- Transparency and accountability

VI. An Alliance of shared values and transatlantic unity

NATO embodies the unique bond that unites Europe and North America. The Alliance is a community of 29 nations that share a common goal of preventing conflict and preserving peace.

Transatlantic unity has helped keep our people safe for almost 70 years. In today's complex security environment, transatlantic cooperation is needed more than ever.

- The founding treaty
- NATO's purpose
- Collective defence and Article 5
- Deterrence and defence
- Resilience and Article 3
- Strategic Concepts
- The consultation process and Article 4
- Consensus decision-making at NATO

The meeting room at the new NATO Headquarters in Brussels where the North Atlantic Council unites Europe and North America

Summit meetings

NATO summit meetings provide periodic opportunities for Heads of State and Government of member countries to evaluate and provide strategic direction for Alliance activities.

Highlights

- Summit meetings are often held at key moments in the Alliance's evolution – they are not regular meetings, but important junctures in the Alliance's decision-making process.
- Summits are used, for instance, to introduce new policy, invite new members into the Alliance, launch major initiatives and reinforce partnerships.
- They are meetings of the North Atlantic Council at its highest level possible – that of Heads of State and Government.
- Since 1949, there have been 27 NATO summits. The last one took place in Warsaw, Poland on 8-9 July 2016 and the next one will be in Brussels, Belgium in July 2018.
- NATO summits are always held in a NATO member country and are chaired by the NATO Secretary General.

More background information

Summit meeting agendas

NATO summit meetings are effectively meetings of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) - the Alliance's principal political decision-making body - at its highest level, that of Heads of State and Government.

Due to the political significance of summit meetings, agenda items typically address issues of overarching political or strategic importance. Items can relate to the internal functioning of the Alliance as well as NATO's relations with external partners.

Major decisions

Many of NATO's summit meetings can be considered as milestones in the evolution of the Alliance. For instance, the first post-Cold War summit was held in London, in 1990, and outlined proposals for developing relations with Central and Eastern European countries. A year later, in Rome, NATO Heads of State and Government published a new Strategic Concept that reflected the new security environment. This document was issued as a public document for the first time ever. At the same summit, NATO established the North Atlantic Cooperation Council – a forum that officially brought together NATO and partner countries from Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

The 1997 Madrid and Paris Summits invited the first countries of the former Warsaw Pact – the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland – to join NATO, and established partnerships between NATO and Russia and Ukraine, while the 2002 Prague Summit saw major commitments to improving NATO's capabilities and transformed the military command structure.

These are just a few of the many decisions that have been taken over the decades (a full summary of all NATO summit meetings can be found below under "Previous summit meetings").

Implementation of summit decisions

Typically, the decisions taken at a summit meeting are issued in declarations and communiqués. These are public documents that explain the Alliance's decisions and reaffirm Allies' support for aspects of NATO policies.

The decisions are then translated into action by the relevant actors, according to the area of competency and responsibility: the NAC's subordinate committees and NATO's command structure, which cover the whole range of the Organization's functions and activities.

Timing and location

Timing

Summits are convened upon approval by the NAC at the level of Permanent Representatives (or Ambassadors) or foreign and defence ministers. They are usually called on an *ad-hoc* basis, as required by the evolving political and security situation.

From the founding of NATO until the end of the Cold War – over 40 years – there were ten summit meetings. Since 1990, their frequency has increased considerably in order to address the changes brought on by the new security challenges. In total, 27 summit meetings have taken place since 1949.

Location

NATO summit meetings are held in one of the member countries, including Belgium, at NATO HQ. Members volunteer to host a summit meeting and, after evaluating all offers, the NAC makes the final decision concerning the location.

In recent years, summit locations have held some thematic significance. For example, the Washington Summit of 1999 commemorated the 50th anniversary of the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in that city. Istanbul – which hosted a summit meeting in 2004 – connects Europe and Asia and is where the Alliance launched the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. This initiative is intended to foster linkages between NATO and the broader Middle East.

Previous summit meetings

The first time that Heads of State and Government from NATO countries met was at the actual signing ceremony of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949, but this was not a summit meeting. The first summit meeting was held eight years later, in Paris in 1957, and subsequent summits occurred at key junctures in the history of the Alliance.

Paris, 16-19 December 1957
Reaffirmation of the principal purposes and unity of the Atlantic alliance; Improvements in the coordination and organisation of NATO forces and in political consultation arrangements; Recognition of the need for closer economic ties and for cooperation in the spirit of Article 2 of the Treaty, designed to eliminate conflict in international policies and encourage economic collaboration (Report of the Committee of the Three on Non-Military Cooperation in NATO, the so-called report of the Three Wise Men).

Brussels, 26 June 1974
Signature of the Declaration on Atlantic Relations adopted by NATO foreign ministers in Ottawa on 19 June, confirming the dedication of Allies to the aims and ideals of the Treaty in the 25th anniversary of its signature; Consultations on East-West relations in preparation for US-USSR summit talks on strategic nuclear arms limitations.

Brussels, 29-30 May 1975
Affirmation of the fundamental importance of the Alliance and of Allied cohesion in the face of international economic pressures following the 1974 oil crisis; Support for successful conclusion of negotiations in the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) (to result in 1975 in the signing of the Helsinki Final Act).

London, 10-11 May 1977
Initiation of study on long-term trends in East-West relations and of a long-term defence programme (LTDP) aimed at improving the defensive capability of NATO member countries.

Washington D.C., 30-31 May 1978
Review of interim results of long-term initiatives taken at the 1977 London Summit; Confirmation of the validity of the Alliance's complementary aims of maintaining security while pursuing East-West *détente*; Adoption of three per cent target for growth in defence expenditures.

Bonn, 10 June 1982
Accession of Spain; Adoption of the Bonn Declaration setting out a six-point Programme for Peace in Freedom; Publication of a statement of Alliance's goals and policies on arms control and disarmament and a statement on integrated NATO defence.

Brussels, 21 November 1985
Special meeting of the North Atlantic Council for consultations with US President Reagan on the positive outcome of the US-USSR Geneva Summit on arms control and other areas of cooperation.

Brussels, 2-3 March 1988
Reaffirmation of the purpose and principles of the Alliance (reference to the Harmel Report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance published in 1967) and of its objectives for East-West relations; Adoption of a blue print for strengthening stability in the whole of Europe through conventional arms control negotiations.

Brussels, 29-30 May 1989
Declaration commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Alliance setting out Alliance policies and security objectives for the 1990s aimed at maintaining Alliance defence, introducing new arms control initiatives, strengthening political consultation, improving East-West cooperation and meeting global challenges; Adoption of a Comprehensive Concept of Arms Control and Disarmament.

Brussels, 4 December 1989
Against the background of fundamental changes in Central and Eastern Europe and the prospect of the end of the division of Europe, US President Bush consults with Alliance leaders following his summit meeting with Soviet President Gorbachev in Malta. While the NATO summit meeting is taking place, Warsaw Pact leaders denounce the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia and repudiate the Brezhnev Doctrine of limited sovereignty.

London, 5-6 July 1990
Publication of the London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance, outlining proposals for developing cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe across a wide spectrum of political and military activities including the establishment of regular diplomatic liaison with NATO.

Rome, 7-8 November 1991
Publication of several key documents: the Alliance's new Strategic Concept, the Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation and statements on developments in the Soviet Union and the situation in Yugoslavia.

Brussels, 10-11 January 1994
Launching of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative; All North Atlantic Cooperation Council partner countries and members of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) are invited to participate; Publication of the PfP Framework Document; Endorsement of the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs) and other measures to develop the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI); Reaffirmation of Alliance readiness to carry out air strikes in support of United Nations objectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina**.**

Paris, 27 May 1997
Signing of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between the Russian Federation and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The Founding Act states that NATO and Russia are no longer adversaries and establishes the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council.

Madrid, 8-9 July 1997
Invitations to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin accession talks; Reaffirmation of NATO's Open Door Policy; Recognition of achievement and commitments represented by the NATO-Russia Founding Act; Signature of the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine; First meeting of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) at summit level that replaces the North Atlantic Cooperation Council; An enhanced PfP; Updating of the 1991 Strategic Concept and adoption of a new defence posture; Reform of the NATO military command structure; Special Declaration on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Washington D.C., 23-24 April 1999
Commemoration of NATO's 50th Anniversary; Allies reiterate their determination to put an end to the repressive actions by Yugoslav President Milosevic against the local ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo; The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland participate in their first summit meeting; Adoption of the Membership Action Plan; Publication of a revised Strategic Concept; Enhancement of the European Security and Defence Identity within NATO; Launch of the Defence Capabilities Initiative; Strengthening of the PfP and the EAPC, as well as the Mediterranean Dialogue; Launch of the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Initiative.

Rome, 28 May 2002
NATO Allies and the Russian Federation create the NATO-Russia Council, where they meet as equal partners, bringing a new quality to NATO-Russia relations. The NATO-Russia Council replaces the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council.

Prague, 21-22 November 2002
Invitation of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia to begin accession talks; Adoption of measures to improve military capabilities (The Prague Capabilities Commitment, the NATO Response Force and the streamlining of the military command structure); Adoption of a Military Concept for Defence against Terrorism; Decision to support NATO member countries in Afghanistan; Endorsement of a package of initiatives to forge new relationships with partners.

Istanbul, 28-29 June 2004
Summit held at 26, with seven new members; Expansion of NATO's operation in Afghanistan with the establishment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams throughout the country; Agreement to assist the Iraqi Interim Government with the training of its security forces; Maintaining support for stability in the Balkans; Decision to change NATO's defence-planning and force-generation processes, while strengthening

contributions to the fight against terrorism, including WMD aspects; Strengthening cooperation with partners and launch of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative with countries from the broader Middle East region.

Brussels, 22 February 2005
Leaders reaffirm their support for building stability in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq, and commit to strengthening the partnership between NATO and the European Union.

Riga, 28-29 November 2006
Review of progress in Afghanistan in light of the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the entire country and call for broader international engagement; Confirmation that the Alliance is prepared to play its part in implementing the security provisions of a settlement on the status of Kosovo; Measures adopted to further improve NATO's military capabilities; NATO Response Force declared operational; Comprehensive Political Guidance published; Initiatives adopted to deepen and extend relations with partners; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia invited to join PfP.

Bucharest, 2-4 April 2008
Allied leaders review the evolution of NATO's main commitments: operations (Afghanistan and Kosovo); enlargement and the invitation of Albania and Croatia to start the accession process (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1] will also be invited as soon as ongoing negotiations over its name have led to an agreement); the continued development of military capabilities.

Strasbourg/ Kehl, 3-4 April 2009
Against the backdrop of NATO's 60th anniversary, adoption of a Declaration on Alliance Security calling for a new Strategic Concept; adherence to basic principles and shared values, as well as the need for ongoing transformation; in-depth discussion on Afghanistan; welcoming of two new members: Albania and Croatia, and the pursuit of NATO's open door policy (invitation extended to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); France's decision to fully participate in NATO structures and the impact of this decision on the Alliance's relations with the European Union; NATO's relations with Russia.

Lisbon, 19-20 November 2010
Publication of a new Strategic Concept; Transition to full Afghan security responsibility to start in 2011; Agreement on a long-term partnership with Afghanistan; Decision to develop a NATO missile defence system to protect populations and territory in Europe, in addition to deployed troops; Russia invited to cooperate as part of a "reset" of relations with NATO; Adoption of a comprehensive approach to crisis management, including a greater role in stabilisation and reconstruction and more emphasis on training and developing local forces; Continue to support arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, and maintain an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces; Adoption of the Lisbon Capabilities Package; Agreement to develop a cyber defence policy and action plan; Reform of NATO's military command structure and agencies; New impetus given to relations with partners and NATO's partnership policy.

Chicago, 20-21 May 2012
NATO leaders set out a strategy to conclude the transition of security responsibility to Afghan forces by end 2014 and commit to a post-2014 mission to train, advise and assist Afghan forces; Talks on Afghanistan bring together over 60 countries and organisations in Chicago; Approval of the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review and adoption of a Defence Package and new policy guidelines on counter-terrorism; An Interim Ballistic Missile Capability was declared and initiatives taken in other key capability areas (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and air policing); Commitment to pursue cooperative security and engage with partners across the globe as well as countries that aspire to NATO membership.

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[1]   Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Wales (Newport), 4-5 September 2014

Renewed commitment to the Transatlantic Bond and to a robust defence capability; Pledge to reverse defence cuts and adoption of a Readiness Action Plan, including a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force; Increased support to Ukraine in the wake of the crisis with Russia; Continued condemnation of Russia's illegal and illegitimate "annexation" of Crimea and destabilisation of eastern Ukraine; Strengthened relations with partners through the Partnership Interoperability Initiative and the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative; Reassertion of NATO's commitment to Afghanistan through the Resolute Support Mission, financial contributions to the Afghan National Security Forces, and the NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership; Tribute to the Armed Forces as NATO marks its 65th anniversary and two decades of operations on land, sea and air.

Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016

Focus on two pillars: strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence, and projecting stability beyond NATO's borders. Measures, such as the positioning of four multinational battalions in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in 2017 and the development of a tailored forward presence in the south-eastern part of NATO, were adopted; Initial Operational Capability of NATO's ballistic missile defence declared; pledge to strengthen national cyber defences while cyberspace is recognised as a new operational domain like land, air and maritime; support to be provided to partners, especially in the fields of training and capacity-building; decision to use AWACS aircraft in service until 2035 and use them to provide information to the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL; agreement on changing NATO's counter-terrorism Operation Active Endeavour to a broader Maritime Security Operation; agreement to extend Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan beyond 2016 and funding for Afghan forces until 2020; endorsement of a Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine; NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg signs a Joint Declaration with the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission.

Organising and holding these events

NATO summit meetings are centred on the activities of the North Atlantic Council (NAC or Council). As with all NAC meetings, the Secretary General chairs them and plays an important role in coordination and deliberations to help members reach consensus on the issues at hand.

As with meetings at the levels of Permanent Representatives and ministers, the work of the NAC is prepared by subordinate committees with responsibility for specific areas of policy. The Deputies Committee, which consists of Deputy Permanent Representatives, is responsible for drafting declarations and communiqués after meetings of heads of state and government, as well as foreign and defence ministers.

Other aspects of political work may be handled by the Political Committee and the Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee. Depending on the topic under discussion, the respective senior committee with responsibility for the subject assumes the lead role in preparing Council meetings and following up Council decisions.

Support to the Council is provided by the Secretary of the Council, who is also Director of the ministerial and summit meeting task forces. The Secretary of the Council ensures that NAC mandates are executed and its decisions recorded and circulated. A small Council Secretariat ensures the bureaucratic and logistical aspects of the Council's work, while the relevant divisions of the International Staff support the work of committees reporting to the NAC.

Participation

NATO summit meetings normally involve member countries only. However, on occasion, and provided Allies agree, meetings can be convened in other formats. They include, for instance, meetings of defence or foreign ministers, heads of state and government of countries belonging to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the NATO-Russia Council, the NATO-Ukraine Commission or the NATO-Georgia Commission. They can also include leaders from countries contributing troops to a NATO-led operation, as was the case for ISAF troop-contributing countries at the 2010 Lisbon Summit or top representatives from international organisations such as the United Nations, the European Union or the World Bank.

Member countries

At present, NATO has 29 members. In 1949, there were 12 founding members of the Alliance: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. The other member countries are: Greece and Turkey (1952), Germany (1955), Spain (1982), the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (1999), Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (2004), Albania and Croatia (2009), and Montenegro (2017).

Highlights

- Provision for enlargement is given by Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

- Article 10 states that membership is open to any "European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area".

- Any decision to invite a country to join the Alliance is taken by the North Atlantic Council, NATO's principal political decision-making body, on the basis of consensus among all Allies.

More background information

Alphabetical list of NATO member countries

Albania 2009	**Belgium** 1949	**Bulgaria** 2004	**Canada** 1949	**Croatia** 2009	**Czech Republic** 1999
Denmark 1949	**Estonia** 2004	**France** 1949	**Germany** 1955	**Greece** 1952	**Hungary** 1999
Iceland 1949	**Italy** 1949	**Latvia** 2004	**Lithuania** 2004	**Luxembourg** 1949	**Montenegro** 2017
Netherlands 1949	**Norway** 1949	**Poland** 1999	**Portugal** 1949	**Romania** 2004	**Slovakia** 2004
Slovenia 2004	**Spain** 1982	**Turkey** 1952	**United Kingdom** 1949	**United States** 1949	

About member countries and their accession

The founding members

On 4 April 1949, the foreign ministers from 12 countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty (also known as the Washington Treaty) at the Departmental Auditorium in Washington, D.C.: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Within the following five months of the signing ceremony, the Treaty was ratified by the parliaments of the interested countries, sealing their membership.

The 12 signatories

Some of the foreign ministers who signed the Treaty were heavily involved in NATO's work at a later stage in their careers:

- Belgium: M. Paul-Henri Spaak (NATO Secretary General, 1957-1961);

- Canada: Mr Lester B. Pearson (negotiated the Treaty and was one of the "Three Wise Men", who drafted the report on non-military cooperation in NATO, published in 1956 in the wake of the Suez Crisis);

- Denmark: Mr Gustav Rasmussen;

- France: M. Robert Schuman (architect of the European institutions, who also initiated the idea of a European Defence Community);

- Iceland: Mr Bjarni Benediktsson;

- Italy: Count Carlo Sforza;

- Luxembourg: M. Joseph Bech;

- the Netherlands: Dr D.U. Stikker (NATO Secretary General, 1961-1964);

- Norway: Mr Halvard M. Lange (one of the "Three Wise Men", who drafted the report on non-military cooperation in NATO);

- Portugal: Dr José Caeiro da Matta;

- the United Kingdom: Mr Ernest Bevin (main drive behind the creation of NATO and as Foreign Secretary from 1945 to 1951, he attended the first formative meetings of the North Atlantic Council);

- the United States: Mr Dean Acheson (as US Secretary of State from 1949 to 1953, he attended and chaired meetings of the North Atlantic Council).

Flexibility of NATO membership

On signing the Treaty, countries voluntarily commit themselves to participating in the political consultations and military activities of the Organization. Although each and every signatory to the North Atlantic Treaty is subject to the obligations of the Treaty, there remains a certain degree of flexibility which allows members to choose how they participate. The memberships of Iceland and France, for instance, illustrate this point.

- Iceland

When Iceland signed the Treaty in 1949, it did not have – and still does not have – armed forces. There is no legal impediment to forming them, but Iceland has chosen not to have any. However, Iceland has a Coast Guard, national police forces, an air defence system and a voluntary expeditionary peacekeeping force. Since 1951, Iceland has also benefitted from a long-standing bilateral defence agreement with the United States. In 2006, US forces were withdrawn but the defence agreement remains valid. Since 2008, air policing has been conducted on a periodic basis by NATO Allies.

- France

In 1966, President Charles de Gaulle decided to withdraw France from NATO's integrated military structure. This reflected the desire for greater military independence, particularly vis-à-vis the United States, and the refusal to integrate France's nuclear deterrent or accept any form of control over its armed forces.

In practical terms, while France still fully participated in the political instances of the Organization, it was no longer represented on certain committees, for instance, the Defence Planning Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group. This decision also led to the removal of French forces from NATO commands and foreign forces from French territory. The stationing of foreign weapons, including nuclear weapons, was also banned. NATO's political headquarters (based in Paris since 1952), as well as the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe or SHAPE (in Rocquencourt since 1951) moved to Belgium.

Despite France's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military structure, two technical agreements were signed with the Alliance, setting out procedures in the event of Soviet aggression. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, France has regularly contributed troops to NATO's military operations, making it one of the largest troop-contributing states. It is also NATO's fourth-biggest contributor to the military budget.

From the early 1990s onwards, France distanced itself from the 1966 decision with, for instance, its participation at the meetings of defence ministers from 1994 (Seville) onwards and the presence of French officers in Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation structures from 2003. At NATO's Strasbourg/Kehl Summit in April 2009, France officially announced its decision to fully participate in NATO structures[1].

The accession of Greece and Turkey

Three years after the signing of the Washington Treaty, on 18 February 1952, Greece and Turkey joined NATO. This enabled NATO to reinforce its "southern flank".

At a time when there was a fear of communist expansion throughout Europe and other parts of the world (Soviet support of the North Korean invasion of South Korea in 1950), extending security to southeastern Europe was strategically important. Not only did NATO membership curb communist influence in Greece – a country recovering from civil war – but it also relieved Turkey from Soviet pressure for access to key strategic maritime routes.

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[1]   However, France has chosen not to become a member of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group.

The accession of Germany

Germany became a NATO member on 6 May 1955. This was the result of several years of deliberations among western leaders and Germany, whose population opposed any form of rearmament.

Following the end of the Second World War, ways of integrating the Federal Republic of Germany into west European defence structures was a priority. The Federal Republic of Germany - or West Germany - was created in 1949 and although the new state was anchored to the west, its potential was feared. Initially, France proposed the creation of a European Defence Community – a European solution to the German question. However, the French Senate opposed the plan and the proposal fell through leaving NATO membership as the only viable solution. Three conditions needed to be fulfilled before this could happen: post-war victors (France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union) had to end the occupation of the Federal Republic of Germany; Italy and West Germany needed to be admitted to the Western Union Defence Organisation (the military agency of the Western Union) and then there was the accession procedure itself.

When Germany joined the Western Union, the latter changed its name to become the Western European Union. This accession, together with the termination of the Federal Republic of Germany's status as an occupied country, was bringing the country closer to NATO membership. The Federal Republic of Germany officially joined the Western Union on 23 October 1954 and its status as an occupied country came to an end when the Bonn-Paris conventions came into effect on 5 May 1955. The next day, it became NATO's 15th member country.

With the reunification of Germany on 3 October 1990, the Länder of the former German Democratic Republic joined the Federal Republic of Germany in its membership of NATO.

The accession of Spain

Spain joined the Alliance on 30 May 1982 despite considerable public opposition. The end of Franco's dictatorship in 1975, the military coup in 1981 and the rise of the Socialist Party (PSOE), the leading opposition party which was initially against NATO accession, made for a difficult social and political context, both nationally and internationally.

Spain fully participated in the political instances of the Organization, but refrained from participating in the integrated military structure - a position it reaffirmed in a referendum held in 1986. With regard to the military aspects, it was present as an observer on the Nuclear Planning Group; reserved its position on participation in the integrated communication system; maintained Spanish forces under Spanish command and did not accept to have troops deployed outside of Spain for long periods of time. Nevertheless, Spanish forces would still be able to operate with other NATO forces in an emergency.

Spain's reservations gradually diminished. The Spanish Parliament endorsed the country's participation in the integrated military command structure in 1996, a decision that coincided with the nomination of Dr Javier Solana as NATO's first Spanish Secretary General (1995-1999).

The first wave of post-Cold War enlargement

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact after the end of the Cold War opened up the possibility of further NATO enlargement. Some of the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe were eager to become integrated into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

In 1995, the Alliance carried out and published the results of a Study on NATO Enlargement that considered the merits of admitting new members and how they should be brought in. It concluded that the end of the Cold War provided a unique opportunity to build improved security in the entire Euro-Atlantic area and that NATO enlargement would contribute to enhanced stability and security for all.

The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited to begin accession talks at the Alliance's Madrid Summit in 1997 and on 12 March 1999 they became the first former members of the Warsaw Pact to join NATO.

Drawing heavily on the experience gained during this accession process, NATO launched the Membership Action Plan - or MAP - at the Washington Summit in April 1999. The MAP was established to help countries aspiring to NATO membership in their preparations, even if it did not pre-judge any decisions.

The second wave of post-Cold War enlargement

Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia were invited to begin accession talks at the Alliance's Prague Summit in 2002. On 29 March 2004, they officially became members of the Alliance, making this the largest wave of enlargement in NATO history.

All seven countries had participated in the MAP before acceding to NATO.

The accession of Albania and Croatia

When they were partners, Albania and Croatia worked with NATO in a wide range of areas, with particular emphasis on defence and security sector reform, as well as support for wider democratic and institutional reform.

Albania had participated in the MAP since its inception in 1999 and Croatia joined in 2002. In July 2008, they both signed Accession Protocols and became official members of the Alliance on 1 April 2009.

Montenegro – the most recent accession

Shortly after regaining its independence in June 2006, Montenegro joined the Partnership for Peace in December of the same year and the Membership Action Plan three years later. It actively supported the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan from 2010 and, now provides support to the follow-on mission. Developing the interoperability of its forces and pursuing defence and security sector reforms were an important part of the country's cooperation with NATO before it became a member country. It worked with NATO in areas such as the development of emergency response capabilities and the destruction of surplus munitions – an area in which a project is still ongoing..

The Accession Protocol was signed in May 2016 and Montenegro became a member of the Alliance on 5 June 2017.

Partners

NATO cooperates with a range of international organisations and countries in different structures. Below is a list of these partners with links to web pages on their relations with NATO as well as links to their information servers.

- ## Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)

The EAPC consists of all NATO member countries and the following Partnership for Peace countries:

| Country	1St	Sen	GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL	Info
Armenia	Parliament		GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD		DEL	Info
Austria	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL	
Azerbaijan	Parliament		GOV	State Head		MFA		MIL	DEL	
Belarus	Parliament		GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD			
Bosnia and Herzegovina				State Head		MFA	MoD			
Finland	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL	
Georgia	Parliament			State Head		MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL	Info
Ireland	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL		
Kazakhstan	Parliament		GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD			
Kyrgyz Republic			GOV	State Head						
Malta	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA				
The Republic of Moldova	Parliament		GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD			
Russia										
Serbia	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL	
Sweden	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL	
Switzerland	1St	Sen	GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL	
Tajikistan										
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia [1]	Parliament		GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD			
Turkmenistan										
Ukraine	Parliament		GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD		DEL	
Uzbekistan				State Head	PM	MFA			DEL	

[1] Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

- **NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue**

The following seven countries of the Mediterranean region are currently involved:

		1St	Sen	GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL
	Algeria	1St	Sen		State Head		MFA			
	Egypt	1St	Sen	GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD		
	Israel	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	
	Jordan	Parliament			State Head	PM	MFA			
	Mauritania			GOV						
	Morocco					PM	MFA			
	Tunisia			GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD		
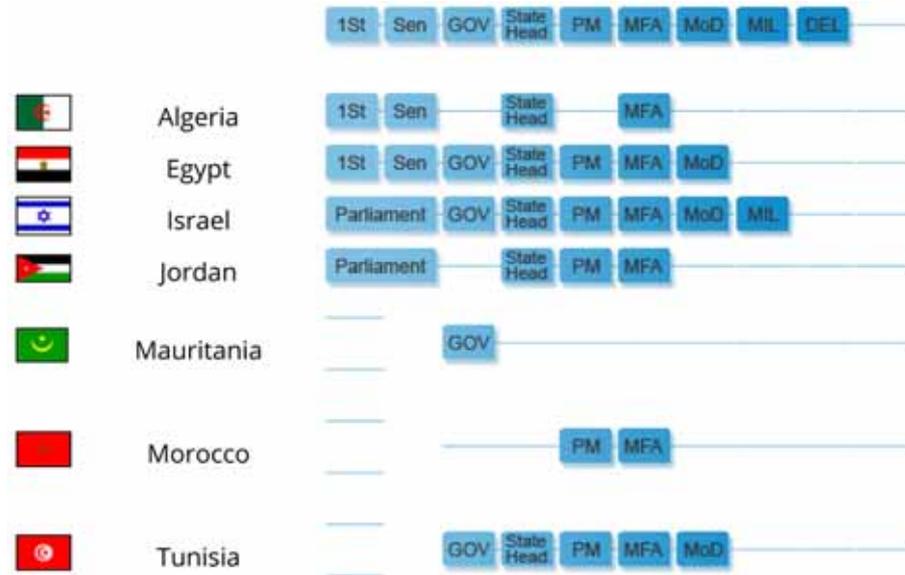
- **Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI)** To date, the following four countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council have joined:

		1St	Sen	GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL
	Bahrain			GOV						
	Kuwait				State Head					
	Qatar						MFA			
	United Arab Emirates					PM				
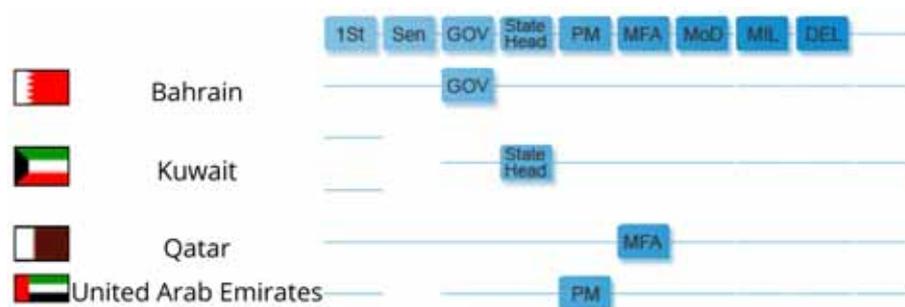
● Partners across the globe

In addition to its formal partnerships, NATO cooperates with a range of countries which are not part of these structures. Often referred to as ″Partners across the globe″, these countries develop cooperation with NATO in areas of mutual interest, including emerging security challenges, and some contribute actively to NATO operations either militarily or in some other way.

	1St	Sen	GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD	MIL	DEL
Afghanistan			GOV	State Head		MFA			
Australia	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD		
Colombia				State Head		MFA	MoD		
Iraq	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD		
Japan	1St	Sen			PM	MFA			
Republic of Korea	Parliament			State Head	PM	MFA	MoD		
Mongolia	Parliament		GOV	State Head					
New Zealand	Parliament		GOV	State Head	PM	MFA	MoD		
Pakistan	1St	Sen	GOV	State Head		MFA	MoD		
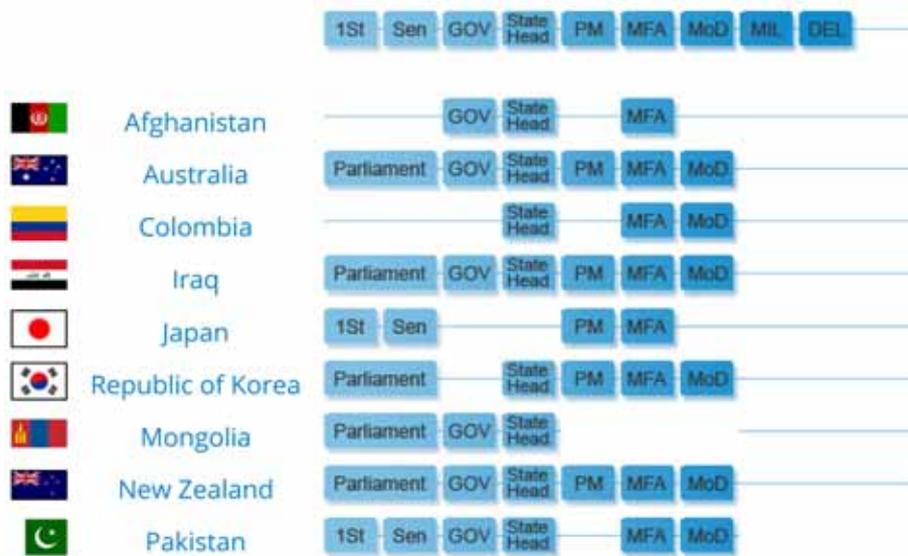
● International organisations

In addition to its partnerships with countries, NATO cooperates with a range of international organisations.

- United Nations (UN) - http://www.un.org
- European Union (EU) - http://europa.eu
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - http://www.osce.org

Legend

1St	Parliament, 1st Chamber
Sen	Senate, 2nd Chamber
GOV	Government
State Head	Head of State / President
PM	Prime Minister
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoD	Ministry/Department of Defence
MIL	Military / Chief of Staff
DEL	National Mission or Delegation to NATO
Info	Information Centre

NATO Secretary General

The Secretary General is the Alliance's top international civil servant. This person is responsible for steering the process of consultation and decision-making in the Alliance and ensuring that decisions are implemented.

Highlights

- The Secretary General is NATO's top international civil servant and has three principal roles.
- He/she chairs all major committees and is responsible for steering discussions, facilitating the decision-making process and ensuring that decisions are implemented.
- He/she is the Organization's chief spokesperson.
- He/she is at the head of the International Staff, whose role it is to support the Secretary General directly and indirectly.
- The person is nominated by member governments for an initial period of four years, which can be extended by mutual consent.
- The post is currently held by Jens Stoltenberg, former Prime Minister of Norway, who took up his responsibilities on 1 October 2014.

Three principal responsibilities

● Chairman of the North Atlantic Council and other key bodies

First and foremost, the Secretary General chairs the North Atlantic Council - the Alliance's principal political decision-making body - as well as other senior decision-making committees. These include the Nuclear Planning Group, the NATO-Russia Council and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Additionally, together with a Ukrainian representative, he is the chairman of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, as well as the chairman of the NATO-Georgia Commission.

Above and beyond the role of chairman, the Secretary General has the authority to propose items for discussion and use his good offices in case of disputes between member states. He acts as a decision facilitator, leading and guiding the process of consensus-building and decision-making throughout the Alliance.

He maintains direct contact with heads of state and government, foreign and defence ministers in NATO and partner countries, in order to facilitate this process. This entails regular visits to NATO and partner countries, as well as bilateral meetings with senior national officials when they visit NATO Headquarters.

Effectively, his role allows him to exert some influence on the decision-making process while respecting the fundamental principle that the authority for taking decisions is invested only in the member governments themselves.

● Principal spokesperson

The Secretary General is also the principal spokesman of the Alliance and represents the Alliance in public on behalf of the member countries, reflecting their common positions on political issues.

He also represents NATO vis-à-vis other international organisations as well as to the media and the public at large. To this end the Secretary General regularly holds press briefings and conferences as well as public lectures and speeches.

● Head of the International Staff

Third and lastly, the Secretary General is the senior executive officer of the NATO International Staff, responsible for making staff appointments and overseeing its work.

Support to the Secretary General

In his day-to-day work, the Secretary General is directly supported by a Private Office and a Deputy Secretary General, who assists the Secretary General and replaces him in his absence. The Deputy Secretary General is also the chairman of a number of senior committees, ad hoc groups and working groups.

More generally speaking, the entire International Staff at NATO Headquarters supports the Secretary General, either directly or indirectly.

The selection process

The Secretary General is a senior statesman from a NATO member country, appointed by member states for a four-year term. The selection is carried through informal diplomatic consultations among member countries, which put forward candidates for the post.

No decision is confirmed until consensus is reached on one candidate. At the end of his term, the incumbent might be offered to stay on for a fifth year.

The position has traditionally been held by a European statesman.

Deterrence and defence

NATO is a political and military alliance, whose principal task is to ensure the protection of its citizens and to promote security and stability in the North Atlantic area. As outlined in the 2010 Strategic Concept, the Alliance's three core tasks are collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

Today, the Alliance is faced with a security environment that is more diverse, complex, fast moving and demanding than at any time since its inception. It faces challenges and threats that originate from the east and from the south; from state and non-state actors; from military forces and from terrorist, cyber and hybrid attacks.

Russia has become more assertive with the illegal annexation of Crimea and destabilisation of eastern Ukraine, as well as its military build-up close to NATO's borders. In parallel, to the south, the security situation in the Middle East and Africa has deteriorated due to a combination of factors that are causing loss of life, fuelling large-scale migration flows and inspiring terrorist attacks in Allied countries and elsewhere.

The Alliance must be able to address the full spectrum of current and future challenges and threats from any direction, simultaneously. It is therefore strengthening its deterrence and defence posture in view of the changed and evolving security environment.

Towards a strengthened deterrence and defence posture

The Readiness Action Plan (RAP), launched at the NATO Summit in Wales in 2014, has been a major driver for change in the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture. The RAP was initiated to ensure the Alliance was ready to respond swiftly and firmly to new security challenges from the east and from the south. It has been the most significant reinforcement of NATO's collective defence since the end of the Cold War.

Building on the RAP, NATO Heads of State and Government approved a strengthened deterrence and defence posture at the Warsaw Summit in July 2016. It is providing the Alliance with a broad range of options to be able to respond to any threats from wherever they arise to protect Alliance territory, population, airspace and sea lines of communication.

Collective defence is the Alliance's greatest responsibility and deterrence remains a core element of NATO's overall strategy – preventing conflict and war, protecting Allies, maintaining freedom of decision and action, and upholding the principles and values it stands for – individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. NATO's capacity to deter and defend is supported by an appropriate mix of capabilities. Nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities complement each other. NATO also maintains the freedom of action and flexibility to respond to the full spectrum of challenges with an appropriate and tailored approach, at the minimum level of force.

The Alliance's actions are defensive in nature, proportionate and in line with international commitments given the threats in the changed and evolving security environment, and the Alliance's right to self-defence. NATO also remains fully committed to non-proliferation, disarmament, arms control and confidence- and security-building measures to increase security and reduce military tensions. For instance, Allies go beyond the letter of the Vienna Document and other transparency measures in planning and conducting NATO exercises. The Vienna Document is a politically binding agreement, initiated by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is designed to promote mutual trust and transparency about a state's military forces and activities.

More specifically, NATO's strengthened deterrence and defence posture entails efforts on areas such as conventional forces, forward presence, joint air power and maritime forces, as well as cyber defence, civil preparedness and countering hybrid threats, including in cooperation with the European Union.

Projecting stability

While renewed emphasis is being placed on deterrence and collective defence, NATO also retains its ability to respond to crises beyond its borders and remain actively engaged in supporting partners and working with other international organisations, in particular the European Union. All this is part of NATO's contribution to the international community's efforts in projecting stability. NATO's deterrence and defence are not pursued in isolation. They are part of a broader response of the wider transatlantic community to the changed and evolving security environment.

Projecting stability consists in strengthening NATO's ability to train, advise and assist local forces. NATO has a long history in this area – through operations in Afghanistan and the Balkans – and capacity-building with over 40 partners worldwide. It is increasing its efforts, for instance, by enhancing situational awareness, reinforcing the Alliance's maritime dimension and developing a more strategic approach to partnerships.

In view of today's reality as well as the scale and complexity of the challenges and threats around NATO's periphery, the Alliance will continue to strengthen its role in contributing to security across its three core tasks – collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

Boosting NATO's presence in the east and southeast

An important component of NATO's strengthened deterrence and defence posture is military presence in the eastern and south-eastern parts of Alliance territory. Allies implemented the 2016 Warsaw Summit decisions to establish NATO's forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland and to develop a tailored forward presence in the Black Sea region.

Highlights

- NATO has enhanced its forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance, with four multinational battalion-size battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, on a rotational basis.

- These battlegroups, led by the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and the United States respectively, are robust, multinational, combat-ready forces. They demonstrate the strength of the transatlantic bond and make clear that an attack on one Ally would be considered an attack on the whole Alliance.

- It is part of the biggest reinforcement of Alliance collective defence in a generation.

- NATO has also a forward presence tailored to the southeast of Alliance territory and in the Black Sea region. Allies are contributing forces and capabilities on land, at sea and in the air.

- The land element in the southeast of the Alliance is built around a multinational brigade, under Multinational Division Southeast in Romania and is coordinating multinational training through a Combined Joint Enhanced Training Initiative. In the air, several Allies have reinforced Romania's and Bulgaria's efforts to protect NATO airspace.

More background information

Enhanced forward presence

As part of NATO's strengthened deterrence and defence posture, Allies agreed at the 2016 Summit in Warsaw to enhance NATO's military presence in the eastern part of the Alliance.

NATO's enhanced forward presence is defensive, proportionate, and in line with international commitments. It represents a significant commitment by Allies and is a tangible reminder that an attack on one is an attack on all.

Fully deployed in June 2017, NATO's enhanced forward presence comprises multinational forces provided by framework nations and other contributing Allies on a voluntary, fully sustainable and rotational basis.

They are based on four rotational battalion-size battlegroups that operate in concert with national home defence forces and are present at all times in the host countries.

Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States are the framework nations for the robust multinational presence in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland respectively.

Other Allies confirmed contributions to these forces: Albania, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain contribute to the Canadian-led battlegroup in Latvia; Belgium, Croatia, France, Iceland, the Netherlands and Norway have joined the German-led battlegroup in Lithuania; Denmark and Iceland contribute to the UK-led battlegroup in Estonia; and Croatia, Romania and the United Kingdom have joined the US-led battlegroup in Poland.

Enhanced forward presence forces are complemented by the necessary logistics and infrastructure to support pre-positioning and to facilitate rapid reinforcement.

The four battlegroups are under NATO command, through the Multinational Corps Northeast Headquarters in Szczecin, Poland. Multinational Division Northeast Headquarters (MND-NE) in Elblag, Poland coordinates and supervises training and preparation activities of the four battlegroups.

Tailored forward presence

At the 2016 Summit in Warsaw, Allies also agreed to develop a tailored forward presence in the south-eastern part of Alliance territory. On land, this presence is built around the Romanian-led multinational brigade in Craiova. In the air, several Allies have reinforced Romania's and Bulgaria's efforts to protect NATO airspace.

This means more NATO forces, and more exercises and training under Headquarters Multinational Division Southeast (in Romania), which became fully operational in June 2017. Tailored forward presence contributes to the Alliance's strengthened deterrence and defence posture, to Allies' situational awareness, interoperability and responsiveness.

NATO is also developing a number of additional measures to increase its presence in the Black Sea region. Specific measures for a strengthened NATO maritime and air presence in the region are being implemented, with a number of Allies contributing forces and capabilities.

NATO's rapid reinforcement strategy also ensures that forward presence forces will be reinforced by NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, the broader NATO Response Force, Allies' additional high readiness forces and NATO's heavier follow-on forces, if necessary.

Evolution

Allies agreed at the Wales Summit in 2014 to implement the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) in order to respond swiftly to the fundamental changes in the security environment on NATO's borders and further afield.

Building on the RAP, Allies took further decisions at the Warsaw Summit in 2016 to strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence posture and to contribute to projecting stability and strengthening security outside of Alliance territory.

Together, these decisions are the biggest reinforcement of Alliance collective defence in a generation. Combined with the forces and capabilities required for rapid reinforcement by follow-on forces, these measures will enhance the security of all Allies and ensure protection of Alliance territory, populations, airspace and sea lines of communication, including across the Atlantic, against threats from wherever they arise.

At their meeting on 26 October 2016, Allied defence ministers confirmed troop contributions to the four battalion-size battlegroups: Albania, Italy, Poland and Slovenia will contribute to the Canadian-led battlegroup in Latvia; Belgium, Croatia, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway will join the German-led battlegroup in Lithuania; Denmark and France will contribute to the UK-led battlegroup in Estonia, and Romania and the United Kingdom will join the US-led battlegroup in Poland. Later on, Spain confirmed its contribution to the battlegroup in Latvia. Contributions will be made on a voluntary, sustainable and rotational basis.

Ministers also decided a number of tailored measures to increase NATO presence in the southeast of the Alliance on land, at sea and in the air with more multinational land training, combined joint enhanced training, more maritime activity and increased coordination.

Air policing: securing NATO airspace

NATO Air Policing is a peacetime mission, which aims to preserve the security of Alliance airspace. It is a collective task and involves the continuous presence – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year – of fighter aircraft and crews, which are ready to react quickly to airspace violations.

Highlights

- NATO Air Policing is a collective task and a purely defensive mission, which involves the 24/7 presence of fighter aircraft, which are ready to react quickly to airspace violations.

- NATO members assist those Allies who are without the necessary means to provide air policing of their own territory.

- The Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) is responsible for the conduct of the NATO Air Policing mission.

- Preservation of the integrity of NATO airspace is one of the missions of NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence.

- Air policing was intensified following the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

More background information

A collective security mission

Safeguarding the integrity of Alliance members' sovereign airspace is a peacetime task contributing to NATO's collective defence. It is a clear sign of cohesion, shared responsibility and solidarity across the Alliance.

The NATO Air Policing mission is carried out using the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS)..

The Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) has the overall responsibility for the conduct of the NATO Air Policing mission.

Allied Air Command (AIRCOM) headquartered at Ramstein, Germany oversees the NATO Air Policing mission with 24/7 command and control from two Combined Air Operations Centres (CAOCs); one in Torrejon, Spain, and one in Uedem, Germany. CAOC Uedem is responsible for NATO Air Policing north of the Alps and CAOC Torrejon for the south. The CAOC decides which interceptor aircraft will be scrambled (i.e. tasked to react) according to the location of the incident.

NATO member nations provide the necessary aircraft and assets for the air policing of their own airspace, under SACEUR direction. Those without the necessary means to do so (Albania, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro and Slovenia) are assisted by other NATO members to preserve the integrity of their sovereign airspace in peacetime and to ensure their security.

NATO has been protecting the Baltic skies since 2004, when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania joined the Alliance. The Baltic Air Policing mission started in April 2004 and has been executed continuously ever since. Slovenia's airspace is covered by Hungary and Italy, while Albania and Montenegro are covered by Greece and Italy.

All NATO member nations that possess an air policing capability, voluntarily contribute to the NATO Air Policing mission in the Baltic States and this responsibility is rotated every four months. The capability for the mission in the Baltic States was established by the deployment of NATO fighter aircraft to Šiauliai Air Base in Lithuania. Since 2014, NATO has also been using Ämari Air Base in Estonia for the deployment of additional air policing assets.

The mission of patrolling the skies along NATO's eastern border was intensified in 2015 following the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

▬▬ Main components

NATO Air Policing requires the Air Surveillance and Control System (ASACS), the Air Command and Control (Air C2) structure and Quick Reaction Alert (Interceptor) (QRA(I)) aircraft and crews to be available on a 24/7 basis.

This enables the Alliance to detect, track and identify to the greatest extent possible all aerial objects approaching or operating within NATO airspace so that violations can be recognised, and appropriate action taken.

▬▬ Evolution

The term "air policing" was first used by the United Kingdom between the two World Wars to describe their mission in Mesopotamia (now part of Iraq), where aircraft were used to replace the more traditional army approach of "boots on the ground" in an effort to cut back on the large imperial army. This was the first time air power had been used for a policing task and is still considered to be the birth of the concept, even though this first initiative was policing the situation on the ground, rather than in the air.

In the 1960s, nations participating in the NATO military structure realised that individual air defence systems operating independently could not effectively protect Alliance airspace, so they began working together to establish a structure to overcome this deficiency. Combining national assets supplemented as necessary by other NATO elements, an integrated air defence structure and system – the NATO Integrated Air Defence System (NATINADS) – was established.

Established in 1961 during the Cold War, NATO Air Policing was – and still is – an integral part of NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD). On duty 24/7/365, NATO Air Policing is a constant in a rapidly changing security environment, giving SACEUR the capability to preserve the integrity of Alliance airspace in peacetime.

In the early days of NATINADS, all NATO member nations (with the exception of Iceland and Luxembourg) provided fighter aircraft to SACEUR. Referred to as "NATO command forces", these aircraft were put under the command of SACEUR already in peacetime. This gave him the necessary flexibility to react to any incident in NATO airspace in a timely manner.

In 2004, nine new member nations joined the Alliance. Some of them did not possess fighter aircraft and could therefore not provide the necessary means for the protection of their airspace. This responsibility was taken over by NATO member nations which possess an air policing capability. Initially, NATO only used the Šiauliai Air Base in Lithuania, but since 2014, has also been using Ämari Air Base in Estonia for the deployment of additional air policing assets.

Also in 2004, special arrangements were established to ensure adequate air policing of Slovenia. The country's airspace is covered by both Hungary and Italy. The Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) decides on a case-by-case basis which nation will be scrambled according to the location of the incident.

In 2006, the United States ended its permanent air policing mission over Iceland. The US mission was replaced by a system whereby Allies periodically deploy fighter aircraft to Keflavik Air Base to provide protection of Icelandic airspace. The first deployment took place in May 2008.

When Albania joined NATO in 2009, an arrangement similar to that for Slovenia was established with Greece and Italy ensuring coverage over Albania.

At the Lisbon Summit in 2010, Allied leaders agreed to address air *and missile* defence in a holistic way by developing a NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS). NATINAMDS is based on the previously existing NATINADS enhanced by new BMD elements.

In 2015, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands signed an agreement to conduct joint air policing of their territories. Under the agreement, the Belgian and Dutch Air Forces will defend the Benelux airspace on a rotational basis. The joint operations started on 1 January 2017.

In 2017, Montenegro joined the Alliance. Greece and Italy have agreed to ensure the coverage of the airspace over Montenegro using the same model as for Albania.

Cyber defence

Cyber threats and attacks are becoming more common, sophisticated and damaging. The Alliance is faced with an evolving complex threat environment. In recent events, cyber attacks have been part of hybrid warfare. NATO and its Allies rely on strong and resilient cyber defences to fulfil the Alliance's core tasks of collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. NATO needs to be prepared to defend its networks and operations against the growing sophistication of the cyber threats and attacks it faces.

Highlights

- Cyber defence is part of NATO's core task of collective defence.

- NATO has affirmed that international law applies in cyberspace.

- NATO's main focus in cyber defence is to protect its own networks (including operations and missions) and enhance resilience across the Alliance.

- In July 2016, Allies reaffirmed NATO's defensive mandate and recognised cyberspace as a domain of operations in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea.

- Allies also made a Cyber Defence Pledge in July 2016 to enhance their cyber defences, as a matter of priority. Since then, almost all Allies have upgraded their cyber defences.

- NATO reinforces its capabilities for cyber education, training and exercises.

- Allies are committed to enhancing information-sharing and mutual assistance in preventing, mitigating and recovering from cyber attacks.

- NATO Cyber Rapid Reaction teams are on standby to assist Allies, 24 hours a day, if requested and approved.

- NATO and the European Union (EU) are cooperating through a Technical Arrangement on cyber defence that was signed in February 2016. In light of common challenges, NATO and the EU are strengthening their cooperation on cyber defence, notably in the areas of information exchange, training, research and exercises.

- NATO is intensifying its cooperation with industry through the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership.

More background information

Principal cyber defence activities

NATO Policy on Cyber Defence

To keep pace with the rapidly changing threat landscape and maintain robust cyber defences, NATO adopted an enhanced policy and action plan, which were endorsed by Allies at the Wales Summit in September 2014. An updated action plan has since been endorsed by Allies in February 2017. The policy establishes that cyber defence is part of the Alliance's core task of collective defence, confirms that international law applies in cyberspace and intensifies NATO's cooperation with industry. The top priority is the protection of the communications systems owned and operated by the Alliance.

The policy also reflects Allied decisions on issues such as streamlined cyber defence governance, procedures for assistance to Allied countries, and the integration of cyber defence into operational planning (including civil emergency planning). In addition, the policy defines ways to take forward awareness, education, training and exercise activities, and encourages further progress in various cooperation initiatives, including those with partner countries and international organisations. It also foresees boosting NATO's cooperation with industry, including on information-sharing and the exchange of best practices. Allies have also committed to enhancing information-sharing and mutual assistance in preventing, mitigating and recovering from cyber attacks.

NATO's cyber defence policy is complemented by an action plan with concrete objectives and implementation timelines on a range of topics from capability development, education, training and exercises, and partnerships.

Allies pledged at the Warsaw Summit in 2016 to strengthen and enhance the cyber defences of national networks and infrastructures, as a matter of priority. Together with the continuous adaptation of NATO's cyber defence capabilities, as part of NATO's long-term adaptation, this will reinforce the cyber defence and overall resilience of the Alliance.

At Warsaw, Allies also reaffirmed NATO's defensive mandate and recognised cyberspace as a domain of operations in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea. As most crises and conflicts today have a cyber dimension, treating cyberspace as a domain will enable NATO to better protect and conduct its missions and operations.

Developing the NATO cyber defence capability

The NATO Computer Incident Response Capability (NCIRC) based at SHAPE, Mons, Belgium, protects NATO's own networks by providing centralised and round-the-clock cyber defence support to the various NATO sites. This capability is expected to evolve on a continual basis, to maintain pace with the rapidly changing threat and technology environment.

To facilitate an Alliance-wide and common approach to cyber defence capability development, NATO also defines targets for Allied countries' implementation of national cyber defence capabilities via the NATO Defence Planning Process. In June 2017, further cyber defence capability targets were agreed by defence ministers.

Cyber defence has also been integrated into NATO's Smart Defence initiatives. Smart Defence enables countries to work together to develop and maintain capabilities they could not afford to develop or procure alone, and to free resources for developing other capabilities. The Smart Defence projects in cyber defence, so far, include the Malware Information Sharing Platform (MISP), the Smart Defence Multinational Cyber Defence Capability Development (MN CD2) project, and the Multinational Cyber Defence Education and Training (MN CD E&T) project.

NATO is also helping member countries by sharing information and best practices, and by conducting cyber defence exercises to help develop national expertise. Similarly, individual Allied countries may, on a voluntary basis and facilitated by NATO, assist other Allies to develop their national cyber defence capabilities.

Increasing NATO cyber defence capacity

Recognising that cyber defence is as much about people as it is about technology, NATO continues to improve the state of its cyber defence education, training and exercises.

NATO conducts regular exercises, such as the annual Cyber Coalition Exercise, and aims to integrate cyber defence elements and considerations into the entire range of Alliance exercises, including the annual Crisis Management Exercise (CMX). NATO is also enhancing its capabilities for cyber education, training and exercises, including the NATO Cyber Range, which is based at a facility provided by Estonia.

To enhance situational awareness, an updated Memorandum of Understanding on Cyber Defence was developed in 2015. This updated MOU is now being concluded between NATO and the national cyber defence authorities of each of the 29 Allies. It sets out arrangements for the exchange of a variety of cyber defence-related information and assistance to improve cyber incident prevention, resilience and response capabilities.

The NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCD CoE) in Tallinn, Estonia is a NATO-accredited research and training facility dealing with cyber defence education, consultation, lessons learned, research and development. Although it is not part of the NATO Command Structure, the CCD CoE offers recognised expertise and experience.

The NATO Communications and Information Systems School (NCISS) in Latina, Italy provides training to personnel from Allied (as well as non-NATO) nations relating to the operation and maintenance of NATO communication and information systems. NCISS will soon relocate to Portugal, where it will provide greater emphasis on cyber defence training and education.

The NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany conducts cyber defence-related education and training to support Alliance operations, strategy, policy, doctrine and procedures. The NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy fosters strategic thinking on political-military matters, including on cyber defence issues.

Cooperating with partners

Because cyber threats defy state borders and organisational boundaries, NATO engages with relevant countries and organisations to enhance international security.

Engagement with partner countries is based on shared values and common approaches to cyber defence. Requests for cooperation with the Alliance are handled on a case-by-case basis founded on mutual interest.

NATO also works with, among others, the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The Alliance's cooperation with other international organisations is complementary and avoids unnecessary duplication of effort.

Cyber defence is one of the areas of strengthened cooperation between NATO and the EU, as part of the two organisations' increasingly coordinated efforts to counter hybrid threats. NATO and the EU share information between cyber crisis response teams and exchange best practices. Cooperation is also being enhanced on training, research and exercises.

Cooperating with industry

The private sector is a key player in cyberspace, and technological innovations and expertise from the private sector are crucial to enable NATO and Allied countries to mount an effective cyber defence.

Through the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership (NICP), NATO and its Allies are working to reinforce their relationships with industry. This partnership relies on existing structures and includes NATO entities, national Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) and NATO member countries' industry

representatives. Information-sharing activities, exercises, training and education, and multinational Smart Defence projects are just a few examples of areas in which NATO and industry have been working together.

Governance

The NATO Policy on Cyber Defence is implemented by NATO's political, military and technical authorities, as well as by individual Allies. The North Atlantic Council (NAC) provides high-level political oversight on all aspects of implementation. The NAC is apprised of major cyber incidents and attacks, and it exercises principal authority in cyber defence-related crisis management.

The Cyber Defence Committee, subordinate to the NAC, is the lead committee for political governance and cyber defence policy in general, providing oversight and advice to Allied countries on NATO's cyber defence efforts at the expert level. At the working level, the NATO Cyber Defence Management Board (CDMB) is responsible for coordinating cyber defence throughout NATO civilian and military bodies. The CDMB comprises the leaders of the policy, military, operational and technical bodies in NATO with responsibilities for cyber defence.

The NATO Consultation, Control and Command (NC3) Board constitutes the main committee for consultation on technical and implementation aspects of cyber defence.

The NATO Military Authorities (NMA) and NCIA bear the specific responsibilities for identifying the statement of operational requirements, acquisition, implementation and operating of NATO's cyber defence capabilities. Allied Command Transformation (ACT) is responsible for the planning and conduct of the annual Cyber Coalition Exercise.

Lastly, NCIA, through its NCIRC Technical Centre in Mons, Belgium, is responsible for the provision of technical cyber security services throughout NATO. The NCIRC Technical Centre has a key role in responding to any cyber incidents affecting NATO. It handles and reports incidents, and disseminates important incident-related information to system/security management and users.

The NCIRC Coordination Centre is a staff element responsible for the coordination of cyber defence activities within NATO and with member countries, and for staff support to the CDMB.

Evolution

Although NATO has always protected its communication and information systems, the 2002 Prague Summit first placed cyber defence on the Alliance's political agenda. Allied leaders reiterated the need to provide additional protection to these information systems at the Riga Summit in 2006.

Following the cyber attacks against Estonia's public and private institutions in April and May of 2007, Allied defence ministers agreed in June 2007 that urgent work was needed in this area. As a result, NATO approved its first Policy on Cyber Defence in January 2008.

In the summer of 2008, the conflict between Russia and Georgia demonstrated that cyber attacks have the potential to become a major component of conventional warfare.

NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept at the Lisbon Summit in 2010, during which the NAC was tasked to develop an in-depth NATO cyber defence policy and to prepare an action plan for its implementation.

In June 2011, NATO defence ministers approved the second NATO Policy on Cyber Defence, which set out a vision for coordinated efforts in cyber defence throughout the Alliance within the context of the rapidly evolving threat and technology environment, and an associated action plan for its implementation.

In April 2012, cyber defence was introduced into the NATO Defence Planning Process. Relevant cyber defence requirements are identified and prioritised through the defence planning process.

At the Chicago Summit in May 2012, Allied leaders reaffirmed their commitment to improve the Alliance's cyber defences by bringing all of NATO's networks under centralised protection and implementing a series of upgrades to the NCIRC.

In July 2012, as part of the reform of NATO's agencies, NCIA was established.

In February 2014, Allied defence ministers tasked NATO to develop a new, enhanced cyber defence policy regarding collective defence, assistance to Allies, streamlined governance, legal considerations and relations with industry.

In April 2014, the NAC agreed to rename the Defence Policy and Planning Committee/ Cyber Defence as the Cyber Defence Committee.

In May 2014, the full operational capability of the NCIRC (NCIRC FOC) was achieved, providing enhanced protection to NATO networks and users.

At the Wales Summit in September 2014, Allies endorsed a new cyber defence policy and approved an action plan which, along with the policy, contributes to the fulfilment of the Alliance's core tasks. The policy and its implementation is under close review at both the political and technical levels within the Alliance and will be refined and updated in line with the evolving cyber threat.

On 17 September 2014, NATO launched an initiative to boost cooperation with the private sector on cyber threats and challenges. Endorsed by Allied leaders at the Wales Summit, the NATO Industry Cyber Partnership (NICP) was presented at a two-day cyber conference held in Mons, Belgium, where 1,500 industry leaders and policy makers gathered to discuss cyber collaboration. The NICP recognises the importance of working with industry partners to enable the Alliance to achieve its cyber defence policy's objectives.

On 10 February 2016, NATO and the EU concluded a Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence to help both organisations better prevent and respond to cyber attacks. This Technical Arrangement between NCIRC and the Computer Emergency Response Team of the EU (CERT-EU) provides a framework for exchanging information and sharing best practices between emergency response teams.

On 14 June 2016, defence ministers agreed to recognise cyberspace as a domain at the Warsaw Summit. This is an addition to the existing operational domains of air, sea and land. This recognition does not change NATO's mission or mandate, which is defensive. As in all areas of action, NATO will exercise restraint and act in accordance with international law. The Alliance also welcomed efforts undertaken in other international fora to develop norms of responsible state behaviour and confidence-building measures to foster a more transparent and stable cyberspace for the international community.

At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, Allied Heads of State and Government reaffirmed NATO's defensive mandate and recognised cyberspace as a domain of operations in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea. This will improve NATO's ability to protect and conduct its missions and operations.

Allies also pledged to enhance the cyber defences of their national networks and infrastructures, as a matter of priority. Each Ally will honour its responsibility to improve its resilience and ability to respond quickly and effectively to cyber attacks, including in hybrid contexts.

On 6 December 2016, NATO and the EU agreed on a series of more than 40 measures to advance how the two organisations work together – including on countering hybrid threats, cyber defence, and making their common neighbourhood more stable and secure. On cyber defence, NATO and the EU will strengthen their mutual participation in exercises, and foster research, training and information-sharing.

On 16 February 2017, defence ministers approved an updated Cyber Defence Action Plan as well as a roadmap to implement cyberspace as a domain of operations. This will increase Allies' ability to work together, develop capabilities and share information.

Also on 16 February 2017, NATO and Finland stepped up their engagement with the signing of a Political Framework Arrangement on cyber defence cooperation. The arrangement will allow NATO and Finland to better protect and improve the resilience of their networks

On 8 November 2017, defence ministers expressed their agreement in principle on the creation of a new Cyber Operations Centre as part of the outline design for the adapted NATO Command Structure. This will strengthen NATO's cyber defences, and help integrate cyber into NATO planning and operations at all levels. Ministers also agreed to allow the integration of Allies' national cyber contributions into Alliance operations and missions. Allies will maintain full ownership of those contributions, just as Allies own the tanks, ships and aircraft in NATO missions.

On 5 December 2017, NATO and EU Ministers agreed to step up cooperation between the two organisations in a number of areas, including cyber security and defence. Analysis of cyber threats and collaboration between incident response teams is one area of further cooperation; another is the exchange of good practices concerning the cyber aspects and implications of crisis management.

Following the announcement of 8 November 2017, defence ministers agreed on 14 February 2018 to set up the proposed Cyber Operations Centre at NATO's military headquarters at SHAPE.

Relations with Russia

For more than two decades, NATO has strived to build a partnership with Russia, developing dialogue and practical cooperation in areas of common interest. Cooperation has been suspended in response to Russia's military intervention in Ukraine, which the Allies condemn in the strongest terms. Political and military channels of communication remain open. NATO remains concerned by Russia's continued destabilising pattern of military activities and aggressive rhetoric, which goes well beyond Ukraine.

NATO is pursuing a dual-track approach towards Russia: meaningful dialogue on the basis of a strong deterrence and defence posture. (NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, September 2017)

Highlights

- Relations started after the end of the Cold War, when Russia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1991) and the Partnership for Peace programme (1994).

- The 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act provided the formal basis for relations.

- Dialogue and cooperation were strengthened in 2002 with the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) to serve as a forum for consultation on current security issues and to direct practical cooperation in a wide range of areas.

- Russia's disproportionate military action in Georgia in August 2008 led to the suspension of formal meetings of the NRC and cooperation in some areas, until spring 2009. The Allies continue to call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states.

- All practical civilian and military cooperation under the NRC with Russia was suspended in April 2014 in response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. But channels of political dialogue and military communication were kept open. The NRC is an important forum for dialogue and information exchange, to reduce misunderstandings and increase predictability; meetings are being held periodically on the basis of reciprocity.

- At the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014, NATO leaders condemned Russia's military intervention in Ukraine and demanded that Russia comply with international law and its international obligations and responsibilities; end its illegal and illegitimate occupation and 'annexation' of Crimea; refrain from aggressive actions against Ukraine; withdraw its troops; halt the flow of weapons, equipment, people and money across the border to the separatists; and stop fomenting tension along and across the Ukrainian border.

- At the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016, Allied leaders reiterated their concerns about Russia's destabilising actions and policies, which go beyond Ukraine and include provocative military activities near NATO's borders stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea; irresponsible and aggressive nuclear rhetoric, military posture and underlying posture; as well as the risks posed by its military intervention and support for the regime in Syria. NATO has responded to this changed security environment by enhancing its deterrence and defence posture, while remaining open to dialogue.

- NATO and Russia have profound and persistent disagreements; however, the Alliance does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia.

- In the wake of the nerve agent attack in Salisbury, the United Kingdom, on 4 March 2018, NATO Allies were united in expressing deep concern about this clear breach of international norms and agreements. As a consequence, a number of Russian diplomats were expelled from the Russian Mission to NATO and from embassies across most Allied countries.

More background information

Response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict

NATO followed developments in Ukraine closely from the beginning of the crisis, which has had serious implications for NATO-Russia relations.

After Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea in March 2014, the Alliance took immediate steps in terms of its relations with Russia. It suspended the planning for its first NATO-Russia joint mission and put the entire range of NATO-Russia cooperation under review. In April 2014, NATO foreign ministers decided to suspend all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia but to maintain political contacts at the level of ambassadors and above, to allow NATO and Russia to exchange views, first and foremost on the crisis in Ukraine. While the suspension of cooperation with Russia continues today, channels of political dialogue and military communication are being kept open. The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) is meeting periodically on the basis of reciprocity – it is an important forum for dialogue and information exchange, to reduce misunderstandings and increase predictability.

NATO has identified ways to transfer those cooperative projects that impact on third parties, in particular the NRC Counter-Narcotics Training Project, to other non-NRC mechanisms or structures.

At the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014, NATO leaders condemned in the strongest terms Russia's military intervention in Ukraine and demanded that Russia stop and withdraw its forces from Ukraine and along the country's border. NATO leaders also demanded that Russia comply with international law and its international obligations and responsibilities; end its illegitimate occupation of Crimea; refrain from aggressive actions against Ukraine; halt the flow of weapons, equipment, people and money across the border to the separatists; and stop fomenting tension along and across the Ukrainian border. They reaffirmed that NATO does not and will not recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate 'annexation' of Crimea.

At the Wales Summit in 2014, the Allies also noted that violence and insecurity in the region led to the tragic downing of Malaysia Airlines passenger flight MH17 on 17 July 2014. They said that those directly and indirectly responsible for the downing of MH17 should be held accountable and brought to justice as soon as possible. In May 2018, the Joint Investigation Team, which is investigating the MH17 crash,

concluded that the BUK-TELAR that was used to down the aircraft originated from the 53rd Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade, a unit of the Russian army from Kursk. Allies stand in solidarity with the Netherlands and Australia, which call on Russia to take State responsibility for the downing of flight MH17. Allies strongly support the settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine by diplomatic and peaceful means and welcome the ongoing diplomatic efforts in this regard. All signatories of the Minsk Agreements must comply with their commitments and ensure their full implementation. Russia has a significant responsibility in this regard.

For more than two decades, NATO has strived to build a partnership with Russia, including through the mechanism of the NRC, based upon the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act and the 2002 Rome Declaration. Russia has breached its commitments, as well as violated international law, breaking the trust at the core of its cooperation with NATO. The decisions NATO leaders took at Wales demonstrate their respect for the rules-based European security architecture.

The Allies continue to believe that a partnership between NATO and Russia, based on respect for international law, would be of strategic value. They continue to aspire to a cooperative, constructive relationship with Russia – including reciprocal confidence-building and transparency measures and increased mutual understanding of NATO's and Russia's non-strategic nuclear force postures in Europe – based on common security concerns and interests, in a Europe where each country freely chooses its future. They regret that the conditions for that relationship do not currently exist.

The Alliance does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia, but it will not compromise on the principles on which the Alliance and security in Europe and North America rest.

At the 2014 Summit in Wales, the Alliance said that the nature of the Alliance's relations with Russia and its aspiration for partnership will be contingent on seeing a clear, constructive change in Russia's actions which demonstrates compliance with international law and its international obligations and responsibilities.

At the 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allies agreed to strengthen their deterrence and defence posture, while remaining open to a periodic, focused and meaningful dialogue with a Russia willing to engage on the basis of reciprocity. Allies agreed that Ukraine would continue to be the first topic on the agenda at the NRC. Allies also decided to keep open military lines of communication.

Wider concerns about Russia's behaviour

NATO's concerns go well beyond Russia's activities in Ukraine. Notably, Russia's military activities particularly along NATO's borders have increased. Russia's behaviour continues to make the Euro-Atlantic security environment less stable and predictable, in particular its practice of calling snap exercises, deploying near NATO borders, conducting large-scale training and exercises and violating Allied airspace.

Russia's military intervention and considerable military presence in Syria have posed further risks for the Alliance. On 5 October 2015, in response to Russia's military intervention in Syria, the Allies called on Russia to immediately cease their attacks on the Syrian opposition and civilians, to focus its efforts on fighting so-called Islamic State, and to promote a solution to the conflict through a political transition.

In 2016 and 2017, the NRC met six times to discuss three important topics: 1) the crisis in and around Ukraine, including the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements; 2) issues related to military activities, transparency and risk reduction; 3) assessment of the security situation in Afghanistan, including the regional terrorist threat.

In March 2018, in response to the use of a military-grade nerve agent in Salisbury, the Alliance expressed solidarity with the United Kingdom, strongly condemned the attack, and reduced the maximum number of personnel in the Russian Mission to NATO by 10 people. In April 2018, Allies expressed strong support to the US, UK and French joint military action in response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

At the NRC meeting on 31 May 2018, three issues were discussed: 1) the crisis in and around Ukraine, including the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements; 2) issues related to military activities, transparency and risk reduction; 3) asymmetric techniques as aspects of doctrine and strategy. NATO and Russia both briefed on major upcoming exercises.

NATO and Russia have profound and persistent disagreements. NATO's decision to suspend all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia remains in place. Political and military channels of communication, however, remain open. Dialogue is necessary among nations that share a common Euro-Atlantic space, including to reduce the risk of military incidents.

Key areas of cooperation prior to April 2014

● Support for ISAF and the Afghan Armed Forces

In spring 2008, Russia offered to support the NATO-led, UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan by facilitating the land transit of non-military equipment for ISAF contributors across Russian territory. Similar arrangements have been concluded with the other transit states, opening up this important supply route for ISAF. These arrangements were later amended to allow for land transit both to and from Afghanistan of non-lethal cargo (2010) and for multi-modal reverse transit, using a mix of rail and air transit (2012). These arrangements have expired with the end of the ISAF mission.

An NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund to help the Afghan Armed Forces to operate and maintain their helicopter fleet was officially launched in March 2011. It helped provide a much-needed maintenance and repair capacity, including spare parts and technical training. During the first phase of the project, financial and in-kind contributions to the project by ten NRC donor nations amounted to approximately US$23 million. Tailored training for Afghan Air Force helicopter maintenance staff started in April 2012 at the OAO Novosibirsk Aircraft Repair Plant in Russia, which served as the main training centre for Afghan maintenance personnel under the project. Some 40 Afghan helicopter maintenance staff had been trained under the project by the end of 2013.

The scope of the project was expanded with the launch of the second phase in April 2013: maintenance training, which had previously focused on the Mi-17s (medium-sized transport helicopters that can also act as gunships), was offered for Mi-35s (large helicopter gunship and attack helicopters with troop transport capability); critical spare parts were provided for the repair of seven Mi-35 helicopters that were non-operational; and new support was directed at developing the AAF's medical evacuation capacity.

● Counter-narcotics training of Afghan and Central Asian personnel

The NRC Counter-Narcotics Training Project was launched in December 2005 to help address the threats posed by trafficking in Afghan narcotics. It sought to build local capacity and to promote regional networking and cooperation by sharing the combined expertise of NRC member states with mid-level officers from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Pakistan became the seventh participating country in 2010.

The project was implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Along with the project's seven beneficiary countries, this was a joint endeavour of 20 NRC countries as well as two non-NRC contributors (Finland, since 2007, and Ukraine, since 2012). The NRC countries participating in the project convened with representatives of Afghanistan, the Central Asian nations and Pakistan for High Level Steering Sessions, which ensured that the project continued to meet the countries' counter-narcotics training needs.

Fixed training took place in one of four institutes either in Turkey, Russia or the United States and mobile courses were conducted in each of the seven participating countries. In 2013, the project also began work to encourage cross-border counter-narcotics training. This included supporting the UNODC's work in establishing border liaison officers at existing border checkpoints between northern Tajikistan and

southern Kyrgyzstan, and offering joint counter-narcotics training to Afghan and Pakistani officers. By July 2014, over 3,500 officers had been trained under the project.

After NATO-Russia cooperation was suspended in April 2014, NATO has begun to organise training again under a new NATO-UNODC Counter Narcotics Training Project for Central Asia, Afghan and Pakistani counter-narcotics officers.

- ## Combating terrorism

An NRC Action Plan on Terrorism was launched in December 2004 to improve overall coordination and provide strategic direction for cooperation in this area. NRC leaders underlined the continued importance of cooperation in the fight against terrorism at Lisbon in November 2010 and an updated Action Plan on Terrorism was approved in April 2011. A first NRC civil-military counter-terrorism tabletop exercise was conducted at NATO Headquarters in March 2012.

Regular exchanges of information and in-depth consultations took place within the NRC on various aspects of combating terrorism. Under the Cooperative Airspace Initiative (see also below), an information exchange system was developed to provide air traffic transparency and early notification of suspicious air activities to help prevent terrorist attacks such as the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

In the scientific and technical field, NATO and Russia worked together on the STANDEX project, a flagship initiative which aimed to develop technology that would enable the stand-off detection of explosive devices in mass transport environments. Successful live trials of the technology took place in real time in an underground station in a major European city in June 2013, marking the completion of the development and test phase of STANDEX – the result of four years of joint work between experts from Russia and NATO countries.

Countering improvised explosive devices was another important focus of cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Events facilitating the sharing of experiences in hosting and securing high-visibility events have also been held.

Over the years, several Russian ships were deployed in support of Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's maritime operation against terrorism in the Mediterranean.

- ## Cooperative Airspace Initiative

The Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI) was aimed at preventing terrorists from using aircraft to launch attacks similar to those of 9/11. The CAI enabled the reciprocal exchange of air traffic data and the early notification of suspicious air activities. This facilitated air traffic transparency, predictability and interoperability in airspace management.

A total of around €10 million was invested in the CAI project by 13 NRC nations. Based on a feasibility study completed in 2005, implementation started in 2006 and the system reached its operational capability in December 2011. The operational readiness of the CAI system was demonstrated during live flying, real-time counter-terrorism exercises in June 2011 and September 2013. A simulated computer-based exercise to test and consolidate processes, procedures and capabilities took place in November 2012.

The CAI system consisted of two coordination centres, in Moscow and in Warsaw, and local coordination sites in Russia (Murmansk, Kaliningrad, Rostov-on-Don) and in NATO member countries (Bodø, Norway; Warsaw, Poland; and Ankara, Turkey).

The NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA), formerly known as the NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A), led the implementation of the NATO part of the CAI system and the software was procured from EUROCONTROL. Implementation of the Russian part of the system was led by the State Air Traffic Management Corporation, under the guidance of the Federal Air Navigation Authority. The Russian segment of the system was developed and supplied by the ″Almaz-Antey″ Concern.

- ## Theatre missile defence/ ballistic missile defence

Cooperation in the area of theatre missile defence (TMD) was underway for a number of years to address the unprecedented danger posed to deployed forces by the increasing availability of ever more accurate ballistic missiles. A study was launched in 2003 to assess the possible levels of interoperability among the theatre missile defence systems of NATO Allies and Russia.

Between 2004 and 2006, three command post exercises were held in the United States, the Netherlands and in Russia. Computer-assisted exercises took place in Germany in 2008 and 2012. Together with the interoperability study, these exercises were intended to provide the basis for future improvements to interoperability and to develop mechanisms and procedures for joint operations in the area of theatre missile defence.

In December 2009, an NRC Missile Defence Working Group was established to build on the lessons learned from previous TMD cooperation and to exchange views on possible mutually beneficial cooperation on ballistic missile defence, based on a joint assessment of missile threats.

At the 2010 Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders approved the joint ballistic missile threat assessment and agreed to discuss pursuing missile defence cooperation. They decided to resume TMD cooperation, which had been suspended in August 2008, and to develop a joint analysis of the future framework for missile defence cooperation.

At the 2012 Chicago Summit, Allied leaders stressed that NATO's planned missile defence capability is not directed against Russia, nor will it undermine Russia's strategic deterrent. It is intended to defend against potential threats from beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. These points were reaffirmed at the 2014 Wales Summit.

- ## Non-proliferation and arms control

The NRC developed dialogue on a growing range of issues related to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This resulted in concrete recommendations to strengthen existing non-proliferation arrangements and expert discussions on possible practical cooperation in the protection against nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Work was underway to assess global trends in WMD proliferation and their means of delivery, and to review areas in which NRC nations could work together politically to promote effective multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. In December 2011, for example, a Joint NRC Statement was agreed for the 7th Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

Over the years, the NRC also provided a forum for frank discussions on issues related to conventional arms control, such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), the Open Skies Treaty and confidence- and security-building measures. A key priority for all NRC nations was to work towards the ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty. The Allies expressed concern over Russia's unilateral "suspension" of its participation in the treaty in December 2007. At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders emphasised their strong support for the revitalisation and modernisation of the conventional arms control regime in Europe and their readiness to continue dialogue on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation issues of interest to the NRC. So Allies are concerned by Russia's subsequent decision in March 2015 to suspend participation in the joint consultative group that meets in Vienna regularly to discuss the implementation of the CFE Treaty.

Another critical issue has arisen concerning the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. In July 2014, the United States briefed the North Atlantic Council on its determination that Russia is in violation of its obligations under the Treaty not to possess, produce, or flight-test a ground-launched cruise missile with a range capability of 500 to 5,500 kilometres, or to possess or produce launchers of such missiles. The Treaty, which entered into force in 1988, was concluded to reduce threats to security and stability in Europe, in particular the threat of short-warning attack on targets of strategic importance. It has a special place in history, as it required the verifiable elimination of an entire class of missiles possessed by the United States and the former Soviet Union.

The INF Treaty remains a key element of Euro-Atlantic security -- one that benefits the security of all parties and must be preserved. At the Wales Summit in 2014, Allied leaders underlined that Russia should work constructively to resolve this critical treaty issue and preserve the viability of the INF Treaty by returning to full compliance in a verifiable manner.

● Nuclear weapons issues

In the nuclear field several seminars were held over the years to discuss nuclear doctrine and strategy, lessons learned from nuclear weapons incidents and accidents, and potential responses to the detection of improvised nuclear or radiological devices.

Between 2004 and 2007, experts and representatives from NRC countries also observed four nuclear weapon accident response field exercises, which took place in Russia and each of the nuclear weapon states of NATO (France, the United Kingdom and the United States). As a follow-on to these exercises, in June 2011, NRC countries participated in a tabletop exercise dealing with emergency response to a nuclear weapon incident. Such activities increased transparency, developed common understanding of nuclear weapon accident response procedures, and built confidence that the nuclear weapon states were fully capable of responding effectively to any emergency involving nuclear weapons.

● Military-to-military cooperation

Since the NRC was established, military liaison arrangements have been enhanced, at the Allied Commands for Operations and for Transformation, as well as in Moscow. A key objective of military-to-military cooperation was to build trust, confidence and transparency, and to improve the ability of NATO and Russian forces to work together in preparation for possible future joint military operations. Areas of cooperation included logistics, combating terrorism, search and rescue at sea, countering piracy, theatre missile defence/missile defence and military academic exchanges – and related military activities.

● Countering piracy

Countering piracy was one of the key areas of common interest and concern identified in the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges approved at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010. Cooperation at the tactical level developed from late 2008 between Russian vessels and Allied ships deployed as part of Operation Ocean Shield, NATO's counter-piracy operation off the Horn of Africa. At the operational level, regular meetings between staffs sought to enhance NATO-Russia maritime cooperation. Russian ships also used the training facilities of the NATO Maritime Interdiction Training Centre in Crete, Greece, to prepare for counter-piracy missions.

● Submarine crew search and rescue

Work in the area of submarine crew search and rescue at sea grew steadily following the signing of a framework agreement on cooperation in this area in February 2003. Russia participated in three NATO-led search-and-rescue exercises between 2005 and 2011. In December 2013, a sea survival course for aircrews took place in Germany.

● Defence transparency, strategy and reform

Aimed at building mutual confidence and transparency, dialogue took place under the NRC on doctrinal issues, strategy and policy, including their relation to defence reform, nuclear weapons issues, force development and posture.

Past initiatives launched in the area of defence reform focused on the evolution of the military, management of human and financial resources, reform of defence industries, managing the consequences of defence reform, and defence-related aspects of combating terrorism.

From 2002 to 2008, a NATO-Russia Resettlement Centre helped facilitate the integration of former Russian military personnel into civilian life by providing information regarding job search and resettlement, professional courses for trainees, job placement services, and English-language and management courses for small and medium-sized enterprises. Initially set up in Moscow, its operations were gradually expanded into the regions. Over the project's lifetime, around 2,820 former military personnel from the Russian armed forces were retrained and over 80 per cent found civilian employment as a result of the retraining or job placement assistance.

● **Defence industrial cooperation**

A broad-based "Study on NATO-Russia Defence Industrial and Research and Technological Cooperation", launched in January 2005 and completed in 2007, concluded that there was potential in combining scientific and technological capabilities to address global threats.

● **Logistics**

Opportunities for logistics cooperation were pursued on both the civilian and military side, including areas such as air transport, air-to-air refuelling, medical services and water purification. Meetings and seminars focused on establishing a sound foundation of mutual understanding in the field of logistics by promoting information sharing in areas such as logistic policies, doctrine, structures and lessons learned.

● **Civil emergencies**

NATO and Russia cooperated between 1996 and 2014 to develop a capacity for joint action in response to civil emergencies, such as earthquakes and floods, and to coordinate detection and prevention of disasters before they occur. Moreover, a Russian proposal led to the establishment in 1998 of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre, which coordinates responses to disasters among all countries of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (the 29 NATO members and 21 partner countries).

Under the NRC, an important focus of cooperation was to develop capabilities to manage the consequences of terrorist attacks. Two disaster response exercises in Russia (2002, 2004) and another in Italy (2006) resulted in concrete recommendations for consequence management. A tabletop consequence-management exercise was hosted by Norway in 2010. More recent work focused on risk reduction, capacity-building and cooperation in the area of civil preparedness and consequence management related to high-visibility events.

● **Scientific cooperation**

Russia was actively engaged with the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme from 1992. The programme enables close collaboration on issues of common interest to enhance the security of NATO and partner countries. By facilitating international efforts, in particular with a regional focus, it seeks to address emerging security challenges, support NATO-led operations and advance early warning and forecast for the prevention of disasters and crises.

Scientists and experts from Russia sought to address a wide range of security issues, notably in the fields of defence against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents, mine detection and counter-terrorism (including explosives detection such as the STANDEX project mentioned above). Two important projects focused on addressing environmental and security hazards in the Baltic regions – the first aimed to develop solutions for effective oil spill management; the second sought to establish a continuous risk monitoring assessment network to observe munitions dump sites in the Baltic Sea.

● **Terminology and language training**

To facilitate better understanding of terms and concepts used by NATO and Russia, glossaries were developed on the entire spectrum of NATO-Russia cooperation. Following the publication in 2011 of an NRC Consolidated Glossary of Cooperation covering some 7,000 terms, additional glossaries were

developed on missile defence, nuclear doctrine and strategies, helicopter maintenance, counter-piracy, ammunition demilitarization and counter-narcotics.

Language cooperation was expanded in 2011 with the launch of a project to harmonise language training for military and selected civilian experts at the Russian Ministry of Defence.

● Raising public awareness of the NRC

An NRC web site was launched in June 2007 to increase public awareness of NRC activities. It was suspended in April 2014.

Framework for cooperation

The 29 individual Allies and Russia are equal partners in the NRC, which was established in 2002. Until the suspension of activities in April 2014, the NRC provided a framework for consultation on current security issues and practical cooperation in a wide range of areas of common interest. Its agenda built on the basis for bilateral cooperation that was set out in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, which provided the formal basis for relations.

Cooperation between Russia and NATO member states was directed by the NRC and developed through various subordinate working groups and committees, as agreed in annual work programmes.

The driving force behind the NRC's cooperation was the realisation that NATO and Russia shared strategic priorities and faced common challenges. At the Lisbon Summit, the NRC leaders pledged to *"work towards achieving a true strategic and modernised partnership based on the principles of reciprocal confidence, transparency, and predictability, with the aim of contributing to the creation of a common space of peace, security and stability."* They endorsed a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges, which included Afghanistan, terrorism, piracy, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as natural and man-made disasters.

To facilitate regular contacts and cooperation, Russia established a diplomatic mission to NATO in 1998. NATO opened an Information Office in Moscow in 2001 and a Military Liaison Mission in 2002.

Milestones in relations

1991: Russia joins the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (later renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council), created as a forum for consultation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War. The Soviet Union actually dissolves at the same time as the inaugural meeting of this body takes place.

1994: Russia joins the Partnership for Peace (PfP).

1996: Russian soldiers deploy as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

27 May 1997: At a summit in Paris, Russian and Allied leaders sign the NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security and establish the Permanent Joint Council (PJC)

1999: Russia suspends participation in the PJC for a few months because of NATO's Kosovo air campaign.

June 1999: Russian peacekeepers deploy as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

May 2000: Broader cooperation in the PJC resumes, following a meeting of NATO and Russian foreign ministers in Florence.

2001: The NATO Information Office opens in Moscow.

September 2001: President Putin is the first world leader to call the US President after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which underscore the need for concerted international action to address terrorism and other new security threats. Russia opens its airspace to the international coalition's campaign in Afghanistan and shares relevant intelligence.

March 2001: A joint NATO-Russia Resettlement Centre is officially opened to help discharged Russian military personnel return to civilian life.

May 2002: NATO opens a Military Liaison Mission in Moscow.

28 May 2002: At a summit in Rome, Russian and Allied leaders sign a declaration on ″NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality″ and establish the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) to replace the PJC.

September 2002: Russia hosts a multinational disaster response exercise in Noginsk.

February 2003: NATO and Russia sign an agreement on submarine crew rescue.

April 2003: Russia announces that it will withdraw its troops from the NATO-led peacekeeping forces in the Balkans.

January 2004: NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer tries out a new hotline to the Russian defence minister.

March 2004: The first NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise takes place in Colorado Springs, United States.

June 2004: Russia hosts a multinational disaster response exercise in Kaliningrad.

28 June 2004: At an NRC meeting of foreign ministers in Istanbul, Russia offers to contribute a ship to NATO's maritime counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean, Operation Active Endeavour.

December 2004: In the wake of several terrorist attacks in Russia, NRC foreign ministers approve a comprehensive NRC Action Plan on Terrorism.

December 2004: NRC foreign ministers issue a common statement concerning the conduct of the Ukrainian presidential elections.

March 2005: The second NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise takes place in the Netherlands.

April 2005: Russia signs the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (later ratified by the Russian parliament in May 2007).

June 2005: NRC defence ministers endorse a ″Political-Military Guidance″ aimed at developing, over time, interoperability between Russian and Allied forces at the strategic, operational and tactical command levels.

June 2005: Russia takes part in a major NATO search-and-rescue at sea exercise, Sorbet Royal.

December 2005: The NRC launches a pilot project on counter-narcotics training for Afghan and Central Asian personnel.

April 2006: NRC foreign ministers meeting in Sofia agree a set of priorities and recommendations to guide the NRC's future work.

October 2006: The third NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise takes place in Moscow.

October 2006: An NRC civil emergency exercise takes place in Montelibretti, Italy.

September 2006: The first Russian frigate deploys to the Mediterranean to support Operation Active Endeavour.

September 2007: A second Russian frigate deploys in active support of Operation Active Endeavour.

January 2008: A computer-assisted exercise takes place in Germany under the NRC theatre missile defence project.

March 2008: In support of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation in Afghanistan, Russia offers transit to ISAF contributors.

May 2008: Russia takes part in a major NATO search-and-rescue at sea exercise, Bold Monarch.

August 2008: Following Russia's disproportionate military action in Georgia, formal meetings of the NRC and cooperation in some areas are suspended. Cooperation continues in key areas of common interest, such as counter-narcotics and the fight against terrorism.

December 2008: NATO foreign ministers agree to pursue a phased and measured approach to re-engagement with Russia.

March 2009: NATO foreign ministers decide to resume formal meetings and practical cooperation under the NRC.

December 2009: At the first formal NRC ministerial since the Georgia crisis, foreign ministers take steps to reinvigorate NRC cooperation and agree to launch a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges.

June 2010: The NRC meets for the first time in a political advisory format in Rome for a two-day informal, off-the-record exchange of views on how to make the NRC a more substance-based forum.

September 2010: NRC foreign ministers meet in New York to chart the way forward in relations and cooperation.

November 2010: NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen visits Russia for meetings with President Dmitry Medvedev and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to prepare for the upcoming NRC summit meeting in Lisbon.

20 November 2010: At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders pledge to "work towards achieving a true strategic and modernised partnership". They endorse a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges and agree to resume cooperation in the area of theatre missile defence as well as to develop a comprehensive joint analysis of the future framework for broader missile defence cooperation. They also agree on a number of initiatives to assist in the stabilisation of Afghanistan and the wider region.

April 2011: NRC foreign ministers meet in Berlin to discuss the situation in Libya and Afghanistan, as well as ongoing work on outlining the future framework for missile defence cooperation between Russia and NATO. They launch the NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund to support the Afghan security forces' helicopter fleet and approve an updated NRC Action Plan on Terrorism.

June 2011: For the first time in three years, the NRC defence ministers meet in Brussels to discuss a broad range of defence issues.

June 2011: A Russian submarine takes active part in NATO exercise ''Bold Monarch 2011''.

June 2011: A joint exercise, Vigilant Skies 2011, demonstrates the operational readiness of the NRC Cooperative Airspace Initiative.

June 2011: NATO and Russia participate in a tabletop exercise dealing with a nuclear weapon incident scenario.

July 2011: The NRC meets in Sochi, Russia, and also meets Russian President Medvedev. NRC Ambassadors restate their commitment to pursuing cooperation on missile defence as well as cooperation in other security areas of common interest.

December 2011: NRC foreign ministers meet in Brussels to discuss international security issues and NRC practical cooperation, including on Afghanistan, counter-piracy and counter-terrorism. They approve the NRC Work Programme 2012 and announce that the Cooperative Airspace Initiative is ready to initiate operations.

March 2012: The fifth theatre missile defence computer-assisted exercise is conducted in Germany.

April 2012: A first civilian-military NRC counter-terrorism tabletop exercise is organised at NATO Headquarters.

April 2012: The first training course for Afghan Air Force helicopter maintenance staff gets underway in Novosibirsk under the NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund project.

April 2012: NRC foreign ministers meet in Brussels to discuss NRC practical cooperation.

21 May 2012: Russia sends a special representative to participate in a meeting on Afghanistan, involving nations contributing to ISAF, at NATO's Chicago Summit.

November 2012: A simulated computer-based exercise tests the information exchange system of the NRC's Cooperative Airspace Initiative.

December 2012: NRC foreign ministers agree to increase cooperation in key areas under the NRC Work Programme for 2013.

February 2013: NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen meets Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at NATO Headquarters to discuss implementation of the NRC Work Programme, as well as ways to advance the NATO-Russia dialogue on missile defence.

April 2013: NRC foreign ministers agree to launch the second phase of the NRC Trust Fund project for the maintenance of helicopters in Afghanistan and discuss plans for cooperation in other areas in 2013. They also exchange views on progress in the NATO-led Afghan mission and on other regional and global security issues, including Syria, North Korea and missile defence.

June 2013: Technology for the remote, real-time detection of explosives is successfully tested live in an underground station in a major European city, marking the completion of the development and test phase of the Stand-off Detection of Explosives (STANDEX) project.

September 2013: Under the Cooperative Airspace Initiative, a live counter-terrorism exercise takes place in the skies over Poland, Russia and Turkey involving fighter aircraft, military personnel and command centres from the Arctic to the Black Sea.

October 2013: NRC defence ministers exchange views on pressing events on the international agenda, including Syria, and transparency on military exercises. They also discuss ways to widen practical cooperation including plans to work together to dispose of excess ammunition in Russia, possibly through a new NRC Trust Fund project.

2 March 2014: NATO condemns Russia's military escalation in Crimea and expresses its grave concern regarding the authorisation by the Russian parliament for the use of Russian armed forces on the territory of Ukraine.

16 March 2014: NATO member states declare that they do not recognise the results of the so-called referendum held in Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea, which is both illegal and illegitimate, violating the Ukrainian Constitution and international law.

1 April 2014: NATO foreign ministers urge Russia to take immediate steps to return to compliance with international law and its international obligations and responsibilities, and to engage immediately in a genuine dialogue towards a political and diplomatic solution that respects international law and Ukraine's internationally recognised borders. They decide to suspend all practical civilian and military cooperation between NATO and Russia.

24 June 2014: NATO foreign ministers agree to maintain the suspension of practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia. Any decision to resume cooperation will be conditions-based.

5 September 2014: At the Wales Summit, NATO leaders demand that Russia stop and withdraw its forces from Ukraine and along the country's border. They express their deepest concern that the violence and insecurity in the region caused by Russia and the Russian-backed separatists are resulting in a

deteriorating humanitarian situation and material destruction in eastern Ukraine. The Allies approve the NATO Readiness Action Plan – a comprehensive package of necessary measures to respond to the changes in the security environment on NATO's borders and further afield.

16 September 2014: The NATO Secretary General states that NATO does not recognise the reported elections held on 14 September in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Ukraine, calling on Russia to reverse its illegal and illegitimate "annexation" of Crimea.

31 October 2014: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg states that the planned 'elections' organised by self-appointed and armed rebel groups in parts of Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk regions, due to take place on 2 November, undermine efforts towards a resolution of the conflict, violating Ukrainian laws and running directly counter to the Minsk agreements co-signed among others by the two self-proclaimed 'republics' and by Russia.

24 November 2014: The NATO Secretary General states that NATO fully supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders and that the Allies do not recognise the so-called treaty on alliance and strategic partnership signed between the Georgian region of Abkhazia and Russia.

18 March 2015: The NATO Secretary General states that NATO does not recognise the so-called treaty on alliance and integration signed between the Georgian region of South Ossetia and Russia on 18 March.

13 May 2015: NATO foreign ministers meet in Antalya, Turkey, to review the security challenges to the East and the South; the NATO Secretary General calls for the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements in Ukraine, calling on Russia to stop supporting the separatists and to withdraw all its forces from eastern Ukraine.

25 June 2015: NATO defence ministers emphasise that Russia is challenging Euro-Atlantic security through military action, coercion and intimidation of its neighbours. They express continued concern about Russia's aggressive actions, while reaffirming strong commitment to an independent, peaceful and prosperous Ukraine and firm support to its territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

19 August 2015: NATO Allies express serious concern about the recent sharp escalation of violence in eastern Ukraine, stressing the need for all parties to de-escalate tensions and exercise restraint. Allies underline that the focus must be on pursuing a solution through diplomatic means, the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements being the path to peace. They emphasise that Russia has a special responsibility to find a political solution, calling any attempt by the Russian-backed separatists to take over more of Ukraine's territory as unacceptable to the international community.

5 October 2015: The North Atlantic Council meets to hold consultations on the potential implications of the dangerous military actions of Russia in and around Syria. In a statement, Allies express their deep concern with regard to the Russian military build-up in Syria, calling on Russia to immediately cease its attacks on the Syrian opposition and civilians, to focus its efforts on fighting so-called Islamic State, and to promote a solution to the conflict through political transition. Allies strongly protest Russian violations of Turkish sovereign airspace on 3 October and 4 October and note the extreme danger of such irresponsible behaviour, calling on the Russia to cease and desist, and to immediately explain these violations.

24 November 2015: At an extraordinary North Atlantic Council meeting, NATO Ally Turkey informs Allies about the downing of a Russian Air Force plane violating Turkish airspace. The Secretary General expresses concerns about the implications of the military actions of Russia close to NATO's borders and reiterates full solidarity with Turkey and support to its territorial integrity, calling for calm and de-escalation.

2 December 2015: After NATO foreign ministers meet, the Secretary General notes that challenges posed by Russia's actions in the Euro-Atlantic area will be with us for a long time, adding that Allies expressed regret at the decline in military transparency in Europe over the last decade, and noting that the Allies' priority now is to work to restore predictability in our relations. The Secretary General underlines

that it is important to step up work on transparency and risk reduction, including through intensive efforts to reach agreement on a substantive update of the OSCE Vienna Document.

30 January 2016: The NATO Secretary General calls on Russia to act responsibly and fully respect NATO airspace after a Russian combat aircraft violated Turkish airspace on 29 January 2016, despite repeated warnings by the Turkish authorities. The Secretary General urges Russia to take all necessary measures to ensure that such violations do not happen again.

20 April 2016: Following the meeting of the NRC, the Secretary General emphasises the necessity and usefulness of political dialogue among nations that share the same Euro-Atlantic area, especially in times of tensions. However, he makes clear this does not constitute a return to business as usual. NRC Ambassadors discuss the crisis in and around Ukraine; issues related to military activities, transparency and risk reduction; and an assessment of the security situation in Afghanistan, including regional terrorist threats.

9 July 2016: At the NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders reiterate their concerns about Russia's destabilising actions and policies, including its ongoing illegal actions in Ukraine and illegitimate annexation of Crimea; provocative military activities near NATO's borders stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea; its irresponsible and aggressive nuclear rhetoric, military posture and underlying posture; as well as the risks posed by its military intervention and support for the regime in Syria. They explain how NATO has responded to this changed security environment by enhancing its deterrence and defence posture, while underlining that they remain open to political dialogue with Russia, especially with a view to avoiding misunderstanding, miscalculation and unintended escalation, and to increase transparency and predictability.

13 July 2016: The NRC meets to discuss the crisis in and around Ukraine and the need to fully implement the Minsk agreements; transparency and risk reduction measures; and the situation in Afghanistan. Allied ambassadors also brief their Russian counterpart on decisions taken at the NATO Summit in Warsaw a few days earlier.

19 December 2016: The NRC meets to discuss the crisis in and around Ukraine and the security situation in Afghanistan, as well as military activities, transparency and risk reduction. Ambassadors welcome a Finnish proposal to host a technical meeting with Russian experts in early 2017 to improve air safety in the Baltic Sea region.

30 March 2017: The NRC meets to discuss the situation in and around Ukraine, the security situation in Afghanistan and risk reduction and transparency. In the spirit of reciprocity, Russia gives a briefing on the three new divisions in its Western Military District; NATO provides a briefing on the four battlegroups being deployed to Poland and the Baltic countries.

13 July 2017: The NRC meets in Brussels for a frank and constructive discussion of three key issues: Ukraine, Afghanistan, and transparency and risk reduction.

7 September 2017: Demonstrating mutual interest to maintain military lines of communication, General Petr Pavel, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee and General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and First Deputy Minister of Defence, meet in Baku, Azerbaijan.

26 October 2017: The NRC meets for the third time in 2017 to discuss the priority issues of Ukraine, Afghanistan, and transparency and risk reduction.

November 2017: As part of NATO Allies' ongoing commitment to transparency, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania host Russian arms control inspectors for a week of visits to a number of military sites, including some used by multinational NATO battlegroups.

15 December 2017: In a statement, the North Atlantic Council expresses concerns about a Russian missile system that may not be in full compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The Allies urge Russia to address these concerns in a substantial and transparent way, and actively engage in a technical dialogue with the United States.

March 2018: Estonia and Latvia host the visits of Russian arms control inspectors to military bases where NATO multinational battlegroups are based.

14 March 2018: Following a briefing by the United Kingdom on the use of a nerve agent in Salisbury on 4 March, the North Atlantic Council expresses deep concern at the first offensive use of a nerve agent on Alliance territory since NATO's foundation. Allies express solidarity with the United Kingdom, offer their support in the conduct of the ongoing investigation, and call on Russia to address the UK's questions including providing full and complete disclosure of the Novichok programme to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

27 March 2018: Following consultations with Allies, the NATO Secretary General announces the withdrawal of the accreditation of seven staff at the Russian Mission to NATO and the denial of three pending accreditations. In line with this decision, the North Atlantic Council reduces the maximum size of the Russian Mission by 10 people, bringing it down to 20. The Secretary General explains the intention is to send "a *clear message to Russia that there are costs and consequences for its unacceptable and dangerous pattern of behaviour. And it follows Russia's lack of constructive response to what happened in Salisbury.*" He also emphasises that the "*decision does not change NATO's policy towards Russia. NATO remains committed to our dual-track approach of strong defence and openness to dialogue.*"

31 May 2018: The NRC meets for the first time in 2018. Ambassadors have an open exchange on several topics, including the situation in and around Ukraine, issues related to military activities, transparency and risk reduction, as well as asymmetric techniques as aspects of doctrine and strategy.

NATO-Russia relations: the facts

Since Russia began its aggressive actions against Ukraine, Russian officials have accused NATO of a series of threats and hostile actions. This webpage sets out the facts.

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- Claim: The NATO-led mission in Afghanistan failed to stop the Afghan drugs trade
- Claim: NATO's operation over Libya was illegitimate
- Claim: NATO's operation over Kosovo was illegitimate
- Claim: The cases of Kosovo and Crimea are identical

- Claim: Russia's annexation of Crimea was justified by the opinion of the International Court of Justice on the independence of Kosovo

- Claim: The Ukrainian authorities are illegitimate

● **NATO's Cooperation with Russia**

Claim: NATO refuses real dialogue with Russia

Fact: NATO suspended practical cooperation with Russia due to its aggressive actions in Ukraine. However, we continue to keep channels for political dialogue open. The NATO-Russia Council, an important platform for dialogue, has never been suspended. We have held seven meetings since April 2016.

We have made progress this year, by addressing both force posture and military exercises, including through reciprocal briefings. This dialogue contributes to the predictability of our relations. We would welcome more briefings and transparency, particularly on upcoming military exercises.

NATO and Russia also maintain open military-to-military lines of communication, which aim to promote predictability and transparency in our military activities. We welcome the recent contacts between the Chairman of the Military Committee, General Petr Pavel; the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Curtis Scaparrotti, and the Russian Chief of Defence, General Valery Gerasimov.

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Claim: By suspending practical cooperation with Russia, NATO undermines security

Fact: In 2014, NATO suspended all practical cooperation with Russia, in response to its aggressive actions in Ukraine. This cooperation included projects in Afghanistan, on counter-terrorism and scientific cooperation. These projects did deliver results over time, but their suspension has not undermined the security of the Alliance or our ability to counter challenges such as terrorism.

We have made it clear that we continue to seek a constructive relationship with Russia. But an improvement in the Alliance's relations with Russia will be contingent on a clear and constructive change in Russia's actions – one that demonstrates compliance with international law and Russia's international commitments.

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Claim: NATO did not respond to Russia's proposal on transponders?

Fact: At the NATO-Russia Council on 13 July 2016, Russia presented several proposals, including on the use of transponders over the Baltic Sea. In response, Allies invited Russia to provide more details, while underlining that aviation safety is about more than the use of transponders – it's about responsible airmanship and how aircraft fly.

To encourage a comprehensive discussion on air safety, NATO invited representatives of the former Baltic Sea Project Team (BSPT), and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to brief the NATO-Russia Council on 19 December 2016. Their work has made an important contribution towards improving air safety over the Baltic Sea.

To take this work forward, a Finnish-led Expert Group on Baltic Sea Air Safety was established. Their work so far is promising and the NATO Secretary General has welcomed this initiative:

NATO remains committed to work in this framework, to reduce air safety risks to civil and military flights. We look forward to further meeting of the Expert Group.

At the same time, we continue to call on Russia to implement existing rules and procedures for air safety and to engage in safe and responsible airmanship.

Claim: STANDEX Project scrapped by NATO

Fact: Initiated in 2009, the Stand-off Detection of Explosives (STANDEX) project was never frozen or suspended. It was completed according to schedule at the end of 2013.

STANDEX was a NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) project run by a consortium of laboratories and research institutes. Participants included France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Russia. The project brought together various techniques and technologies to allow for the detection, recognition, localisation and tracking of would-be suicide bombers in mass transportation.

STANDEX was a technology development project. As with all such developments, the eventual goal is a deployed system. NATO encouraged project participants to seek commercialisation of their technologies, and some are now commercially available.

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- **NATO enlargement**

Claim: NATO enlargement threatens Russia

Fact: Every country that joins NATO undertakes to uphold its principles and policies. This includes the commitment that ″the Alliance does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia,″ as reaffirmed at the Warsaw Summit. NATO enlargement is not directed against Russia.

Every sovereign nation has the right to choose its own security arrangements. This is a fundamental principle of European security, one that Russia has also subscribed to and should respect. NATO's Open Door policy has been a historic success. Together with EU enlargement, it has spread stability and prosperity in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

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Claim: NATO's Open Door policy creates new dividing lines in Europe and deepens existing ones

Fact: NATO's Open Door policy has helped close Cold War-era divisions in Europe. NATO enlargement has contributed to spreading democracy, security and stability further across Europe.

By choosing to adopt the standards and principles of NATO, aspirant countries gave their democracies the strongest possible anchor. And by taking the pledge to defend NATO, they received the pledge that NATO would protect them.

NATO membership is not imposed on countries. Each sovereign country has the right to choose for itself whether it joins any treaty or alliance.

This fundamental principle is enshrined in international agreements including the Helsinki Final Act which says that every state has the right ″to belong or not to belong to international organizations, to be or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties including the right to be or not to be a party to treaties of alliance.″ And by signing the NATO-Russia Founding Act, Russia agreed to respect states' ″inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security.″

Over the past 65 years, 29 countries have chosen freely, and in accordance with their domestic democratic processes, to join NATO. Not one has asked to leave. This is their sovereign choice. Article 13 of the Washington Treaty specifically gives Allies the right to leave should they wish to.

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Claim: NATO enlargement in the Balkans is destabilizing

Fact: All the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which have joined NATO over the past decade have enjoyed peace, security and cooperation with their neighbours since then.

The countries in the region which aspire to membership are conducting reforms to bring themselves closer to NATO standards. These reforms enhance democracy and security in each country.

The countries in the region have played a significant role in NATO's operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, providing training to the Afghan forces and helping to provide a safe and secure environment for all people in Kosovo. This is a direct contribution to stability in the broader Euro-Atlantic area.

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Claim: NATO tried to ″drag″ Ukraine into the Alliance

Fact: When the administrations of President Kuchma and President Yushchenko made clear their aspiration to NATO membership, the Alliance worked with them to encourage the reforms which would be needed to make that aspiration a reality.

When the administration of President Yanukovych opted for a non-bloc status, NATO respected that decision and continued to work with Ukraine on reforms, at the government's request.

NATO respects the right of every country to choose its own security arrangements. In fact, Article 13 of the Washington Treaty specifically gives Allies the right to leave.

Over the past 65 years, 29 countries have chosen freely, and in accordance with their domestic democratic processes, to join NATO. Not one has asked to leave. This is their sovereign choice.

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Claim: Russia has the right to demand a ″100% guarantee″ that Ukraine will not join NATO

Fact: According to Article I of the Helsinki Final Act (here) which established the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 1975, every country has the right ″*to belong or not to belong to international organizations, to be or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties including the right to be or not to be a party to treaties of alliance.*″ All the OSCE member states, including Russia, have sworn to uphold those principles.

In line with those principles, Ukraine has the right to choose for itself whether it joins any treaty of alliance, including NATO's founding treaty.

Moreover, when Russia signed the Founding Act, it pledged to uphold *"respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states and their inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security"*.

Thus Ukraine has the right to choose its own alliances, and Russia has, by its own repeated agreement, no right to dictate that choice.

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Claim: NATO provoked the "Maidan" protests in Ukraine

Fact: The demonstrations which began in Kiev in November 2013 were born out of Ukrainians' desire for a closer relationship with the European Union, and their frustration when former President Yanukovych halted progress toward that goal as a result of Russian pressure.

The protesters' demands included constitutional reform, a stronger role for the parliament, the formation of a government of national unity, an end to the pervasive and endemic corruption, early presidential elections and an end to violence. There was no mention of NATO.

Ukraine began discussing the idea of abandoning its non-bloc status in September 2014, six months after the illegal and illegitimate Russian "annexation" of Crimea and the start of Russia's aggressive actions in Eastern Ukraine. The final decision by Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada to abandon the non bloc status was taken in December 2014, over a year after the pro-EU demonstrations began.

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Claim: NATO was planning to base ships and missiles in Crimea

Fact: This is fiction. The idea has never been proposed, suggested or discussed within NATO.

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Claim: NATO set up a military base in Georgia

Fact: NATO agreed at the Wales Summit to offer Georgia a substantial package of assistance to strengthen Georgia's defence and interoperability capabilities with the Alliance. In August 2015, a NATO-Georgian Joint Training and Evaluation Centre was inaugurated in Krtsanisi to contribute to the training and interoperability of Georgian and Alliance personnel.

This is a training centre, not a military base.

It contributes to stability by making Georgia's armed forces more professional, and by reinforcing the democratic controls over them.

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Claim: NATO has bases all around the world

Fact: NATO's military infrastructure outside the territory of Allies is limited to those areas in which the Alliance is conducting operations.

Thus the Alliance has military facilities in Afghanistan for the support of the Resolute Support mission, and in Kosovo for the KFOR mission.

NATO has civilian liaison offices in partner countries such as Georgia, Ukraine and Russia. These cannot be considered as "military bases".

Individual Allies have overseas bases on the basis of bilateral agreements and the principle of host-nation consent, in contrast with Russian bases on the territory of Moldova (Transnistria), Ukraine (the Autonomous Republic of Crimea) and Georgia (the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

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- **NATO and its attitude to Russia**

Claim: NATO whips up 'hysteria' over Russia's exercises

Fact: Every nation has the right to conduct exercises, but it is important that they are conducted transparently and in line with international obligations.

To promote transparency, members of the OSCE, including Russia, commit to follow the rules of the Vienna Document. If an exercise exceeds 9,000 personnel, it is subject to notification, and if it exceeds 13,000 personnel, observers from OSCE states must be invited to attend the exercise. Since the end of the Cold War, Russia has never opened an exercise to mandatory Vienna Document observation.

NATO's concerns about exercise ZAPAD 2017 were a direct result of Russia's lack of transparency. Both the scale and geographical scope of the exercise significantly exceeded what Russia had previously announced, including in the NATO-Russia Council. Allies made this clear to Russia at a meeting of the NATO-Russia Council in October 2017.

Russia has also used large snap exercises, including with tens of thousands of troops, to intimidate its neighbours. This practice raises tension and undermines trust. Russia's intervention in Georgia in 2008 and illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 were masked by snap exercises.

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Claim: NATO is encircling Russia.

Fact: This myth ignores geography. Russia's land border is just over 20,000 kilometres long. Of that, less than one-sixteenth (1,215 kilometres), is shared with NATO members. Russia has land borders with 14 countries. Only five of them are NATO members.
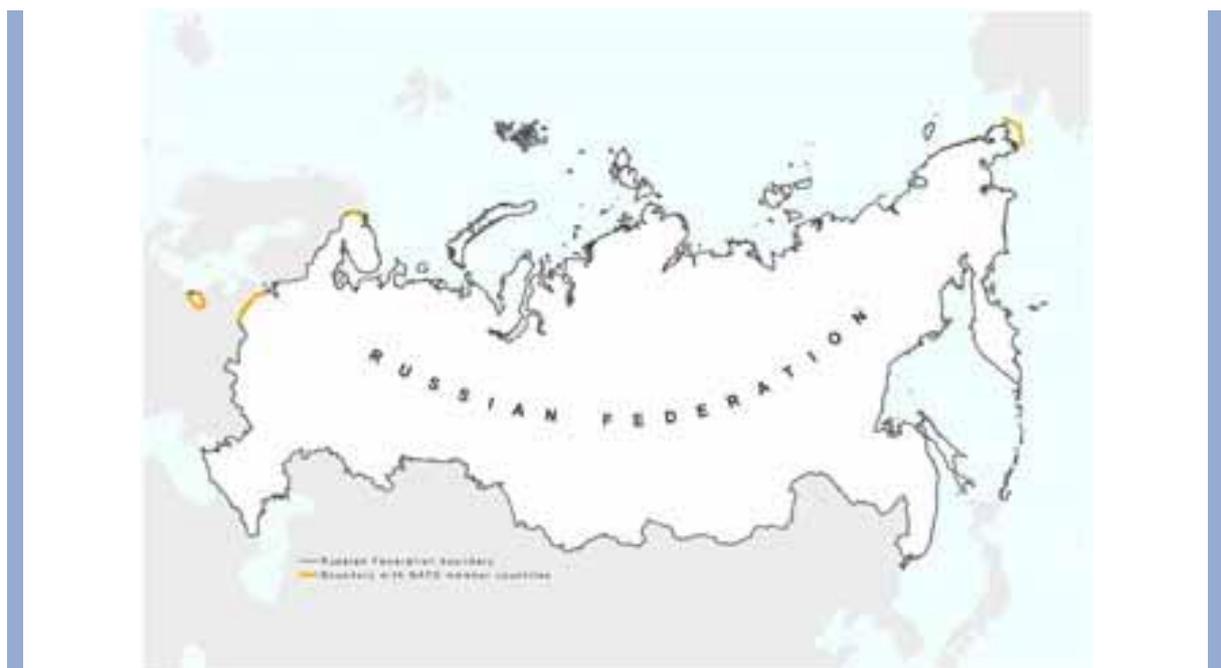
Outside NATO territory, the Alliance only has a military presence in two places: Kosovo and Afghanistan. Both operations are carried out with a United Nations mandate, endorsed by the UN Security Council, of which Russia is a member. In contrast, Russia has military bases and soldiers in three countries – Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine – without the consent of their governments.

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Claim: NATO has a Cold War mentality

Fact: The Cold War ended over 20 years ago. It was characterized by the opposition of two ideological blocs, the presence of massive standing armies in Europe, and the military, political and economic domination by the Soviet Union of almost all its European neighbours.

The end of the Cold War was a victory for the people of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and opened the way to overcoming the division of Europe. At pathbreaking Summit meetings in the years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Russia played its part in building a new, inclusive European security architecture, including the Charter of Paris, the establishment of the OSCE, the creation of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, and the NATO-Russia Founding Act.

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has introduced sweeping changes to its membership and working practices – changes made clear by its adoption of new Strategic Concepts in 1999 and 2010. Accusations that NATO has retained its Cold War purpose ignore the reality of those changes.

Over the same period, NATO reached out to Russia with a series of partnership initiatives, culminating in the foundation of the NATO-Russia Council in 2002. No other country has such a privileged relationship with NATO.

As stated by NATO heads of state and government at the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, *"the Alliance does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia. But we cannot and will not compromise on the principles on which our Alliance and security in Europe and North America rest."* (The Warsaw Summit Communique can be read here).

This is NATO's official policy, defined and expressed transparently by its highest level of leadership. As an organisation which is accountable to its member nations, NATO is bound to implement this policy.

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Claim: NATO is a U.S. geopolitical project

Fact: NATO was founded in 1949 by twelve sovereign nations: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. It has since grown to 29 Allies who each took an individual and sovereign decision to join this Alliance.

All decisions in NATO are taken by consensus, which means that a decision can only be taken if every single Ally accepts it.

Equally, the decision for any country to take part in NATO-led operations falls to that country alone, according to its own legal procedures. No member of the Alliance can decide on the deployment of any other Ally's forces.

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Claim: NATO's purpose is to contain or weaken Russia

Fact: NATO's purpose is set out in the preamble to the Washington Treaty, the Alliance's Founding document (online here).

This states that Allies are determined *"to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security."*

In line with those goals, in the past two decades NATO has led missions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, over Libya and off the Horn of Africa. The Alliance has conducted exercises from the Mediterranean to the North Atlantic and across Europe, and on issues ranging from counter-terrorism to submarine rescue - including with Russia itself.

None of these activities can credibly be presented as directed against Russia.

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Claim: NATO has tried to isolate or marginalise Russia

Fact: For more than two decades, NATO has consistently worked to build a cooperative relationship with Russia.

NATO began reaching out, offering dialogue in place of confrontation, at the London NATO Summit of July 1990 (declaration here). In the following years, the Alliance promoted dialogue and cooperation by creating the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), open to the whole of Europe, including Russia (PfP founding documents here and here).

In 1997, NATO and Russia signed the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, creating the NATO Russia Permanent Joint Council. In 2002, this was upgraded, creating the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) (The Founding Act can be read here, the Rome Declaration which established the NRC here, the Lisbon NRC Summit Declaration here.)

We set out to build a good relationship with Russia. We worked together on issues ranging from counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism to submarine rescue and civil emergency planning.

However, in March 2014, in response to Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine, NATO suspended practical cooperation with Russia. At the same time, NATO has kept channels for communication with Russia open. The NATO-Russia Council has met seven times since April 2016. The Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General also engage regularly with their Russian counterparts. We do not seek confrontation, but we cannot ignore Russia breaking international rules, undermining our stability and security.

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Claim: NATO should have been disbanded at the end of the Cold War

Fact: At the London Summit in 1990, Allied heads of state and government agreed that *""We need to keep standing together, to extend the long peace we have enjoyed these past four decades"*. This was their sovereign choice and was fully in line with their right to collective defence under the United Nations Charter.

Since then, thirteen more countries have chosen to join NATO. The Alliance has taken on new missions and adapted to new challenges, all the while sticking to its fundamental principles of security, collective defence, and decision-making by consensus.

Twice since the end of the Cold War, NATO has adopted new Strategic Concepts (in 1999 and 2010), adapting to new realities. Thus, rather than being disbanded, NATO adapted, and continues to change, to live up to the needs and expectations of Allies, and to promote their shared vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace.

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Claim: NATO enlargement followed the same process as the expansion of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact

Fact: Any comparison between NATO enlargement after the end of the Cold War and the creation of the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet bloc at the end of World War II is an utter distortion of history.

The incorporation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact after the Second World War was carried out under conditions of military occupation, one-party dictatorship and the violent suppression of dissent.

When the countries of Central and Eastern Europe applied for NATO membership after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, it was of their own free choice, through their own national democratic processes, and after conducting the required reforms.

This was done through debate, in peacetime conditions, and in a transparent way.

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- **NATO as a ″threat″**

Claim: NATO wants to prepare Europe's civilian infrastructure to start a war

Fact: NATO is a defensive alliance, whose purpose is to protect our member states. Military mobility is key to deterrence in peacetime and key to our collective defence in times of crisis. NATO is working closely with Allies to ensure that our bridges, roads, ports and rail networks are capable of transporting military equipment and personnel across our Allies' borders.

This is not a preparation for war. This is about updating the military requirements for civilian infrastructure at a time when we see increased challenges to our security, including as a result of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and ongoing destabilisation of eastern Ukraine.

NATO is cooperating with Allies and the European Union to remove bureaucratic hurdles to allow us to move forces across Allied territory. This involves sharing information on standards, requirements, and any challenges related to civilian infrastructure. We are also working closely with national governments and the private sector to ensure that infrastructure in Allied territory remains in top condition.

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Claim: NATO's presence in the Baltic region is dangerous

Fact: NATO has taken defensive and proportionate steps in response to a changed security environment. Following Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine, Allies requested a greater NATO presence in the region.

NATO personnel meet Russian arms control inspectors at Estonia's 1st Infantry Brigade in Tapa on 8 November 2017

In 2016, we deployed four multinational battlegroups – or "enhanced forward presence" – to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. In 2017, the battlegroups became fully operational. More than 4,500 troops from Europe and North America work closely together with home defence forces.

NATO's presence in the region is at the request of the host nations, and enjoys significant public support. A 2016 Gallup poll found that most people in Allied countries in the Baltic region associate NATO with the protection of their country. NATO forces uphold the highest standards of conduct, both on and off duty.

As part of NATO Allies' commitment to transparency, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania hosted Russian arms control inspectors in November 2017 and in March 2018. They toured a number of military sites, including some used by the multinational NATO battlegroups.

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Claim: NATO missile defence threatens Russian security

Fact: NATO's missile defence system is purely defensive and not directed against Russia. Bilateral agreements between the US and host nations do not allow missile sites to be used for any purpose other than missile defence.

The system defends against ballistic missiles from outside the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO has attempted many times to cooperate with Russia on missile defence. Russian statements threatening to target Allies because of NATO's ballistic missile defence are unacceptable and counterproductive.

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Claim: NATO is preparing an attack on Russia

Fact: NATO is a defensive alliance, whose purpose is to protect our member states. Our exercises and military deployments are not directed against Russia – or any other country. Any claims that NATO is preparing an attack on Russia are absurd.

We announce our military exercises well in advance and they are subject to international observation. We notify Russia throughout the year about our exercises. In 2016, for example, Russian military experts visited 13 Allied exercises. This demonstrates the transparency of our military activities.

In direct response to Russia's use of military force against its neighbours, NATO has deployed four multinational battlegroups to the Baltic States and Poland. These forces are rotational, defensive and proportionate. They cannot compare to the three divisions Russia has established in its Western Military and Southern Military Districts. Before Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, there were no plans to deploy Allied troops to the eastern part of the Alliance. Our aim is to prevent conflict, protect our Allies, and preserve the peace.

NATO remains open to meaningful dialogue with Russia. That is why we have held seven meetings of the NATO-Russia Council since April 2016. Talking to Russia allows us to communicate clearly our positions. The crisis in and around Ukraine remains the first topic on our agenda. We will continue our dialogue, including with representatives of Russian civil society.

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Claim: NATO is a threat to Russia

Fact: NATO has reached out to Russia consistently, transparently and publicly over the past 26 years.

The Alliance created unique cooperation bodies – the Permanent Joint Council and the NATO-Russia Council – to embody its relationship with Russia. It has invited Russia to cooperate on missile defence, an invitation extended to no other partner.

In the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, agreed with Russia in 1997 and reaffirmed at NATO-Russia summits in Rome in 2002 and in Lisbon in 2010, NATO stated that *"in the current and foreseeable security environment, the Alliance will carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces"*. The Alliance has fulfilled all such commitments.

NATO's official policy towards Russia was most recently articulated by the heads of state and government of the Alliance at the Warsaw Summit in July 2016.

They stated that *"the Alliance does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia. But we cannot and will not compromise on the principles on which our Alliance and security in Europe and North America rest."* (The Warsaw Summit Communique can be read here).

Thus, neither the Alliance's policies nor its actions are a threat to Russia.

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Claim: NATO missile defence targets Russia and the Iran agreement proves it

Fact: NATO's missile defence system is not designed or directed against Russia. It does not pose a threat to Russia's strategic deterrent.

As already explained by NATO Deputy Secretary General Alexander Vershbow, geography and physics make it impossible for the NATO system to shoot down Russian intercontinental missiles from NATO sites in Romania or Poland. Their capabilities are too limited, their planned numbers too few, and their locations too far south or too close to Russia to do so.

Russian officials have confirmed that the planned NATO shield will not, in fact, undermine Russia's deterrent. Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's missile defence envoy, said on January 26, 2015, that *"neither the current, nor even the projected"* missile defence system *"could stop or cast doubt on Russia's strategic missile potential."*

Finally, the Russian claim that the framework agreement on Iran's nuclear programme obviates the need for NATO missile defence is wrong on two counts.

The Iranian agreement does not cover the proliferation of ballistic-missile technology which is an issue completely different from nuclear questions.

Furthermore, NATO has repeatedly made clear that missile defence is not about any one country, but about the threat posed by proliferation more generally. In fact, over 30 countries have obtained, or are trying to obtain, ballistic missile technology. The Iran framework agreement does not change those facts.

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Claim: The accession of new Allies to NATO threatens Russia

Fact: Every country which joins NATO undertakes to uphold the principles and policies of the Alliance, and the commitments which NATO has already made.

This includes the commitment that NATO poses no threat to Russia, as most recently stated at the Warsaw Summit.

Therefore, as the number of countries which join NATO grows, so does the number of countries which agree that ″the Alliance does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia.″

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● **Promises and pledges**

Claim: NATO violates the Non-Proliferation Treaty

Fact: At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, Allies reaffirmed their full support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Stationing of US nuclear weapons on the territories of our Allies is fully consistent with the NPT. These weapons remain under the custody and control of the United States at all times.

Furthermore, NATO's nuclear arrangements predate the NPT. They were fully addressed when the treaty was negotiated.

Russia, however, has increased its nuclear rhetoric, stepped up nuclear exercises and regularly rehearses rapid nuclear escalation. Russia has also threatened to base nuclear-capable missiles in Kaliningrad and Crimea. Russia's actions and rhetoric do not contribute to transparency and predictability.

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Claim: NATO's enhanced forward presence violates the NATO-Russia Founding Act?

Fact: Moscow accuses NATO of violating an important part of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act related to new permanent stationing of forces. It's called the ″Substantial Combat Forces″ pledge. That pledge stated that in the ″current and foreseeable security environment″ NATO would ″carry out its collective defence…by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces.″

NATO has fully abided by this pledge. The four multinational battlegroups deploying to the eastern part of our Alliance are rotational, defensive and well below any reasonable definition of ″substantial combat forces.″ There has been no permanent stationing of substantial combat forces on the territory of eastern allies; and total force levels across the Alliance have, in fact, been substantially reduced since the end of the Cold War.

Russia, which pledged to exercise ″similar restraint″ has increased the numbers of its troops along Allied borders, and breached agreements which allow for verification and military transparency, in particular on military exercises.

By signing the NATO-Russia Founding Act, Russia also pledged not to threaten or use force against NATO Allies and any other state. It has broken this commitment, with the illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, the territory of a sovereign state. Russia also continues to support militants in eastern Ukraine.

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Claim: NATO missile defence violates the INF Treaty

Fact: The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) is a crucial element of Euro-Atlantic security. The United States, as a co-signatory, has made clear that the Aegis Ashore sites in Romania and Poland are fully compliant with the INF treaty.

The Aegis Ashore system deployed in Romania is purely defensive. The SM-3 interceptors deployed there cannot be used for offensive purposes. This is also true for the future Aegis Ashore site in Poland.

The bilateral agreements between the US and the two host nations, Romania and Poland, do not allow the sites to be used for any purposes other than missile defence.

NATO's missile defence is strictly defensive and designed to protect European Allies against missile threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic area. It is not directed against Russia and will not undermine Russia's strategic deterrence capabilities.

We have made this clear to Russian authorities many times and at the highest political levels. Russia did not respond positively to our many offers to cooperate on missile defence. In fact, Russia terminated this cooperative dialogue unilaterally in 2013.

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Claim: Russia has the right to oppose NATO-supported infrastructure on the territory of member states in Central and Eastern Europe

Fact: The relationship between NATO and Russia is governed by the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, agreed by NATO Allies and Russia in 1997 and reaffirmed at NATO-Russia summits in Rome in 2002, and in Lisbon in 2010. (The Founding Act can be read here.)

In the Founding Act, the two sides agreed that: *″in the current and foreseeable security environment, the Alliance will carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces.* **Accordingly, it will have to rely on adequate infrastructure commensurate with the above tasks.** *In this context, reinforcement may take place, when necessary, in the event of defence against a threat of aggression and missions in support of peace consistent with the United Nations Charter and the OSCE governing principles, as well as for exercises consistent with the adapted CFE Treaty, the provisions of the Vienna Document 1994 and mutually agreed transparency measures. Russia will exercise similar restraint in its conventional force deployments in Europe.″*

Therefore, both infrastructure and reinforcements are explicitly permitted by the Founding Act and therefore by Russia.

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Claim: NATO's response to Russia's illegal actions in Ukraine violates the Founding Act

Fact: NATO has responded to the new strategic reality caused by Russia's illegitimate and illegal actions in Ukraine by reinforcing the defence of Allies in Central and Eastern Europe, and by ensuring the ability to increase those reinforcements if necessary, including by upgrading infrastructure.

All this is consistent with the Founding Act, quoted above.

In the Founding Act, all signatories, including Russia, agreed on principles which include ″refraining from the threat or use of force against each other as well as against any other state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence in any manner inconsistent with the United Nations Charter and with the Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations Between Participating States contained in the Helsinki Final Act″ and the ″respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states and their inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security, the inviolability of borders and peoples' right of self-determination as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents.″

NATO has respected those commitments faithfully. Russia, on the other hand, has declared the annexation of Crimea, supported violent separatists in the east of the country, and insisted that Ukraine be barred from joining NATO.

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Claim: NATO nuclear exercises violate the Non-Proliferation Treaty

Fact: At the Wales Summit in September 2014, Allies reaffirmed their full support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). NATO's nuclear posture is fully consistent with the treaty.

At no point has NATO moved nuclear weapons to Eastern Europe. There have been no NATO nuclear exercises in the eastern part of the Alliance since the end of the Cold War.

It is Russia that has started to use its nuclear weapons as a tool in its strategy of intimidation. Russia has increased nuclear rhetoric and stepped up its nuclear exercises. Russian nuclear-capable bombers are flying close to Alliance borders. Russia has also threatened to base nuclear-capable missiles in Kaliningrad and Crimea.

This activity and this rhetoric do not contribute to transparency and predictability, particularly in the context of a changed security environment due to Russia's aggressive actions in Ukraine.

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Claim: NATO promised Russia it would not expand after the Cold War

Fact: NATO Allies take decisions by consensus and these are recorded. There is no record of any such decision having been taken by NATO. Personal assurances from individual leaders cannot replace Alliance consensus and do not constitute formal NATO agreement.

NATO's ″Open Door Policy″ is based on Article 10 of the Alliance's founding document, the North Atlantic Treaty (1949). The Treaty states that NATO membership is open to any ″European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area″. It states that any decision on enlargement must be made ″by unanimous agreement″. NATO has never revoked Article 10, nor limited the potential for enlargement. Over the past 65 years, 29 countries have chosen freely, and in accordance with their domestic democratic processes, to join NATO. This is their sovereign choice.

In addition, at the time of the alleged promise, the Warsaw Pact still existed. Its members did not agree on its dissolution until 1991. The idea of their accession to NATO was not on the agenda in 1989. This was confirmed by Mikhail Gorbachev himself in an interview with Russia Beyond the Headlines:

″The topic of 'NATO expansion' was not discussed at all, and it wasn't brought up in those years. I say this with full responsibility. Not a single Eastern European country raised the issue, not even after the Warsaw Pact ceased to exist in 1991. Western leaders didn't bring it up, either.″

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● **NATO's operations**

Claim: NATO's operation in Afghanistan was a failure

Fact: NATO took over the command of the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan in 2003.

Under NATO's command, the mission progressively extended throughout Afghanistan, was joined by 22 non-NATO countries and built up from scratch an Afghan National Security Force of more than 350,000 soldiers and police.

Threats to Afghanistan's security continue. However, the Afghan forces are now ready to take full responsibility for security across the country, as agreed with the Afghan authorities.

NATO is providing training, advice and assistance to the Afghan forces through the ″Resolute Support″ mission.

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Claim: The NATO-led mission in Afghanistan failed to stop the Afghan drugs trade

Fact: As with any sovereign country, the primary responsibility for upholding law and order in Afghanistan, including as regards the trade in narcotics, rests with the Afghan government.

The international community is supporting the Afghan government to live up to this responsibility in many ways, including both through the United Nations and through the European Union.

NATO is not a main actor in this area. This role has been agreed with the international community.

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Claim: NATO's operation over Libya was illegitimate

The NATO-led operation was launched under the authority of two UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR), 1970 and 1973, both quoting Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and neither of which was opposed by Russia.

UNSCR 1973 authorized the international community ″to take all necessary measures″ to ″protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack″. This is what NATO did, with the political and military support of regional states and members of the Arab League.

After the conflict, NATO cooperated with the UN International Commission of Inquiry on Libya, which found no breach of UNSCR 1973 or international law, concluding instead that ″NATO conducted a highly precise campaign with a demonstrable determination to avoid civilian casualties.″

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Claim: NATO's operation over Kosovo was illegitimate

Fact: The NATO operation for Kosovo followed over a year of intense efforts by the UN and the Contact Group, of which Russia was a member, to bring about a peaceful solution. The UN Security Council on several occasions branded the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and the mounting number of refugees driven from their homes as a threat to international peace and security. NATO's Operation Allied Force was launched to prevent the large-scale and sustained violations of human rights and the killing of civilians.

Following the air campaign, the subsequent NATO-led peacekeeping operation, KFOR, which initially included Russia, has been under UN mandate (UNSCR 1244), with the aim of providing a safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

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Claim: The cases of Kosovo and Crimea are identical

Fact: The Kosovo operation was conducted following exhaustive discussion involving the whole international community dealing with a long-running crisis that was recognized by the UN Security Council as a threat to international peace and security.

Following the operation, the international community engaged in nearly ten years of diplomacy, under UN authority, to find a political solution and to settle Kosovo's final status, as prescribed by UNSCR 1244.

In Crimea, there was no pre-existing crisis, no attempt to discuss the situation with the Ukrainian government, no involvement of the United Nations, and no attempt at a negotiated solution.

In Kosovo, international attempts to find a solution took over 3,000 days. In Crimea, Russia annexed part of Ukraine's territory in less than 30 days. It has sought to justify its illegal and illegitimate annexation, in part, by pointing to a ″referendum″ that was inconsistent with Ukrainian law, held under conditions of illegal armed occupation with no freedom of expression or media access for the opposition, and without any credible international monitoring.

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Claim: Russia's annexation of Crimea was justified by the opinion of the International Court of Justice on the independence of Kosovo (online here).

Fact: The court stated that their opinion was not a precedent. The court said they had been given a ″narrow and specific″ question about Kosovo's independence which would not cover the broader legal consequences of that decision.

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Claim: The Ukrainian authorities are illegitimate

Fact: Ukraine's President Poroshenko was elected on 25 May with a clear majority in a vote which the OSCE characterized (report here) as showing the ″clear resolve of the authorities to hold what was a genuine election largely in line with international commitments and with a respect for fundamental freedoms.″ The only areas where serious restrictions were reported were those controlled by separatists, who undertook ″increasing attempts to derail the process.″

The current parliament was elected on 26 October in a vote which the OSCE characterized (report here) as ″an amply contested election that offered voters real choice, and a general respect for fundamental freedoms″. It again pointed out that ″Electoral authorities made resolute efforts to organize elections throughout the country, but they could not be held in parts of the regions (oblasts) of Donetsk and Luhansk or on the Crimean peninsula″.

Finally, Russian officials continue to allege that the Ukrainian parliament and government are dominated by ″Nazis″ and ″fascists.″ However, in the parliamentary elections, the parties whom Russia labelled as ″fascists″ fell far short of the threshold of 5% needed to enter parliament. Ukraine's electorate clearly voted for unity and moderation, not separatism or extremism, and the composition of the parliament reflects that.

In short, the President and parliament are legitimate, the actions of the separatists were not.

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NATO's response to hybrid threats

Hybrid methods of warfare, such as propaganda, deception, sabotage and other non-military tactics have long been used to destabilise adversaries. What is new about attacks seen in recent years is their speed, scale and intensity, facilitated by rapid technological change and global interconnectivity. NATO has a strategy on its role in countering hybrid warfare and stands ready to defend the Alliance and all Allies against any threat, whether conventional or hybrid.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the inauguration of the European Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Countering Hybrid Threats (Finland, 2 October 2017)

Highlights

- The primary responsibility to respond to hybrid threats or attacks rests with the targeted nation.
- NATO is prepared to assist any Ally against hybrid threats as part of collective defence. The Alliance has developed a strategy on its role in countering hybrid warfare to help address these threats.
- NATO is strengthening its coordination with partners, including the European Union, in efforts to counter hybrid threats.
- NATO's Joint Intelligence and Security Division has a hybrid analysis branch, that helps improve situational awareness.
- It also actively counters propaganda – not with more propaganda, but with facts – online, on air and in print.

What are the hybrid threats NATO faces?

Hybrid threats combine military and non-military as well as covert and overt means, including disinformation, cyber attacks, economic pressure, deployment of irregular armed groups and use of regular forces. Hybrid methods are used to blur the lines between war and peace, and attempt to sow doubt in the minds of targets.

The speed, scale and intensity of hybrid threats have increased in recent years. Being prepared to prevent, counter and respond to hybrid attacks, whether by state or non-state actors, is a top priority for NATO.

NATO's strategy: prepare, deter, defend

Since 2015, NATO has had a strategy on its role in countering hybrid warfare. NATO will ensure that the Alliance and Allies are sufficiently prepared to counter hybrid attacks in whatever form they may materialise. It will deter hybrid attacks on the Alliance and, if necessary, will defend Allies concerned.

To be prepared, NATO continuously gathers, shares and assesses information in order to detect and attribute any ongoing hybrid activity. The Joint Intelligence and Security Division at NATO Headquarters improves the Alliance's understanding and analysis of hybrid threats. The hybrid analysis branch provides decision-makers with improved awareness on possible hybrid threats.

The Alliance supports Allies' efforts to identify national vulnerabilities and strengthen their own resilience, if requested. NATO also serves as a hub for expertise, providing support to Allies in areas such as civil preparedness and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incident response; critical infrastructure protection; strategic communications; protection of civilians; cyber defence; energy security; and counter-terrorism.

Training, exercises and education also play a significant role in preparing to counter hybrid threats. This includes exercising of decision–making processes and joint military and non-military responses in cooperation with other actors.

To deter hybrid threats, NATO is resolved to act promptly, whenever and wherever necessary. It continues to increase the readiness and preparedness of its forces, and has strengthened its decision-making process and its command structure as part of its deterrence and defence posture. This sends a strong signal that the Alliance is improving both its political and military responsiveness and its ability to deploy appropriate forces to the right place at the right time.

If deterrence should fail, NATO stands ready *to defend any Ally against any threat*. To this end, NATO forces have to be able to react in a quick and agile way, whenever and wherever needed.

Cooperation beyond NATO

NATO continues to strengthen its cooperation and coordination with such partners as Finland, Sweden, Ukraine and the European Union (EU) to counter hybrid threats and enhance resilience. As part of their increasingly closer cooperation, NATO and the EU have stepped up their cooperation on dealing with hybrid threats, with a special focus on countering cyber attacks.

In addition, Centres of Excellence work alongside and contribute knowledge and expertise to the Alliance. They are international research centres that are nationally or multi-nationally funded and staffed.

The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats located in Helsinki, Finland serves as a hub of expertise, assisting participating countries in improving their civil-military capabilities, resilience and preparedness to counter hybrid threats. It was inaugurated in October 2017 by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, together with European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini. The Centre is an initiative of the Government of Finland, supported by 14 other nations, as well as NATO and the EU.

Other Centres of Excellence contribute to NATO's efforts to counter hybrid threats, including the Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia; the Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Tallinn, Estonia; and the Energy Security Centre of Excellence in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Resilience and Article 3

Each NATO member country needs to be resilient to resist and recover from a major shock such as a natural disaster, failure of critical infrastructure or an armed attack. Resilience is a society's ability to resist and recover easily and quickly from such shocks and combines both civil preparedness and military capacity. Robust resilience and civil preparedness in Allied countries are essential to NATO's collective security and defence.

The principle of resilience is firmly anchored in Article 3 of the Alliance's founding treaty: "*In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.*"

The individual commitment of each and every Ally to maintain and strengthen its resilience reduces the vulnerability of NATO as a whole. Members can strengthen resilience through the development of home defence and niche skills such as cyber defence or medical support combining civilian, economic, commercial and military factors. When Allies are well prepared, they are less likely to be attacked, making NATO as a whole stronger.

Moreover, military forces, especially those deployed during crises and war, have come to depend on the civilian and commercial sectors for transport, communications and even basic supplies such as food and water to fulfil their missions. Military efforts to defend Alliance territory and populations therefore need to be complemented by robust civil preparedness. However, civil capabilities can be vulnerable to disruption and attack in both peace and war. By reducing these vulnerabilities, NATO reduces the risk of a potential attack. A high level of resilience is therefore an essential aspect of credible deterrence.

Resilience is a national responsibility and each member country needs to be sufficiently robust and adaptable to support the entire spectrum of crises envisaged by the Alliance. In this context, Article 3 complements the collective defence clause set out in Article 5, which stipulates that an attack against one Ally is an attack against all. Allies need to give NATO the means to fulfil its core tasks and, in particular, that of collective defence.

Vulnerabilities in a changing security environment

Today's security environment is unpredictable. Threats can come from state and non-state actors, including terrorism and other asymmetrical threats, cyber attacks and hybrid warfare, which blur the lines between conventional and unconventional forms of conflict. They can also come from natural disasters such as floods, fires and earthquakes. The challenge of adapting and responding to these hazards is compounded by trends that have radically transformed the security environment.

Firstly, falling defence budgets since the end of the Cold War have gradually increased the overall reliance on civil and commercial assets and capabilities. A few figures illustrate the extent of this: around 90 per cent of military transport for large military operations is chartered or requisitioned from the commercial sector; on average, over 50 per cent of satellite communications used for defence purposes are provided by the commercial sector; and some 75 per cent of host nation support to NATO operations is sourced from local commercial infrastructure and services.

Secondly, civil resources and critical infrastructure are now, in many areas, owned and operated by the private sector. Driven by the objective of maximising efficiency and making profits, the private sector has eliminated most redundancies, which are costly for business. However, these redundancies are critical for governments to maintain and use as an emergency back-up in times of crises. During the Cold War for instance, there were territorial defence mechanisms and capabilities in place ready to support a war effort, but they no longer exist.

In sum, with the reduction in military investment and the privatisation of previously government-owned assets, a heavy reliance on civilian enablers, bound by commercial practices, has developed.

Thirdly, with the widespread use of new technologies, our societies have become interconnected and interdependent, in the economic, financial, information and cyber domains. Such interdependence has been a great strength and of significant benefit to our societies, but it can also be a weakness, making Allies vulnerable to the implications of rapid change in these domains.

The vulnerabilities Allies have to contend with are numerous, complex and multidirectional. NATO's work to improve resilience is not specific to any single vulnerability. It contributes to protecting citizens from all potential hazards. At the 2016 Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders committed to continue enhancing NATO's resilience to the full spectrum of threats and to further developing individual and collective capacity to resist any form of armed attack. Implementing this commitment is a top priority for Allies. NATO can support Allies in assessing and, upon request, enhancing their resilience.

In Warsaw, Allied leaders also took steps to ensure NATO has the ability to effectively address the complex challenges hybrid warfare poses. Although primary responsibility to respond to hybrid threats or attacks rests with the targeted country, NATO is prepared to assist an Ally at any stage of a hybrid campaign and to counter hybrid warfare as part of collective defence.

Role of civil preparedness in crisis management

When military forces need to deploy, they rely on the civilian and commercial sectors for support. In concrete terms this means that they need support to deploy rapidly and freely across Alliance territory. Military forces are reliant for instance on civilian transport facilities, satellite communication and power supplies, not to mention food and water supplies, to conduct their operations.

The range of functions and facilities the civilian sector covers is broad, and includes: continuity of government, of essential services to the population and support to military operations as the three critical civilian functions that a country must be able to uphold under all circumstances.

Exercises are an effective way to conduct stress tests of national arrangements, in particular when it comes to large-scale problems such as an attack with weapons of mass destruction or dealing with hybrid warfare. However, in order to support Allies, NATO has developed guidelines and tools. It has agreed seven baseline requirements for national resilience against which member states can measure their level of preparedness:

- Assured continuity of government and critical government services: for instance the ability to make decisions, communicate them and enforce them in a crisis;

- Resilient energy supplies: back-up plans and power grids, internally and across borders;

- Ability to deal effectively with uncontrolled movement of people, and to de-conflict these movements from NATO's military deployments;

- Resilient food and water resources: ensuring these supplies are safe from disruption or sabotage;

- Ability to deal with mass casualties: ensuring that civilian health systems can cope and that sufficient medical supplies are stocked and secure;

- Resilient civil communications systems: ensuring that telecommunications and cyber networks function even under crisis conditions, with sufficient back-up capacity; and

- Resilient transport systems: ensuring that NATO forces can move across Alliance territory rapidly and that civilian services can rely on transportation networks, even in a crisis.

In 2017, an Alliance-wide assessment of national resilience was conducted with the aim of generating an overview of the state of civil preparedness. It identified areas where further efforts are required to enhance resilience and deal with a wide range of threats, including terrorism. This initiative has increased awareness of the need for Allied countries to focus on building resilience through civil preparedness.

Partnering to strengthen resilience

Enhancing resilience and civil preparedness is also part of NATO's support to partners and a way to project stability in the Alliance's neighbourhood. Examples of practical cooperation include the deployment of teams of civil preparedness experts in support of Georgia and Iraq, and the establishment of a three-year defence capacity-building project to assist Jordan in improving its crisis management capabilities and maintaining continuity of government.

NATO also partners with the private sector and other international organisations, in particular the European Union, to further reinforce the efficiency and effectiveness of civil preparedness.

Ballistic missile defence

Proliferation of ballistic missiles poses an increasing threat to NATO populations, territory and forces. Many countries have ballistic missiles or are trying to develop or acquire them. NATO ballistic missile defence (BMD) is part of the Alliance's response against the increasing threat and of its core task of collective defence.

Highlights

■ In 2010, Allies decided to develop a territorial BMD capability to pursue NATO's core task of collective defence.

■ NATO has the responsibility to protect its European populations, territory and forces in light of the increasing proliferation of ballistic missiles and against threats emanating from outside the Euro-Atlantic area.

■ NATO BMD is purely defensive; it is a long-term investment to address a long-term security threat.

■ In July 2016, Allies declared Initial Operational Capability of NATO BMD, which offers a stronger capability to defend Alliance populations, territory and forces across southern NATO Europe against a potential ballistic missile attack.

■ NATO BMD capability combines assets commonly funded by all Allies as well as voluntary contributions provided by individual Allies.

■ Several Allies already offered their contributions or are undergoing development or acquisition of further BMD assets such as upgraded ships with BMD-capable radars, ground-based air and missile defence systems or advanced detection and alert capabilities.

More background information

Introduction and components

Introduction

At the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, NATO leaders decided to develop a territorial BMD capability. At that time, the Alliance decided to expand the scope of its already ongoing Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence (ALTBMD) programme beyond the protection of NATO deployed forces to also provide territorial missile defence.

At the Chicago Summit in May 2012, the Alliance declared the achievement of the Interim NATO BMD capability. It provided an operationally significant first step and offered maximum coverage within the available means to defend populations, territory and forces across southern NATO Europe against a potential ballistic missile attack.

In July 2016, Allies declared the achievement of the Initial Operational Capability of NATO BMD, which offers a stronger capability to defend Alliance populations, territory and forces across southern NATO Europe against a potential ballistic missile attack.

The final aim of NATO BMD is to provide full coverage and protection for all NATO European populations, territory and forces against the increasing threats posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles. This coverage is based on the principles of indivisibility of Allied security and NATO solidarity, equitable sharing of risks and burdens, as well as reasonable challenge. It also takes into account the level of threat, affordability and technical feasibility, and is in accordance with the latest common threat assessments agreed by the Alliance. Should international efforts reduce the threats posed by ballistic missile proliferation, NATO missile defence can, and will, adapt accordingly.

Components

NATO BMD is based on voluntary national contributions, including nationally funded interceptors and sensors, hosting arrangements and on the expansion of the Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence (ALTBMD) capability. Only the command and control systems of ALTBMD and their expansion to territorial defence are eligible for common funding.

The United States contributes to NATO BMD through its European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA). Turkey is hosting a US BMD radar at Kürecik; Romania is hosting a US Aegis Ashore site at Deveselu Air Base (declared operational on 12 May 2016); Germany is hosting the command centre at Ramstein Air Base; and Poland will be hosting another Aegis Ashore site at the Redzikowo Military Base. Additionally, in the context of the EPAA, Spain is hosting four multi-mission BMD-capable Aegis ships at its naval base in Rota. All of these assets are voluntary national contributions and are integral parts of the NATO BMD capability.

Several Allies currently offer further ground-based air and missile defence systems (such as Patriot or SAMP/T) or complementary ships as a force protection of other BMD assets. Other Allies are also developing or acquiring BMD-capable assets that could eventually be made available for NATO BMD.

Mechanisms

The Defence Policy and Planning Committee (Reinforced) (DPPC(R)) is the senior committee under the North Atlantic Council that oversees and coordinates all efforts at the political-military level to develop the NATO BMD capability. It also provides political-military guidance and advice on NATO BMD.

The Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) is the senior committee responsible for the BMD programme aimed at developing the necessary technical functionalities for BMD planners and operators.

NATO Military Authorities are responsible for developing a military doctrinal framework for BMD and related operational planning, training and execution.

The Air and Missile Defence Committee (AMDC) is the senior committee responsible for overall policy aspects of NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD).

Several other NATO senior committees address NATO BMD in the context of broader topics, such as civil emergency planning or crisis management.

Evolution

The key policy document providing the framework for NATO's activities in the area of BMD is NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept. In addition, BMD is an important aspect of the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review of 2012.

The Strategic Concept recognises, *inter alia*, that *"the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, threatens incalculable consequences for global stability and prosperity. During the next decade, proliferation will be most acute in some of the world's most volatile regions"*. *"Therefore, NATO will develop the capability to defend our populations and territories against ballistic missile attack as a core element of our collective defence, which contributes to the indivisible security of our Alliance"*. As a defensive capability, BMD will be one element of a broader response to the threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

The Deterrence and Defence Posture Review of 2012 states that missile defence can complement the role of nuclear weapons in deterrence; it cannot substitute for them. It is a purely defensive capability and is being established in the light of threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic area. It is expected that NATO's missile defence capabilities would complicate an adversary's planning, and provide damage mitigation. Effective missile defence could also provide valuable decision space in times of crisis. Like other weapons systems, missile defence capabilities cannot promise complete and enduring effectiveness. NATO missile defence capability, along with effective nuclear and conventional forces, will signal our determination to deter and defend against any threat from outside the Euro-Atlantic area to the safety and security of our populations.

At the Lisbon Summit in 2010, Allied leaders agreed to address air and missile defence in a holistic way by developing a NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS). NATINAMDS is based on the previously existing NATO Integrated Air Defence System (NATINADS) enhanced by the new BMD elements.

Since 2003 NATO and Russia engaged in TBMD-related discussions and activities under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). From 2010 onwards, discussions and activities expanded from Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence (TBMD) towards territorial BMD. NATO and Russia examined possible areas for cooperation in this field. Progress, however, was difficult and, in October 2013, NATO-Russia BMD-related discussions were paused by Russia. In April 2014, NATO suspended all practical cooperation with Russia in response to its illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea.

Key milestones

NATO

May 2001
NATO launches two parallel feasibility studies for a future Alliance Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence (TBMD) system.

November 2002
At the Prague Summit, Allied leaders direct that a missile defence feasibility study be launched to examine options for protecting Alliance forces, territory and populations against the full range of ballistic missile threats.

June 2004

At the Istanbul Summit, Allied leaders direct that work on TBMD be taken forward expeditiously.

April 2006

The study concludes that ballistic missile defence is technically feasible within the limits and assumptions of the study. The results are approved by the CNAD.

2007

An update of a 2004 Alliance assessment of ballistic missile threat developments is completed.

April 2008

At the Bucharest Summit, Allied leaders agree that the planned deployment of European-based US BMD assets should be an integral part of any future NATO-wide missile defence architecture. They call for options for a comprehensive ballistic missile defence architecture to extend coverage to all Allied territory not otherwise covered by the US system to be prepared in time for NATO's next Summit.

April 2009

At the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, Allies recognise that a future US contribution of important architectural elements could enhance NATO elaboration of Alliance efforts and judge that ballistic missile threats should be addressed in a prioritised manner that includes consideration of the level of imminence of the threat and the level of acceptable risk.

September 2009

The United States announces its plan for the US European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA).

November 2010

At the Lisbon Summit, Allied leaders decide to develop a BMD capability to pursue its core task of collective defence. To this end, they decide that the scope of the existing TBMD programme will be expanded beyond the capability to protect forces to also include NATO European populations and territory. In this context, the EPAA and other national contributions are welcomed as valuable to the NATO BMD architecture.

June 2011

NATO defence ministers approve the NATO BMD Action Plan.

September 2011

Turkey announces a decision to host a US-owned missile defence radar as part of the NATO BMD capability.

September 2011

Romania and the United States sign an agreement to base a US Aegis Ashore system in Romania as part of NATO's BMD capability.

September 2011

An agreement between Poland and the United States on basing a US Aegis Ashore system in Poland enters into force.

September 2011

The Netherlands announces plans to upgrade four air-defence frigates with extended long-range radar systems as its national contribution to NATO's BMD capability.

October 2011

Spain and the United States announce an agreement to port US Aegis ships in Rota, Spain, as part of the US contribution to NATO's ballistic missile defence capability.

February 2012

Germany announces a decision to offer its Patriot air- and missile defence systems as a national contribution to NATO's BMD capability.

April 2012

NATO successfully installs and tests the command and control architecture for the soon to be announced Interim Capability at Allied Air Command in Ramstein, Germany.

May 2012

At the Chicago Summit, Allies declare the Interim NATO BMD Capability, which is an operationally significant first step, offering the maximum coverage within available means to defend the populations, territory and forces across southern NATO Europe against a ballistic missile attack.

March 2013

The United States announces a revised EPAA.

October 2013

Ground-breaking ceremony for the US Aegis Ashore system in Deveselu, Romania.

2014

First US Aegis destroyer stationed in Rota, Spain in February; second US Aegis destroyer stationed in Rota in June.

August 2014

Denmark announces the decision to acquire a frigate-based radar system for NATO BMD.

September 2014

NATO Summit in Wales. Allies reiterate basic parameters for NATO BMD and note additional contributions offered or considered by Allies.

2015

Third US Aegis destroyer stationed in Rota in April; fourth US Aegis destroyer stationed in Rota in September.

November 2015

The United Kingdom announces it will invest in a ground-based BMD radar, which will enhance the coverage and effectiveness of the NATO BMD capability.

December 2015

The Aegis Ashore site in Deveselu, Romania is technically completed and handed over to military users.

May 2016

The Aegis Ashore site in Deveselu is declared operational.

July 2016

Allies declare Initial Operational Capability of NATO BMD, which offers a stronger capability to defend Alliance populations, territory and forces across southern NATO Europe against a potential ballistic missile attack.

NATO-Russia Council

2003

A study is launched under the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) to assess possible levels of interoperability among TBMD systems of NATO Allies and Russia.

March 2004

An NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise is held in the United States.

March 2005

An NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise is held in the Netherlands.

October 2006

An NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise is held in Russia.

January 2008

An NRC theatre missile defence computer-assisted exercise takes place in Germany.

December 2010

First meeting of the NRC Missile Defence Working Group aimed at assessing decisions taken at the 2010 Lisbon Summit and exploring a possible way forward for cooperation on ballistic missile defence.

June 2011

NRC Defence Ministers take stock of the work on missile defence since the 2010 Lisbon Summit.

April 2012

A computer-assisted exercise takes place in Ottobrunn, Germany.

October 2013

Russia unilaterally pauses the discussions on missile defence in the NRC framework.

April 2014

In response to the illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea by Russia, NATO suspends all practical cooperation with Russia, including on missile defence.

Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in NATO

NATO has a long-standing commitment to an active policy in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The Alliance continues to pursue its security objectives through these policies, while at the same time ensuring that its collective defence obligations are met and the full range of its missions fulfilled.

Highlights

- NATO seeks its security at the lowest possible level of forces.

- It actively contributes to effective and verifiable arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts through its policies, activities and its member countries. NATO itself is not party to any treaty, but it supports and facilitates dialogue among members, partners and other countries to implement their international obligations fully.

- NATO Allies are parties to the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, the Ottawa Convention on mine action, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and other related treaties and agreements.

- In the field of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), NATO cooperates with the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), other regional organisations and multilateral initiatives to address proliferation issues.

- Nuclear weapons committed to NATO have been reduced by more than 95 per cent since the height of the Cold War.

- NATO will remain a nuclear alliance as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, but will do so at the lowest possible level and with an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces.

- NATO Allies also assist partner countries in the destruction of surplus stocks of mines, arms and munitions. In addition, former military personnel receive retraining assistance through defence reform Trust Fund projects.

Definitions

While often used together, the terms arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation do not mean the same thing. In fact, experts usually consider them to reflect associated, but different areas in the same discipline or subject.

Arms control

Arms control is the broadest of the three terms and generally refers to mutually agreed upon restraints or controls (usually between states) on the research, manufacture, or the levels of and/or locales of deployment of troops and weapons systems.

Disarmament

Disarmament, often inaccurately used as a synonym for arms control, refers to the act of eliminating or abolishing weapons (particularly offensive arms) either unilaterally (in the hope that one's example will be followed) or reciprocally.

Non-proliferation

For the Alliance, "*non-proliferation refers to all efforts to prevent proliferation from occurring, or should it occur, to reverse it by any other means than the use of military force*."[1] Non-proliferation usually applies to weapons of mass destruction, which include nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Weapons of mass destruction proliferation

Attempts made by state or non-state actors to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons or devices and their means of delivery or related material, including precursors, without prejudice to the rights and obligations of the States Parties to the following agreements: the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC).

Ways in which NATO effectively participates

NATO contributes to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in many ways: through its policies, its activities and through its member countries.

NATO's policies in these fields cover consultation and practical cooperation in a wide range of areas. These include conventional arms control; nuclear policy issues; promoting mine action and combating the spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW); preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); and developing and harmonising capabilities to defend against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats.

Conventional forces

Allies have reduced their conventional forces significantly from Cold War levels. Allies remain committed to the regime of the CFE Treaty. As a response to Russia's unilateral "suspension" of its Treaty obligations in 2007, NATO CFE Allies ceased implementing certain Treaty obligations vis-à-vis Russia in November 2011, while still continuing to implement fully their obligations with respect to all other CFE States Parties. Allies stated that these decisions are fully reversible should Russia return to full implementation. At the 2012 Chicago Summit, Allies reiterated their commitment to conventional arms control and expressed their determination to preserve, strengthen and modernise the conventional arms control regime in Europe, based on key principles and commitments.

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[1] According to NATO's Comprehensive, Strategic-Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and Defending Against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Threats.

At their 2014 Wales and 2016 Warsaw Summits, Allies reaffirmed their long-standing commitment to conventional arms control as a key element of Euro-Atlantic security and emphasised the importance of full implementation and compliance to rebuild trust and confidence. They underscored that Russia's unilateral military activity in and around Ukraine has undermined peace, security and stability across the region, and its selective implementation of the Vienna Document and Open Skies Treaty and long-standing non-implementation of the CFE Treaty have eroded the positive contributions of these arms control instruments. Allies called on Russia to fully adhere to its commitments. Meanwhile, on 11 March 2015, the Russian Federation announced that it is suspending its participation in the meetings of the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) on the CFE Treaty, which meets regularly in Vienna.

Nuclear forces

NATO is committed to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons – but reconfirms that, as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. However, it will do so at the lowest possible level and with an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces. The nuclear weapons committed to NATO have been reduced by more than 95 per cent since the height of the Cold War. NATO nuclear weapon states have also reduced their nuclear arsenals and ceased production of highly enriched uranium or plutonium for nuclear weapons. Allies remain committed to crafting the conditions for further reductions in the future on the basis of reciprocity, recognising that progress on arms control and disarmament must take into account the prevailing international security environment.

Allies also emphasise their strong commitment to full implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which has been the cornerstone of global non-proliferation and disarmament efforts for nearly 50 years. The Alliance reaffirms its resolve to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with all provisions of the NPT, including Article VI, in a step-by-step and verifiable way that promotes international stability, and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all. Allies reiterate their commitment to progress towards the goals and objectives of the NPT in its three mutually reinforcing pillars: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

All Allies are party to the NPT and view it as an essential foundation for international peace and security. At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, NATO leaders reiterated their commitment to the NPT and continued to call on Russia to preserve the viability of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty by ensuring full and verifiable compliance.

Armed forces

Through its cooperation framework with non-member countries, the Alliance supports defence and security sector reform, emphasising civilian control of the military, accountability, and restructuring of military forces to lower, affordable and usable levels.

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) and mine action (MA)

Allies are working with non-member countries and other international organisations to support the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All its Aspects.

NATO also supports mine action activities across the globe. All NATO member countries, with the exception of the United States, are party to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, often referred to as the Ottawa Convention.

NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund Policy was initiated in 2000 to assist countries in fulfilling their Ottawa Convention obligations to dispose of stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines. The policy was later expanded to include efforts to implement the UN Programme of Action on SALW. More recently, the Trust Fund Policy has also been expanded to include projects addressing the consequences of defence reform, training and building integrity.

NATO/Partnership Trust Funds may be initiated by a NATO member or partner country to tackle specific, practical issues linked to these areas. They are funded by voluntary contributions from individual NATO Allies, partners and organisations.

At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government emphasised the need to do more to achieve lasting calm and an end to violence in the Middle East and North Africa, which face continuing crises and instability with direct implications for the security of NATO. They also made a plea for enhanced practical cooperation, including through further support in the areas of counter-terrorism, small arms and light weapons, countering improvised explosive devices, and military border security.

Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

"With due respect to the primarily military mission of the Alliance, NATO will work actively to prevent the proliferation of WMD by State and non-State actors, to protect the Alliance from WMD threats should prevention fail, and be prepared for recovery efforts should the Alliance suffer a WMD attack or CBRN event, within its competencies and whenever it can bring added value, through a comprehensive political, military and civilian appoach."[2]

NATO stepped up its activities in this area in 1999 with the launch of the WMD Initiative and the establishment of a WMD Centre at NATO Headquarters the following year. NATO Allies have also taken a comprehensive set of practical initiatives to defend their populations, territory and forces against potential WMD threats. As part of NATO's outreach to Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) partners, Mediterranean Dialogue countries, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative countries and other partner countries, the NATO Conference on WMD Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation is the only annual conference, sponsored by an international organisation, dealing with all types and aspects of weapons of mass destruction.

Of particular importance is NATO's outreach to and cooperation with the UN, the EU, other regional organisations and multilateral initiatives that address WMD proliferation.

Chemical weapons

Since its entry into force in 1997, the Chemical Weapons Convention has become one of the pillars of the global non-proliferation regime. The Convention prohibits the development, transfer and use of chemical weapons. States Parties to the Convention include all NATO member countries; they commit not to develop, produce or acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons, nor to transfer, directly or indirectly, chemical weapons to anyone. States Parties also undertake not to engage in any military preparations to use chemical weapons, nor to commit to assist, encourage or induce anyone to engage in prohibited activity.

NATO stands at a crossroads, as the universal norm against chemical weapons use is eroding. The first offensive use of a nerve agent on Alliance territory since NATO's foundation occurred on 4 March 2018 in Salisbury, the United Kingdom. The military grade nerve agent was of a type developed by Russia. Allies agree that the attack was a clear breach of international norms and agreements, and they have called on Russia to disclose the Novichok programme to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Allies strongly condemn the repeated use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime and call for those responsible to be held to account. Despite sustained diplomatic efforts, the Syrian regime's repeated use of chemical weapons against civilians has contributed to appalling human suffering since the start of the conflict in 2011. The use of such weapons is in flagrant violation of international standards and non-proliferation norms, multiple UN Security Council Resolutions, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, which Syria ratified in 2013. NATO considers any use of chemical weapons by state or non-state actors to be a threat to international peace and security.

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[2]   NATO's Comprehensive, Strategic-Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and Defending Against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Threats, Para 4.

Evolution of NATO's contribution to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation

Active policies in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation have been an inseparable part of NATO's contribution to security and stability since the Harmel Report of 1967.

Harmel Report

This report formed the basis for NATO's security policy. It outlined two objectives: maintaining a sufficient military capacity to act as an effective and credible deterrent against aggression and other forms of pressure while seeking to improve East-West relations. The Alliance's objectives in arms control have been tied to the achievement of both aims. It is therefore important that defence and arms control policies remain in harmony and are mutually reinforcing.

Comprehensive Concept of Arms Control and Disarmament

In May 1989, NATO adopted the Comprehensive Concept of Arms Control and Disarmament, which allowed the Alliance to move forward in the sphere of arms control. It addressed the role of arms control in East-West relations, the principles of Alliance security and a number of guiding principles and objectives governing Allied policy in the nuclear, conventional and chemical fields of arms control.

It clearly set out the interrelationships between arms control and defence policies and established the overall conceptual framework within which the Alliance sought progress in each area of its arms control agenda.

The Alliance's Strategic Concept

NATO's continued adherence to this policy was reaffirmed in the 2010 Strategic Concept (with regard to nuclear weapons):
"*It [This Strategic Concept] commits NATO to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons – but reconfirms that, as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance.*"

It continues, on a more general note:

"*NATO seeks its security at the lowest possible level of forces. Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation contribute to peace, security and stability, and should ensure undiminished security for all Alliance members. We will continue to play our part in reinforcing arms control and in promoting disarmament of both conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, as well as non-proliferation efforts.*"

Deterrence and Defence Posture Review

The NATO Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR), agreed at the Chicago Summit in 2012, addresses issues of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The DDPR document underscores: "*The Alliance is resolved to seek a safer world for all and to create the* **conditions for a world without nuclear weapons** in accordance with the goals of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, in a way that promotes international stability, and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all". It also repeats that as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.

The Special Advisory and Consultative Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Committee (ADNC) was established on the basis of DDPR agreement.

Summit declarations

Allied leaders have reiterated their commitment in declarations made at every summit meeting since 1999. For instance, at the Bucharest Summit in 2008, Allied leaders took note of a report on raising NATO's profile in the fields of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. As part of a broader response to security issues, they agreed that NATO should continue to contribute to international efforts in these fields and keep these issues under active review. Subsequently, these commitments were

reaffirmed in the official declarations of summits that have since taken place. Additionally, at the 2009 Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, Allied leaders endorsed NATO's Comprehensive, Strategic-Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and Defending Against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Threats.

In the 2016 Warsaw Summit Declaration, the Alliance reaffirmed its long-standing commitment to conventional arms control as a key element of Euro-Atlantic security and emphasised the importance of full implementation and compliance to rebuild trust and confidence. Allied leaders also stated that Russia's unilateral military activity in and around Ukraine has undermined peace, security and stability across the region, and its selective implementation of the Vienna Document and Open Skies Treaty and long-standing non-implementation of the CFE Treaty have eroded the positive contributions of these arms control instruments. At Warsaw, NATO also continued to call on Russia to preserve the viability of the INF Treaty and condemned the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) for its multiple ballistic missile tests and its nuclear tests, calling DPRK to immediately cease and abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile activities in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner and re-engage in international talks.

NATO bodies dealing with these issues

A number of NATO bodies oversee different aspects of Alliance activities in the fields of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Overall political guidance is provided by the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest political decision-making body. More detailed oversight of activities and policy in specific areas is provided by a number of bodies, including the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Conventional Arms Control, the Special Advisory and Consultative Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Committee (ADNC), the Nuclear Planning Group High Level Group (NPG/HLG), the Verification Coordinating Committee (VCC), the Committee on Proliferation (CP) in politico-military and defence format.

Within NATO's cooperative frameworks, the EAPC (in particular, the Ad Hoc Working Group on SALW and Mine Action) has a central role.

Weapons of mass destruction

The proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and their delivery systems, could have incalculable consequences for national, regional and global security. During the next decade, proliferation will remain most acute in some of the world's most volatile regions. The potential effects of WMD proliferation on NATO Allies are one of the greatest threats NATO faces.
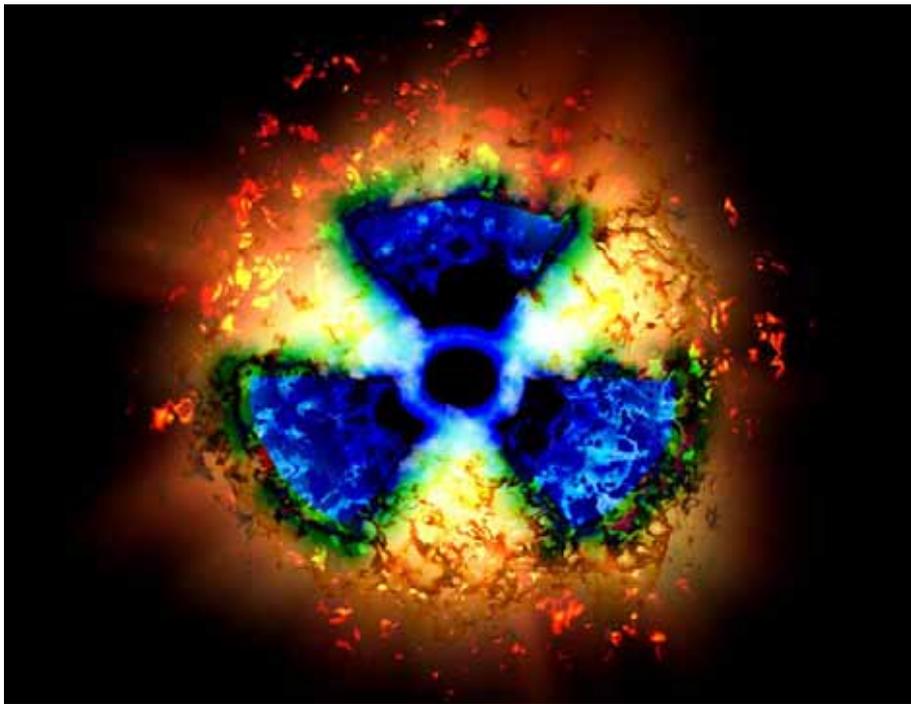
(© Science Photo Library / Van Parys Media)

Highlights

- NATO Allies seek to prevent the proliferation of WMD through an active political agenda of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

- The Arms Control, Disarmament, and WMD Non-proliferation Centre (ACDC) at NATO Headquarters, strengthens dialogue among Allies, assesses risks to Allied populations, forces and territories, and supports chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear defence efforts.

- NATO is strengthening its capabilities to defend against chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) attacks, including terrorism and warfare.

- NATO conducts training and exercises designed to test interoperability and prepare forces to operate in a CBRN environment.

More background information

NATO's counter-WMD initiatives

NATO Allies engage in preventing the proliferation of WMD by state and non-state actors through an active political agenda of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. They also do this by

developing and harmonising defence capabilities and, when necessary, by employing these capabilities, consistent with political decisions in support of non-proliferation objectives. Both political and defence elements are essential to NATO's security.

NATO is prepared for recovery efforts, should it suffer a WMD attack or CBRN event, through a comprehensive political-military approach.

Despite significant progress, however, major challenges remain.

Since the launch of the 1999 WMD Initiative, which was designed to integrate political and military aspects of NATO work in responding to WMD proliferation, Allies have continued to intensify and expand NATO's contribution to global non-proliferation efforts. Through cooperation with partners and relevant international organisations, NATO has historically provided strong support to the negotiations and implementation of a number of arms control and non-proliferation regimes. Allies have also intensified NATO's defence response to the risk posed by WMD by improving civil preparedness and consequence-management capabilities in the event of WMD use or a CBRN accident or incident.

The Arms Control, Disarmament, and WMD Non-proliferation Centre (ACDC)

The ACDC was created in 2017, merging NATO's Arms Control and Coordination Section with the WMD Non-Proliferation Centre. The ACDC resides in the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division at NATO Headquarters and comprises national experts as well as personnel from NATO's International Staff and International Military Staff.

Improving CBRN defence capabilities

NATO continues to significantly improve its CBRN defence posture with the establishment of the Combined Joint CBRN Defence Task Force (CJ-CBRND-TF), the NATO CBRN Reachback capability, the Joint CBRN Defence Centre of Excellence (JCBRN Defence COE), the Defence against Terrorism COE, and other COEs and agencies that support NATO's response to the WMD threat. Allies continue to invest significant resources in capabilities ranging from CBRN reconnaissance and decontamination to warning and reporting, individual protection, and CBRN hazard management.

Combined Joint CBRN Defence Task Force

The NATO Combined Joint CBRN Defence Task Force is designed to perform a full range of CBRN defence missions. It comprises the multinational CBRN Defence Battalion and the Joint Assessment Team.

The Task Force is led by an individual Ally on a 12-month rotational basis. Under normal circumstances, it operates within the NATO Response Force (NRF), which is a multinational force designed to respond rapidly to emerging crises across the full spectrum of Alliance missions. However, the Task Force may operate independently of the NRF on other tasks as required, for example, helping civilian authorities in NATO member countries.

Joint Centre of Excellence on CBRN Defence

The JCBRN Defence COE in Vyškov, Czech Republic, was activated in July 2007. It is an international military organisation sponsored and manned by the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and the United States. It is also open for partners that want to become contributing nations. Austria joined the Centre as the first such contributing nation in 2016.

The COE offers recognised expertise and experience in the field of CBRN to the benefit of the Alliance. It provides opportunities to improve interoperability and capabilities by enhancing multinational education, training sund exercises; assisting in concept, doctrine, procedures and standards development; and testing and validating concepts through experimentation. It has thus supported NATO's transformation process.

The COE integrates a CBRN Reachback Element (RBE), which has reached Full Operational Capability (FOC) in January 2016. This Reachback capability provides timely and comprehensive scientific (technical) and operational CBRN expertise, assessments and advice to NATO commanders, their staff and deployed forces during planning and execution of operations. The RBE, together with its secondary network which comprises various civilian and military institutions, is able, if needed, to operate 24/7.

Standardization, training, research and development

NATO creates and improves necessary standardization documents, conducts training and exercises, and develops necessary capability improvements in the field of CBRN defence through the work of many groups, bodies and institutions, including:

- CBRN Medical Working Group;

- Joint CBRN Defence Capability Development Group;

- NATO Research and Technology Organisation; and

- Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee (taking over the task of developing and implementing science activities, which were formerly managed under the auspices of the Science for Peace and Security Committee).

The Alliance also continues to create and improve standard NATO agreements that govern Allied operations in a CBRN environment. These agreements guide all aspects of preparation, ranging from standards for disease surveillance to rules for restricting troop movements. In addition, the Organization conducts training exercises and senior-level seminars that are designed to test interoperability and prepare NATO leaders and forces for operations in a CBRN environment.

Building capacity and scientific collaboration

The NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme enables collaboration between NATO and partner countries on issues of common interest to enhance their mutual security by facilitating international research efforts to meet emerging security challenges, supporting NATO-led operations and missions, and advancing early warning and forecast for the prevention of disasters and crises.

The central objective of SPS activities in WMD non-proliferation and CBRN defence is to improve the ability of NATO and its partners to protect their populations and forces from CBRN threats. The Programme supports research towards the development of CBRN defence capabilities, training activities and workshops in the following fields:

- protection against CBRN agents, as well as diagnosing their effects, detection, decontamination, destruction, disposal and containment;

- risk management and recovery strategies and technologies; and

- medical counter-measures for CBRN agents.

Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation

Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation are essential tools in preventing the use of WMD and the spread of these weapons and their delivery systems. That is why Allies will continue to support numerous efforts in the fields mentioned above, always based on the principle to ensure undiminished security for all Alliance members.

Since the end of the Cold War, Allies have dramatically reduced the number of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and their reliance on nuclear weapons in the NATO strategy. No NATO member country has a chemical or biological weapons programme. Additionally, Allies are committed to destroying stockpiles of chemical agents and have supported a number of partners and other countries in this work.

NATO members are resolved to seek a safer world for all and create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goal of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). That is why the Alliance will seek to create the conditions for further reductions in the future. One important step

towards this goal is the implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the United States and the Russian Federation.

With respect to the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the North Atlantic Council declared that the treaty disregards the realities of the increasingly challenging international security environment. At a time when the world needs to remain united in the face of growing threats, in particular the grave threat posed by North Korea's nuclear programme, the treaty fails to take into account these urgent security challenges. This new treaty risks undermining the NPT, which has been at the heart of global non-proliferation and disarmament efforts for almost 50 years, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards regime which supports it. In view of this and a number of other arguments including their commitment to advancing security through deterrence, defence, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, the Allied nations cannot support this treaty.

Improving civil preparedness

National authorities are primarily responsible for protecting their populations and critical infrastructure against the consequences of terrorist attacks, CBRN incidents and natural disasters. Within NATO, Allies have agreed baseline requirements for national resilience and are developing guidelines to help nations achieve them. The Alliance also serves as a forum to exchange best practices and lessons learned to improve preparedness and national resilience.

A network of 380 civil experts from across the Euro-Atlantic area exists to support these efforts. Their expertise covers all civil aspects relevant to NATO planning and operations, including crisis management, consequence management and critical infrastructure protection. Drawn from government and industry, experts participate in training and exercises, and respond to requests for assistance.

Under the auspices of NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), Allies have established an inventory of national civil and military capabilities that could be made available to assist stricken countries following a CBRN terrorist attack. Originally created in 1998 to coordinate responses to natural and man-made disasters, the EADRCC has since 2001 been given an additional coordinating role for responses to potential terrorist acts involving CBRN agents. It organises major international field exercises to practise responses to simulated disaster situations and consequence management.

Cooperating with partners

The Alliance engages actively to enhance international security through partnership with relevant countries and other international organisations. NATO's partnership programmes are therefore designed as a tool to provide effective frameworks for dialogue, consultation and coordination. They contribute actively to NATO's arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

Examples of institutionalised fora of the aforementioned cooperation include the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the NATO-Ukraine Commission, the NATO-Georgia Commission and the Mediterranean Dialogue. NATO also consults with countries in the broader Middle East region which take part in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, as well as with partners across the globe.

International outreach activities

Outreach to partners, international and regional organisations helps develop a common understanding of the WMD threat and encourages participation in and compliance with international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts to which they are party. It also enhances global efforts to protect and defend against CBRN threats and improve crisis management and recovery if WMD are employed against the Alliance or its interests.

Of particular importance is NATO's outreach to and cooperation with the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and other regional organisations and multilateral initiatives that address WMD proliferation. Continued cooperation with regional organisations such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) can contribute to efforts to encourage member states to comply with relevant international agreements.

On the practical side, NATO organises an annual non-proliferation conference involving a significant number of non-member countries from six continents. This event is unique among international institutions' activities in the non-proliferation field, as it provides a venue for informal discussions among senior national officials on all types of WMD threats, as well as potential political and diplomatic responses. The conference has been hosted by both Allies and partners since it first took place at the NATO Defense College in Rome in 2004, followed by events in Sofia, Vilnius, Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Bergen, Budapest, Split, Interlaken, Doha, Ljubljana and Helsinki.

The Alliance also participates in relevant conferences organised by other international institutions, including the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, the EU, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the OSCE, and others.

Many of NATO's activities under the SPS Programme focus on the civilian side of nuclear, chemical and biological technology. Scientists from NATO and partner countries are cooperating in research that impacts on these areas. Some examples include the decommissioning and disposal of WMD or their components, the safe handling of materials, techniques for arms control implementation, and the detection of CBRN agents.

The decision-making bodies

The North Atlantic Council, NATO's principal political decision-making body, has overall authority on Alliance policy and activity in countering WMD proliferation. The Council is supported by a number of NATO committees and groups, which provide strategic assessments and policy advice and recommendations.

The Committee on Proliferation is the senior advisory body for discussion of the Alliance's political and defence efforts against WMD proliferation. It brings together senior national officials responsible for political and security issues related to non-proliferation with experts on military capabilities needed to discourage WMD proliferation, to deter threats and the use of such weapons and to protect NATO populations, forces and territories. The Committee on Proliferation is chaired by NATO's International Staff when discussing political-military aspects of proliferation, and by national co-chairs when discussing defence-related issues.

Evolution

The use or threatened use of WMD significantly influenced the security environment of the 20th century and will also impact international security in the foreseeable future. Strides in modern technology and scientific discoveries have opened the door to even more destructive weapons.

During the Cold War, the use of nuclear weapons was prevented by the prospect of mutually assured destruction. The nuclear arms race slowed in the early 1970s following the negotiation of the first arms control treaties.

The improved security environment of the *1990s* enabled nuclear weapon states to dramatically reduce their nuclear stockpiles. However, the proliferation of knowledge and technology has enabled other countries to build their own nuclear weapons, extending the overall risks to new parts of the world.

At the Washington Summit in 1999, Allied leaders launched a Weapons of Mass Destruction Initiative to address the risks posed by the proliferation of these weapons and their means of delivery. The initiative was designed to promote understanding of WMD issues, develop ways of responding to them, improve intelligence and information-sharing, enhance existing Allied military readiness to operate in a WMD environment and counter threats posed by these weapons. Consequently, the WMD Non-Proliferation Centre was established in 2000.

At the 2002 Prague Summit, Allies launched a modernisation process which aimed to ensure that the Alliance is able to effectively meet the new challenges of the 21st century. This included the creation of the

NATO Response Force, the streamlining of the Alliance command structure and a series of measures to protect NATO populations, forces and territories from chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats.

In 2003, NATO created the Multinational CBRN Defence Battalion and Joint Assessment Team, which have been part of the Combined Joint CBRN Defence Task Force since 2007.

At the *Riga Summit in 2006*, Allied leaders endorsed a Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) that provides an analysis of the future security environment and a fundamental vision for NATO's ongoing transformation. It explicitly mentions the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery as major security threats, which are particularly dangerous when combined with the threats of terrorism or failed states.

In *July 2007*, NATO activated a Joint CBRN Defence Centre of Excellence in Vyškov, Czech Republic.

In *April 2009*, NATO Heads of State and Government endorsed NATO's ″Comprehensive Strategic-Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of WMD and Defending against CBRN Threats″. On 31 August 2009, the North Atlantic Council decided to make this document public.

At the *November 2010 Lisbon Summit*, Allied leaders adopted a new Strategic Concept. They also agreed at Lisbon to establish a dedicated committee providing advice on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. This committee started work in March 2011.

In May 2012 at the Chicago Summit, NATO leaders approved and made public the results of the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review. This document reiterates NATO's commitment *″to maintaining an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities for deterrence and defence to fulfil its commitments as set out in the Strategic Concept″*. The Summit also reaffirmed that *″arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation play an important role in the achievement of the Alliance's security objectives″* and therefore Allies will continue to support these efforts.

Allied Heads of State and Government further emphasised that "*proliferation threatens our shared vision of creating the conditions necessary for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)*".

At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, Allies stated that they will ensure that NATO continues to be both strategically and operationally prepared with policies, plans and capabilities to counter a wide range of state and non-state CBRN threats.

NATO's nuclear deterrence policy and forces

Nuclear weapons are a core component of NATO's overall capabilities for deterrence and defence alongside conventional and missile defence forces.

Highlights

- NATO's nuclear policy is based on NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept and the 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review.

- The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear forces is deterrence.

- Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of NATO's overall strategy.

- Nuclear weapons are a core component of the Alliance's overall capabilities for deterrence and defence alongside conventional and missile defence forces.

- NATO is committed to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, but as long as nuclear weapons exist, it will remain a nuclear alliance.

- The Nuclear Planning Group provides the forum for consultation on NATO's nuclear deterrence.

More background information

NATO's nuclear deterrence policy

NATO's nuclear policy is based on two public documents agreed by the Heads of State and Government of all 29 Allies:

- The 2010 Strategic Concept
- The 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review

The 2010 Strategic Concept, which was adopted by Allied Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Lisbon in November 2010, sets out the Alliance's core tasks and principles, including deterrence. The Strategic Concept commits NATO to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, but reconfirms that, as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance:

 "The greatest responsibility of the Alliance is to protect and defend our territory and populations against attack, as set out in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. […]

 Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy. […] As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. […]

We will ensure the broadest possible participation of Allies in collective defence planning on nuclear roles, in peacetime basing of nuclear forces, and in command, control and consultation arrangements."

The 2010 Lisbon Summit set in train work on a Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR), which was endorsed by the Allied Heads of State and Government at the NATO Chicago Summit in May 2012. The DDPR reviewed NATO's overall posture in the light of the Strategic Concept:

"The review has shown that the Alliance's nuclear force posture currently meets the criteria for an effective deterrence and defence posture.

While seeking to create the conditions and considering options for further reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to NATO, Allies concerned[1] will ensure that all components of NATO's nuclear deterrent remain safe, secure, and effective for as long as NATO remains a nuclear alliance. That requires sustained leadership focus and institutional excellence for the nuclear deterrence mission and planning guidance aligned with 21st century requirements."

The fundamental purpose of Alliance nuclear forces is deterrence. This is essentially a political function. The Alliance will focus on the maintenance of effective deterrence. Political control of nuclear weapons will be maintained under all circumstances. Nuclear planning and consultation within the Alliance will be in accordance with political guidance.

Nuclear consultation

The key principles of NATO's nuclear policy are established by the Heads of State and Government of all 29 members of the Alliance.

For those countries that are members, the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) provides the forum for consultation on all issues that relate to NATO nuclear deterrence. All Allies, with the exception of France, which has decided not to participate, are members of the NPG.

All NATO members, including potential new members, are members of the Alliance in all respects, including their commitment to the Alliance's policy on nuclear weapons, and the guarantees which that policy affords to all Allies.

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[1]   i.e. all members of the Nuclear Planning Group

The role of NATO's nuclear forces

Nuclear weapons are a core component of NATO's overall capabilities for deterrence and defence, alongside conventional and missile defence forces.

The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated are extremely remote.

Strategic nuclear forces

As stated in the 2010 Strategic Concept:

"The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies."

Dual-capable aircraft

A number of NATO member countries contribute a dual-capable aircraft (DCA) capability to the Alliance. These aircraft are available for nuclear roles at various levels of readiness – the highest level of readiness is measured in weeks. In their nuclear role, the aircraft are equipped to carry nuclear bombs and personnel are trained accordingly.

The United States maintains absolute control and custody of the associated nuclear weapons, while Allies provide military support for the DCA mission with conventional forces and capabilities.

NATO leaders touched on these issues at the Warsaw Summit in July 2016:

"NATO's nuclear deterrence posture also relies, in part, on United States' nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe and on capabilities and infrastructure provided by Allies concerned. These Allies will ensure that all components of NATO's nuclear deterrent remain safe, secure, and effective. […] The Alliance will ensure the broadest possible participation of Allies concerned in their agreed nuclear burden-sharing arrangements."

NATO's policy on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation

It is made clear in both the 2010 Strategic Concept and the 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) that NATO is committed to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Strategic Concept states that:

"NATO seeks its security at the lowest possible level of forces. Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation contribute to peace, security and stability, and should ensure undiminished security for all Alliance members."

NATO has unilaterally reduced the size of its land-based nuclear weapons stockpile by over 95 per cent since the height of the Cold War.

As regards the reductions, the DDPR reads:

"Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has dramatically reduced the number, types, and readiness of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and its reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO strategy.

[…] NATO is prepared to consider further reducing its requirement for non-strategic nuclear weapons assigned to the Alliance in the context of reciprocal steps by Russia, taking into account the greater Russian stockpiles of non-strategic nuclear weapons stationed in the Euro-Atlantic area."

In the 2016 Warsaw Summit declaration, NATO leaders stated that:

"After the end of the Cold War, NATO dramatically reduced the number of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and its reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO strategy. We remain committed to contribute to creating the conditions for further reductions in the future on the basis of reciprocity, recognising that progress on arms control and disarmament must take into account the prevailing international security environment. We regret that the conditions for achieving disarmament are not favourable today."

NATO's role in conventional arms control

NATO attaches great importance to conventional arms control and provides an essential consultative and decision-making forum for its members on all aspects of arms control and disarmament.

Highlights

- NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept highlights the continued importance of harmonising defence and arms control policies and objectives, and the Alliance's commitment to the development of future arms control agreements.

- The 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) is considered as a landmark arms control agreement, to which Allies have repeatedly stated their commitment.

- Russia's selective implementation of the Vienna Document and Open Skies Treaty and long-standing non-implementation of the CFE Treaty have eroded the positive contributions of these arms control instruments. Allies have called on Russia to fully adhere to all its arms control commitments.

- NATO Allies support the implementation of various confidence- and security-building measures, which include: the Vienna Document, the Open Skies Treaty and the humanitarian demining goals of the Ottawa Convention.

- All NATO Allies are party to the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in All Its Aspects, which seeks to improve national legislation and controls over illicit small arms.

- The Arms Trade Treaty establishes common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms and came into force in December 2014. NATO stands ready to support the implementation of the treaty as appropriate.

- NATO Allies assist partner countries in the destruction of surplus stocks of mines, arms and munitions.

Conventional arms control agreements

Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty

The 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) is referred to as a "cornerstone of European security" and imposes for the first time in European history legal and verifiable limits on the force structure of its 30 States Parties which stretch from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains.

Since the Treaty's entry into force in 1992, the destruction of over 100,000 pieces of treaty-limited equipment (tanks, armoured personnel carriers, artillery, attack helicopters and combat aircraft) has been verified and almost 6,000 on-site inspections have been conducted, thereby reaching its objective of creating balance and mitigating the possibility of surprise conventional attacks within its area of application.

At the first CFE Review Conference in 1996, negotiations began to adapt the CFE Treaty to reflect the realities of the post-Cold War era. This process was completed in conjunction with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Summit in Istanbul in 1999. States Parties also agreed to additional commitments, called the Istanbul Commitments. Although the Adapted CFE (ACFE) Treaty went far in adjusting the Treaty to a new security environment, it was not ratified by Allied countries because of the failure of Russia to fully meet commitments regarding withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, on which Allies' agreement to the Adapted Treaty was based.

Since 2000 at NATO summits and ministerial meetings, the Allies have reiterated their commitment to the CFE Treaty and have reaffirmed their readiness and commitment to ratify the Adapted Treaty.

During the third CFE Review Conference in June 2006, Russia expressed its concerns regarding ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty and claimed that even the ACFE was outdated.

After the June 2007 Extraordinary Conference of the States Parties to the CFE Treaty, the Russian president signed legislation on 14 July 2007 to unilaterally "suspend" its legal obligations under the CFE Treaty as of 12 December 2007. In response to these events, NATO offered a set of constructive and forward-looking actions.

In 2008 and 2009, consultations were held between the United States – on behalf of the Alliance – and Russia, but with limited development. Further efforts to resolve the impasse were pursued on the basis of the United States' initiative, which sought an agreement on a framework for negotiations on a modernised CFE Treaty, in consultations at 36 between all CFE States Parties and NATO member states not party to the CFE Treaty. The process stalled in the autumn of 2011 because of the lack of agreement among parties.

In a situation where no agreement could be reached to overcome the impasse, towards the end of November 2011, NATO CFE Allies announced their decisions to cease implementing certain CFE obligations vis-à-vis Russia, while still continuing to fully implement their obligations with respect to all other CFE States Parties. However, in the December 2011 foreign ministers' communiqué, Allies stated that these decisions were reversible should the Russian Federation return to full implementation.

At the Chicago Summit in May 2012, Allies reiterated their commitment to conventional arms control and expressed determination to preserve, strengthen and modernise the conventional arms control regime in Europe, based on key principles and commitments.

At the Wales Summit in September 2014, Allies reaffirmed their long-standing commitment to conventional arms control as a key element of Euro-Atlantic security and emphasised the importance of full implementation and compliance to rebuild trust and confidence. They underscored that Russia's unilateral military activity in and around Ukraine has undermined peace, security and stability across the region, and its selective implementation of the Vienna Document and Open Skies Treaty and long-standing non-implementation of the CFE Treaty have eroded the positive contributions of these arms control instruments. Allies called on Russia to fully adhere to its commitments. On 11 March 2015, the Russian Federation announced that it was suspending its participation in the meetings of the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) on the CFE Treaty, which meets regularly in Vienna.

Vienna Document

The Vienna Document (VD), that includes all European and Central Asian participating states, is a politically binding agreement designed to promote mutual trust and transparency about a state's military forces and activities. Under the VD, thousands of inspections and evaluation visits have been conducted as well as airbase visits and visits to military facilities; also new types of armament and equipment have been demonstrated to the participating states of the VD. With an aim to reflect the contemporary security policy environment, an updated version of the VD was approved by the OSCE in December 2016.

Open Skies Treaty

The Open Skies Treaty is legally binding and allows for unarmed aerial observation flights over the territory of its participants. So far, more than 1,100 observation missions have been conducted since the Treaty's entry into force in January 2002. Aerial photography and other material from observation missions provide transparency and support verification activities carried out on the ground under other treaties.

This Treaty provides for extensive cooperation regarding the use of aircraft and their sensors, thereby adding to openness and confidence. Following long-lasting negotiations the States Parties to the Open Skies Treaty agreed, at the 2010 review conference, to allow the use of digital sensors in the future. However, these have to undergo a certification process, as foreseen by the Open Skies Treaty.

UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) not only feeds global terrorist activities, but also encourages violence, thus affecting local populations and preventing constructive development and economic activities.

SALW proliferation needs to be addressed as broadly as possible and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) is a well-suited framework for that. The NATO/EAPC Ad Hoc Working Group on SALW and Mine Action contributes to international efforts to address the illicit trade in SALW and encourages full implementation of international regulations and standards, including the United Nations Programme of Action (UN PoA).

The UN PoA was adopted in July 2001 by nearly 150 countries, including all NATO member countries, and contains concrete recommendations for improving national legislation and controls over illicit small arms, fostering regional cooperation and promoting international assistance and cooperation on the issue. It was developed and agreed as a result of the growing realisation that most present-day conflicts are fought with illicit small arms and light weapons, and that their widespread availability has a negative impact on international peace and security, facilitates violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, and hampers economic and social development. It includes measures at the national, regional and global levels, in the areas of legislation, destruction of weapons that were confiscated, seized, or collected, as well as international cooperation and assistance to strengthen the ability of states in identifying and tracing illicit arms and light weapons. Every two years, the UN holds the Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the PoA, in which NATO participates. National delegations from all member states gather every six years to review the progress made in the implementation of the PoA.

Mine action

Although not all member states of the Alliance are a party to the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines, they all fully support its humanitarian demining goals.

The Alliance assists partner countries in the destruction of surplus stocks of mines, arms and munitions through a NATO/Partnership Trust Fund mechanism.

The EAPC Ad Hoc Working Group on SALW and Mine Action also supports mine action efforts through these Trust Fund projects, as well as through information-sharing. In particular, its guest speaker programme provides an opportunity for mine action experts to share their expertise with the Working

Group. These speakers originate from national mine action centres, non-governmental organisations and international organisations and have included high-profile experts, such as Nobel Laureate Ms Jody Williams, Director of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. The Group has broadened its focus to also incorporate issues related to explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions onto its agenda.

Convention on Cluster Munitions

The Convention on Cluster Munitions prohibits all use, stockpiling, production and transfer of cluster munitions. Separate articles in the Convention concern assistance to victims, clearance of contaminated areas and destruction of stockpiles. It became a legally binding international instrument when it entered into force on 1 August 2010. As of 1 May 2018, a total of 103 States Parties had joined the Convention.

Arms Trade Treaty

In July 2012, UN member states gathered in New York to negotiate an arms trade treaty that would establish high common standards for international trade in conventional arms. After two years of negotiations, the Conference reached an agreement on a treaty text. Governments signed the treaty and after ratification of 50 states it came into force in December 2014. This treaty establishes common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. NATO stands ready to support the Arms Trade Treaty as necessary.

Trust Fund projects

The Partnership for Peace Trust Fund mechanism was originally established in 2000 to assist partner countries with the safe destruction of stocks of anti-personnel land mines. It was later extended to include the destruction of surplus munitions, unexploded ordnance and SALW, and assisting partner countries in managing the consequences of defence reform, training and building integrity. So far, NATO has contributed to the destruction of 5.65 million anti-personnel landmines, 46,750 tonnes of various munitions, 2 million hand grenades, 15.95 million cluster submunitions, 1,635 man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), 3,530 tonnes of chemicals and 626,000 SALW, alongside 164.4 million rounds of SALW ammunition.

Over the years, NATO has trained thousands of explosive ordnance disposal experts, giving, for instance, assistance to more than 12,000 former military personnel through defence reform Trust Fund projects.

Trust Fund projects are initiated by a NATO member or partner country and funded by voluntary contributions from individual Allies, partners and organisations. A web-based information-sharing platform allows donors and recipient countries to share information about ongoing and potential projects.

NATO bodies involved in conventional arms control

There are a number of NATO bodies that provide a forum to discuss and take forward arms control issues. Arms control policy is determined within the deliberations of the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) on Conventional Arms Control that was established for CFE and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs).

Implementation and verification of arms control agreements fall under the purview of the Verification Coordinating Committee (VCC), including overseeing a designated CFE verification database.

Other fora include the Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee (PCSC) and the EAPC Ad Hoc Working Group on SALW and Mine Action, in which implementing organisations like the UN, the European Union, the OSCE, the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of SALW – or SEESAC – and the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) can share information on projects.

The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) also has a working group for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. However, work of the NRC has been suspended since spring 2014 due to Russia's actions in Ukraine.

The NATO School in Oberammergau (Germany) conducts several courses in the fields of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. They are related to CFE, VD, Open Skies, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), SALW and Mine Action. Most of them are also open to NATO's partners across the globe.

Operations and missions: past and present

NATO is an active and leading contributor to peace and security on the international stage. It promotes democratic values and is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes. However, if diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military capacity needed to undertake crisis management operations, alone or in cooperation with other countries and international organisations.

Highlights

■ NATO is a crisis management organisation that has the capacity to undertake a wide range of military operations and missions.

■ Approximately 20,000 military personnel are engaged in NATO missions around the world, managing often complex ground, air and naval operations in all types of environment.

■ Currently, NATO is operating in Afghanistan, Kosovo and the Mediterranean.

■ NATO is also supporting the African Union and conducting air policing missions on the request of its Allies. Furthermore, NATO is assisting with the response to the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe and has Patriot missiles and AWACS aircraft deployed in Turkey.

■ It also carries out disaster relief operations and missions to protect populations against natural, technological or humanitarian disasters.

■ The tempo and diversity of operations and missions in which NATO is involved have increased since the early 1990s.

Current operations and missions

NATO in Afghanistan

NATO is currently leading Resolute Support, a non-combat mission which provides training, advice and assistance to Afghan security forces and institutions. Resolute Support was launched on 1 January 2015.

It includes approximately 15,600 personnel from both NATO and partner countries and operates with one hub (in Kabul/Bagram) and four spokes in Mazar-e Sharif (northern Afghanistan), Herat (western Afghanistan), Kandahar (southern Afghanistan) and Laghman (eastern Afghanistan).

Key functions include: supporting planning, programming and budgeting; assuring transparency, accountability and oversight; supporting the adherence to the principles of rule of law and good governance; supporting the establishment and sustainment of processes such as force generation, recruiting, training, managing and development of personnel.

The legal basis of the Resolute Support Mission rests on a formal invitation from the Afghan Government and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between NATO and Afghanistan, which governs the presence of Allied troops. Resolute Support is also supported by the international community at large. This is reflected in United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 2189, unanimously adopted on 12 December 2014. This resolution welcomes the new Resolute Support Mission and underscores the importance of continued international support for the stability of Afghanistan.

Resolute Support is a follow-on mission to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). ISAF was under NATO leadership from August 2003 to December 2014. It was established under a request for assistance by the Afghan authorities and by a UN mandate in 2001 to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for terrorists. In addition, ISAF was tasked to develop new Afghan security forces and enable Afghan authorities to provide effective security across the country in order to create an environment conducive to the functioning of democratic institutions and the establishment of the rule of law.

The mission in Afghanistan constitutes the Alliance's most significant operational commitment to date. Moreover, beyond Resolute Support and ISAF, Allies and partners countries are committed to the broader international community's support for the long-term financial sustainment of the Afghan security forces. NATO leaders have also reaffirmed their commitment to an enduring partnership between NATO and Afghanistan, by strengthening political consultations and practical cooperation within the framework of the NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership signed in 2010.

NATO in Kosovo

While Afghanistan remains NATO's primary operational theatre, the Alliance has not faltered on its other commitments, particularly in the Balkans. Today, approximately 4,500 Allied and partner troops operate in Kosovo as part of NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR).

Having first entered Kosovo in June 1999 to end widespread violence and halt the humanitarian disaster, KFOR troops continue to maintain a strong presence throughout the territory.

Following Kosovo's declaration of independence in February 2008, NATO agreed it would continue to maintain its presence on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 1244. It has since helped to create a professional and multi-ethnic Kosovo Security Force, which is a lightly armed force responsible for security tasks that are not appropriate for the police. Meanwhile, progress has been achieved in the European Union-sponsored Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo is key to solving the political deadlock over northern Kosovo.

Securing the Mediterranean Sea

NATO operations are not limited only to zones of conflict. In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, NATO immediately began to take measures to expand the options available to counter the threat of international terrorism. In October 2001, it launched the maritime surveillance Operation Active Endeavour, focused on detecting and deterring terrorist activity in the Mediterranean. The operation was terminated in October 2016 and was succeeded by Sea Guardian, a flexible maritime operation able to perform the full range of maritime security operations tasks.

Sea Guardian is currently performing three tasks in the Mediterranean Sea: maritime situational awareness, counter-terrorism at sea and support to capacity-building. If decided by Allies, it could also perform other tasks such as upholding freedom of navigation, conducting interdiction tasks and protecting

critical infrastructure. More generally speaking, it is helping to maintain a secure and safe maritime environment while supporting the Alliance's three core tasks: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

Supporting the African Union

Well beyond the Euro-Atlantic region, the Alliance continues to support the African Union (AU) in its peacekeeping missions on the African continent.

Since June 2007, NATO has assisted the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) by providing air- and sealift support for AU peacekeepers following renewed AU requests. NATO is also providing capacity-building support, as well as expert training support to the African Standby Force (ASF), at the AU's request. The ASF is intended to be deployed in Africa in times of crisis and is part of the AU's efforts to develop long-term peacekeeping capabilities. ASF represents the AU's vision for a continental, on-call security apparatus with some similarities to the NATO Response Force.

Air policing

Since Russia's illegal military intervention in Ukraine in 2014, NATO has been taking extra reassurance measures for its Allies. Among these is the boosting of NATO's air policing missions.

Air policing missions are collective peacetime missions that enable NATO to detect, track and identify all violations and infringements of its airspace and to take appropriate action. Allied fighter jets patrol the airspace of Allies who do not have fighter jets of their own. NATO has deployed additional aircraft to reinforce missions over Albania, Montenegro and Slovenia, as well as the Baltic region, where NATO F-16s have intercepted Russian aircraft repeatedly violating Allied airspace.

This air policing capability is one of three NATO standing forces on active duty that contribute to the Alliance's collective defence efforts on a permanent basis. They also include NATO's standing maritime forces, which are ready to act when called upon, as well as an integrated air defence system to protect against air attacks, which also comprises the Alliance's ballistic missile defence system.

Terminated operations and missions

Counter-piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the Horn of Africa

Responding to a request from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, NATO naval forces provided escorts to UN World Food Programme (WFP) vessels transiting through the dangerous waters in the Gulf of Aden, where growing piracy threatened to undermine international humanitarian efforts in Africa. The NATO-led Operation Allied Provider was conducted from October to December 2008 and involved counter-piracy activities off the coast of Somalia.

Concurrently, in response to an urgent request from the African Union (AU), these same NATO naval forces escorted a vessel chartered by the AU carrying equipment for the Burundi contingent deployed to the AU Mission in Somalia.

From March to August 2009, NATO ran Operation Allied Protector, a counter-piracy operation, to improve the safety of commercial maritime routes and international navigation off the Horn of Africa. The force conducted surveillance tasks and provided protection to deter and suppress piracy and armed robbery, which are threatening sea lines of communication and economic interests.

Building on previous counter-piracy missions conducted by NATO, Operation Ocean Shield focused on at-sea counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa. Approved on 17 August 2009 by the North Atlantic Council, this operation contributed to international efforts to combat piracy in the area. It also offered, to regional states that requested it, assistance in developing their own capacity to combat piracy activities. There were no successful piracy attacks from May 2012 onwards, but even though Somalia-based piracy was suppressed, it had not been eliminated. During the periods without surface ships, maritime patrol aircraft continued to fly sorties, and links to situational awareness systems and counter-piracy partners

remained in place. In this effort, the NATO Shipping Centre played a key role. Ocean Shield was terminated on 15 December 2016 after having achieved its objectives.

Operation Active Endeavour

Operation Active Endeavour (OAE) was initiated in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks to deter, defend, disrupt and protect against terrorist activity in the Mediterranean. It helped to secure one of the busiest trade routes in the world and was among eight initiatives launched by the Alliance in 2001, in solidarity with the United States. It was an Article 5 operation, i.e., a collective defence operation that, initially only involved NATO member countries until it started accepting non-NATO countries' participation in 2004.

OAE hailed merchant vessels and boarded suspect ships, intervened to rescue civilians on stricken oil rigs and sinking ships and, generally, helped to improve perceptions of security. NATO ships also systematically carried out preparatory route surveys in "choke" points, as well as in important passages and harbours throughout the Mediterranean.

2010 was a turning point for OAE, when it shifted from a platform-based to a network-based operation, using a combination of on-call units and surge operations instead of deployed forces. In addition to tracking and controlling suspect vessels, it helped to build a picture of maritime activity in the Mediterranean by conducting routine information approaches to various vessels.

Active Endeavour was succeeded by Operation Sea Guardian in November 2016.

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan

Established under the request of the Afghan authorities and a UN mandate in 2001, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was led by NATO from August 2003 to December 2014.

Its mission was to develop new Afghan security forces and enable Afghan authorities to provide effective security across the country in order to create an environment conducive to the functioning of democratic institutions and the establishment of the rule of law, with the aim to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for terrorists.

ISAF also contributed to reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. This was done primarily through multinational Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) – led by individual ISAF troop-contributing countries – securing areas in which reconstruction work could be conducted by national and international actors. PRTs also helped the Afghan authorities progressively strengthen the institutions required to fully establish good governance and the rule of law, as well as to promote human rights. The principal role of the PRTs in this respect was to build capacity, support the growth of governance structures and promote an environment in which governance can improve.

ISAF was one of the largest international crisis management operations ever, bringing together contributions from up to 51 different countries. By end 2014, the process of transitioning full security responsibility from ISAF troops to the Afghan army and police forces was completed and the ISAF mission came to a close. On 1 January 2015, a new NATO-led, non-combat mission, Resolute Support, to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions was launched.

NATO and Iraq

NATO conducted a relatively small but important support operation in Iraq from 2004 to 2011 that consisted of training, mentoring and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces. At the Istanbul Summit in June 2004, the Allies rose above their differences and agreed to be part of the international effort to help Iraq establish effective and accountable security forces. The outcome was the creation of the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I). The NTM-I delivered its training, advice and mentoring support in a number of different settings. All NATO member countries contributed to the training effort either in or outside of Iraq, through financial contributions or donations of equipment. In parallel and reinforcing this initiative, NATO also worked with the Iraqi government on a structured cooperation framework to develop the Alliance's long-term relationship with Iraq.

NATO and Libya

Following the popular uprising against the Gadhafi regime in Benghazi, Libya, in February 2011, the UN Security Council adopted Resolutions 1970 and 1973 in support of the Libyan people, "*condemning the gross and systematic violation of human rights*". The resolutions introduced active measures including a no-fly zone, an arms embargo and the authorisation for member countries, acting as appropriate through regional organisations, to take "*all necessary measures*" to protect Libyan civilians.

Initially, NATO enforced the no-fly zone and then, on 31 March 2011, NATO took over sole command and control of all military operations for Libya. The NATO-led Operation Unified Protector had three distinct components:

- the enforcement of an arms embargo on the high seas of the Mediterranean to prevent the transfer of arms, related material and mercenaries to Libya;

- the enforcement of a no-fly-zone in order to prevent any aircraft from bombing civilian targets; and

- air and naval strikes against those military forces involved in attacks or threats to attack Libyan civilians and civilian-populated areas.

The UN mandate was carried out to the letter and the operation was terminated on 31 October 2011 after having fulfilled its objectives.

Assisting the African Union in Darfur, Sudan

The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) aimed to end violence and improve the humanitarian situation in a region that has been suffering from conflict since 2003. From June 2005 to 31 December 2007, NATO provided air transport for some 37,000 AMIS personnel, as well as trained and mentored over 250 AMIS officials. While NATO's support to this mission ended when AMIS was succeeded by the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), the Alliance immediately expressed its readiness to consider any request for support to the new peacekeeping mission.

Pakistan earthquake relief assistance

Just before the onset of the harsh Himalayan winter, a devastating earthquake hit Pakistan on 8 October 2005, killing an estimated 53,000 people, injuring 75,000 and making at least four million homeless. On 11 October, in response to a request from Pakistan, NATO assisted in the urgent relief effort, airlifting close to 3,500 tons of supplies and deploying engineers, medical units and specialist equipment. This was one of NATO's largest humanitarian relief initiatives, which came to an end on 1 February 2006.

Over time, the Alliance has helped to coordinate assistance to other countries hit by natural disasters, including Turkey, Ukraine and Portugal. It does this through its Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre.

Hurricane Katrina

After Hurricane Katrina struck the south of the United States on 29 August 2005, causing many fatalities and widespread damage and flooding, the US government requested food, medical and logistics supplies and assistance in moving these supplies to stricken areas. On 9 September 2005, the North Atlantic Council approved a military plan to assist the United States, which consisted of helping to coordinate the movement of urgently needed material and supporting humanitarian relief operations. During the operation (9 September-2 October), nine member countries provided 189 tons of material to the United States.

Protecting public events

In response to a request by the Greek government, NATO provided assistance to the Olympic and Paralympic Games held in Athens with Operation Distinguished Games from 18 June until 29 September 2004. NATO provided intelligence support, provision of chemical, biological radiological and nuclear (CBRN) defence assets and AWACS radar aircraft. This was the first operation in which non-Article 4 or 5 NATO assistance was provided within the borders of a member country.

In the same vein, NATO responded to a request made by the Latvian government for assistance in assuring the security of the Riga Summit in November 2006. NATO provided technical security, CBRN response capabilities, air and sea policing, improvised explosive device (IED) detections, communications and information systems, and medical evacuation support.

Second Gulf Conflict

During the second Gulf Conflict, NATO deployed NATO AWACS radar aircraft and air defence batteries to enhance the defence of Turkey in an operation called Display Deterrence. This operation started on 20 February 2003 and lasted until 16 April 2003. The AWACS aircraft flew 100 missions with a total of 950 flying hours.

NATO in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1]

Responding to a request from the Government in Skopje to help mitigate rising ethnic tension, NATO implemented three successive operations there from August 2001 to March 2003.

First, Operation Essential Harvest disarmed ethnic Albanian groups operating throughout the country.

The follow-on Operation Amber Fox provided protection for international monitors overseeing the implementation of the peace plan.

Finally, Operation Allied Harmony was launched in December 2002 to provide advisory elements to assist the government in ensuring stability throughout the country.

These operations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia demonstrated the strong inter-institutional cooperation between NATO, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. NATO remains committed to helping the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia integrate into Euro-Atlantic structures. To that end, NATO Headquarters Skopje was created in April 2002 to advise on military aspects of security sector reform; it still operates today.

NATO's first counter-terrorism operation

On 4 October 2001, once it had been determined that the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington DC had come from abroad, NATO agreed on a package of eight measures to support the United States. On the request of the United States, the Alliance launched its first-ever counter-terrorism operation – Operation Eagle Assist - from mid-October 2001 to mid-May 2002.

It consisted of seven NATO AWACS radar aircraft that helped patrol the skies over the United States; in total 830 crew members from 13 NATO countries flew over 360 sorties. This was the first time that NATO military assets were deployed in support of an Article 5 operation.

NATO in Bosnia and Herzegovina

With the break-up of Yugoslavia, violent conflict started in Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 1992. The Alliance responded as early as summer 1992 when it enforced the UN arms embargo on weapons in the Adriatic Sea (in cooperation with the Western European Union from 1993) and enforced a no-fly-zone declared by the UN Security Council. It was during the monitoring of the no-fly-zone that NATO engaged in the first combat operations in its history by shooting down four Bosnian Serb fighter-bombers conducting a bombing mission on 28 February 1994.

In August 1995, to compel an end to Serb-led violence in the country, UN peacekeepers requested NATO airstrikes. Operation Deadeye began on 30 August against Bosnian Serb air forces, but failed to result in Bosnian Serb compliance with the UN's demands to withdraw. This led to Operation Deliberate Force, which targeted Bosnian Serb command and control installations and ammunition facilities. This NATO air campaign was a key factor in bringing the Serbs to the negotiating table and ending the war in Bosnia.

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[1]   Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

With the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord in December 1995, NATO immediately deployed a UN-mandated Implementation Force (IFOR) comprising some 60,000 troops. This operation (Operation Joint Endeavour) was followed in December 1996 by the deployment of a 32,000-strong Stabilisation Force (SFOR).

In light of the improved security situation, NATO brought its peace-support operation to a conclusion in December 2004 and the European Union deployed a new force called Operation Althea. The Alliance has maintained a military headquarters in the country to carry out a number of specific tasks related, in particular, to assisting the government in reforming its defence structures.

From 1949 to the early 1990s

During the Cold War

When NATO was established in 1949, one of its fundamental roles was to act as a powerful deterrent against military aggression. In this role, NATO's success was reflected in the fact that, throughout the entire period of the Cold War, NATO forces were not involved in a single military engagement. For much of the latter half of the 20th century, NATO remained vigilant and prepared.

After the Cold War

With the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s came great changes to the international security environment. The Alliance witnessed the emergence of new threats and the resurgence of old but familiar ones.

With these changing conditions came new responsibilities. From being an exclusively defensive alliance for nearly half a century, NATO began to assume an increasingly proactive role within the international community. Before engaging in its first major crisis-response operation in the Balkans, NATO conducted several other military operations:

Operation Anchor Guard, 10 August 1990 – 9 March 1991
After Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990, NATO Airborne Early Warning aircraft deployed to Konya, Turkey, to monitor the crisis and provide coverage of southeastern Turkey in case of an Iraqi attack during the first Gulf Crisis/War.

Operation Ace Guard, 3 January 1991 – 8 March 1991
In response to a Turkish request for assistance to meet the threat posed by Iraq during the first Gulf Crisis/War, NATO deployed the ACE Mobile Force (Air) and air defence packages to Turkey.

Operation Allied Goodwill I & II, 4-9 February & 27 February – 24 March 1992
Following the break-up of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and the collapse of its centrally-controlled economic system, NATO assisted an international relief effort by flying teams of humanitarian assistance experts and medical advisors to Russia and other Commonwealth of Independent States nations using AWACS trainer cargo aircraft.

Operation Agile Genie, 1-19 May 1992
During a period of growing Western tension with Libya after the UN Security Council imposed sanctions designed to induce Libya to surrender suspects in the bombing of a Pan Am airliner over the town of Lockerbie in Scotland in 1988, NATO provided increased AWACS coverage of the Central Mediterranean to monitor air approach routes from the North African littoral. NATO AWACS aircraft flew a total of 36 missions with a total of 2,336 flying hours.

NATO and Afghanistan

NATO is leading a non-combat mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions. The Resolute Support Mission (RSM) was launched in January 2015, following the completion of the mission of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in December 2014, when responsibility for security in Afghanistan was transferred to the Afghan national defence and security forces. Beyond supporting RSM, NATO Allies and partners are helping to sustain Afghan security forces and institutions financially, as part of a broader international commitment to Afghanistan. The NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership provides a framework for wider political dialogue and practical cooperation.

Highlights

- NATO led the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from August 2003 to December 2014. ISAF's mission was to enable the Afghan authorities and build the capacity of the Afghan national security forces to provide effective security, so as to ensure that Afghanistan would never again be a safe haven for terrorists.

- ISAF is NATO's longest and most challenging mission to date: at its height, the force was more than 130,000 strong with troops from 50 NATO and partner nations.

- ISAF also contributed to reconstruction and development in Afghanistan through 28 multinational Provincial Reconstruction Teams – led by individual ISAF nations – securing areas, outside of Kabul in the provinces, in which reconstruction work was conducted by national and international actors.

- The transition to Afghan lead for security started in 2011 and was completed in December 2014, when the ISAF operation ended and the Afghans assumed full responsibility for security of their country. By the end of 2014, PRTs had been phased out and their functions were handed over to Afghan authorities. In January 2015, NATO launched the Resolute Support Mission (RSM) to train, advise and assist Afghan security forces and institutions. Currently, it numbers almost 16,000 troops from 39 NATO Allies and partner countries. At the July 2018 NATO Summit in Brussels, NATO will welcome two new troop-contributing nations, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, increasing RSM to 41 contributors.

- Allied leaders decided at the July 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw to sustain the presence of RSM beyond 2016.

- NATO and its partners are already committed to providing financial support to sustain the Afghan forces until the end of 2020.

- The Enduring Partnership is NATO's political partnership with Afghanistan. It was set up in 2010 at the NATO Summit in Lisbon. At the 2016 Summit, Allies decided to strengthen and enhance the Partnership, within and alongside RSM, through political dialogue and practical cooperation. In the longer term, a traditional partnership with Afghanistan remains NATO's goal.

- NATO's Senior Civilian Representative represents the political leadership of the Alliance in Kabul, liaising with the government, civil society, representatives of the international community and neighbouring countries. The Representative has a leading role in advising the Afghan authorities on the Enduring Partnership.

More background information

Resolute Support Mission

Launched on 1 January 2015, the Resolute Support Mission (RSM) focuses primarily on training, advice and assistance activities at the security-related ministries, in the country's institutions and among the senior ranks of the army and police. The Resolute Support Mission works closely with different elements of the Afghan army, police and air force.

The mission performs supporting functions in several areas. These include operational planning; budgetary development; force generation process; management and development of personnel; logistical sustainment; and civilian oversight to ensure the Afghan national defence and security forces and institutions act in accordance with the rule of law and good governance.

As of June 2018, RSM has almost 16,000 personnel from 39 NATO Allies and partner countries, operating in one hub (Kabul/Bagram) and four spokes (Mazar-e Sharif in the north, Herat in the west, Kandahar in the south, and Laghman in the east).

The Afghan forces are making progress, performing with professionalism and bravery across the country, and continuing to deny the insurgents their strategic goals. They are developing their combat capabilities, notably their Special Operations Forces and the Air Force.

(More on Resolute Support)

Financial sustainment of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces

At the Wales Summit in 2014, Allied leaders and their international partners renewed the pledge made earlier at the Chicago Summit to play their part in the financial sustainment of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) after 2014. The responsibility to contribute to the financing of this effort is one for the international community as a whole.

NATO has participated in that process, by supporting development of transparent, accountable and cost-effective international funding mechanisms and expenditure arrangements for all strands of the ANDSF.

As of 28 May 2018, total contributions made to the NATO-Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund amount to more than USD 2.3 billion. The Afghan government itself is also expected to provide at least USD 500 million per year for the sustainment of the ANDSF. (More on the ANA Trust Fund)

The ANA Trust Fund is one of four funding streams used to channel financial support to Afghanistan's security forces and institutions. The other three are the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan

(LOTFA), administered by the United Nations Development Programme; the United States Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF); and the Afghan government's commitment to providing USD 500 million each year, while attempting to increase this amount annually, until they can financially sustain their own forces. LOTFA is used to pay the salaries of police and justice personnel and to build the capacity of the ministry of interior. The ASFF is subject to a US-Afghan bilateral agreement and pays for equipping and running Afghanistan's security forces.

In December 2015, NATO Allies and partners launched further work with the wider international community to ensure that the ANDSF could be financially sustained through 2020. Heads of state and government made this commitment at the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016.

NATO's Enduring Partnership with Afghanistan

NATO and Afghanistan signed a Declaration on Enduring Partnership at the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon. The document provides a framework for long-term political consultations and practical cooperation in areas of specific interest for Afghanistan where NATO can share expertise.

The initial set of Enduring Partnership activities, agreed by foreign ministers in April 2011, brings together a number of previously separate initiatives. The Enduring Partnership will contribute to NATO's evolving mission and the sustained development of Afghan institutions.

In May 2015, NATO foreign ministers approved guidelines and principles for the enhancement of the Enduring Partnership. These include a continued presence of civilian and military personnel on the ground after the current Resolute Support Mission. In the longer term, the Enduring Partnership is also intended as a bridge towards a more traditional partnership between NATO and Afghanistan.

Cooperation within this framework includes:

- capacity-building efforts, such as NATO's Building Integrity (BI) programme, which is helping to provide Afghanistan with practical tools to strengthen integrity, transparency and accountability and reduce the risk of corruption in defence and security sectors;

- professional military education programmes, such as the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP);

- training in civil emergency planning and disaster preparedness;

- public diplomacy efforts to promote a better understanding of NATO and its role in Afghanistan.

ISAF's mission (2001 – 2014)

Deployed in 2001 – initially under the lead of individual NATO Allies on a six-month rotational basis – ISAF was tasked, on the request of the Afghan government and under a United Nations (UN) mandate, to assist the Afghan government in maintaining security, originally in and around Kabul exclusively. NATO agreed to take command of the force in August 2003 and the UN Security Council subsequently mandated the gradual expansion of ISAF's operations to cover the whole country.

ISAF was one of the largest coalitions in history. It is NATO's longest and most challenging mission to date. At its height, the force was more than 130,000 strong with troops from 50 NATO and partner nations.

As part of the international community's overall effort, ISAF worked to create the conditions whereby the Afghan government would be able to exercise its authority throughout the country.

Developing professional, capable and self-sustaining Afghan National Security Forces was at the centre of ISAF's efforts and the core mission of the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A). This work was carried out in close cooperation with the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) and the Afghan Ministry of Defence. The NTM-A, which was set up in 2009, focused on training initial recruits and building the institutional training capability of the Afghan security forces, while the ISAF Joint Command was responsible for developing fielded units through advice and assistance.

These combined efforts helped build up the Afghan security forces from scratch to approximately 352,000 soldiers and police officers. Since its creation in 2002, the Afghan National Army (ANA) incrementally progressed from an infantry-centric force to an army, with both fighting elements and enabling capabilities – such as military police, intelligence, route clearance, combat support, medical, aviation and logistics. The role of the Afghan National Police (ANP) gradually shifted from countering the insurgency to a more civilian policing role, by further developing capabilities ranging from criminal investigations to traffic control. The Afghan Air Force steadily increased its personnel including civilians as well as military aircrew and maintenance and support personnel, and its fleet of fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft.

A gradual process of transition to full Afghan security responsibility – known as "Inteqal" in Dari and Pashtu – was launched in 2011. This process was completed on schedule in December 2014, when ISAF's mission ended and the Afghan forces assumed full security responsibility for their country.

ISAF helped create a secure environment for improving governance and socio-economic development, which are important conditions for sustainable stability. Afghanistan made the largest percentage gain of any country in basic health and development indicators over the decade of ISAF's mission. Maternal mortality went down and life expectancy rose. A vibrant media scene sprang up. Millions of people have exercised their right to vote in five election cycles since 2004, including the 2014 presidential and provincial council elections, which resulted in the establishment of a National Unity Government.

(More on ISAF's mission)

A collective international effort

Addressing Afghanistan's challenges requires a comprehensive approach, involving civilian and military actors, aimed not only at providing security but also at promoting good governance, the rule of law and long-term development. The Alliance acts in a supporting role to the Afghan government and works in close coordination with other international partners, including the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the World Bank, the European Union and the development community.

From the start of NATO's engagement in international efforts to help secure Afghanistan's future, the Alliance has also worked closely with many non-member countries. ISAF troop contributors included partners from as far afield as Australia and Latin America, representing more than a quarter of UN member countries, underlining the broad international support for ISAF's mission. Australia, Georgia and Jordan were among the top non-NATO troop-contributing nations to ISAF.

Partner support continues for the new Resolute Support Mission.

Milestones in relations

SEPTEMBER 2001 – JULY 2003
9/11 AND THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN: THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY GETS ENGAGED

11 September 2001: A series of four coordinated terrorist attacks are launched on several targets in the United States, killing almost 3,000 people.

12 September 2001: NATO Allies and partner countries condemn the attacks, offering their support to the United States. The Allies decide to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty – the Alliance's collective defence clause – for the first time in NATO's history, if it is determined that the attack was directed from abroad against the United States.

2 October 2001: The North Atlantic Council is briefed by a high-level US official on results of investigations into the 9/11 attacks and determines that the attacks are regarded as an action covered by Article 5.

7 October 2001: Following the Taliban's refusal to hand over Osama Bin Laden and close down terrorist training camps, the United States launches airstrikes against Al-Qaeda and Taliban targets in Afghanistan

with the support of allies. Ground forces are deployed two weeks later. This marks the start of Operation Enduring Freedom, which is supported by a coalition of allies.

13 November 2001: Taliban forces abandon Kabul, which is taken over by forces of the Northern Alliance -- a military coalition of ethnic groups opposed to the rule of the Taliban.

14 November 2001: UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1378 calls for a central role for the UN in establishing a transitional administration and invites member states to send peacekeepers to Afghanistan.

5 December 2001: At a UN-sponsored conference in Bonn, delegates of Afghan factions appoint Hamid Karzai as head of an interim government. They also sign the Bonn Agreement, which provides for an international peacekeeping force to maintain security in Afghanistan.

20 December 2001: UNSCR 1386 authorises the deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in and around Kabul to help stabilise Afghanistan and create the conditions for self-sustaining peace.

22 December 2001: At a ceremony in Kabul, Hamid Karzai is sworn in as head of the interim government of Afghanistan.

January 2002: The first contingent of ISAF peacekeepers arrive in Afghanistan, deployed under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression). The United Kingdom takes on the first six-month rotation of the command of ISAF; 18 other countries deploy forces and assets.

28 March 2002: The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is established at the request of the interim government of Afghanistan to assist it and the people of Afghanistan in laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development in the country.

June 2002: The *Loya Jirga*, an assembly of Afghan tribal leaders, elects Hamid Karzai as interim head of state to serve until elections in 2004.

20 June 2002: Turkey takes on the second rotation of the command of ISAF, on the basis of UNSCR 1413.

November 2002: The US military starts setting up Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan – first in Gardez, then Bamiyan, Kunduz, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kandahar and Herat – to coordinate redevelopment with UN agencies and non-governmental organisations. Some of these PRTs are later taken over by NATO member and partner countries.

21-22 November 2002: The Prague Summit paves the way for NATO to go ″out-of-area″.

10 February 2013: Germany and the Netherlands jointly take on the third rotation of the command of ISAF, on the basis of UNSCR 1444.

AUGUST 2003 – SPRING 2006
NATO TAKES THE LEAD OF ISAF AND EXPANDS NORTH AND WEST

August 2003: NATO takes the lead of the ISAF operation under the Command of Lieutenant General Goetz Gliemeroth, Germany.

31 December 2003: NATO-led ISAF initiates the expansion of ISAF to the north by taking over command of the German-led PRT in Kunduz.

4 January 2004: After three weeks of debate, the *Loya Jirga* approves a new constitution.

January 2004: Ambassador Hikmet Çetin, Turkey, takes up his post as the first NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

February 2004: Lieutenant General Rick Hillier, Canada, takes command of ISAF.

31 March-1 April 2004: Berlin donors' conference on Afghanistan.

28 June 2004: At the Istanbul Summit, NATO announces that it would establish four other PRTs in the north of the country: in Mazar-e-Sharif, Meymanah, Feyzabad and Baghlan.

May-September 2004: ISAF expands to the west, first taking command of PRTs in the provinces of Herat and Farah and a Forward Support Base (a logistics base) in Herat, followed by PRTs in Chaghcharan, the capital of Ghor Province, and one in Qala-e-Naw, capital of Badghis Province. NATO-led ISAF is now providing security assistance in 50 per cent of Afghanistan's territory.

August 2004: General Jean-Louis Py, France, takes command of ISAF.

1 October 2004: NATO-led ISAF's expansion into Afghanistan's nine northern provinces is completed.

9 October 2004: Hamid Karzai wins the presidential elections with 50 per cent of the vote.

29 October 2004: In a video message, Osama Bin Laden takes responsibility for the 9/11 attacks and threatens the West with further attacks.

February 2005: General Ethem Erdagi, Turkey, takes command of ISAF.

August 2005: General Mauro del Vecchio, Italy, takes command of ISAF.

September 2005: NATO temporarily deploys 2,000 additional troops to Afghanistan to support the provincial and parliamentary elections.

18 September 2005: Legislative elections are held in Afghanistan. In the lower house of parliament, 68 out of 249 seats are reserved for female members, as are 23 out of 102 seats in the upper house.

31 January 2006: At a conference in London, the Afghanistan Compact, a five-year plan of peacebuilding, is launched.

February 2006: ISAF troops adopt more robust rules of engagement.

May 2006: General David Richards, United Kingdom, takes command of ISAF.

8 June 2006: Meeting in Brussels, defence ministers from 37 NATO and partner countries that are contributing to ISAF confirm they are ready to expand ISAF's operation to the south of Afghanistan. It is the first-ever meeting of ministers in ISAF format; after that, such meetings become a regular event.

JULY 2006 – AUGUST 2009
FROM PEACE-SUPPORT TO COMBAT: ISAF EXPANDS SOUTH AND EAST

31 July 2006: NATO-led ISAF assumes command of the southern region of Afghanistan from US-led coalition forces, expanding its area of operations to cover an additional six provinces – Daikundi, Helmand, Kandahar, Nimroz, Uruzgan and Zabul – and taking on command of four additional PRTs. Expanded ISAF now leads a total of 13 PRTs in the north, west and south, covering some three-quarters of Afghanistan's territory.

24 August 2006: Ambassador Daan Everts, The Netherlands, is appointed to the position of NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

5 October 2006: ISAF implements the final stage of its expansion, by taking on command of the international military forces in eastern Afghanistan from the US-led coalition. In addition, ISAF starts to deploy training and mentoring teams to Afghan National Army units at various levels of command.

28-29 November 2006: At the Riga Summit, NATO leaders agree to remove some of the national caveats and restrictions on how, when and where their forces can be used.

February 2007: General Dan K. McNeill, United States, takes command of ISAF.

3 April 2008: At the Bucharest Summit, ISAF troop-contributing nations set out a strategic vision for Afghanistan guided by four principles: a firm and shared long-term commitment; support for enhanced Afghan leadership and responsibility; a comprehensive approach by the international community,

bringing together civilian and military efforts; and increased cooperation and engagement with Afghanistan's neighbours, especially Pakistan.

May 2008: Ambassador Fernando Gentilini, Italy, takes up the post of NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

12 June 2008: A donors' conference for Afghanistan in Paris raises USD 20 billion in commitments, but diplomats harshly criticise the Afghan government's performance in fighting corruption, tackling the drug trade and promoting reconstruction.

June 2008: General David D. McKiernan, United States, takes over as Commander of ISAF.

August 2008: Lead security responsibility for Kabul city is transferred to Afghan forces.

December 2008: ISAF Commander General David D. McKiernan issues guidelines ordering (ISAF or US) soldiers to use force that is proportional to the provocation and that minimises the risk of civilian casualties.

17 February 2009: New US President Barack Obama announces an additional 17,000 troops to be deployed to Afghanistan during the spring and summer to counter a resurgent Taliban and stem the flow of foreign fighters into the south of Afghanistan.

27 March 2009: President Obama announces a new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He also decides to deploy 4,000 troops to Afghanistan as trainers for the Afghan security forces.

3-4 April 2009: At the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, Allied leaders agree to send an additional 5,000 troops to train the Afghan security forces and provide security for the presidential elections in August.

May 2009: UN Special Representative to Afghanistan Kai Eide expresses serious concern over reports of as many as 100 civilians having been killed by airstrikes against Taliban fighters in the western province of Farah on 4 May. President Karzai demands the cessation of airstrikes.

June 2009: Lt Gen Stanley A. McChrystal, United States, takes command of NATO-led ISAF and of US forces in Afghanistan. This signals the adoption of a counter-insurgency strategy.

June 2009: Lt Gen McChrystal announces restrictions on the use of airstrikes in an effort to reduce civilian deaths.

20 August 2009: Presidential elections take place in Afghanistan but they are marred by widespread Taliban attacks, and lengthy vote-counting and fraud investigations leave them unresolved for a couple of months.

SEPTEMBER 2009 – FEBRUARY 2011
COUNTERING THE INSURGENCY: MORE BOOTS ON THE GROUND

20 September 2009: Lt Gen McChrystal's report to US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, calling for more troops in Afghanistan, is made public.

2 November 2009: Hamid Karzai is declared President of Afghanistan for another five-year term following the cancellation of a second-round run-off with rival Abdullah Abdullah, who had announced his withdrawal.

19 November 2009: President Karzai expresses his ambition to see the Afghan security forces take the lead for security across Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

21 November 2009: Following decisions taken at the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit in April 2009, the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan is formally activated. Its aim is to bring together efforts to train the Afghan forces.

December 2009: Following a three-month review of the military campaign, President Obama decides on a troop surge involving the deployment of a further 30,000 troops, while also promising to start drawing down US troops by summer 2011. NATO foreign ministers announce the deployment of a further 7,000 soldiers.

28 January 2010: At an international conference in London, high-level representatives from over 70 countries discuss plans to gradually hand over the lead for security operations to the Afghan security forces.

28 January 2010: Ambassador Mark Sedwill, United Kingdom, assumes the position of NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

23 June 2010: ISAF Commander Lt Gen McChrystal is dismissed following a controversial article in Rolling Stone magazine in which he is quoted as being critical of the US Administration. He is replaced by Gen David H. Petraeus, United States, who maintains the counter-insurgency strategy.

20 July 2010: The Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board is established as the mechanism to assess the readiness of districts and provinces to transition to Afghan lead for security.

20 July 2010: At a conference in Kabul, hosted by the Afghan government and co-chaired by the United Nations, the government makes a renewed commitment to the Afghan people, presenting an Afghan-led plan for improving development, governance and security.

September 2010: Afghan parliamentary elections take place, overshadowed by violence, fraud and delays in announcing the results.

19-20 November 2010: At the Lisbon Summit, NATO leaders agree with the Afghan government to hand over full responsibility for security in Afghanistan from ISAF to Afghan forces by end 2014. The gradual transition to Afghan security lead is set to be launched in 2011, starting in areas that are relatively stable. NATO and Afghanistan also sign a declaration on Enduring Partnership, providing a framework for long-term political and practical support, designed to continue after the ISAF mission.

MARCH 2011 – DECEMBER 2014
TRANSITION TO AFGHAN LEAD FOR SECURITY

22 March 2011: President Karzai announces the first set of Afghan provinces and districts to start transitioning towards Afghan lead for security.

April 2011: Ambassador Simon Gass, United Kingdom, takes up the post of NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

1 May 2011: Osama Bin Laden is killed by US Special Operations Forces in Pakistan.

22 June 2011: President Obama announces plans to withdraw 10,000 troops by end of year and the remaining 20,000 of the ″surge″ troops by summer 2012.

July 2011: General John R. Allen, United States, takes command of ISAF.

26 November 2011: Pakistani officials claim that NATO aircraft killed at least 25 soldiers in strikes against two military posts at the northwestern border with Afghanistan. NATO launches an investigation which later finds that poor coordination and mistakes made by both the NATO and Pakistani forces caused the incident.

27 November 2011: Announcement of the second set of Afghan provinces, districts and cities to transition to Afghan security lead.

5 December 2011: An international conference takes place in Bonn, to discuss cooperation with Afghanistan beyond the withdrawal of ISAF at the end of 2014. The Afghan president commits to strengthening the fight against corruption in exchange for continued international development aid. Pakistan boycotts the conference because of deaths caused by NATO airstrikes in November.

25 February 2012: A gunman shoots dead two senior US military officers in the Afghan interior ministry. Taliban claim responsibility. Gen John Allen, the commander of NATO and US forces, temporarily recalls all NATO personnel from Afghan ministries for force protection reasons.

1 April 2012: The Regional Police Training Centre in Mazar-e Sharif is handed over to the Afghans. It later becomes a training site for the Afghan National Civil Order Police.

13 May 2012: President Karzai announces the third set of areas to enter the transition process, covering over 75 per cent of the Afghan population.

21 May 2012: At the Chicago Summit, leaders from NATO's 28 nations and the 22 partners in the ISAF coalition gave Afghanistan a clear, long-term commitment to continue supporting the Afghan security forces with training, advice and assistance after the NATO-led ISAF mission is completed in 2014. Over USD 4 billion is pledged to sustain the Afghan forces.

8 July 2012: At the Tokyo donors' conference on Afghanistan, the international community pledges USD 16 billion in development aid through 2015 beyond the withdrawal of ISAF. But pressure is put on the government to hold inclusive, transparent and credible elections; to fight corruption and improve good governance; to uphold the constitution, especially human rights; and to enforce the rule of law.

16 July 2012: The Afghan Army Special Operations Command is stood up.

August 2012: English teaching at the Kabul Military Training Center is completely in the hands of Afghan instructors.

October 2012: Ambassador Maurits R. Jochems, The Netherlands, takes up the position of NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

31 December 2012: Announcement of the fourth group of Afghan provinces, cities and districts to enter the transition process. With this decision, 23 provinces out of 34 have fully entered transition and 87 per cent of the population lives in areas where Afghan forces are in the lead for security.

1 February 2013: The Afghan Ground Forces Command is established to oversee all operations in Afghanistan.

February 2013: General Joseph F. Dunford, United States, takes command of ISAF.

1 April 2013: The Afghan National Defence University is set up to train the future officers of the Afghan National Army.

18 June 2013: President Karzai announces the launch of the fifth and final tranche of transition. Once fully implemented, this brings the 11 remaining provinces into transition and puts Afghan forces in the lead for security across the whole country.

24 November 2013: The *Loya Jirga* votes in favour of a Bilateral Security Agreement with the United States, calling on President Hamid Karzai to sign the deal immediately. The agreement governs the presence of US troops in Afghanistan after 2014 and is needed to enable thousands of US soldiers to stay in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of ISAF.

5 April 2014: Millions of men and women turn out in the first-round vote of the presidential election.

14 June 2014: A second-round run-off in the presidential election takes place between Dr Ashraf Ghani and Dr Abdullah Abdullah.

26 August 2014: US Army General John F. Campbell assumes duties as the Commander of ISAF (upon completion of ISAF's operation in December 2014, he becomes the first commander of the follow-on Resolute Support Mission)

September 2014: At the NATO Summit in Wales, the leaders of ISAF troop-contributing nations underline their commitment to continue supporting Afghanistan post-2014.

29 September 2014: After months of negotiations over contested election results, Dr Ashraf Ghani is sworn in as President of Afghanistan at a ceremony in Kabul, while presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah is appointed as Chief Executive Officer of the National Unity Government.

30 September 2014: A Status of Forces Agreement between NATO and Afghanistan is signed in Kabul. Ratified by the Afghan Parliament in November, it provides the legal framework for a new NATO-led, non-combat mission (″Resolute Support″) to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions, starting in January 2015.

12 December 2014: The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2189, welcoming the new Resolute Support Mission.

28 December 2014: At a ceremony in Kabul, ISAF formally completes its mission in Afghanistan, concluding a three-year transition process whereby the lead for security was gradually transferred to the Afghans. The Afghan security forces now have full security responsibility.

**JANUARY 2015 –
TRAINING, ASSISTING AND ADVISING AFGHAN SECURITY INSTITUTIONS**

1 January 2015: The Resolute Support Mission (RSM) is launched to continue to provide training, advice and assistance to the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF).

January 2015: Ambassador Ismail Aramaz, Turkey, takes up the position of NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

22 April 2015: During a three-day visit to Afghanistan, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, Marriët Schuurman, meets with NATO's Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan and the Commander of RSM, as well as with First Lady Rula Ghani, an active defender and advocate of women's rights and gender equality in Afghanistan.

13 May 2015: NATO foreign ministers decide that the Alliance will maintain a civilian-led presence in Afghanistan after the end of RSM with the aim to continue to advise and instruct the Afghan security institutions, to help them become self-sufficient.

25 June 2015: NATO defence ministers and their RSM partners review the security situation and the first six months of the training mission with Afghan Acting Minister of Defence Masoom Stanekzai. While noting that *"it has been a challenging time,"* NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stresses that the Afghan forces *"have dealt with this effectively"*.

15 October 2015: The NATO Secretary General welcomes President Obama's announcement that the United States will maintain its current troop levels in Afghanistan through 2016 and will retain a substantial presence beyond 2016.

1 December 2015: NATO foreign ministers and their RSM partners agree a plan to sustain the training mission in Afghanistan during 2016 and start work to secure funding for Afghan security forces and institutions until the end of 2020.

2 March 2016: General John "Mick" Nicholson assumes duties as the Commander of RSM.

May 2016: NATO foreign ministers agree that RSM's presence will be sustained beyond 2016.

9 July 2016: At the NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders and their RSM partners recognise that, while the Afghan security institutions and forces continue to develop and make progress, challenges and capability gaps persist, and they continue to need international support. They reaffirm their mutual commitment to ensuring long-term security and stability in Afghanistan by sustaining RSM beyond 2016; continuing financial support for the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces until the end of 2020; and strengthening the Enduring Partnership between Afghanistan and NATO.

5 October 2016: 75 countries and 26 international organisations and agencies pledged USD 15.2 billion in financial support for Afghanistan until 2020.

March 2017: Ambassador Cornelius Zimmermann, Germany, assumes the post of NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan.

19 May 2017: NATO Allies and their RSM partners meet at NATO Headquarters to review ongoing efforts in support of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) and long-term stability in Afghanistan. They are joined by the Afghan President, the RSM Commander and the NATO Senior Civilian Representative to Afghanistan via video conference. Attendants note the continued progress made by the Afghan security forces and institutions, just over two years since assumption of full security responsibility by Afghanistan. They also underscore the importance to continue supporting the ANDSF through training, advising and assistance through RSM. The meeting reaffirms the commitment undertaken at the NATO Summit in Warsaw to sustaining the NATO-led mission as a conditions-based mission, and to keeping its configuration under review.

9 November 2017: Defence Ministers from NATO Allies and partner nations agree to increase their troop contributions to RSM in the coming months from around 13,000 to around 16,000 troops. Ministers also confirm that they will continue to fund the Afghan security forces until at least 2020.

27 April 2018: NATO foreign ministers reaffirm NATO's commitment to the development of the Afghan security and defence forces through a conditions-based approach for the Resolute Support Mission. They express support for the Afghan president's proposal for peace talks between the Government of National Unity and the Taliban, without preconditions, in an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process. They also underline the importance of fair, inclusive and timely parliamentary and presidential elections due in 2018 and 2019 respectively, which are essential for peace, stability and the consolidation of democracy.

8 June 2018: Defence ministers from NATO Allies and partner nations discuss the strengthening of RSM's support to the Afghan government and Afghan security forces, noting real progress in the ability of Afghan forces to conduct offensive operations.

Countering terrorism

Terrorism in all its forms poses a direct threat to the security of the citizens of NATO countries, and to international stability and prosperity. It is a persistent global threat that knows no border, nationality or religion and is a challenge that the international community must tackle together. NATO's work on counter-terrorism focuses on improving awareness of the threat, developing capabilities to prepare and respond, and enhancing engagement with partner countries and other international actors.

Highlights

- NATO invoked its collective defence clause (Article 5) for the first and only time in response to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on the United States.

- NATO's Counter-Terrorism Policy Guidelines focus Alliance efforts on three main areas: awareness, capabilities and engagement.

- NATO has a Terrorism Intelligence Cell at NATO Headquarters and a Coordinator oversees NATO's efforts in the fight against terrorism.

- A regional Hub for the South, based at NATO's Joint Force Command in Naples helps the Alliance anticipate and respond to crises arising in its southern neighbourhood.

- NATO is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and supports it through AWACS intelligence flights.

- NATO develops new capabilities and technologies to tackle the terrorist threat and to manage the consequences of a terrorist attack.

- NATO cooperates with partners and international organisations to leverage the full potential of each stakeholder engaged in the global counter-terrorism effort.

More background information

Awareness

In support of national authorities, NATO ensures shared awareness of the terrorist threat through consultations, enhanced intelligence-sharing and continuous strategic analysis and assessment.

Intelligence reporting at NATO is based on contributions from Allies' intelligence services, both internal and external, civilian and military. The way NATO handles sensitive information has gradually evolved, based on successive summit decisions and continuing reform of intelligence structures since 2010. Since 2017, the Joint Intelligence and Security Division at NATO benefits from increased sharing of intelligence between member services and the Alliance, and produces strategic analytical reports relating to terrorism and its links with other transnational threats.

Intelligence-sharing between NATO and partner countries' agencies continues through the Intelligence Liaison Unit at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, and an intelligence liaison cell at Allied Command Operations (ACO) in Mons, Belgium. An intelligence cell at NATO Headquarters improves how NATO shares intelligence, including on foreign fighters. The Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador Rose Gottemoeller, was appointed as Coordinator to oversee NATO's efforts in the fight against terrorism.

NATO faces a range of threats arising from instability in the region to the south of the Alliance. NATO increases its understanding of these challenges and improves its ability to respond to them through the 'Hub for the South' based at NATO's Joint Force Command in Naples, Italy. Around 100 people are expected to work for the Hub, collecting and analysing the information, assessing potential threats and engaging with partner nations and organisations.

Beyond the everyday consultations within the Alliance, experts from a range of backgrounds are invited to brief Allies on specific areas of counter-terrorism. Direct accounts of the experiences and views of partner countries affected by terrorism can add greatly to reporting reaching Allied nations on other channels. Likewise, discussions with international organisations, including the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), enhance Allies' knowledge of international counter-terrorism efforts worldwide and help NATO refine the contribution that it makes to the global approach.

Capabilities

The Alliance strives to ensure that it has adequate capabilities to prevent, protect against and respond to terrorist threats. Capability development and work on innovative technologies are part of NATO's core business, and methods that address asymmetric threats including terrorism and the use of non-conventional weapons, are of particular relevance. Much of this work is conducted through the Defence Against Terrorism Programme of Work (DAT POW), which aims to protect troops, civilians and critical infrastructure against attacks perpetrated by terrorists, such as suicide attacks, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), rocket attacks against aircraft and helicopters and attacks using chemical, biological or radiological material. NATO's Centres of Excellence are important contributors to many projects, providing expertise across a range of topics including military engineering for route clearance, countering IEDs, explosives disposal, cultural familiarisation, network analysis and modelling.

Defence Against Terrorism Programme of Work

The DAT POW was developed by the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) in 2004. Its primary focus was on technological solutions to mitigate the effects of terrorist attacks but the programme has since widened its scope to support comprehensive capability development. It now includes exercises, trials, development of prototypes and concepts, and interoperability demonstrations. Most projects under the programme focus on finding solutions that can be fielded in the short term and that respond to the military needs of the Alliance. The programme uses new or adapted technologies or methods to detect,

disrupt and defeat asymmetric threats under three capability umbrellas: incident management, force protection/survivability, and network engagement.

Countering chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats

The spread and potential use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems together with the possibility that terrorists will acquire them, are acknowledged as priority threats to the Alliance. Therefore, NATO places a high priority on preventing the proliferation of WMD to state and non-state actors and defending against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats and hazards that may pose a threat to the safety and security of Allied populations. The NATO Combined Joint CBRN Defence Task Force is designed to respond to and manage the consequences of the use of CBRN agents both within and beyond NATO's area of responsibility and the NATO-certified Centre of Excellence on Joint CBRN Defence, in the Czech Republic, further enhances NATO's capabilities.

Operations

Since 2017, NATO has been a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. As a member of the Coalition, NATO has been playing a key role in the fight against international terrorism for many years, including through its long-standing operational engagement in Afghanistan, through intelligence-sharing, and through its work with partners with a view to projecting stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond.

At the 2016 Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders agreed to provide direct support to the Coalition through the provision of NATO AWACS surveillance aircraft. Moreover, the Alliance decided to launch a training and capacity-building activity to train, advise and assist Iraqi forces both in Iraq and Jordan. Finally, in May 2017, Allies agreed an Action Plan to fight terrorism, which included NATO's membership in the Coalition as well as more AWACS flight time and information-sharing.

Following a request by the Iraqi government and the Coalition, Allies agreed in February 2018 on planning and direction for a NATO Training and Capacity Building Mission in Iraq – NTCBM-I, with the aim of making the Alliance's efforts more sustainable and taking on additional tasks as required.

The first patrols of NATO AWACS aircraft, operating from Konya Airfield in Turkey, started in October 2016.

NATO works to maintain its military capacity for crisis management and humanitarian assistance operations. When force deployment is necessary, counter-terrorism considerations are often relevant. Lessons learned in operations, including by Special Operations Forces, must not be wasted. Interoperability is essential if members of future coalitions are to work together. Best practices are, therefore, incorporated into education, training and exercises.

NATO's maritime operation Sea Guardian is a flexible maritime security operation that is able to perform the full range of maritime security tasks, including countering terrorism at sea if required. It succeeded operation "Active Endeavour", which was launched in 2001 under Article 5 of NATO's founding treaty as part of NATO's immediate response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks to deter, detect and, if necessary, disrupt the threat of terrorism in the Mediterranean Sea. . Active Endeavour was terminated in October 2016

Many other operations have had relevance to international counter-terrorism efforts. For example, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) - the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan, which began in 2003 and came to an end in 2014 - helped the government expand its authority and implement security to prevent the country once again becoming a safe haven for international terrorism. Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, which followed ISAF and stood up in 2015, is a non-combat mission that builds capacity in the Afghan security forces.

Crisis management

NATO's long-standing work on civil emergency planning, critical infrastructure protection and crisis management provides a resource that may serve both Allies and partners upon request. This field can relate directly to counter-terrorism, building resilience and ensuring appropriate planning and preparation for response to and recovery from terrorist acts.

Protecting populations and critical infrastructure

National authorities are primarily responsible for protecting their population and critical infrastructure against the consequences of terrorist attacks, CBRN incidents and natural disasters. NATO can assist nations by developing non-binding advice and minimum standards and act as a forum to exchange best practices and lessons learned to improve preparedness and national resilience. NATO has developed 'Guidelines for first response to a CBRN incident' and organises 'International Courses for Trainers of First Responders to CBRN Incidents'. NATO guidance can also advise national authorities on warning the general public and alerting emergency responders. NATO can call on an extensive network of civil experts, from government and industry, to help respond to requests for assistance. Its Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) coordinates responses to national requests for assistance following natural and man-made disasters including terrorist acts involving CBRN agents.

Engagement

As the global counter-terrorism effort requires a holistic approach, Allies have resolved to strengthen outreach to and cooperation with partner countries and international actors.

With partners

Increasingly, partners are taking advantage of partnership mechanisms for dialogue and practical cooperation relevant to counter-terrorism, including defence capacity building. Interested partners are encouraged to include a section on counter-terrorism in their individual cooperation agreements with NATO. Allies place particular emphasis on shared awareness, capacity building, civil emergency planning and crisis management to enable partners to identify and protect vulnerabilities and to prepare to fight terrorism more effectively.

Counter-terrorism is one of the five priorities of the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme. The SPS Programme enhances cooperation and dialogue between scientists and experts from Allies and partners, contributing to a better understanding of the terrorist threat, the development of detection and response measures, and fostering a network of experts.

Activities include workshops, training courses and multi-year research and development projects that contribute to identifying: methods for the protection of critical infrastructure, supplies and personnel; human factors in defence against terrorism; technologies to detect explosive devices and illicit activities; and risk management, best practices, and use of new technologies in response to terrorism. The SPS Programme is flexible and able to respond to evolving priorities. As examples, in 2017 SPS issued a Call for Proposals to address human, social, cultural, scientific and technological advancements in the fight against terrorism. In 2018, NATO launched a new initiative to develop an integrated system of sensors and data fusion technologies capable to detect explosives and concealed weapons in real time and to secure mass transport infrastructures, such as airports, metro and railway stations. This initiative is constituted by a number of projects all working together to achieve a live demonstration in 2021.

On 1 April 2014, Allied foreign ministers condemned Russia's illegal military intervention in Ukraine and Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Ministers underlined that NATO does not recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate attempt to annex Crimea. As a result, ministers decided to suspend all practical civilian and military cooperation between NATO and Russia, including in the area of counter-terrorism, which had been among the main drivers behind the creation of the NATO-Russia Council in May 2002. This decision was reconfirmed by Allied leaders at the Wales Summit in September 2014 and to date, practical cooperation with Russia remains suspended.

With international actors

NATO cooperates in particular with the UN, the EU and the OSCE to ensure that views and information are shared and that appropriate action can be taken more effectively in the fight against terrorism. The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, international conventions and protocols against terrorism, together with relevant UN resolutions provide a common framework for efforts to combat terrorism.

NATO works closely with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate as well as with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and many of its component organisations, including the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. NATO's Centres of Excellence and education and training opportunities are often relevant to UN counter-terrorism priorities, as is the specific area of explosives management. More broadly, NATO works closely with the UN agencies that play a leading role in responding to international disasters and in consequence management, including the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the UN 1540 Committee.

NATO and the European Union are committed to combatting terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They exchange information regularly on counter-terrorism projects and on related activities such as work on the protection of civilian populations against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) attacks. Relations with the European External Action Service's Counter-terrorism section, with the Counter-terrorism Coordinator's office and other parts of the EU help ensure mutual understanding and complementarity.

NATO maintains close relations with the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department's Action against Terrorism Unit and with field offices and the Border College in Dushanbe (Tajikistan), which works to create secure open borders through specialised training of senior officers from national border security agencies.

The use of civilian aircraft as a weapon in the 9/11 terrorist attacks led to efforts to enhance aviation security. NATO contributed to improved civil-military coordination of air traffic control by working with EUROCONTROL, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the US Federal Aviation Administration, major national aviation and security authorities, airlines and pilot associations and the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

Education

NATO offers a range of training and education opportunities in the field of counter-terrorism to both Allies and partner countries. It can draw on a wide network that includes the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, mobile training courses run out of Joint Force Commands at Naples and Brunssum and the Centres of Excellence (COEs) that support the NATO Command Structure. There are more than 20 COEs fully accredited by NATO of which several have a link to the fight against terrorism. The Centre of Excellence for Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) in Ankara, Turkey serves both as a location for meetings and as a catalyst for international dialogue and discussion on terrorism and counter-terrorism. The COE-DAT reaches out to over 50 countries and 40 organisations.

▬▬ Milestones in NATO's work on counter-terrorism

1999
The Alliance's 1999 Strategic Concept identifies terrorism as one of the risks affecting NATO's security.

11 September 2001
Four coordinated terrorist attacks are launched by the terrorist group al-Qaeda upon targets in the United States.

12 September 2001
Less than 24 hours after the 9/11 terrorist attacks – NATO Allies and partner countries, in a meeting of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, condemn the attacks, offering their support to the United States and pledging to ″undertake all efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism″. Later that day, the Allies decide to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, the Alliance's collective defence clause for the first time in NATO's history, if it is determined that the attack had been directed from abroad against the United States.

13-14 September 2001
Declarations of solidarity and support are given by Russia and Ukraine.

2 October 2001

The North Atlantic Council is briefed by a high-level US official on the results of investigations into the 9/11 attacks -- the Council determines that the attacks would be regarded as an action covered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

4 October 2001

NATO agrees on eight measures to support the United States:

- to enhance intelligence-sharing and cooperation, both bilaterally and in appropriate NATO bodies, relating to the threats posed by terrorism and the actions to be taken against it;

- to provide, individually or collectively, as appropriate and according to their capabilities, assistance to Allies and other countries which are or may be subject to increased terrorist threats as a result of their support for the campaign against terrorism;

- to take necessary measures to provide increased security for facilities of the United States and other Allies on their territory;

- to backfill selected Allied assets in NATO's area of responsibility that are required to directly support operations against terrorism;

- to provide blanket overflight clearances for the United States and other Allies' aircraft, in accordance with the necessary air traffic arrangements and national procedures, for military flights related to operations against terrorism;

- to provide access for the United States and other Allies to ports and airfields on the territory of NATO member countries for operations against terrorism, including for refuelling, in accordance with national procedures;

- that the Alliance is ready to deploy elements of its Standing Naval Forces to the Eastern Mediterranean in order to provide a NATO presence and demonstrate resolve;

- that the Alliance is similarly ready to deploy elements of its NATO Airborne Early Warning Force to support operations against terrorism.

Mid-October 2001

NATO launches its first-ever operation against terrorism – Operation Eagle Assist: at the request of the United States, seven NATO AWACS radar aircraft are sent to help patrol the skies over the United States (the operation runs through to mid-May 2002 during which time 830 crewmembers from 13 NATO countries fly over 360 sorties). It is the first time that NATO military assets have been deployed in support of an Article 5 operation.

26 October 2001

NATO launches its second counter-terrorism operation in response to the attacks on the United States, Operation Active Endeavour: elements of NATO's Standing Naval Forces are sent to patrol the eastern Mediterranean and monitor shipping to detect and deter terrorist activity, including illegal trafficking.

May 2002

At their Reykjavik meeting, NATO foreign ministers decide that the Alliance would operate when and where necessary to fight terrorism. This landmark declaration effectively ends the debate on what constituted NATO's area of operations and paves the way for the Alliance's future engagement with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

November 2002

At the Prague Summit, NATO leaders express their determination to deter, defend and protect their populations, territory and forces from any armed attack from abroad, including by terrorists. To this end, they adopt a Prague package, aimed at adapting NATO to the challenge of terrorism. It comprises:

- a Military Concept for Defence against Terrorism;

- a Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism (PAP-T);

- five nuclear, biological and chemical defence initiatives;

- protection of civilian populations, including a Civil Emergency Planning Action Plan;

- missile defence: Allies are examining options for addressing the increasing missile threat to Alliance populations, territory and forces in an effective and efficient way through an appropriate mix of political and defence efforts, along with deterrence;

- cyber defence;

- cooperation with other international organisations; and

- improved intelligence-sharing.

In addition, they decide to create the NATO Response Force, streamline the military command structure and launch the Prague Capabilities Commitment to better prepare NATO's military forces to face new challenges, including terrorism.

10 March 2003
Operation Active Endeavour is expanded to include escorting civilian shipping through the Strait of Gibraltar. The remit is extended to the whole of the Mediterranean a year later.

11 August 2003

NATO takes lead of the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. ISAF's primary objective was to enable the Afghan government to provide effective security across the country and develop new Afghan security forces to ensure Afghanistan would never again become a safe haven for terrorists.

2010
NATO's Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, recognises that terrorism poses a direct threat to the security of the citizens of NATO countries, and to international stability and prosperity more broadly. It commits Allies to enhance the capacity to detect and defend against international terrorism, including through enhanced threat analysis, more consultations with NATO's partners, and the development of appropriate military capabilities.

May 2012
At the Chicago Summit, NATO leaders endorse new policy guidelines for Alliance work on counter-terrorism, which focus on improved threat awareness, adequate capabilities and enhanced engagement with partner countries and other international actors. The Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism is subsumed into the overall NATO approach. The NATO Military Concept for Counter-Terrorism, reflecting the policy guidelines, became a public document in 2016.

2011-2014

Responsibility for security gradually transitioned from ISAF to the Afghan security forces in a phased approach. The Afghan forces assumed full security responsibility, and ISAF ended, by the end of 2014.

1 January 2015

NATO's Resolute Support Mission is launched to provide further training, advising and assistance to Afghan security forces and institutions in order to help the Afghan National Unity Government to prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorism.

July 2016
At the Warsaw Summit, Allied leaders decide to provide support through NATO to the fight against ISIL. NATO AWACS aircraft will provide information to the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL. NATO will begin training and capacity building in Iraq, while continuing to train hundreds of Iraqi officers in Jordan. Allies will enhance ongoing cooperation with Jordan in areas such as cyber defence and countering roadside bombs.

Allies also undertake to promote information-sharing through the optimised use of multilateral platforms and to continue to seek to enhance cooperation in exchanging information on returning foreign fighters.

October 2016
Operation Active Endeavour is terminated and succeeded by Sea Guardian, a broader maritime operation in the Mediterranean. Sea Guardian is a flexible maritime operation that is able to perform the full range of maritime security tasks, if so decided by the North Atlantic Council.

5 February 2017
NATO launches a new training programme in Iraq, teaching Iraqi security forces to counter improvised explosive devices (IEDs). This is particularly relevant for territory newly liberated from ISIL occupation.

16 February 2017
Defence ministers agreed to create a new regional 'Hub for the South', based at NATO's Joint Force Command in Naples. It will be a focal point for increasing both the Alliance's understanding of the challenges stemming from the region, and its ability to respond to them.

31 March 2017
Foreign ministers decided to step up their efforts inside Iraq, including with military medicine courses to train new paramedics, and with training to help maintain tanks and armoured fighting vehicles.

25 May 2017
At their meeting in Brussels, Allies agreed an action plan to do more in the international fight against terrorism with: more AWACS flight time, more information-sharing and air-to-air refuelling; NATO's membership in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL; the establishment of a new terrorism intelligence cell at NATO Headquarters and the appointment of a coordinator to oversee NATO's efforts in the fight against terrorism.

5-6 December 2017
At their meeting, foreign ministers underlined the continuing need to provide support to NATO's southern partners in building counter-terrorism capabilities and institutions. They reaffirmed their full commitment to Allied efforts in training and assistance, building Iraq's and Afghanistan's security capacity, which is an important part of NATO's contribution to the fight against terrorism. Ministers also noted that NATO's role within the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS would evolve as the Coalition moves from combat operations to stabilisation efforts.
NATO and the European Union agreed to boost their cooperation in the fight against terrorism, including by strengthening the exchange of information, coordinating their counter-terrorism support for partner countries and working to improve national resilience to terrorist attacks.

15 February 2018
At their meeting, defence ministers agreed to start planning for a NATO training mission in Iraq, at the request of the Iraqi government and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

AWACS: NATO's 'eyes in the sky'

NATO operates a fleet of Boeing E-3A Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS) aircraft, with their distinctive radar domes mounted on the fuselage, which provide the Alliance with air surveillance, command and control, battle space management and communications. NATO Air Base (NAB) Geilenkirchen, Germany, is home to 15 AWACS aircraft.

Highlights

■ NATO operates a fleet of Boeing E-3A Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS) aircraft equipped with long-range radar and passive sensors capable of detecting air and surface contacts over large distances.

■ The NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force (NAEW&C Force) is one of the few military assets that is actually owned and operated by NATO.

■ It conducts a wide range of missions such as air policing, support to counter-terrorism, evacuation operations, embargo, initial entry and crisis response.

■ Under normal circumstances, the aircraft operates for about eight hours, at 30,000 feet (9,150 metres) and covers a surveillance area of more than 120,000 square miles (310,798 square kilometres).

■ The fleet is involved in the reassurance measures following the Russia-Ukraine crisis, and in the tailored assurance measures for Turkey against the background of the Syrian crisis.

■ NATO AWACS aircraft are also providing surveillance and situational awareness to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, thereby making the skies safer.

■ AWACS surveillance aircraft played an important role in NATO operations such as in the United States after 9/11, in Libya and in Afghanistan. It also provided air support to secure NATO summits or international sporting events.

More background information

▬▬ Role and capabilities

The NATO E-3A (or AWACS) is a modified Boeing 707 equipped with long-range radar and passive sensors capable of detecting air and surface contacts over large distances. Information collected by AWACS can be transmitted directly from the aircraft to other users on land, at sea or in the air.

The NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force (NAEW&C Force) is the Alliance's largest collaborative venture and is an example of what NATO member countries can achieve by pooling resources and working together in a truly multinational environment.

The NAEW&C Force conducts a wide range of missions such as air policing, support to counter-terrorism, consequence management, non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO), embargo, initial entry, crisis response and demonstrative force operations.

The aircraft is able to track and identify potentially hostile aircraft operating at low altitudes, as well as provide fighter control of Allied aircraft. It can simultaneously track and identify maritime contacts, and provide coordination support to Allied surface forces.

Under normal circumstances, the aircraft can operate for about eight hours (and longer with air-to-air refuelling) at 30,000 feet (9,150 metres).

The active surveillance sensors are located in the radar dome ("rotodome"), which makes the AWACS such a uniquely recognisable aircraft. This structure rotates once every 10 seconds and provides the AWACS aircraft with 360-degree radar coverage that can detect aircraft out to a distance of more than 215 nautical miles (400 kilometres).

One aircraft flying at 30,000 feet has a surveillance area coverage of more than 120,000 square miles (310,798 square kilometres) and three aircraft operating in overlapping, coordinated orbits can provide unbroken radar coverage of the whole of Central Europe.

▬▬ Operational contributions

In recent years, the Force has been deployed on increasingly complex and demanding tactical missions, including:

- support to maritime operations;

- close air support (CAS);

- airspace management;

- combat search and rescue (CSAR);

- disaster relief; and

- counter-piracy.

Critical asset for crisis management

Since it commenced flight operations in 1982, the NAEW&C Force has proven to be a key asset in crisis management and peace-support operations.

Following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, aircraft from the NATO E-3A Component (NATO Air Base (NAB) Geilenkirchen) deployed to eastern Turkey to help reinforce NATO's southern flank during the war. Operation Anchor Guard included monitoring air and sea traffic in the eastern Mediterranean and providing airborne surveillance along the Iraqi-Turkish border. The mission was conducted from August 1990 to March 1991.

For most of the 1990s, aircraft from both the NATO and United Kingdom's AEW&C fleets operated extensively in the Balkans, supporting United Nations resolutions and Alliance missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo during Operations Deliberate Force and Allied Force. AWACS aircraft from the French Air Force (Armée de l'air) and the US Air Force also helped achieve the objectives of these missions.

From 2007 until 2016, the NAEW&C Force was used successfully in support of NATO's counter-terrorism activities in the Mediterranean Sea during Operation Active Endeavour.

During Operation Unified Protector in 2011, the NAEW&C Force also performed the crucial function of commanding and controlling all Alliance air assets operating over Libya. This included the issuing of real-time tactical orders and taskings to NATO fighter aircraft, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, air-to-air refuellers or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). AWACS aircraft also supported Allied ships and submarines enforcing the maritime arms embargo against Libya by providing an aerial maritime surveillance capability.

From 2011 until 2014, aircraft from NAB Geilenkirchen were deployed to Afghanistan to support the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) by providing air surveillance coverage as part of Operation Afghan Assist. In Afghanistan, AWACS aircraft conducted air surveillance, tactical battle management functions such as support and control of friendly aircraft involved in close air support, battlefield air interdiction, combat search and rescue, reconnaissance, and tactical air transport.

On 25 September 2014, the last NATO AWACS aircraft returned to its home base in Geilenkirchen from Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan. NATO had decided that AWACS aircraft would not be required for the Resolute Support Mission stood up on 1 January 2015 as the new mission focused on training, advising and assisting Afghan forces.

Assuring Allies

In early 2001, the Force also supported NATO's defensive deployment to southeastern Turkey during Operation Display Deterrence.

In the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001, AWACS aircraft were deployed to the mainland US to help defend North America against further attacks during Operation Eagle Assist. This represented the first time in Alliance history that NATO assets were deployed in support of the defence of one of its member nations.

On 1 December 2015, NATO foreign ministers took steps to further the Alliance's adaptation to security challenges from the south and agreed on tailored assurance measures for Turkey that are meant to contribute to de-escalation in the region. This support includes AWACS surveillance flights; increased naval presence in the eastern Mediterranean; Standing Naval Forces port calls; participation in exercises; enhanced air policing; and maritime patrol aircraft flights.

On 11 February 2016, a significant milestone was reached when AWACS aircraft completed the 1,000th mission in support of NATO reassurance measures. These measures are a series of land, sea and air activities in, on and around the territory of NATO Allies in Central and Eastern Europe, designed to reassure their populations and deter potential aggression. They are taken in response to Russia's aggressive actions to NATO's east.

Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS

On 11 February 2016, NATO defence ministers decided in principle that NATO AWACS surveillance planes will backfill national AWACS capabilities in support of the international coalition to counter ISIL. This decision was made in response to a request from the United States.

In July 2016, Allies agreed in principle to enhance the Alliance's contribution to the efforts of the international counter-ISIL coalition by providing direct NATO AWACS support to increase the Coalition's situational awareness.

The first NATO AWACS flight in support of the Coalition fighting ISIL took place on 20 October 2016. Operating from Konya Airfield in Turkey, the aircraft support the Coalition's overall air picture by providing surveillance and situational awareness, thereby making the skies safer.

NATO's AWACS aircraft do not coordinate Coalition air strikes or provide command and control for fighter aircraft. AWACS aircraft only fly over international airspace or over Turkey. AWACS can detect aircraft hundreds of kilometres away so they can monitor airspace in Iraq and Syria from inside Turkey. This is an important contribution to the counter-ISIL effort and a clear signal of NATO's determination to help fight terrorism.

In May 2017, Allies agreed to increase their support to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS with more AWACS flying hours helping to improve airspace management for the Coalition.

Protecting NATO populations

As a consequence of the 9/11 attacks, NATO governments requested the air surveillance and control capability offered by the NAEW&C Force to assist with security for major public occasions.

These high-visibility events have included the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Greece, the 2006 World Cup Football Championship in Germany, the 2012 European Football Championship in Poland as well as important meetings held by other international organisations such as the 2010 Nobel Prize award ceremony in Sweden, the 2013 Dutch royal handover in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, the Netherlands.

Further, the NAEW&C fleets have consistently provided support to NATO summit meetings.

Structure

Multinational cooperation is the key characteristic of the NAEW&C Programme Management Organisation (NAPMO). Currently, the 16 full NAPMO nations are: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey and the United States.

The United Kingdom exercises limited participation as a NAPMO member, but its fleet of E-3D aircraft is an integral part of the NAEW&C Force. France has an observer role and maintains continual coordination to ensure its E-3F aircraft remain interoperable with the other E-3 fleets. France also often assists in coordinated operations with the NAEW&C Force.

The NAEW&C Force Headquarters is co-located with NAB Geilenkirchen and exercises operational control over the Force, consisting of two operational units:

- the E-3A Component based at NAB Geilenkirchen, which operates the 15 NATO-owned NATO E-3A aircraft (the squadrons are manned by integrated international crews from 16 nations); and

- the E-3D Component based at Royal Air Force (RAF) Waddington, United Kingdom, which operates its six Boeing E-3D aircraft (the component is manned by RAF personnel only).

The Force also maintains three forward-operating bases (FOBs) at Konya in Turkey, Aktion in Greece, Trapani in Italy, and a forward-operating location (FOL) at Ørland, Norway.

The AWACS programme, including execution of modernisation projects, is managed on a day-to-day basis by the NAEW&C Programme Management Agency (NAPMA), which is located in Brunssum, the Netherlands. The agency is staffed by military officers seconded to the agency and by civilian officials from the nations participating in the programme. In 2011, the NAPMA General Manager was assigned by the NAPMO nations as the Technical Airworthiness Authority (TAA) for the NATO E-3A fleet. Supported by a dedicated engineering office, the TAA shares responsibilities for airworthiness certification, together with the NAEW&C Force Commander, who is responsible for operations and support of the fleet.

History

During the 1960s, it became clear that military aircraft could no longer fly high enough to avoid surface-to-air missiles. To survive in an increasingly lethal air defence environment, aircraft were forced down to levels little higher than tree-top. By the 1970s, the requirement to detect high-speed combat aircraft with low-level penetration capability made it necessary to augment NATO's system of ground-based radars with new means.

The NATO military authorities determined that an Airborne Early Warning (AEW) capability would provide the key to meeting the challenge. The operational requirement for the NATO AEW system stressed the need to detect small, high-speed intruder aircraft at long range. The need to detect maritime surface targets (such as ships and boats) was also specified because of the geographical regions where the AEW aircraft would have to operate. The inherent mobility and flexibility of the system, especially for control function, were also foreseen by NATO planners as providing air, maritime, and land force commanders with an enhanced command and control (C2) capability. The creation of a NATO AEW Force was therefore designed to make a significant contribution to the Alliance's deterrent posture.

In December 1978, the NATO Defence Planning Committee approved the joint acquisition of 18 aircraft based on the US Air Force (USAF) Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), to be operated as an Alliance-owned Airborne Early Warning System. In addition to the delivery of the 18 E-3A aircraft between February 1982 and May 1985, the NAEW&C programme included the upgrade of 40 NATO Air Defence Ground Environment (NADGE) sites and the establishment of a main operating base (MOB) at Geilenkirchen, Germany, along with three FOBs and an FOL.

Transformation and evolution

Originally designed as an elevated radar platform, the AWACS aircraft has constantly evolved to address the realities of geopolitical change and NATO's new mission over the last 30 years. In emphasising the control aspect of the AEW&C, the AWACS aircraft has become an essential part of air battle management and has continued to remain operationally relevant through successive modernisation programmes involving state-of-the-art engineering and manufacturing developments. From the Initial NAEW&C Acquisition Programme through the Near-Term Programme and on through the Mid-Term Programme, the NAPMO nations have collectively spent/committed, for acquisition and follow-on support, in excess of US$6.8 billion – prohibitively expensive for any single country, but realisable through the collective contribution of the NAPMO nations.

All AWACS aircraft undergo continuous modifications for modernisation and for operations and support. A NATO AWACS aircraft modified with advanced computer and communications systems under the NATO Mid-Term Programme has a standard crew of 16, while the original E-3D requires a standard crew of 18. Whatever the variant, the flight and mission crews are highly trained men and women whose expertise covers all areas of flight operations, including battle space management, weapons control, surveillance control, data link management and the technical aspects of communications, data systems and mission radar.

Today, NATO is moving forward with a new and improved method of planning and conducting operations. To support the dynamic NATO transformation process, NAPMO is committed to adopting new business approaches and entering into cooperative programmes. The purpose is to expedite the fielding of operational capabilities in response to emerging requirements at a cost that takes into consideration today's economic realities. In that sense, efforts are underway for the next phase of NAEW&C enhancements, which will allow the Force to continue fulfilling its operational mandate well into the future.

To be completed by the end of 2018, the Follow-on Upgrade Programme (FUP) primarily aims to enhance the identification system to identify and improve the situational awareness of cooperating units (Mode 5/Enhanced Mode S), while replacing the analogue cockpit with modern, digital technology (known as a "glass" cockpit). Communication systems which use Internet Protocol (IP) are also being developed and fielded to support text communications with other command and control (C2) assets. In February 2018,

the first upgraded aircraft was deployed to Turkey in active support as part of NATO's contribution to the efforts of the international counter-ISIS coalition.

Future

As it stands, the AWACS fleet is expected to retire around 2025. At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, Allies committed to continuing the modernisation of NATO AWACS in order to extend the life of the E-3 fleet until 2035, after which additional lifetime extensions are no longer practical.

At the same time, NATO leaders launched the Alliance Future Surveillance and Control (AFSC) initiative to plan how the Alliance maintains its situational awareness and commands Allied forces after AWACS retires around 2035.

AFSC has been established by NATO to investigate possibilities for a follow-on to the AWACS fleet, with a view to avoiding a potential capability gap in 2035. Based on high-level military requirements, NATO is fundamentally redefining how it conducts surveillance and control in the future. This means working in partnership with experts from a range of communities, including science and technology, military, and industry.

NATO is now studying new technologies and exploring potential combinations of interconnected air, ground, space or unmanned systems to collect and share information. These studies will help inform decisions by NATO, individual Allies or multinational groups to acquire new systems, rather than simply buying new aircraft. NATO aims to have any new systems ready and in place by the time AWACS retires around 2035.

AFSC shows the steps NATO is taking to plan decades into the future. The effort NATO is making today will help retain its information advantage after 2035, while ensuring new systems are cost-effective and fit for purpose.

NATO's maritime activities

The world's oceans are increasingly busy maritime highways. Today, 85 per cent of all international trade in raw material and manufactured goods travels by sea, and tankers carry more than half of the world's oil. The stakes of maritime security are high, and NATO is determined to help protect its Allies from any possible threats at sea or from the sea.

Highlights

- NATO is implementing the Alliance Maritime Strategy that lays out the parameters for NATO's maritime activities. These activities fall under the areas of collective defence, crisis management, cooperative security and maritime security.

- The Alliance has Standing Naval Forces – NATO's highly trained maritime, immediate-response capacity.

- NATO is currently leading Operation Sea Guardian in the Mediterranean and is providing assistance to help deal with the refugee and migrant crisis in the Aegean Sea.

- Cooperation with non-NATO partners, including other international organisations such as the European Union, is fundamental to efforts in the maritime domain.

More background information

Alliance Maritime Strategy

In full consistency with the 2010 Strategic Concept, the 2011 Alliance Maritime Strategy sets out ways in which NATO's unique maritime power could help resolve critical security challenges.

● Four pillars

There are four areas in which NATO's maritime forces can contribute to Alliance security. The first three are the "core tasks" of NATO, as defined by the Alliance's Strategic Concept: deterrence and collective defence; crisis management; and cooperative security. In addition, the Maritime Strategy sets out a fourth area: maritime security.

Deterrence and collective defence

NATO has significant maritime capabilities and inherently flexible maritime forces, which are key to deterring aggression. As such, maritime activities contribute to nuclear deterrence as well as to deterrence from conventional attacks. NATO will ensure it can deploy its maritime forces rapidly, control sea lines of communication, preserve freedom of navigation and conduct effective mine counter-measure activities.

Crisis management

NATO maritime forces can also play an important role in crisis management. These responsibilities can include enforcing an arms embargo, conducting maritime interdiction operations, contributing to the Alliance's counter-terrorism efforts, and providing immediate humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

Cooperative security

NATO's maritime forces not only contribute to ensuring Alliance security. Engagement with partners also helps to build regional security and stability, contributes to conflict prevention and facilitates dialogue. These efforts also promote cooperation and complementarity with other key actors in the maritime domain, such as the United Nations and the European Union.

Maritime security

The Alliance Maritime Strategy reiterates NATO's commitment to helping protect vital sea lines of communication and maintain freedom of navigation. This includes surveillance, information-sharing, maritime interdiction, and contributions to energy security, including the protection of critical infrastructure.

● Implementation

Maritime security is continuing to rise on NATO's agenda and Allies have been implementing the 2011 Alliance Maritime Strategy – an objective the Alliance set itself at the Wales Summit in September 2014. This encompasses a complete revamp of NATO's maritime forces, an extensive multi-year programme of maritime exercises and training, and the enhancement of cooperation between NATO and its partners, as well as other international actors, in particular the European Union (EU). NATO has therefore been reinvigorating, for instance, the Standing Naval Forces so that, *inter alia*, they meet the requirements of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) Maritime, as reiterated at the Warsaw Summit in 2016; improving education, training and exercises, particularly at the tactical and operational levels; improving the capacity of Allies to deploy follow-on forces; enhancing NATO-EU coordination and cooperation in the maritime domain; strengthening engagement with non-NATO member countries; reinforcing the maritime capacities of regional partners in areas of strategic importance to the Alliance as part of the defence capacity-building initiatives; focusing on the future adaptation and evolution of NATO's current maritime operations; and providing assistance with the refugee and migrant crisis.

NATO's Standing Naval Forces and capabilities

NATO has Standing Naval Forces (SNF) that provide the Alliance with a continuous naval presence. This multinational deterrent force constitutes an essential maritime requirement for the Alliance. It carries out a programme of scheduled exercises, manoeuvres and port visits, and can be rapidly deployed in times of crisis or tension.

NATO's SNFs consist of four groups: the Standing NATO Maritime Groups (SNMGs) composed of SNMG1 and SNMG2; and the Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Groups (SNMCMG1 and SNMCMG2). All four Groups are integrated into the NATO Response Force (NRF), the Alliance's rapid-reaction force.

● SNMG1 and SNMG2

The Standing NATO Maritime Groups are a multinational, integrated maritime force made up of vessels from various Allied countries. These vessels are permanently available to NATO to perform different tasks ranging from exercises to operational missions. They also help to establish Alliance presence, demonstrate solidarity, conduct routine diplomatic visits to different countries, support partner engagement, and provide a variety of maritime military capabilities to ongoing missions.

SNMG1 and SNMG2 function according to the operational needs of the Alliance, therefore helping to maintain optimal flexibility. Their composition varies and they are usually composed of between two and six ships from as many NATO member countries.

SNMG1 and SNMG2 fall under the authority of Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM), Northwood, United Kingdom following MARCOM's December 2012 inauguration as the operational hub for all Alliance maritime operations. MARCOM also has two subordinate commands – Submarine Command (COMSUBNATO) and Maritime Air Command (COMMARAIR) – as well as the NATO Shipping Centre, which plays an important role in countering piracy.

● SNMCMG1 and SNMCMG2

The Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Groups – SNMCMG1 and SNMCMG2 – are multinational forces that primarily engage in search and explosive ordnance disposal operations. SNMCMG2 also conducts historical ordnance disposal operations to minimise the threat from mines dating back to the Second World War.

Both SNMCMG groups are key assets in the NATO Response Force (NRF) and are able to fulfil a wide range of roles from humanitarian tasks to operations. They can deploy at short notice and are often the first assets to enter an operational theatre.

SNMCMG1 was formed in the Belgian port of Ostend on 11 May 1973 to ensure safety of navigation around the ports of the English Channel and northwest Europe. Originally called "Standing Naval Force Channel", its name was changed several times to reflect its expanding area of operation. Today, the Group is capable of operating nearly anywhere in the world.

SNMCMG2 developed from an on-call force for the Mediterranean, which was created in 1969. It also evolved over time to reflect its new responsibilities.

SNMCMG2 and SNMCMG1 were both given their current names in 2006.

▬▬ NATO's maritime operations

Built on the strength of its naval forces, NATO's maritime operations have demonstrated the Alliance's ability to achieve strategic objectives in vastly different contexts. In November 2016, Operation Sea Guardian was launched and started to carry out three maritime security operation (MSO) tasks, namely: maritime security capacity building, support to maritime situational awareness; and support to maritime counter-terrorism.

Operation Sea Guardian can execute any of the additional four MSO tasks, if decided by the Allies: upholding freedom of navigation, maritime interdiction, fighting proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the protection of critical infrastructure.

NATO has also been assisting Frontex (the European Union's border management agency) as well as Greek and Turkish national authorities in their efforts to tackle the migrant and refugee crisis in the Aegean.

From 2009 to 2016, Operation Ocean Shield contributed to international efforts to suppress piracy and protect humanitarian aid shipments off the Horn of Africa, succeeding Operation Allied Protector (March-August 2009) and Operation Allied Provider (October-December 2008). And from 2001 to 2016, Operation Active Endeavour (the predecessor to Operation Sea Guardian) helped deter, detect, and if necessary disrupt the threat of terrorism in the Mediterranean Sea. The operation evolved out of NATO's immediate response to the terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September 2001. And in 2011, Operation Unified Protector delivered power from the sea and comprised a major maritime arms embargo on Libya.

NATO's role in Kosovo

NATO has been leading a peace-support operation in Kosovo since June 1999 in support of wider international efforts to build peace and stability in the area.

Highlights

- NATO has been leading a peace-support operation in Kosovo – the Kosovo Force (KFOR) – since June 1999.

- KFOR was established when NATO's 78-day air campaign against Milosevic's regime, aimed at putting an end to violence in Kosovo, was over.

- The operation derives its mandate from United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) and the Military-Technical Agreement between NATO, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia.

- KFOR's original objectives were to deter renewed hostilities, establish a secure environment and ensure public safety and order, demilitarize the Kosovo Liberation Army, support the international humanitarian effort and coordinate with the international civil presence.

- Today, KFOR continues to contribute towards maintaining a safe and secure environment in Kosovo and freedom of movement for all.

- NATO strongly supports the Belgrade-Pristina EU-brokered Normalisation Agreement (2013).

KFOR's objectives

KFOR deployed into Kosovo on 12 June 1999, in the wake of a 78-day air campaign. This air campaign was launched by the Alliance in March 1999 to halt and reverse the humanitarian catastrophe that was then unfolding.

KFOR derives its mandate from United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1244 of 10 June 1999 and the Military-Technical Agreement between NATO and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia. KFOR operates under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and, as such, is a peace enforcement operation.

Today, KFOR consists of approximately 4,500 troops provided by 28 countries. It continues to help maintain a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement for all people and communities in Kosovo, according to its mandate, which is to:

- deter renewed hostility and threats against Kosovo by Yugoslav and Serb forces;

- establish a secure environment and ensure public safety and order;

- demilitarize the Kosovo Liberation Army;

- support the international humanitarian effort; and

- coordinate with, and support, the international civil presence.

Over time, as the security situation has improved, NATO has been gradually adjusting KFOR's force posture towards a smaller and more flexible force with fewer static tasks. All adjustments to the KFOR force posture are decided by the North Atlantic Council as the security situation on the ground evolves. KFOR is also cooperating and coordinating with the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and other international actors to support the development of a stable, democratic, multi-ethnic and peaceful Kosovo.

KFOR's tasks

Initial tasks

KFOR tasks have included and, in some cases, still include assistance with the return or relocation of displaced persons and refugees; reconstruction and de-mining; medical assistance; security and public order; protection of patrimonial sites; border security; interdiction of cross-border weapons smuggling; implementation of a Kosovo-wide weapons, ammunition and explosives amnesty programme; weapons destruction; and support for the establishment of civilian institutions, law and order, the judicial and penal system, the electoral process and other aspects of the political, economic and social life of Kosovo.
Special attention continues to be paid to the protection of minorities. This includes regular patrols near minority enclaves, check points, escorts for minority groups, protection of heritage sites such as monasteries, and donations including food, clothes and school supplies.

Additional tasks
On 12 June 2008, NATO agreed to start implementing additional tasks in Kosovo, i.e. assist in the standing down of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) and in the establishment of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), as well as a civilian structure to oversee the KSF. The following tasks have been implemented in close coordination and consultation with the relevant local and international authorities:

- **Stand-up of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF)**
  NATO has supervised the stand-up and training of a multi-ethnic, professional and civilian-controlled KSF. The KSF is a lightly armed volunteer force. It has primary responsibility for security tasks that are not appropriate for the police such as emergency response, explosive ordnance disposal, management of hazardous material, fire-fighting and civil protection. The KSF's total strength is mandated to a maximum of 2,500 active personnel and 800 reservists.

- **Capacity-building**
  NATO's presence in Kosovo also covers capacity-building efforts with the security organisations in Kosovo through the NATO Advisory and Liaison Team (NALT), that reached full operational capability in January 2017. This team was created following the merger of:

- the NATO Liaison and Advisory Team (NLAT), that continued to support the KSF beyond the North Atlantic Council's declaration of the KSF's full operational capability in July 2013; and

- the NATO Advisory Team (NAT), created in 2008 to supervise the establishment of a civilian-led organisation of the Kosovo authorities to exercise civilian control over the KSF. The NALT is a team of 41 military and civilian personnel, coming from 13 Allied and partner countries. The Team provides practical assistance and advice to the security organisations in Kosovo from the executive to the force level in areas such as logistics, procurement and finance, force development and planning, as well as leadership development. In order to fulfil its mission, the Team is currently designed along three lines of development: Strategy & Plans, Operations, and Support.
The NALT is also playing a key role in the implementation of the enhanced interaction with Kosovo that was approved by the North Atlantic Council in December 2016. This enhanced interaction is focusing on important topics such as building integrity, cyber defence, public diplomacy or Science for Peace and Security."

Command and structure of KFOR

The Multinational Battle Groups (MNBG)

A Battle Group is a military unit at the level of a battalion, consisting of numerous companies. These companies are highly mobile, flexible and rapidly deployable to potential trouble spots all over Kosovo. There are currently two MNBGs:

- HQ MNBG East, located at Camp Bondsteel, located near Urosevac;

- HQ MNBG West, located at Camp Villagio Italia in Pec.

HQ KFOR continues to be located at Camp Film City, Pristina. In addition to the KFOR troops in Kosovo, NATO continues to maintain reserve forces ready to deploy if necessary.

KFOR comes under a single chain of command, under the authority of Commander KFOR (COMKFOR). COMKFOR reports to the Commander of Joint Force Command Naples (COM JFCN), Italy. The current COMKFOR is Maj. Gen. Salvatore Cuoci. He assumed command of the Kosovo Force on 15 November 2017.

Former KFOR commanders

Lt. Gen. Sir Michael Jackson, UK A	09 Jun 1999 - 08 Oct 1999
Lt. Gen. Klaus Reinhardt, GE A	08 Oct 1999 - 18 Apr 2000
Lt. Gen. Juan Ortuño, SP A	18 Apr 2000 - 16 Oct 2000
Lt. Gen. Carlo Cabigiosu, IT A	16 Oct 2000 - 06 Apr 2001
Lt. Gen. Thorstein Skiaker, NO A	06 Apr 2001 - 03 Oct 2001
Lt. Gen. Marcel Valentin, FR A	03 Oct 2001 - 04 Oct 2002
Lt. Gen. Fabio Mini, IT A	04 Oct 2002 - 03 Oct 2003
Lt. Gen. Holger Kammerhoff, GE A	03 Oct 2003 - 01 Sep 2004
Lt. Gen. Yves de Kermabon, FR A	01 Sep 2004 – 01 Sep 2005
Lt. Gen. Giuseppe Valotto, IT A	01 Sep 2005 –01 Sep 2006
Lt. Gen. Roland Kather, GE A	01 Sep 2006 – 01 Sep 2007
Lt. Gen. Xavier Bout de Marnhac, FR A	01 Sep 2007 – 29 Aug 2008
Lt. Gen. Giuseppe E. Gay, IT A	29 Aug 2008 – 08 Sep 2009

Lt. Gen. Markus Bentler, GE A	08 Sep 2009 – 1 Sep 2010
Maj. Gen. Erhard Bühler, GE A	01 Sep 2010 – 08 Sep 2011
Maj. Gen. Erhard Drews, GE A	09 Sep 2011- 07 Sep 2012
Maj. Gen. Volker Halbauer, GE A	08 Sep 2012 – 06 Sep 2013
Maj. Gen. Salvatore Farina, IT A	07 Sep 2013 – 03 Sep 2014
Maj. Gen. Francesco Paolo Figliuolo, IT A	03 Sep 2014 - 07 Aug 2015
Maj. Gen. Guglielmo Luigi Miglietta, IT A	07 Aug 2015 - 31 Aug 2016
Maj. Gen. Giovanni Fungo, IT A	01 Sep 2016 - 15 Nov 2017
Maj. Gen. Salvatore Cuoci, IT A	15 Nov 2017 -

The evolution of NATO's role in Kosovo

KFOR deploys

UNSCR 1244 was adopted on 10 June 1999, and on 12 June the first elements of the NATO-led Kosovo Force, or KFOR, entered Kosovo. By 20 June, the withdrawal of Serbian forces was complete.

KFOR was initially composed of some 50,000 men and women from NATO member countries, partner countries and other non-NATO countries under unified command and control. By early 2002, KFOR was reduced to around 39,000 troops. The improved security environment enabled NATO to reduce KFOR troop levels to 26,000 by June 2003, then to 17,500 by the end of 2003.

An improved security situation

In recent years, the security situation has continued to improve steadily. As a result, on 11-12 June 2009, NATO defence ministers decided to gradually adjust KFOR's force posture towards what is called a deterrent presence. At their informal meeting in Istanbul on 3-4 February 2010, NATO defence ministers were informed by the NATO Military Authorities that KFOR had successfully achieved the so-called Gate 1 in its transition to a deterrent presence, reducing the number of troops on the ground to some 10,200. The move to Gate 2, allowing for a total of approximately 5,000 troops was recommended by the NATO Military Authorities and authorised by the North Atlantic Council on 29 October 2010. Gate 2 was declared on 28 February 2011.

Any future decision on further reducing KFOR's footprint in Kosovo will require the approval of the North Atlantic Council. Nations have been clear that any such decision should be dictated by continued positive conditions on the ground.

In a separate development, the improved security situation on the ground in Kosovo also allowed NATO to continue with the implementation of the so-called unfixing process: the gradual transfer of security for religious and cultural heritage sites under KFOR protection to Kosovo Police responsibility. By the end of 2013, KFOR had unfixed eight properties with Designated Special Status: the Gazimestan Monument, Gracanica Monastery, Zociste Monastery, Budisavci Monastery, Gorioc Monastery, the Archangel site, Devic Monastery, and the Pec Patriarchate. Only one designated site – the Decani Monastery – currently remains under fixed KFOR protection.

NATO's support to the EU-facilitated dialogue

On 19 April 2013, Belgrade and Pristina reached an EU-facilitated First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalisation of Relations; an implementation plan was agreed on 22 May 2013. NATO played an important role in securing the Agreement, and Allies continue to strongly support the accord. In support of the Agreement, Belgrade and Pristina have initiated a programme of high-level talks, hosted by the European Union. This dialogue remains key to solving the political deadlock between the two parties, and has helped improve relations between them. The dialogue has also given fresh momentum to the

Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans. In June 2013, the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with Belgrade and negotiations with Pristina on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). The SAA agreement was signed on 27 October 2015 and entered into force on 1 April 2016.   NATO continues to offer strong political support to the Belgrade-Pristina Agreement, and KFOR stands ready to support its implementation – by ensuring a climate of peace and security – within its current mandate.

Assistance for the refugee and migrant crisis in the Aegean Sea

As Europe faces the greatest refugee and migrant crisis since the end of the Second World War, NATO is providing support to assist with the consequences of this humanitarian crisis.

Highlights

- The current refugee and migrant crisis, caused by conflict and instability on NATO's southern borders, is being fuelled by human trafficking and criminal networks.

- In February 2016, on the request of Germany, Greece and Turkey, NATO decided to join international efforts in dealing with this crisis.

- NATO is contributing to international efforts to stem illegal trafficking and illegal migration in the Aegean Sea, through intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance in the Aegean Sea and at the Turkish-Syrian border.

- To this end, NATO is cooperating with the European Union's border management agency Frontex, in full compliance with international law and the law of the sea.

More background information

NATO's role and contribution

Following a request from Germany, Greece and Turkey, NATO defence ministers decided on 11 February 2016 to assist with the growing refugee and migrant crisis in Europe. NATO has deployed a maritime force in the Aegean Sea to conduct reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance of illegal crossings, in support of Turkish and Greek authorities and the EU's Frontex agency.

NATO maritime forces are deployed in the Aegean Sea to contribute critical, real-time information to Greece and Turkey, as well as to Frontex, in light of the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

NATO's Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2) is conducting reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance of illegal crossings in the territorial waters of Greece and Turkey, as well as in international waters with its maritime and air assets. It is sharing whatever relevant information it finds with the Greek and Turkish coast guards and authorities. Greece and Turkey will only be operating in their own territorial waters and airspace. NATO is also sharing this information in real-time with Frontex so that it can take even more effective action. Since NATO's ships are larger than Frontex vessels, NATO sensors and radars have a broader reach and complement Frontex assets.

The purpose of NATO's deployment is to assist Allies and Frontex in carrying out their duties in the face of the crisis. In accordance with international law, all ships that sail, including NATO ships, have to rescue people in distress at sea. Allied vessels will live up to their national responsibility to assist. Finer details of the mission itself, including its timeframe, are currently being finalised.

Composition and command of the deployments

SNMG2 is currently led by a German flagship and is composed of just over half a dozen vessels. A number of Allies have announced that they will be reinforcing this Group so the mission and its configuration is reviewed on a regular basis.

SNMG2 is one of two Standing NATO Maritime Groups – SNMG1 and SNMG2. SNMGs fall under the authority of Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM), Northwood, United Kingdom, the commander of which is Vice Admiral Clive Johnstone, UK Navy. These are multinational, integrated maritime forces made up of vessels from various Allied countries. These vessels are permanently available to NATO to perform different tasks ranging from exercises to operational missions. They function according to the operational needs of the Alliance, therefore helping to maintain optimal flexibility. Their composition varies and they are usually composed of between two and six ships from as many NATO member countries.

NATO-EU cooperation

The refugee and migrant crisis is the worst humanitarian crisis Europe has witnessed since 1945. NATO has established arrangements enabling direct links with Frontex at the operational and tactical levels. This will allow the exchange of liaison officers and the sharing of information in real time so that Frontex can take even more effective action. In April 2016, a Frontex liaison officer first embarked on the flagship.

Since February 2016, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has held discussions on the refugee and migrant crisis with several EU counterparts including the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, the EU High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission, Federica Mogherini, and the European Commissioner for Migration, Dimitris Avramopoulos.

Troop contributions

When a NATO operation or mission is deemed necessary, NATO member and partner countries volunteer personnel, equipment and resources for the mission. These national contributions operate under the aegis of the Alliance.

Highlights

- An alliance of 29 sovereign countries, NATO relies on the military forces of its member countries to carry out an operation or mission because it does not possess military forces of its own.

- Personnel serving in a NATO operation are referred to as "NATO forces", but are actually multinational forces from NATO countries and, in some cases, partner or other troop-contributing countries.

- "Force generation" is the procedure by which Allies (and partner countries) resource the personnel and equipment needed to carry out North Atlantic Council-approved operations and missions.

- National capitals take the final decision on whether to contribute to a NATO-led operation or mission.

- Allied Command Operations (ACO), commanded by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), is responsible for executing all NATO operations and missions, and the Deputy SACEUR coordinates troop contributions.

More background information

Obtaining troop contributions

When the North Atlantic Council consents to an operation or mission, NATO's military authorities draft a concept of operations – referred to as CONOPS – which outlines the minimum military requirements that are needed. Force generation is the procedure in which those required resources are obtained from Allies

(and partners) to provide the Operational Commander with the necessary capabilities at the right scale and readiness to accomplish the mission. Force generation applies to all current NATO-led operations and missions.

The force generation process

The force generation process follows a standard procedure and is handled by the Allied Command Operations (ACO) Force Generation Branch and National Military Representatives (NMRs). For a given operation or mission, the Operational Commander sends his requirements in terms of equipment, manpower and resources (referred to as the Combined Joint Statement of Requirements) to ACO. It is then passed to NATO member countries and, in some cases, partner countries. While the Force Generation Branch at ACO is responsible for resourcing the required capabilities, the final decision on contributions is taken by national capitals.

At the subsequent Force Generation Conference, NATO and partner countries then make formal offers of personnel and equipment to support the operation or mission. Since 2003, a Global Force Generation Conference has been held as required to discuss all NATO-led operations and missions.

These contributions may be subject to some national limitations (known as "caveats") such as rules of engagement. These restrictions influence NATO's operational planning. Therefore, the Alliance seeks national contributions with as few caveats as possible.

The force generation process is complete when nations reply with a Force Preparation (FORCEPREP) message, which provides the details of the national contributions as well as any caveats on the employment of forces.

Countries that provide leadership for an entire operation or mission, or take responsibility for central elements such as the land brigade in the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), are identified as "framework nations". They typically provide the command element and a significant part of the forces, and will coordinate with other Allies to fill the remainder of the force required.

Although NATO as an alliance does own and maintain some specialised equipment, such as the AWACS aircraft and strategic communications equipment, troop-contributing countries generally commit the equipment necessary to support their personnel in pursuit of operational objectives.

Coordinating troop contributions for non-NATO operations

Over the years, the Alliance has developed significant expertise in coordinating troop contributions for multinational operations and has offered this expertise in support of non-NATO operations.

Under the Berlin Plus agreement, the Alliance cooperates closely with the European Union (EU) in the resourcing of selected operations. When requested by the EU, NATO's Deputy SACEUR and his staff provide support in coordinating member countries' troop contributions. For example, the Deputy SACEUR was identified as operational commander for Operation Althea, the EU-led operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and was responsible for force generation.

NATO also provided force generation support to Germany and the Netherlands, during their leadership of the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in 2003 in Afghanistan, prior to its conversion into a NATO-led operation.

Force generation through time

For much of NATO's history, the Alliance's primary operational commitment was focused on the former border between East and West Germany. For over 40 years, NATO strategists spoke of medium- and long-term "force plans" because during that time, the Alliance maintained static, "conventional" forces in former West Germany, poised for an attack from the former Soviet Union. Beginning in 1986, conventional forces were reduced and bases of individual NATO countries in Germany were largely dismantled or converted to other use after the Cold War.

NATO's first major land expeditionary operation took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a result of the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords. The NATO force generation process, which is still in use today, was developed during the NATO-led operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and later in Kosovo.

Transforming to meet operational needs

While the core procedures for contributing troops and equipment remain the same, the force generation process has been refined to reflect changes in the types of operations and missions that NATO conducts.

For example, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) established in Afghanistan under the NATO-led ISAF operation, were comprised of a unique combination of military and civilian personnel who worked to extend the authority of the central Afghan government in remote areas, and to facilitate development and reconstruction. NATO was involved in generating forces for the military component of a PRT, while it was the responsibility of the contributing country to staff the civilian components. As a result, PRTs were a hybrid of personnel who fell under either NATO or national chains of command. Although PRTs were gradually phased out by end 2014 in agreement with the Afghan authorities, they illustrate the need for great flexibility in force generation processes in order to achieve operational objectives.

Today, NATO military planners are looking beyond immediate needs, allowing both the Alliance and troop-contributing countries to plan their resources better. The goal is to understand the relationships at play in order to achieve fair and realistic burden-sharing during NATO-led operations and missions.

Partnerships: projecting stability through cooperation

At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, Allies underlined that they seek to contribute more to the efforts of the international community in projecting stability and strengthening security outside NATO territory. One of the means to do so is through cooperation and partnerships. Over more than 25 years, the Alliance has developed a network of partnerships with non-member countries from the Euro-Atlantic area, the Mediterranean and the Gulf region, and other partners across the globe. NATO pursues dialogue and practical cooperation with these nations on a wide range of political and security-related issues. NATO's partnerships are beneficial to all involved and contribute to improved security for the broader international community.

Highlights

■ Partners are part of many of NATO's core activities, from shaping policy to building defence capacity, developing interoperability and managing crises.

■ NATO's programmes also help partner nations to develop their own defence and security institutions and forces.

■ In partnering with NATO, partners can:
 – share insights on areas of common interest or concern through political consultations and intelligence-sharing;
 – gain access to advice and support as they reform and strengthen defence institutions and capacities;
 – participate in a rich menu of education, training and consultation events (over 1,200 events a year are open to partners through a Partnership Cooperation Menu);
 – prepare together for future operations and missions by participating in exercises and training;
 – contribute to current NATO-led operations and missions;
 – share lessons learned from past operations and develop policy for the future;
 – work together with Allies on research and capability development.

■ Through partnership, NATO and partners also pursue a broad vision of security:
 – integrating gender perspectives into security and defence;
 – fighting against corruption in the defence sector;
 – enhancing efforts to control or destroy arms, ammunition and unexploded ordnance;
 – advancing joint scientific projects.

■ Partnership has evolved over the years, to encompass more nations, more flexible instruments, and new forms of cooperation and consultation.

More background information

A flexible network of partnerships with non-member countries

Dialogue and cooperation with partners can make a concrete contribution to enhance international security, to defend the values on which the Alliance is based, to NATO's operations, and to prepare interested nations for membership.

In both regional frameworks and on a bilateral level, NATO develops relations based on common values, reciprocity, mutual benefit and mutual respect.

In the Euro-Atlantic area, the 29 Allies engage in relations with 21 partner countries through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace – a major programme of bilateral cooperation with individual Euro-Atlantic partners. Among these partners, NATO has developed specific structures for its relationships with Russia[1], Ukraine and Georgia.

NATO is developing relations with the seven countries on the southern Mediterranean rim through the Mediterranean Dialogue, as well as with four countries from the Gulf region through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

NATO also cooperates with a range of countries which are not part of these regional partnership frameworks. Referred to as "partners across the globe", they include Afghanistan, Australia, Colombia, Iraq, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand and Pakistan.

NATO has also developed flexible means of cooperation with partners, across different regions. NATO can work with so-called "29+n" groups of partners, where partners are chosen based on a common interest or theme. At the 2014 Wales Summit, NATO introduced the possibility of "enhanced opportunities" for certain partners to build a deeper, more tailor-made bilateral relationship with NATO. At the same time, Allied leaders launched the "Interoperability Platform", a permanent format for cooperation with partners on the interoperability needed for future crisis management and operations.

Key objectives of NATO's partnerships

Under NATO's partnership policies, the strategic objectives of NATO's partner relations are to:

■ Enhance Euro-Atlantic and international security, peace and stability;

■ Promote regional security and cooperation;

■ Facilitate mutually beneficial cooperation on issues of common interest, including international efforts to meet emerging security challenges;

■ Prepare interested eligible nations for NATO membership;

■ Promote democratic values and institutional reforms, especially in the defence and security sector;

■ Enhance support for NATO-led operations and missions;

■ Enhance awareness of security developments including through early warning, with a view to preventing crises;

■ Build confidence and achieve better mutual understanding, including about NATO's role and activities, in particular through enhanced public diplomacy.

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[1] In April 2014, NATO foreign ministers decided to suspend all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia but to maintain political contacts at the level of ambassadors and above.

That said, each partner determines – with NATO – the pace, scope, intensity and focus of their partnership with NATO, as well as individual objectives. This is often captured in a document setting goals for the relationship, which is to be regularly reviewed. However, many of NATO's partnership activities involve more than one partner at a time.

Partnership in practice: how NATO works with partners

In practice, NATO's partnership objectives are taken forward through a broad variety of means. Broadly speaking, NATO opens up parts of its processes, procedures and structures to the participation of partners, allowing partners to make concrete contributions through these. In some cases, special programmes have been created to assist and engage partners on their specific needs. Key areas for cooperation are set out below:

Consultation is key to the work of NATO as an alliance and is central to partnerships. Political consultations can help understand security developments, including regional issues, and shape common approaches to preventing crises or tackling a security challenge. NATO's many committees and bodies often meet in formations with partners to shape cooperation in specific areas. NATO Allies meet with partners (individually or in groups) on a broad variety of subjects and at a variety of levels every day.

Interoperability is the ability to operate together using harmonized standards, doctrines, procedures and equipment. It is essential to the work of an alliance of multiple countries with national defence forces, and is equally important for working together with partners that wish to contribute in supporting the Alliance in achieving its tactical, operational and strategic objectives. Much of day-to-day cooperation in NATO – including with partners – is focused on achieving this interoperability. In 2014, recognising the importance of maintaining interoperability with partners for future crisis management, NATO launched the Partnership Interoperability Initiative, which inter alia launched mechanisms for enhanced cooperation with nations that wished to maintain deeper interoperability with NATO.

Partners **contribute to NATO-led operations and missions,** whether through supporting peace by training security forces in the Western Balkans and Afghanistan or monitoring maritime activity in the Mediterranean Sea or off the Horn of Africa. As contributors to those missions, partners are invited to shape policy and decisions that affect those missions, alongside Allies. A number of tools have been created to assist partners in developing their ability to participate in NATO-led operations, and be interoperable with Allies' forces.

For many years, NATO has worked with partners on **defence reform, institution and capacity-building**. As part of its work to project stability, NATO Allies have agreed that long-term and lasting stability is linked to improved governance of defence and security sector and institutions. Viable, effective and resilient defence institutions are essential to the long-term success of efforts to strengthen partner capacity. In 2004, NATO Allies and partners adopted the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building, setting basic benchmarks for defence institutions. In a NATO context, such work can go from strategic objective setting and joint reviews, to expert assistance and advice, as well as targeted education and training. Defence advice and reform is provided through bilateral partnership cooperation programmes, as well as through expert advisory programmes targeting specific aspects of Defence Institution Building, like the Defence Education Enhancement Programme or Building Integrity. In 2014, at the Wales Summit, NATO adopted the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative *(see more below)*. The Initiative builds on NATO's extensive track record and expertise in supporting, advising, assisting, training and mentoring countries requiring capacity-building support of the Alliance, and allows for the development of targeted, tailor-made packages of defence capacity-building support for countries, upon request and with Allied consent.

NATO also engages with partners in a broad variety of other areas where it has developed expertise and programmes. These include:

- Counter-terrorism;
- Counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery;

- Emerging security challenges, such as those related to cyber defence, energy security and maritime security, including counter-piracy;

- Civil emergency planning.

Towards more flexibility: evolutions in NATO's partnerships

NATO's partnerships began in 1990, when, at the London Summit, NATO pledged to "*extend… the hand of friendship*" to its former adversaries in the Cold War. This soon led to the creation of cooperation structures, such as the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1991. In January 1994, the Partnership for Peace was launched, NATO's first formal partnership programme, focused on NATO's neighbours in Europe and the former Soviet Union. The same year, Allies launched the Mediterranean Dialogue for its Mediterranean neighbours. In 2004, Allies launched the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative for Gulf countries, and over the years, through cooperation in NATO missions and operations, NATO developed and built relations with partners further across the globe.

Reflecting the significant evolutions in NATO's partnerships policy, in line with the new Strategic Concept adopted in 2010, a focused effort to reform NATO's partnerships policy was launched at the 2010 Lisbon Summit to make dialogue and cooperation more inclusive, flexible, meaningful and strategically oriented. This resulted in a new partnership policy, which was endorsed by NATO foreign ministers at their meeting in Berlin in April 2011.

The new policy aimed to reinforce existing partnerships by strengthening consultation mechanisms and by facilitating more substance-driven cooperation. In addition, the new policy outlined a "toolbox" of mechanisms and activities for cooperation with partners.

In line with the Strategic Concept, NATO is offering its partners *"more political engagement with the Alliance, and a substantial role in shaping strategy and decisions on NATO-led operations to which they contribute".* The Political-Military Framework, which governs the way NATO involves partners in political consultation and the decision-making process for operations and missions to which they contribute, was updated, giving contributing partners decision-shaping authority but not the same decision-making authority as member countries.

The Berlin policy decisions opened up the possibility for new forms of political dialogue with partners, including through more flexible "29+n" formats (thematic or event-driven), and are used, on a case-by-case basis, to enhance consultation on security issues of common concern and cooperation in priority policy areas, such as counter-piracy, counter-narcotics in Afghanistan, and cyber defence. The 2011 policy also opened up the possibility of developing deeper relations with partners across the globe as well as key global actors and other new interlocutors across the globe which share the Allies' interest in peaceful international relations but have no individual programme of cooperation with NATO. A number of partners across the globe have since joined NATO's partnerships community; most recently, Colombia became a partner in 2017.

At the Wales Summit in September 2014, NATO leaders endorsed two important initiatives to reinforce the Alliance's commitment to the core task of cooperative security: the Partnership Interoperability Initiative, and the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative. The first initiative was designed to reinforce NATO's ability to provide security *with* partners in future, through interoperability; while the second was more focused on helping countries, upon request, to provide for their own security, by strengthening their defence and related security institutions and capacity.

The Partnership Interoperability Initiative provides measures designed to ensure that the deep connections built between NATO and partner forces over years of operations will be maintained and deepened so that partners can contribute to future NATO-led operations and, where applicable, to the NATO Response Force. The **Partnership Interoperability Initiative** has introduced a number of innovations, including the possibility of granting specific partners **enhanced opportunities** for deeper cooperation. Five partners (Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Sweden) currently have access to

this enhanced cooperation, which includes easing the process for these nations to participate in exercises and enabling regular consultation on security matters; their status as enhanced opportunity partners was renewed in late 2017.

Another innovation concerns the establishment of the **Interoperability Platform**, a standing forum for meetings with 24 partners that have contributed to NATO operations or have taken concrete steps to deepen their interoperability with NATO. In this format, Allies and partners discuss projects and issues that affect interoperability, such as education, training, exercises, evaluation, capability development, command and control systems, and logistics.

The **Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative** builds on NATO's extensive track record and expertise in supporting, advising, assisting, training and mentoring countries requiring capacity-building support of the Alliance. It aims to reinforce NATO's commitment to partner nations and help the Alliance to project stability without deploying large combat forces, as part of the Alliance's overall contribution to international security, stability and conflict prevention. The programme is extended to countries upon their request, and with Allied consent. Allies have agreed to offer DCB packages to Georgia, Iraq, Jordan and the Republic of Moldova, following their requests.

Partnership Interoperability Initiative

The Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII) was launched at the Wales Summit in 2014 to ensure that the deep connections built up between NATO and partner forces over years of operations will be maintained and deepened. In this way, partners can contribute to future crisis management, including NATO-led operations and, where applicable, to the NATO Response Force.

Highlights

- NATO partners contribute to NATO-led operations and missions, as well as exercises, often significantly.

- Partner forces need to be interoperable – able to operate together with NATO forces according to NATO standards, rules, procedures and using similar equipment.

- At the 2014 Wales Summit, NATO launched the Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII) to maintain and deepen the interoperability that has been developed with partners during NATO-led operations and missions over the last decades.

- The PII underlined the importance of interoperability for all its partnerships and proposed new means to deepen cooperation with those partners that wished to be more interoperable with NATO.

- As a result of the PII, NATO granted tailor-made "enhanced opportunities" for deeper cooperation with five partners: Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Sweden.

- The PII also launched the "Interoperability Platform" (IP) to provide a wider group of partners with deeper access to cooperation on interoperability issues – currently 24 selected partners, who are interested and committed to deepening interoperability for future crises, participate in meetings of a number of NATO committees and bodies held in the IP format.

A focus on interoperability

Partners can contribute to NATO-led operations and missions – whether through supporting peace by training security forces in the Western Balkans and Afghanistan, or monitoring maritime activity in the

Mediterranean Sea or off the Horn of Africa – as well as NATO exercises. To be able to contribute effectively, partners need to be interoperable with NATO.

Interoperability is the ability to operate together using harmonised standards, doctrines, procedures and equipment. It is essential to the work of an alliance of multiple countries with national defence forces, and is equally important for working together with partners that wish to contribute in supporting NATO in achieving its tactical, operational and strategic objectives. Much of day-to-day cooperation in NATO – including with partners – is focused on achieving this interoperability.

The Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII)

In 2014, Allied leaders responded to the need to maintain and enhance interoperability built up with partners during years of operations (including in Afghanistan and the Western Balkans), recognising the importance of maintaining interoperability with partners for future crisis management. NATO launched the Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII), which aims to:

- re-emphasise the importance of developing interoperability with and for all partners, and of ensuring that all existing partnership interoperability programmes are used to their full potential;

- enhance support for those partners that wish to maintain and enhance their interoperability, including through deeper cooperation and dialogue;

- offer enhanced opportunities for cooperation to those partners that provide sustained and significant force, capability or other contributions to the Alliance;

- underline that interoperability also needs to be a priority for NATO's relations with other international organisations with a role in international crisis management.

More tailor-made cooperation: ''Enhanced Opportunities Partners''

The PII recognised that deeper interoperability underpins and complements closer relations between NATO and partners. As partner nations' contributions to NATO missions and operations as well as force pools became more ambitious and complex, they would benefit from a more tailor-made relationship to help sustain such contributions, based on specific "enhanced opportunities" for cooperation, including:

- regular, political consultations on security matters, including possibly at ministerial level;

- enhanced access to interoperability programmes and exercises;

- sharing information, including on lessons learned;

- closer association of such partners in times of crisis and the preparation of operations.

Shortly after the 2014 Wales Summit, five partners were granted these "enhanced opportunities": Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan, and Sweden. Since then, each "Enhanced Opportunities Partner" (EOP) has taken forward this programme of cooperation with NATO in a tailor-made manner, in areas of mutual interest for NATO and the partner concerned.

A standing format for cooperation on interoperability issues: the Interoperability Platform

Interoperability for current and future military cooperation to tackle security challenges is a key focus of day-to-day work at NATO, including in a broad range of committees, working groups and expert communities. The PII recognised that if partners are to be interoperable to manage crises with NATO tomorrow, they need to work with NATO on interoperability issues today – and be part of those discussions.

This is why the PII launched a standing format for NATO-partner cooperation on interoperability and related issues: the Interoperability Platform (IP)**.** The format cuts across traditional, geographical frameworks for cooperation, and brings together all partners that have contributed to NATO operations or have taken concrete steps to deepen their interoperability with NATO. Participation in these programmes and activities changes, so the North Atlantic Council – the Alliance's highest political decision-making body – adjusts participation every year. As of June 2017, 24 partners are members of the IP.

In this format, Allies and partners discuss projects and issues that affect interoperability for future crisis management, such as command and control systems, education and training, exercises or logistics.

Recognising the breadth and depth of work needed on interoperability, any NATO committee or body can meet in IP format, at different levels. It was launched by a meeting of defence ministers in IP format at the Wales Summit, and since then has met in a number of configurations at NATO Headquarters, including at the level of the North Atlantic Council, the Military Committee, the Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee, the Operations Policy Committee, and technical groups such as the Conference of National Armaments Directors, the Command, Control and Consultation Board, the Civil Emergency Planning Committee and others. At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, the defence ministers of the IP nations will meet with their NATO counterparts to review progress since Wales.

● **The following 24 partners are part of the IP as of June 2017:**

Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1], Tunisia, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates.

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[1]   Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative

The Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative reinforces NATO's commitment to partners and helps project stability by providing support to nations requesting assistance from NATO. DCB helps partners improve their defence and related security capacities, as well as their resilience, and, therefore, contributes to the security of the Alliance. It can include various types of support, ranging from strategic advice on defence and security sector reform and institution-building, to development of local forces through education and training, or advice and assistance in specialised areas such as logistics or cyber defence.

Highlights

- The DCB Initiative was launched in September 2014 at the NATO Summit in Wales.

- The Initiative is demand-driven and tailored to the needs of the recipient nations by providing support which reinforces and exceeds what is offered through other existing programmes.

- The Initiative builds on NATO's extensive track record and expertise in advising, assisting, training and mentoring countries that require defence and related security capacity building support. It uses NATO's unique defence expertise to provide and coordinate practical specialised support.

- Good progress continues on the DCB packages for Georgia, Iraq, Jordan and the Republic of Moldova.

- The packages are implemented with the support of Allies and partners, who provide advisors, trainers and coordinators to work with the recipient countries, and help fund projects. A dedicated DCB Trust Fund is in place, since 2015, to provide financial support to the Initiative.

- NATO has also received requests for DCB support from Libya and Tunisia.

More background information

Cooperation with DCB partners

NATO has been providing capacity-building through a number of partnership programmes and also as part of its operations and missions. The DCB Initiative enhances this role by allowing NATO to undertake DCB activities in support of partner nations, other non-partner nations or other international organisations. Any NATO assistance is provided following a specific request by the recipient country – which is then thoroughly assessed and considered by the North Atlantic Council – and relies on mutual political commitment and local ownership. If existing programmes cannot accommodate the request, then the Alliance may consider offering a tailored set of assistance measures – a specific "DCB package". Four DCB packages have been launched thus far. Additionally, NATO has also received requests for DCB support from Libya and Tunisia.

Georgia

The DCB package for Georgia was agreed in 2014 at the Wales Summit and intensified in 2016 at the Warsaw Summit.

It is provided through the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP), which includes support in a wide range of areas: the Joint Training and Evaluation Centre, the Defence Institution Building School, a logistics capability, acquisitions, Special Operations Forces, intelligence-sharing and secure communications, military police, cyber defence, maritime security, aviation, air defence, strategic communications, crisis management and counter-mobility. The package also includes support and contributions to NATO exercises in Georgia that are open to partners.

Since 2014, many projects and advisory activities have been launched in support of the SNGP initiatives. One of the highlights was the inauguration of the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre in August 2015 by Georgian leaders and the NATO Secretary General. The centre is tasked with strengthening the capacities of the Georgian Armed Forces, as well as improving the interoperability of Georgian and Allied forces and contributing to regional security cooperation. It has conducted many activities since its establishment, and it will play an important role in the upcoming 2019 NATO-Georgia exercise. Another flagship initiative of the SNGP, the Defence Institution Building School, also continues to produce results, running specialised courses. Other SNGP initiatives also make progress. The strategic and operational planning initiative was completed in 2017.

The SNGP is currently supported by all Allies and two partners, who all together provide more than 40 experts, resident or frequently traveling to Georgia. A three-person Core Team in Tbilisi coordinates the implementation of the package.

Iraq

The DCB package for Iraq was agreed in July 2015 following a request from the Iraqi Prime Minister. At the 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw, NATO agreed to transfer the training and capacity-building activities inside Iraq based on the request of the Iraqi Prime Minister. The NATO Training and Capacity Building activity in Iraq currently conduct activities in the following areas: counter-improvised explosive devices (C-IED), explosive ordnance disposal and demining; civil-military planning support to operations; reform of the Iraqi security institutions; technical training on the maintenance of Soviet-era armoured vehicles; military medicine and medical assistance; advice on security sector reform (SSR); and civil-military planning support to operations.

In-country training started in January 2017 with a "train-the-trainer" focus, aiming primarily to increase the training capacity of Iraq. The activities conducted range from multiple workshops on civilian-military cooperation, train-the-trainer courses to Iraqi instructors, to senior leader's seminars on C-IED. In the SSR area, NATO is providing advice to the Iraqi authorities on the transformation and good governance of the defence sector.

One of the key principles of NATO's capacity-building activities is to seek complementarity with other international actors. As such, NATO works closely with the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL, the European Union, the United Nations and individual nations providing support to Iraq. One such example of this are the combined workshops conducted by the international community assisting Iraq's SSR, which was supported by NATO experts.

Jordan

The DCB assistance for Jordan builds upon the already extensive level of cooperation between NATO and Jordan through various partnership tools. The initial DCB package agreed in 2014 at the Wales Summit was revised and approved in 2017 reflecting the progress made and addressing the evolving security needs of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

The package focuses on the areas of information protection, cyber defence, military exercises, C-IED, strategic defence review, personnel management, logistics system, civil preparedness/ crisis management and border security.

Activities are underway in elements of the package, ranging from courses for Jordanian personnel on C-IED to advice on strategy and capability development in other areas. The support provided on C-IED, cyber defence and exercises has been particularly fruitful. A Computer Emergency Response Team has been established for the Jordanian Armed Forces, which has a nation-wide responsibility. Jordan hosted successfully the NATO Regional Exercise 2017 (REGEX 2017), the first NATO exercise held in a Mediterranean Dialogue country. The implementation of the package is supported, *inter alia*, by NATO's Science for Peace and Security Programme in the areas of C-IED, cyber defence and border security, as well as the DCB Trust Fund projects, particularly in the areas of logistics (codification) and civil preparedness/ crisis management.

Republic of Moldova

Following the commitment made at the 2014 Wales Summit, the DCB package for the Republic of Moldova was launched in June 2015.

The package will be delivered in two phases. In phase one, which is currently underway, NATO is advising and assisting in the establishment of a national security strategy, national defence strategy, a military strategy and a force structure for Moldova. NATO brings defence reform experts to Moldova on a frequent basis to assist Moldovan authorities as they develop these key political and strategic-level directions and guidance for the defence sector and the development of the armed forces. In parallel to the defence sector reform, NATO has been providing support to Moldova in several specific areas, such as cyber defence, defence education, building integrity and the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

In phase two, NATO will continue to provide advice and will assist with specific elements of the transformation of Moldova's armed forces and relevant institutions.

DCB Trust Fund

The DCB Trust Fund was established in 2015 to provide financial support and resources to implement the DCB Initiatives. The Trust Fund allows Allies and partners to contribute, on a voluntary basis, to the implementation of projects developed in support of the packages. It has proven to be an important enabler to kick-start DCB activities. Since the establishment of the DCB Trust Fund, 17 Allies and two partners have contributed to the DCB Trust Fund, which has facilitated 15 projects and is currently supporting another seven projects.

Defence Institution Building

The Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB) aims to reinforce efforts by partner countries to reform and restructure their defence institutions to meet domestic needs as well as international commitments.

Highlights

- Effective and efficient state defence institutions under civilian and democratic control are fundamental to stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and for international security cooperation, PAP-DIB was launched at NATO's Istanbul Summit in June 2004.

- The reform of defence and security institution is often a long and difficult process, and often partner countries are hampered by scarce resources and limited experience. PAP-DIB offers support by defining common objectives for partnership work in this area, encouraging exchange of relevant experience, and helping tailor and focus bilateral defence and security assistance programmes.

More background information

▬▬ Objectives

The objectives of the Action Plan on Defence Institution Building include:

- effective and transparent arrangements for the democratic control of defence activities;

- civilian participation in developing defence and security policy;

- effective and transparent legislative and judicial oversight of the defence sector;

- enhanced assessment of security risks and national defence requirements, matched with developing and maintaining affordable and interoperable capabilities;

- optimising the management of defence ministries and other agencies which have associated force structures;

- compliance with international norms and practices in the defence sector, including export controls;

- effective and transparent financial, planning and resource allocation procedures in the defence area;

- effective management of defence spending as well as of the socio-economic consequences of defence restructuring;

- effective and transparent personnel structures and practices in the defence forces;

- effective international cooperation and good neighbourly relations in defence and security matters.

Key tools for implementation

Implementation of the Action Plan makes maximum use of existing partnership tools and mechanisms.

Planning and Review Process

One of the key instruments that contribute to defence institution building is the Planning and Review Process (PARP). It encourages partners to develop forces and capabilities able to operate alongside Allied nations in operations and other activities. Furthermore, PARP plays a prominent role in the transformation and defence reform of partners' armed forces. This includes support to the development of national defence and security policy and architectures; efficient and democratically responsible defence institutions and armed forces under democratic and civilian control; and defence planning. PARP is also crucial for countries aspiring to join the Alliance to prepare their forces and capabilities for possible membership.

Participation in PARP is open to all NATO's partners with the ambition to pursue a closer relationship with the Alliance. Euro-Atlantic partners participate on a voluntary basis, and other partners may participate as well, upon approval of the North Atlantic Council. Currently, 19 partners take part in PARP – each has its own history and pace of progress, as well as unique needs and priorities.

Under PARP, Allies and each of the participating partners negotiate a set of tailored planning targets for the individual partner country, known as Partnership Goals. The fulfilment of the Goals is reviewed regularly. In sum, PARP provides a well-established framework to assist partners to develop effective, interoperable, affordable and sustainable armed forces as well as to promote wider defence and security sector transformation and reform efforts.

(Learn more about PARP)

Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative

Since 2014, defence institution building is also pursued through the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative. It reinforces NATO's commitment to partners and helps project stability by providing practical support to a number of partners in the form of so-called DCB packages. The aim is to complement support already provided by other NATO partnership tools and programmes, such as PARP. The DCB packages are based on specific requests for NATO assistance and agreed by the North Atlantic Council. They are tailored to the unique needs and priorities of each country, and rely on mutual political commitment and local ownership. DCB puts great emphasis on sustainability and long-term effects of the assistance provided.

Currently, DCB packages have been launched for four countries: Georgia, Iraq, Jordan and the Republic of Moldova. Each of the individual DCB packages contains aspects relevant to defence institution building. The support provided by NATO under DCB includes strategic-level advice on defence and security sector reform and institution-building; development of local forces through education and training; and advice and assistance in specialised areas such as logistics or cyber defence. The packages

are implemented thanks to the generous contributions of Allies and partner countries, who provide advisors, trainers and coordinators to work with the recipient countries, as well as funding projects through a DCB Trust Fund.

(Learn more about DCB)

Professional Development Programme

The Professional Development Programme (PDP) assists interested partner countries in developing the professional skills of civilian personnel employed in their defence and security institutions.

The Programme works with the legislative and executive branches to:

- increase the professional skills of key civilian specialists responsible for national security and managing reforms;

- contribute to increasing the resilience of state institutions by focusing on the skills of personnel responsible for addressing security challenges;

- build the capacity of professional development agencies, in this way directly contributing to establishing self-sustaining local training capacities for the defence and security sectors;

- address sectoral requirements including effective implementation of specific reform concepts and strategies.

By addressing these objectives, the Programme contributes to increasing the effectiveness of civil and democratic control of security forces and assists partner countries in establishing modern defence and security institutions in which civilian expertise plays vital roles. Currently, the Programme operates in Georgia and Ukraine.

NATO Trust Fund on Military Career Transition

The NATO Trust Fund on Military Career Transition promotes responsible governance in partner countries focused on the development of sustainable and integrated approaches to managing the resettlement of military personnel in the Armed Forces and other defence and security-related state organisations. As its key component, the Programme provides policy advice by identifying all requirements in terms of the recruitment-retention-transition nexus, to assist a partner country to develop the desired human resource management system.

The work under the Programme extends to developing the necessary legal and normative documents, including guiding documents for human resources management processes, mechanisms, tools and financing as well as implementing communication strategies related to military career transition.

Practical assistance also takes the form of professional retraining courses to support the successful transition to civilian professional life of released military personnel and facilitating their resettlement by enabling them to acquire an additional professional qualification orientated at the demand of the civilian labour market. The Programme also offers psychological rehabilitation seminars aimed at mitigating post-traumatic stress syndrome disorders among demobilised military servicemen.

Defence Education Enhancement Programme

The NATO Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) is a vehicle for institutional reform. It contributes to international security by making defence education institutions compatible to NATO defence education standards and values.

DEEP addresses the defence education component of defence institution building, helping to facilitate institutional adaptation by:

- supporting defence education institutions through faculty development (how to teach) and curriculum development (what to teach);

- tailored support to meet individual partner defence education requirements, as every defence education institution is different and should be treated individually;

- multi-year programmes of cooperation managed jointly by NATO and the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes to assist the host nation government defence education system to support the modernisation process.

(Learn more about DEEP)

Building Integrity Programme

The NATO Building Integrity (BI) Programme is part of NATO's commitment to strengthening integrity, transparency and accountability in the defence and related security sector. Launched in 2007 by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, BI stems from the PAP-DIB objective to assist nations in reforming their defence and security sector.

BI promotes the values and principles of good governance. It helps to develop effective and efficient defence institutions under civilian and democratic control, providing tailored support at the institutional and individual levels based on strategic advice and capacity-building activities.

At the July 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders endorsed the BI Policy, recognising that poor governance and corruption are a security threat. The ensuing BI Action Plan noted by Allied foreign ministers in December 2016 provides further guidance for the implementation of BI into NATO's three core tasks (collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security) as well as to NATO member states and partner countries.

(Learn more about BI)

Partnership tools

NATO has developed a number of partnership tools and mechanisms to support cooperation with partner countries through a mix of policies, programmes, action plans and other arrangements. Many tools are focused on the important priorities of interoperability and building capabilities, and supporting defence and security-related reform.

Highlights

- A Partnership Cooperation Menu comprising approximately 1,400 activities is accessible to all NATO partners.

- Several initiatives are open to all partners that allow them to cooperate with NATO mainly focusing on interoperability and building capacity, and supporting defence and security-related reform.

- Partnership tools for deeper bilateral cooperation with individual partners in specific areas include, for instance, the Planning and Review Process, the Operational Capabilities Concept and the Individual Partnership Action Plans.

Setting objectives for cooperation

Each partner determines the pace, scope, intensity and focus of their partnership with NATO, as well as individual objectives. Bilateral (NATO-partner) cooperation documents set out the main objectives and goals of that partner's cooperation with NATO. There are three main types of bilateral partnership documents, set out below. Broadly speaking, the type of document chosen reflects the different nature and emphasis of the relationship.

The **Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP)** is the standard document, developed usually every two years by the partner in close consultation with NATO staffs, and then

approved by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the partner. It is open to all partners, and is modular in structure, adaptable to the interests and objectives of the partner and NATO.

The **Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP),** which partners can take up instead of IPCPs, offer partners the opportunity to deepen their cooperation with NATO and sharpen the focus on domestic reform efforts. Developed on a two-year basis, these plans include a wide range of jointly agreed objectives and targets for reforms on political issues as well as security and defence issues. IPAP prioritises and coordinates all aspects of the NATO-partner relationship, provides for an enhanced political dialogue and systematic support to democratic and defence and related security sector reform, including through an annual Allied assessment of progress in reforms undertaken by each participating partner.

The **Annual National Programme (ANP)** is the most demanding document, focused on comprehensive democratic, security and defence reforms, developed annually by the partner in consultation with NATO. The ANP is open to Membership Action Plan (MAP) nations, to track progress on the road to NATO membership; Georgia in the context of the NATO-Georgia Commission; and Ukraine in the context of the NATO-Ukraine Commission. Unlike the IPCP or IPAP, the ANP is a nationally owned document and is not agreed by the NAC. However, an annual assessment of progress in reforms is conducted by NATO staffs, agreed by the Allies, and discussed with each participating partner at NAC level.

Building capabilities and interoperability

Partner countries have made and continue to make significant contributions to the Alliance's operations and missions, whether it be supporting peace in the Western Balkans and Afghanistan, training national security forces in Iraq, monitoring maritime activity in the Mediterranean Sea, or helping protect civilians in Libya.

At the Wales Summit in September 2014, NATO leaders endorsed two important initiatives to reinforce the Alliance's commitment to the core task of cooperative security: the Partnership Interoperability Initiative and the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative. The first initiative was designed to reinforce NATO's ability to provide security *with* partners in future, through interoperability; while the second was more focused on helping partners provide for their own security, by strengthening their defensc and related security capacity. A number of tools have been developed to assist partners in developing their own defence capacities and defence institutions, ensuring that partner forces are able to provide for their own security, capable of participating in NATO-led operations, and interoperable with Allies' forces.

They include the following:

The **Planning and Review Process (PARP)** helps develop the interoperability and capabilities of forces which might be made available for NATO training, exercises and operations. Under PARP, Allies and partners, together negotiate and set planning targets with a partner country. Regular reviews measure progress. In addition, PARP also provides a framework to assist partners to develop effective, affordable and sustainable armed forces as well as to promote wider defence and security sector transformation and reform efforts. It is the main instrument used to assess the implementation of defence-related objectives and targets defined under IPAPs. PARP is open to Euro-Atlantic partners on a voluntary basis and is open to other partner countries on a case-by-case basis, upon approval of the NAC.

The **Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC)** Evaluation and Feedback Programme is used to develop and train partner land, maritime, air or Special Operations Forces that seek to meet NATO standards. This rigorous process can often take a few years, but it ensures that partner forces are ready to work with Allied forces once deployed. Some partners use the OCC as a strategic tool to transform their defence forces. The OCC has contributed significantly to the increasing number of partner forces participating in NATO-led operations and the NATO Response Force.

Exercising is key for maintaining, testing and evaluating readiness and interoperability, also for partners. NATO offers partners a chance to participate in the **Military Training and Exercise Programme**

(MTEP) to promote their interoperability. Through the MTEP, a five-year planning horizon provides a starting point for exercise planning and the allocation of resources.

In addition, and on a case-by-case basis, Allies may invite partners to take part in **crisis-management exercises** that engage the NAC and ministries in participating capitals, and national political and military representation at NATO Headquarters, in consultations on the strategic management of crises during an exercise.

Once a partner wishes to join a NATO-led operation, the **Political-Military Framework (PMF)** sets out principles and guidelines for the involvement of all partner countries in political consultations and decision-shaping, in operational planning and in command arrangements for operations to which they contribute.

Several tools and programmes have been developed to provide assistance to partner countries in their own efforts to transform defence and security-related structures and policies, and to manage the economic and social consequences of reforms. An important priority is to promote the development of effective defence institutions that are under civil and democratic control.

In particular, since 2014, the **Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative** reinforces NATO's commitment to partners and helps project stability by providing support to nations requesting defence capacity assistance from NATO. It can include various types of support, ranging from strategic advice on defence and security sector reform and institution building, to development of local forces through education and training, or advice and assistance in specialised areas such as logistics or cyber defence.

The **Building Integrity Initiative** is aimed at promoting good practice, strengthening transparency, accountability and integrity to reduce the risk of corruption in the defence establishments of Allies and partners alike.

In addition, a **Professional Development Programme** can be launched for the civilian personnel of defence and security establishments to strengthen the capacity for democratic management and oversight.

Through the **Partnership Trust Fund policy**, individual Allies and partners support practical demilitarization projects and defence transformation projects in partner countries through individual Trust Funds.

Supporting transformation through education, training and exercises

NATO offers different means to access education, training and exercises, which can help partners to train and test personnel in the various areas relevant to their NATO partnerships.

Education and training in various areas is offered to decision-makers, military forces, civil servants and representatives of civil society through institutions such as the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany; the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy; and some 30 national Partnership Training and Education Centres.

NATO offers partners a **Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM) –** an annual catalogue which comprises, on average, some 1,400 education, training and other events for partners across 37 disciplines, held in more than 50 countries, which cater to the needs of around 10, 000 participants from partner countries. In addition to NATO bodies, Allies and partners can offer contributions to the PCM.

To support education and training for defence reform, the **Defence Education Enhancement Programmes (DEEPs)** are tailored programmes through which the Alliance advises partners on how to build, develop and reform educational institutions in the security, defence and military domain.

Wider cooperation

The NATO **Science for Peace and Security (SPS)** Programme promotes joint cooperative projects between Allies and partners in the field of security-related civil science and technology. Funding applications should address SPS key priorities -- these are linked to NATO's strategic objectives and focus on projects in direct support to NATO's operations, as well as projects that enhance defenc capacity building and address other security threats.

Disaster response and preparedness is also an important area of cooperation with partners. The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) is a 24/7 focal point for coordinating disaster-relief and consequence management efforts among NATO and partner countries, and has guided consequence-management efforts in more than 45 emergencies, including fighting floods and forest fires, and dealing with the aftermath of earthquakes.

The principles of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and related Resolutions – that form the Women, Peace and Security agenda – were first developed into a NATO policy approved by Allies and partners in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in 2007. The Resolutions reaffirm the role of women in conflict and post-conflict situations and encourage greater participation of women and the incorporation of gender perspectives in peace and security efforts. Over the years, the policy has been updated, related action plans have been strengthened and more partner countries from across the globe have become associated with these efforts. Currently NATO's UNSCR 1325 coalition is the largest worldwide with 55 nations associated to the Action Plan. In practice, NATO has made significant progress in embedding gender perspectives within education, training and exercises, as well as the planning and execution of missions and operations, policies and guidelines.

Relations with Finland

NATO and Finland actively cooperate on peace-support operations and have developed practical cooperation in many other areas, including education and training, and the development of military capabilities.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Sauli Niinistö, President of Finland

Highlights

- Finnish cooperation with NATO is based on its longstanding policy of military non-alignment and a firm national political consensus.

- Cooperation has been reinforced over the years since Finland joined NATO's Partnership for Peace in 1994 and became a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997.

- Finland is one of NATO's most active partners and a valued contributor to NATO-led operations and missions in the Balkans and Afghanistan – it is one of five countries that has enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with NATO.

- An important priority for cooperation is to develop capabilities and maintain the ability of the Finnish armed forces to work with those of NATO and other partner countries in multinational peace-support operations.

- In the current security context with heightened concerns about Russian military activities, NATO is stepping up cooperation with Finland and Sweden in the Baltic region.

- Finland's role in training the forces of NATO partner countries is greatly valued as is its support for several NATO-led Trust Fund projects aimed at promoting defence and security reform in partner countries.

- Finland actively supports the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

More background information

Key areas of cooperation

Security cooperation

Finland is one of five countries (known as 'Enhanced Opportunity Partners'[1]) that make particularly significant contributions to NATO-led operations and that support other Alliance objectives. As such, the country has enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with the Allies.

In the current security context with heightened concerns about Russian military activities, NATO is stepping up cooperation with Finland and Sweden. This means expanding political dialogue, including at the highest levels, exchanges of information on hybrid warfare, coordinating training and exercises, and developing better joint situational awareness to address common threats and develop joint actions, if needed. Both partners participate in the enhanced NATO Response Force (NRF) in a supplementary role and subject to national decisions, as well as hold regular consultations with NATO on security in the Baltic Sea region.

In 2017, Finland established the Helsinki European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats. The centre is supported by NATO and the European Union (EU), and NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg and EU HR/VP Mogherini attended the inauguration in October 2017.

At NATO's Wales Summit in September 2014, Finland and Sweden signed a memorandum of understanding on Host Nation Support, which addresses issues related to the provision of civil and military assistance to Allied forces located on, or in transit through, their territory in peacetime, crisis or war. The agreement was ratified by the Finnish parliament in 2015.

Since 2002, Finnish soldiers have been working alongside Allied forces in Afghanistan – first, as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which completed its mission at the end of 2014, and currently as part of the follow-on mission (known as Resolute Support) to further train, assist and advise the Afghan security forces and institutions. Since 2007, Finland has contributed USD 14.5 million to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund. Finland also contributes to a project aimed at training counter-narcotics personnel from Afghanistan and other Central Asian partner countries.

Finnish forces have played significant roles in securing peace in the former Yugoslavia. Finnish soldiers are currently operating with the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) and, in the past, Finland contributed a battalion to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finland's role in training the forces of partner countries, particularly in peacekeeping, is greatly valued by the Allies. In July 2001, NATO formally recognised the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT) in Tuusula as a Partnership for Peace (PfP) Training Centre. This Centre provides training on military crisis management for staff employed by international organisations such as NATO, the United Nations and the European Union.

Finland also regularly participates in NATO and PfP exercises. Among other forces, Finland has declared one mechanised infantry battalion group and one combat engineer unit, a coastal mine hunter and a number of fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft as potentially available for exercises and operations.

Finland plays an active part in a number of multinational projects for the development of capabilities. In the area of strategic airlift, it participates in two initiatives: the Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) programme and the Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS).

On cyber defence, Finland and NATO signed a Political Framework Arrangement in 2017 to provide a common framework for cooperation in this area. The country also participates in the Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, NATO cyber defence exercises, such as Cyber Coalition, and all cyber-related 'Smart Defence' projects.

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[1] Enhanced Opportunity Partners: Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Sweden

Furthermore, Finland is participating in the establishment of a multinational joint headquarters in Germany; a harbour protection system; and a deployable system for the surveillance of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents. It is a member of the Movement Coordination Centre Europe and is participating in the Air Transport, Air-to Air Refuelling and other Exchange of Services (ATARES), as well as the Air Situation Data Exchange.

Finland's close ties with its neighbours Norway, Denmark and Sweden have resulted in Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO), a further practical and efficient way for like-minded states to contribute to regional and international security. In Finland's case, this activity is pursued alongside the Nordic Battlegroup.

Defence and security sector reform

Finland has participated in the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) since 1995, which – along with participating in the Operational Capabilities Concept – influences Finnish planning and activities. Cooperation in these frameworks is aimed at enhancing the country's ability to take part in peace-support operations, as well as allowing Allies and other partners to benefit from Finnish expertise.

Finland has issued a new defence report in 2017, which provides new directions for the development of the Finnish Defence Forces (FDF). In line with the report's conclusions, the FDF continue to increase their readiness, and are now assigned with a new role, the reception and provision of international assistance. Finland continues to assign troops to participate in NATO-led operations, activities and exercises, and provides regular contributions to EU Battlegroups. It is cooperating with Estonia, Norway and Sweden, among other countries, in the development of a multinational rapid-reaction force for EU-led peace-support operations.

Finland is an active supporter of Trust Fund projects in other partner countries and has contributed to nearly a dozen so far, as well as supports a range of NATO's defence capacity building (DCB) efforts. Currently, it is supporting the DCB Trust Fund, and projects in Georgia, Jordan, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine as well as the Building Integrity Programme and the NATO-UNODC Counter-Narcotics Training Project.

Civil preparedness

Civil preparedness continues to be a major area of bilateral cooperation. The baseline requirements for national resilience provides valuable structure for cooperation and form a central part of Finland's engagement with NATO and its Civil Emergency Planning Committee. Finland also cooperates with NATO Allies in the field of regional assessments, security of supply, critical infrastructure protection, and in providing mutual support in dealing with the consequences of a major accident or disaster in the Euro-Atlantic area. This could include dealing with the consequences of incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear agents, as well as humanitarian disaster-relief operations.

In line with this, Finnish civil resources have been listed with NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) and Finland has nominated several civil experts to NATO's pool of experts. In addition, Finland has provided valuable civil preparedness training to Allies and partners, and has sent a national expert to work as part of the Civil Preparedness Section of the International Staff.

Security-related scientific cooperation

Under the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme, scientists and experts from Finland have participated in numerous advanced research workshops and multi-year projects on a range of topics. Key areas of cooperation include cyber defence, explosives detection, identification of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) agents, resilience capacity building, and security-related advanced technology. Finland (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) has also participated in a multi-year project co-led by experts from NATO Allies Romania and the United States together with Moldova and Ukraine. The project established a multinational telemedicine system, enabling medical specialists to provide real-time recommendations to first responders at emergency scenes or in combat zones.

Framework for cooperation

An Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP), which is jointly agreed for a two-year period, lays out the programme of cooperation between Finland and NATO. Key areas include security and peacekeeping cooperation, crisis management and civil emergency planning.

An important objective in Finland's participation in the PfP programme is to develop and enhance interoperability between NATO and partner forces through a variety of PfP instruments and mechanisms. Finland joined the PfP programme at its inception in 1994.

Milestones in relations

1994: Finland joins Partnership for Peace (PfP).

1995: Finland joins the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP).

1996: Finland contributes forces to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

1997: Finland joins the newly created Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

1999: Finnish forces participate in the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo, KFOR.

2001: The Finnish Defence Forces International Centre in Tuusula becomes a PfP training centre.

2002: Finnish forces begin their contribution to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

2008: Finland hosts the June 2008 Uusimaa civil crisis-management exercise.

2009: Finland and the NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NATO C3 Agency) – currently known as the NATO Communications and Information Agency or NCI Agency – sign a memorandum of understanding on mutual cooperation in key defence technology areas.

2011: Following the signature of an agreement in October, senior Finnish officials visit the NATO C3 Agency (currently known as NCI Agency) in November to discuss the details of a multi-year programme of work for cooperation on advanced technology.

March 2012: Finnish fighter jets take part in a NATO exercise over the Baltic region aimed at practising air policing skills.

November 2012: Finland takes part in Exercise Steadfast Juncture, an exercise organised at Amari Air Base, Estonia, focused on the command and control of a fictitious crisis-response operation involving the NATO Response Force; and the Cyber Coalition procedural exercise, focused on cyber defence capabilities.

15 November 2012: NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen visits Helsinki.

November 2013: Finland takes part in Exercise Steadfast Jazz.

February 2014: Finland and Sweden participate in Iceland Air Meet 2014 under the command of Norway, which had deployed to Iceland to conduct NATO's mission to provide airborne surveillance and interception capabilities to meet Iceland's peacetime preparedness needs.

September 2014: At the Wales Summit, Finland is identified as one of five countries that make particularly significant contributions to NATO operations and other Alliance objectives, which will have enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with the Allies. Along with Sweden, Finland signs a memorandum of understanding on Host Nation Support, which addresses issues related to the provision of civil and military assistance to Allied forces located on, or in transit through, their territory in peacetime, crisis or war.

January 2015: Following the completion of the ISAF operation in Afghanistan in December 2014, Finland starts contributing to the follow-on NATO-led mission ("Resolute Support") to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions.

February 2015: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets Finnish President Sauli Niinistö in the margins of the Munich Security Conference.

5 March 2015: NATO's Secretary General visits Finland for meetings with Prime Minister Alexander Stubb, Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja and Defence Minister Carl Haglund, as well as the Speaker of the Parliament, Eero Heinäluoma.

1 December 2015: The Secretary General has talks with Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström, along with Finnish Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Timo Soini, on the margins of NATO's meetings of foreign ministers in Brussels. They discuss ongoing work to expand exchanges of information, including on hybrid warfare, coordinating training and exercises, and developing better joint situational awareness to help NATO, Finland and Sweden more effectively to address common threats and develop joint actions, if needed. Also underway are talks on how to include the two partners in the enhanced NATO Response Force and regular consultations on security in the Baltic Sea region.

20 April 2016: Finland participates in two days of air exercises in the Baltic region alongside NATO and partner air forces, practising emergency responses and sharpening cooperation.

25-26 April 2016: The Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, General Petr Pavel, visits Finland for discussions with the President, Foreign Minister, Defence Minister and the Chief of Defence about regional security and NATO-Finnish military cooperation and interoperability.

19-20 May 2016: The Finnish foreign minister participates in a meeting with NATO foreign ministers devoted to NATO-EU cooperation.

8-9 July 2016: At the NATO Summit in Warsaw, the Allies underline the importance of further strengthening cooperation with Finland and Sweden, including through regular political consultations, shared situational awareness, and joint exercises, in order to respond to common challenges in a timely and effective manner. Finnish President Sauli Niinistö joins Summit discussions on current security challenges in Europe and on sustaining support for Afghanistan.

1 September 2016: NATO Deputy Secretary General Alexander Vershbow outlines the vital role that partners play within NATO in a keynote speech at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. While in Helsinki, he meets with the Finnish President as well as officials from both the foreign ministry and the defence ministry.

9 November 2016: President Niinistö visits NATO HQ – the first Finnish President ever to do so. Discussions with the Secretary General cover a wide range of issues, including the situation in the Baltic Sea region.

16 February 2017: The Political Framework Arrangement on cyber defence is signed between NATO and Finland.

11 April 2017: Several NATO Allies and European Union members come together for a ceremony in Helsinki to sign a memorandum of understanding on establishing a European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in the Finnish capital. Nine nations sign the Memorandum: Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States; other NATO and EU nations are expected to join the Centre in the near future. While not signatories themselves, NATO and the EU will participate actively in the Centre's activities.

11 June 2017: At the invitation of President Niinistö, NATO Deputy Secretary General Gottemoeler attends the Kultaranta talks on the future of European Security.

October 2017: NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg and EU High Representative/Vice President Mogherini attend the inauguration of the Helsinki European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, which is supported by NATO and the EU.

Relations with Georgia

Georgia aspires to join the Alliance. The country actively contributes to NATO-led operations and cooperates with the Allies and other partner countries in many other areas. Support for Georgia's reform efforts and its goal of integration in Euro-Atlantic institutions is a priority for cooperation.

During a visit to Georgia in August 2015, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg inaugurates the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre at the Krtsanisi Military Facility

Highlights

- Shortly after Georgia regained independence in 1991, the country joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1992) and Partnership for Peace (1994).

- Dialogue and cooperation deepened after the "Rose Revolution" in 2003, when the new government pushed for more ambitious reforms.

- Allied leaders agreed at the 2008 Bucharest Summit that Georgia will become a NATO member, provided it meets all necessary requirements – this decision was reconfirmed at NATO Summits in 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016.

- Following the Russia-Georgia crisis in August 2008, the Allies continue to support Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty within its internationally recognised borders and call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states.

- The NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC) provides the framework for close political dialogue and cooperation in support of the country's reform efforts and its Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

- At the Wales Summit in September 2014, a substantial package of measures was launched to strengthen Georgia's ability to defend itself and advance its preparations for membership. Further steps to help strengthen Georgia's defence capabilities were taken at the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016.

- Georgia has provided valued support for NATO-led operations, in particular in Afghanistan.

More background information

Key areas of cooperation

Security cooperation

Thanks to regular participation in Partnership for Peace (PfP) training and exercises, Georgia has been able to contribute actively to Euro-Atlantic security by supporting NATO-led operations.

Georgian troops worked alongside NATO troops in the peacekeeping operation in Kosovo (KFOR) from 1999 to 2008, providing a company-sized unit as part of the German brigade and an infantry platoon within a Turkish battalion task force.

Georgia was one of the largest non-NATO troop contributors to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, which completed its mission in 2014. It is currently one of the top overall contributors to "Resolute Support" – the follow-on NATO-led mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan forces. Moreover, Georgia continues to offer transit for supplies destined for forces deployed in Afghanistan. The Georgian government has also pledged financial support for the further development of the Afghan National Security Forces.

Georgia participated in NATO's Operation Active Endeavour, a counter-terrorist maritime surveillance operation in the Mediterranean, primarily through intelligence exchange. The country continues to support NATO's maritime situational awareness in the context of maritime operation Sea Guardian, which was launched in 2016.

Moreover, Georgia currently participates in the NATO Response Force (NRF).

The country also has a mountain training site, which is accredited as a Partnership Training and Education Centre and offers courses and training to Allies and other partner countries. Moreover, over the years, since first hosting a PfP military training exercise in 2001, Georgia has hosted a number of multinational exercises involving NATO Allies and partner countries.

At the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, Georgia was invited to participate in the Interoperability Platform that brings Allies together with 24 partners that are active contributors to NATO's operations. Georgia became also one of five countries (known as 'Enhanced Opportunity Partners'[1]) that make particularly significant contributions to NATO operations and other Alliance objectives, which will have enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with the Allies.

Defence and security sector reform

NATO supports the wide-ranging democratic and institutional reform process underway in Georgia. Particularly in the area of defence and security sector reform, NATO and individual Allies have considerable expertise upon which Georgia can draw.

Cooperation in this area was given a significant boost at the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, where Allied leaders endorsed a Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP). These measures aim to strengthen Georgia's ability to defend itself as well as to advance its preparations towards NATO membership.

As part of this package, more strategic-level advice is being provided to the Georgian defence ministry and general staff. A core team of advisors is embedded in the defence ministry and complemented by experts in over a dozen specific areas of work. As of spring 2018, some 21 resident advisors and a similar number of non-resident advisors from NATO member states and partner countries are providing support to the package. Essentially, all NATO Allies are currently supporting Georgia through the SNGP in the form of expertise and/or resources.

[1]   Enhanced Opportunity Partners: Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Sweden

Moreover, a Joint Training and Evaluation Centre has been established together with Georgia to host live and simulated training and certification for military units from Allied and partner countries. NATO exercises open to partners are conducted in Georgia periodically. The most recent one took place in late 2016 and the next iteration is to take place in early 2019. A defence institution building school has been established to make benefit of Georgia's experience in reforms.

At the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016, a number of initiatives were added to the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package, in particular crisis management and counter-mobility. Allies also decided to deepen their focus on security in the Black Sea region.

Georgia's participation in the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP), since 1999, has helped its forces develop the ability to work with NATO and is also providing planning targets that are key to security reform objectives in several areas. NATO support has, for example, helped Georgia build deployable units (according to NATO standards) that are interoperable with Allied forces. Georgia's defence reform objectives within the PARP have facilitated improved financial management in the ministry of defence, assisted in reforming the intelligence structure of the armed forces and ensured that a credible Strategic Defence Review was conducted.

An important priority for Georgia is to ensure democratic control of the armed forces, including effective judicial oversight and appropriate defence command and control arrangements.

Improved education and training are also essential for Georgia's defence reform efforts. NATO is leading a tailored programme for Georgia – the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) – with the support of the PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes, the Partnership Training and Education Centres and Allied defence institutions. The DEEP programme with Georgia started in 2009, focusing on assisting the National Defence University (NDA) and the four-year Military Academy, and supporting the Non-Commissioned Officer Training Centre.

NATO and Georgia launched a Professional Development Programme (PDP) for Civilian Personnel in the Ministry of Defence and other Security Institutions in 2009. The PDP provides training with the aim of strengthening the capacity for democratic management and oversight in the Ministry of Defence, as well as other security sector institutions. Training and education provided in the framework of the PDP are closely aligned to Georgia's defence and security sector reform objectives. Current priorities are to support Georgia's civil service reform and enhance Georgia's own capacity for providing training to security sector civilian personnel.

Georgia also participates in the Building Integrity programme, which provides practical assistance and advice for strengthening integrity, accountability and transparency in the defence and security sector. Another important focus of cooperation has been to support demilitarization projects in Georgia through the Partnership Trust Fund mechanism, which allows individual Allies and partner countries to provide financial support to key projects on a voluntary basis. Over the years, a number of such projects have helped to address problems posed by stockpiles of surplus and obsolete weapons and munitions, and promoted their safe disposal. A three-year project with a budget of Euro 1.15 million, which was completed in November 2017, helped to clear mines and unexploded munitions from the ammunitions depot at Skra (near Gori).

Civil preparedness

Georgia is strengthening and reforming the way it organises crisis management and national resilience with the support of NATO. In October 2017, an advisory support team supported the development of a national concept for Critical Infrastructure Protection. In April and May 2018, civil preparedness experts advised Georgian authorities on the new Law on Emergency Management Service.

Practical cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) has helped enhance Georgian crisis management capabilities and interoperability through more than 10 EADRCC consequence-management field exercises since 2003. Georgia itself hosted a major EADRCC consequence-management field exercise in 2012. This has allowed Georgia to contribute to numerous

international disaster relief efforts and to receive assistance through the EADRCC following floods in July 2005, an earthquake in 2009 and forest fires in August and September 2017.

Security-related scientific cooperation

Georgia has been actively engaged within the framework of the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme since 1994. Today, scientists and experts from Georgia are working to address a wide range of security issues, notably in the fields of energy security, support to NATO-led operations, counter-terrorism and the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

One project currently underway aims to improve the conditions for servicemen and women in the Georgian Armed Forces, with a special focus on assessing gender equality, harassment and abuse in the Georgian Armed Forces.

Other SPS activities involving Georgian scientists include an advanced research workshop providing a comprehensive perspective on the security challenges in the eastern part of the Alliance through a tailored set of so-called "black swan" scenarios, and a regional initiative to reduce the risk of geohazards to the Enguri hydroelectrical facility, an important element of Georgia's energy infrastructure.

Moreover, a recently completed project, led by scientists from the United States and Georgia, designed a prototype system to protect the entrances of bunkers, caves and other underground critical infrastructures - such as refineries and chemical plants - from detonation of thermobaric explosive devices (see video). (More on Georgia's ongoing cooperation under the SPS Programme).

Public information

The NATO Liaison Office conducts public diplomacy programmes in Georgia in support of the Georgian government's efforts to inform the public on NATO and in cooperation with local non-governmental organisations and state authorities. Activities include seminars, conferences and workshops. "NATO Weeks" and summer schools are organised on an annual basis to reach out to youth audiences.

Groups of opinion leaders from Georgia are regularly invited to visit NATO Headquarters and the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) for briefings about the Alliance, and NATO officials regularly travel to Georgia to speak at public events. Senior NATO officials – including the Secretary General and the Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia – also regularly visit the country for high-level consultations. The Permanent Representatives to the North Atlantic Council, NATO's principal political decision-making body, paid a visit to the country in September 2008 (in the immediate aftermath of the Georgia crisis), in November 2011, in June 2013 and in September 2016.

Georgia has established an Information Center on NATO, which has its main office in Tbilisi and various branches. Working in close cooperation with NATO's Public Diplomacy Division and with the NATO Liaison Office in Georgia, it is an important tool in raising public awareness about the Alliance in the country.

Response to the Georgian crisis

At an emergency meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 19 August 2008, NATO foreign ministers called for a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict based on respect for Georgia's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. They deplored the use of force, which is inconsistent with the commitments to the peaceful resolution of conflicts that both Georgia and Russia have made under the Partnership for Peace as well as other international agreements. The Allies expressed particular concern over Russia's disproportionate military action, which is incompatible with Russia's peacekeeping role in the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and called for the immediate withdrawal of its troops from the areas it was required to leave under the terms of the six-point agreement brokered by the European Union.

At Georgia's request, the Allies agreed to provide support in a number of areas: assessing the damage to civil infrastructure and the state of the ministry of defence and armed forces; supporting the re-establishment of the air traffic system; and advising on cyber defence issues.

On 27 August 2008, the North Atlantic Council condemned and called for the reversal of Russia's decision to extend recognition to the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of Georgia as independent states.

The Allies continue to support Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty within its internationally recognised borders. NATO does not recognise elections that have since taken place in the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and has stated that the holding of such elections does not contribute to a peaceful and lasting settlement. NATO equally does not recognise the signature of so-called treaties between Russia and the breakaway regions.

The Allies welcome Georgia's efforts to seek a resolution to the crises with South Ossetia and Abkhazia through peaceful means. They strongly support Georgia's current strategy of engagement with the two breakaway regions, which envisions a constructive way forward through fostering economic ties and people-to-people contacts to build confidence.

The Allies also welcome the steps Georgia has taken unilaterally towards Russia in recent years, including the removal of visa requirements for Russian citizens, the agreement on Russia's membership of the World Trade Organization; as well as the direct dialogue that has been initiated with the Russian government by the Georgian government.

Framework for cooperation

Created in September 2008 in the wake of Georgia's crisis with Russia, the NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC) provides the framework for cooperation, serving as a forum for both political consultations and practical cooperation to help Georgia advance its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Since December 2008, the work of the NGC is taken forward through the development of an Annual National Programme (ANP). The ANP lays out Georgia's concrete reform objectives and includes specific timelines and benchmarks.

In addition to Georgia's contributions to Euro-Atlantic peace and stability, key areas of cooperation under the ANP include political, military and security-sector reforms. Priorities for Georgia include transforming its public and private sectors in order to promote democracy, good governance, the rule of law and sustainable social and economic development, as well as reforming the defence and security sector. NATO agrees to support Georgia in these reforms by providing focused and comprehensive advice and activities in several frameworks (both civilian and military) towards its reform goals.

In parallel with the establishment of the NGC, the Military Committee with Georgia was created as a format for meetings focused on military cooperation. The principal aim of NATO-Georgia military cooperation is to assist Georgia with the implementation of military and defence-related issues of the ANP, strategic planning and defence reforms, and to increase interoperability in support of Georgia's contributions to NATO-led operations. The Military Committee with Georgia Work Plan defines key areas and objectives for military cooperation between NATO and the Georgian Armed Forces. The Work Plan comprises activities that help achieve the goals set in the ANP and the Planning and Review Process (PARP).

A NATO Liaison Office was established in Georgia in 2010 to support the country's reform efforts and its programme of cooperation with NATO. A new exchange of letters establishing the status for NATO personnel in Georgia, signed in May 2017, entered into force in late 2017.

Georgia also cooperates with NATO and other partner countries in a wide range of other areas through the Interoperability Platform, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

Milestones in relations

1992: Georgia joins the newly created North Atlantic Cooperation Council (succeeded by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997).

1994: Georgia joins Partnership for Peace (PfP), a programme aiming to increase security and defence cooperation between NATO and individual partner countries.

1995: Georgia signs the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between NATO and partner countries – it addresses the status of foreign forces while present on the territory of another state in the context of cooperation and exercises under the PfP programme.

1999: Georgia joins the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) to help its forces develop the ability to work with NATO and to improve defence planning.

1999: Georgia starts contributing peacekeepers to the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

2002: Georgia declares its aspirations to NATO membership and its intention to develop an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO to sharpen the focus of cooperation on reform efforts.

2004: Georgia becomes the first country to agree an IPAP with NATO.

2005: NATO and Georgia sign a transit agreement allowing the Alliance and other International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troop-contributing nations to send supplies for their forces in Afghanistan through Georgia.

April 2008: At the Bucharest Summit, NATO leaders agree Georgia will become a member of NATO, provided that it meets all the necessary requirements.

August 2008: Allies express deep concern over the armed conflict between Georgia and Russia, calling for a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict based on respect for Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. They agree to support Georgia's recovery in a number of areas and also propose the establishment of a NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC) to oversee the implementation of support as well as supervise the integration process set at hand at the Bucharest Summit.

12 March 2010: Agreements are signed to launch a new project that will help Georgia safely dispose of explosive remnants of war.

October 2010: The NATO Liaison Office is inaugurated in Tbilisi.

April 2011: NGC foreign ministers meet in Berlin and adopt, for the first time, a joint statement which reaffirms the basic principles of NATO-Georgia cooperation.

November 2011: The North Atlantic Council pays a visit to Tbilisi and Batumi.

October 2012: Georgia doubles its contribution to ISAF, making the country one of the largest non-NATO troop contributor nations.

September 2014: Georgian President Giorgi Margvelashvili attends the Wales Summit, where NATO leaders endorse the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package to help Georgia in its efforts to improve its defence capabilities and to achieve its goal of NATO membership.

January 2015: Following the completion of the ISAF operation in Afghanistan in December 2014, Georgia starts contributing to the follow-on NATO-led mission ("Resolute Support") to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions.

27 August 2015: The NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre at the Krtsanisi Military Facility is inaugurated.

2 December 2015: In a statement on NATO's "open door" policy, NATO foreign ministers meeting in Brussels reiterate their decision at Bucharest and subsequent decisions concerning Georgia. They welcome the progress the country has made in coming closer to the Alliance and express their determination to intensify support for Georgia.

8 July 2016: During the NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied foreign ministers meet their Georgian counterpart to discuss progress and priorities in cooperation between Georgia and NATO, as well as current international security issues. Allies welcome the significant progress in implementing the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package since its launch at the 2014 Wales Summit. They also decide on new steps to intensify cooperation to help strengthen Georgia's defence capabilities, interoperability and resilience capabilities, including in the areas of training and education, strategic communications, air defence and air surveillance. Allies also agree to deepen their focus on security in the Black Sea region.

10-21 November 2016: A 10-day exercise involving 250 personnel takes place at the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre in Krtsanisi to hone the ability of Georgian staff officers to work alongside Allied counterparts in planning and executing crisis response operations. It is the first exercise where Georgia's general staff led a multinational crisis response exercise.

August 2017: Following a request for assistance, NATO Allies and partners help Georgia contain a major forest fire in the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region.

6 December 2017: At a meeting of the NATO-Georgia Commission, NATO foreign ministers reaffirm their practical and political support for Georgia as well as their commitment to Georgia's eventual membership of the Alliance. They underline NATO's strong commitment to Georgia's security and territorial integrity, calling on Russia to end its recognition of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia and to withdraw its forces from Georgian territory.

Relations with Iraq

NATO and Iraq are engaged in political dialogue and practical cooperation aimed at developing the capacity of Iraq's security forces, its defence and security institutions, and its national defence academies. Following the defeat of ISIL/Daesh in Iraq and the restoration of sovereign control of all its territory in late 2017, NATO is scaling up its training and advising efforts in Iraq at the government's request.
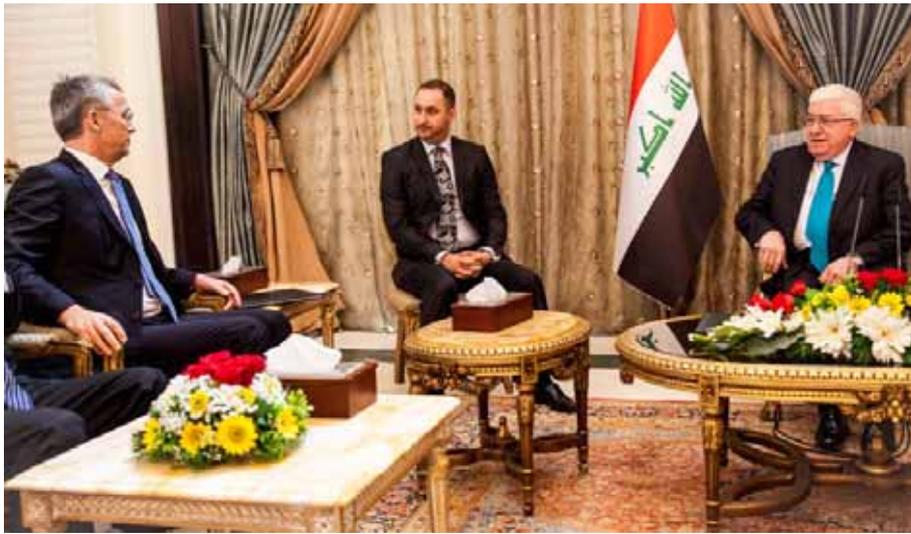
NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg with the President of the Republic of Iraq, Fouad Massoum (March 2016)

Highlights

- Iraq is one of a range of countries beyond the Euro-Atlantic area – often referred to as ″partners across the globe″ – with which NATO is developing relations.

- Relations with Iraq build on cooperation that developed through the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) from 2004 to 2011, during which 15,000 officers were trained.

- In 2011, NATO agreed to grant Iraq partner status and a jointly agreed Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme was signed in September 2012, providing a framework for political dialogue and tailored cooperation.

- At the 2014 NATO Summit, Allied leaders expressed readiness to consider undertaking measures with Iraq in the framework of NATO's Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative.

- At the request of the Iraqi government, NATO agreed in July 2015 on a package of defence capacity building measures to provide assistance in a number of priority areas where NATO could provide added value. The first phase of out-of-country training was launched in April 2016, with a 'train-the-trainers' course provided to 350 Iraqi officers in Jordan.

- At the 2016 NATO Summit, Allied leaders decided to provide direct support to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL/Daesh with NATO AWACS surveillance aircraft. They also agreed to provide a training and capacity-building effort within Iraq, at the request of the Iraqi government.

- In January 2017, a small Core Team of NATO civilian and military personnel was established in Baghdad to coordinate training and capacity-building activities in support of Iraqi security forces and institutions. Mobile security sector reform teams began to travel to Iraq to conduct training.

- In May 2017, NATO became a full member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL/Daesh, in which all individual Allies were already taking part.

- NATO commended Iraqi security forces for defeating ISIL/Daesh in Iraq and restoring sovereign control over all of its territory in late 2017.

- Since this time, NATO has responded positively to an Iraqi request to scale up training and advising efforts in Iraq including transitioning its current training activities in Baghdad to a 'mission' by the NATO Summit in July 2018.

More background information

Practical cooperation

Cooperation between NATO and Iraq is based on principles of respect for sovereignty, international law, joint ownership and mutual benefit. The partnership serves to anchor and bolster Iraq's capacity to contribute constructively to regional security. It reflects NATO's long-standing commitment to the development of Iraq's capabilities to address shared challenges and threats.

NATO first began its relationship with Iraq by establishing a NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) in 2004, at the request of the interim Iraqi government and in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546, to help Iraq create effective armed forces by providing training and mentoring and donating equipment. From 2004 to 2011, NTM-I trained over 5,000 military personnel and over 10,000 police personnel in Iraq. Nearly 2,000 courses were provided in Allied countries. Over Euro 115 million worth of military equipment was donated and Euro 17.5 million in trust fund donations were provided from 26 Allies.

In April 2011, NATO agreed to grant Iraq partner status. Through a jointly agreed Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP), NATO and Iraq undertook further efforts to develop the capacity of Iraq's security and defence institutions. This programme provides a framework for political dialogue and for training cooperation in areas such as counter-terrorism, crisis management and critical energy infrastructure protection.

At the NATO Summit in Wales in 2014, Allied leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the NATO-Iraq partnership and expressed readiness to consider measures in the framework of NATO's Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative. This initiative was launched to strengthen the Alliance's contribution to international security, stability and conflict prevention. It is demand-driven and offers partners – at their request – assistance beyond what is available under existing programmes, building on NATO's extensive expertise in providing advice, assistance, support, training, education and mentoring activities in the defence and related security sector.

Following a request from Prime Minister Al-Abadi, a DCB package for Iraq was agreed by Allies in July 2015. It includes assistance measures in the areas of countering improvised explosive devices (C-IED), explosive ordnance disposal and demining; military medicine and medical assistance; advice on security sector reform; civil-military planning support to operations; civil emergency planning and preparedness; cyber defence; and military training.

In 2016, 350 Iraqi officers were trained at the King Abdullah Special Operations Training Center in Jordan in the immediate priority areas of C-IED, military medicine and civil-military planning. Beginning with mobile team visits to Iraq in February 2016, NATO has also provided advice to Iraqi authorities on security sector reform.

At the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016, Allied leaders agreed to provide a training and capacity-building effort within Iraq, alongside the ongoing training in Jordan. A NATO Core Team has been deployed to Baghdad and in-country training has been ongoing since January 2017. Key counterparts for NATO in Baghdad are the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, the Counter-Terrorism Service and the Office of the National Security Advisor.

The focus of NATO's efforts in Iraq is on areas agreed upon with the Iraqi authorities – tailored to the needs of the Iraqi security forces and institutions – and where NATO can provide added value. NATO's training and capacity-building activities do not have a fixed duration. NATO Allies keep progress under regular review, in close consultation with the Iraqi authorities.

On the ground, NATO coordinates its efforts with a wide range of international actors – including the United Nations, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL/Daesh, the European Union and individual countries – to ensure complementarity with the activities of other members of the international community in support of Iraq's long-term stability.

Since February 2018, NATO has been planning a non-combat training and capacity-building mission based on the request of the Iraqi government. Current activities will be expanded into additional schools and institutions, with the intent to help Iraq to build and sustain more effective, transparent and inclusive national security structures and institutions. This is key for the stability of Iraq and the wider region.

Milestones in relations

22 June 2004: Interim Iraqi Prime Minister Ilyad Allawi sends letter to NATO Secretary General requesting NATO support to his government through training and other forms of technical assistance.

28 June 2004: At NATO Summit in Istanbul, NATO heads of state and government agree to assist Iraq with training of its security forces on the day that sovereignty was formally transferred to an interim Iraqi government.

30 July 2004: NATO Training Implementation Mission is established to identify best methods for conducting training inside and outside Iraq. First elements deployed to Baghdad on 7 August followed by a team of 50 officers.

22 September 2004: North Atlantic Council agrees to expand NATO's assistance to Iraq to include a NATO-supported Iraqi Training, Education and Doctrine Centre in Iraq.

November 2004: NATO military authorities prepare a detailed concept of operations for the expanded assistance, including rules of engagement for force protection.

9 December 2004: NATO foreign ministers authorise Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) to start next stage of the mission.

16 December 2004: SACEUR gives activation order paving the way to deploy an additional 300 trainers and support staff. The activation order also changes the mission name to NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I).

End 2004: NTM-I is now established, at the request of the Iraqi interim government and in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546, to help Iraq create effective armed forces by providing training and mentoring, and donating equipment.

February 2005: NTM-I is fully staffed and funded.

2006: NATO Summit in Riga, Allied leaders agree to develop niche training options within the mandate of NTM-I.

2007: Allies decide to extend their training assistance to Iraq by including gendarmerie-type training of the federal police to bridge the gap between routine police work and military operations.

December 2008: NATO expands NTM-I to include navy and air force leadership training, defence reform, defence institution building and small arms and light weapons accountability, at the request of Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki.

5 October 2010: In response to Iraqi Minister of Interior Bolani's request, Italy announces its intention to provide specialised training in the area of oil policing to the Government of Iraq and as part of NTM-I.

April 2011: Allies agree to grant Iraq partner status.

31 December 2011: NTM-I is discontinued due to the lack of an agreement on the legal status of NATO troops operating in the country.

May 2012: Iraq officially submits its draft Individual Partnership Cooperation Programme (IPCP) to NATO.

June 2012: A temporary one-year NATO Transition Cell opens in Baghdad to ensure smooth transition from NTM-I to regular partnership programme and to assist the Iraqi government in establishing inter-agency mechanism to determine what capabilities the country needs to develop.

24 September 2012: NATO-Iraq IPCP is signed, focusing mainly on education and training, response to terrorism, countering improvised explosive devices, explosive ordnance disposal, and defence institution building.

31 July 2015: Following a request of the Iraqi government for assistance through the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative, NATO Allies agree on DCB package, based on Iraqi requirements.

1 March 2016: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets President Fouad Massoum and Prime Minister Al-Abadi during his first official visit to Iraq. He commends the success of Iraqi forces in pushing ISIL/Daesh back and welcomes the government's ongoing efforts to build confidence across Iraq's different communities, which is vital for the country's long-term stability.

April 2016: Training for Iraqi security forces under DCB Initiative is launched in Jordan, with 350 officers being trained between April and December 2016.

19 May 2016: NATO foreign ministers agree that NATO should do more to project stability beyond the Alliance's borders by training local forces to build their capacity to secure their own territory and push back against extremist groups.

July 2016: At NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders respond positively to a request from Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Abadi, agreeing to start training and advising Iraqi security forces and institutions in Iraq, alongside training of Iraqi officers and non-commissioned officers out of the country.

July 2016: Also at Warsaw, Allied leaders decide to provide direct support to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL/Daesh with NATO AWACS surveillance aircraft.

18 October 2016: Iraqi Foreign Minister Dr Ibrahim Al-Jaafari visits NATO Headquarters for talks with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on the Alliance's support to Iraq as well as political and security developments, including the ongoing fight to liberate Mosul.

25 May 2017: NATO joins Global Coalition to defeat ISIL/Daesh.

January 2017: NATO Core Team is deployed to Baghdad to coordinate in-country training and capacity-building activities.

November 2017: Iraqi government announces victory against terrorist ISIL/Daesh and regains control of its territory, liberating more than 7.5 million people from Daesh oppression.

22 January 2018: US Secretary of Defense James Mattis sends letter of request, on behalf of Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL/Daesh, for NATO to scale up current training and advising activities in Iraq, with the aim to transition to a mission by the NATO Summit in Brussels in July 2018.

February 2018: The Iraq Reconstruction conference in Kuwait is attended by 70 countries and international organisations as well as 2,000 private sector companies, mobilising nearly USD 300 million to support reconstruction.

February 2018: At request of Iraqi government and Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS/Daesh, NATO defence ministers agree to start planning for a NATO training mission in Iraq to make current training efforts more sustainable.

5 March 2018: During his second official visit to Iraq, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets Iraqi President and Prime Minister and visits NATO's training facilities in Besmaya.

26 April 2018: North Atlantic Council approves Concept of Operations for a NATO mission in Iraq.

22 June 2018: North Atlantic Council approves Operations Plan for a NATO mission in Iraq.

Relations with the Republic of Moldova

Moldova contributes to the NATO-led operation in Kosovo and cooperates with the Allies and other partner countries in many other areas. Support for the country's reform efforts and for capacity-building in the defence and security sector is a priority.

Highlights

- Moldova is constitutionally neutral but seeks to draw closer to Euro-Atlantic standards and institutions.
- Relations with NATO started when Moldova joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1992) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme (1994).
- The country's programme of cooperation with NATO is set out in an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), which is agreed every two years and is a public document.
- At the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014, Allied leaders offered to strengthen support, advice and assistance to Moldova through the new Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative.
- Moldova has contributed troops to the Kosovo Force (KFOR) since March 2014.

More background information

Key areas of cooperation

Security cooperation

Through participation in Partnership for Peace (PfP) training and exercises, Moldova is developing the ability of the 22nd Peacekeeping Battalion's forces to work together with forces from other countries, especially in crisis management and peacekeeping operations. These units could be made available for NATO peace support operations. In March 2014, over 40 Moldovan troops were deployed in support of the NATO-led peace-support operation in Kosovo, comprising an infantry manoeuvre platoon and an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team.

NATO has no direct role in the conflict resolution process in the region of Transnistria. However, NATO closely follows developments in the region and the Alliance fully expects Russia to abide by its international obligations, including respecting the territorial integrity and political freedom of neighbouring countries.

Defence and security sector reform

Defence and security sector reforms are core areas of cooperation in which NATO and individual Allies have considerable expertise that Moldova can draw upon. The Allies also support the wider democratic, institutional and judicial reform process underway in the country.

At the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, Moldova was invited to take part in the newly launched Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative, which offers expert advice and assistance to interested partners. Based on the request received from the Moldovan authorities, a tailored package of measures was endorsed by NATO defence ministers in June 2015 to assist in strengthening and modernising the country's armed forces and reforming its national security structures.

The DCB package will be delivered in two phases. In phase one, which is currently underway, NATO is advising and assisting in the establishment of a national security strategy, national defence strategy, a military strategy and defence plans, a force structure for Moldova and capability requirements. NATO brings defence reform experts to the country on a frequent basis to assist the authorities as they develop these key political and strategic-level directions and guidance for the defence sector and the development of the armed forces. In phase two, NATO will continue to provide advice and will assist with specific elements of the transformation of Moldova's armed forces and relevant institutions.

In parallel to these two phases of implementing Moldova's DCB package, NATO has been providing support to Moldova in several specific areas, such as cyber defence, defence education, building integrity and the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

NATO and individual Allies continue to assist Moldova in creating modern, mobile, high-readiness, well-equipped and cost-effective forces that are interoperable with those of other countries. The country's participation in the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) since 1997 is instrumental in this process. Key reform projects include improving command and control structures, military logistics, personnel management, training and strengthening Moldova's border patrol capabilities.

Moldova's participation in the Operational Capabilities Concept also supports the country's objective to train and develop designated units to achieve full interoperability.

Work on enhancing military education and training in Moldova has focused on the Military Academy and its Continuous Training Centre – an accredited Partnership Training and Education Centre – both of which are working closely with NATO experts. Moldova has received advice on how to build, develop and reform educational institutions in the security, defence and military domain through NATO's Defence Education Enhancement Programme.

Moldova is also participating in the Building Integrity (BI) Programme. The defence ministry completed the NATO BI Self-Assessment and Peer Review Process in January 2016. The ministry receives tailor-made assistance and advice for strengthening integrity, accountability, transparency and good governance in the defence and security sector.

The country is also working with NATO to promote the implementation of UNSCR 1325, which recognises the disproportionate impact that war and conflicts have on women and children. This Resolution calls for full and equal participation of women at all levels in issues ranging from early conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, peace and security. With the support of the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme, Moldova has developed its first multi-agency National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325, which was approved by the government in March 2018.

Trust Fund for the destruction and storage of pesticides

A NATO Trust Fund mechanism was set up in Moldova in 2007 to channel funding and support to a project aimed at the destruction and proper storage of surplus stocks of old pesticides and dangerous chemicals, which were buried or scattered around the country and posed increasingly high risks to the population and the environment. The aim of the Trust Fund was to dispose of 1,269 tonnes of pesticides and dangerous chemicals, which had been repacked and centralised under previous projects. The last batch was evacuated in June 2018, thereby successfully completing the project. A closing ceremony took place on 28 June in the town of Singerei in the presence of Moldovan and NATO officials.

The total cost of the project was Euro 2.2 million, covered through a NATO Trust Fund which garnered contributions from 18 NATO Allies and partners. It was part of a three-phase NATO/Partnership Trust Fund initiative developed by NATO and the Moldovan Ministry of Defence in cooperation with other international organisations.

Civil preparedness

Civil emergency planning is another area of cooperation. Through participation in activities organised by NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), Moldova is developing its national civil emergency and disaster management capabilities. In consultation with the Allies, the country is also working on enhancing the legal framework for coping with such emergencies and on establishing a civil crisis information system to coordinate activities in the event of an emergency.

Science for Peace and Security Programme

Moldova is an active participant in the SPS Programme. In addition to support for UNSCR 1325, current cooperation focuses in particular on defence against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) agents, cyber defence and counter-terrorism.

As part of the DCB Initiative, the SPS Programme supported a multi-year project to provide Moldova with a cyber defence laboratory at the Technical University of Moldova. Inaugurated in October 2016 and equipped with SPS support, the laboratory serves as a research and training centre for civil servants of Moldovan government institutions, as well as for young scientists and students of the university. Building on this work, another SPS multi-year project launched in February 2018 aims to develop cyber defence capabilities for the Moldovan Armed Forces to address sophisticated and emerging cyber threats that may affect the military computer information systems' functionality, security of services and critical infrastructure.

Another multi-year project focuses on developing a capability to counter threats posed by infectious biological agents, including anthrax, through setting up a mobile biological laboratory and training experts to enhance early detection and rapid response. In addition, a project launched in January 2018 is developing an innovative control framework for the management of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) specifically deployed to support counter-terrorism missions in urban environments.

Public information

Moldova and NATO aim to improve public awareness of and access to information on NATO and the benefits of cooperation with the Alliance. NATO's Public Diplomacy Division supports the activities of the Information and Documentation Centre (IDC) on NATO. NATO also supports Moldova in improving the training of public information specialists within the country's armed forces.

The NATO Liaison Office that opened in December 2017 also plays an important role in communicating what NATO is and explaining the support being provided to Moldova.

Framework for cooperation

Areas of cooperation, reform plans and political dialogue processes are detailed in the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), which is jointly agreed with NATO for a two-year period. Key areas of cooperation include support for wide-ranging reforms, assistance with the preparation of strategic

documents, defence planning and budgeting, developing the interoperability of elements of the armed forces, and enhancing military education and training in Moldova.

Moldova also cooperates with NATO and other partner countries in a wide range of other areas through the PfP programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

In December 2017, the Alliance opened a civilian NATO Liaison Office in Chisinau to promote practical cooperation between Moldova and NATO and facilitate support for the country's reforms, as requested by the Moldovan government.

Milestones in relations

1992: Moldova joins the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (later succeeded by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in 1997).

1994: Moldova joins the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme.

1997: Moldova joins the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP).

May 2006: Moldova agrees its first Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO.

September 2006: Moldova hosts the PfP training exercises Cooperative Longbow and Cooperative Lancer.

July 2007: Phase I of a project for the destruction of pesticides and other dangerous chemicals is completed, centralising stocks in regional central storages.

October 2007: The Information and Documentation Centre on NATO is inaugurated.

31 July 2008: The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) receives an urgent request from Moldova and Ukraine to help them cope with major floods.

30 October 2008: The NATO Secretary General visits Moldova for talks with President Vladimir Voronin and key ministers, as well as to give a speech at and visit the Information and Documentation Centre on NATO at Chisinau State University.

2010: Phase II of a project for the destruction of pesticides and other dangerous chemicals is completed, resulting in the set-up of a lab to analyse the chemical stockpiles.

20 August 2010: A new IPAP is agreed, which the Moldovan authorities subsequently decide to release to the public for the first time.

August 2011: Moldova hosts the EADRCC exercise Codrii 2011.

July 2013: Phase III of the project for the destruction of pesticides and other dangerous chemicals is launched, aiming to destroy 950 tonnes of chemicals.

May 2014: NATO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Alexander Vershbow pays a three-day visit to Moldova.

September 2014: At the Wales Summit, Moldova is invited to take part in the newly launched Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative, which offers expert advice and assistance to interested partners.

16 March 2015: Prime Minister Chiril Gaburici visits NATO for talks with Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on strengthening the partnership.

June 2015: The NATO Partnership and Cooperative Security Committee pays a two-day visit to Moldova for talks on deepening cooperation and dialogue.

24 June 2015: NATO defence ministers endorse a package of measures under the DCB Initiative to help Moldova enhance its defence and security institutions.

8-9 July 2016: At the NATO Summit in Warsaw, the Allies underline their support for the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova as well as for efforts towards a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the South Caucasus, as well as in the Republic of Moldova. They also express their continued commitment to help project stability by working with individual partners, including Moldova, to build their defence and security capacities.

29 November 2016: Moldovan Prime Minister Pavel Filip visits NATO HQ for discussions on how to strengthen the country's partnership with NATO. He and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg sign an agreement to pave the way for the establishment of a NATO Liaison Office in Chisinau, which will help promote practical cooperation and improve support for reforms and capacity-building.

7 February 2017: Moldovan President Igor Dodon meets NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller at NATO headquarters for talks on the partnership between the Alliance and Moldova. The Deputy Secretary General thanks Moldova for its contribution to the NATO-led peace-support mission in Kosovo, which also gives Moldovan troops valuable practical experience. Moreover, she highlights NATO support for the training of almost 2,000 Moldovans in areas such as fighting corruption in the defence sector, border security and civil emergency planning, as well as initiatives to help Moldova destroy dangerous stocks of pesticides, anti-personnel mines, surplus munitions and rocket fuel, which have received 4.5 million Euro from the Alliance.

30 March 2017: Prime Minister Pavel Filip meets the NATO Secretary General at NATO Headquarters to discuss the jointly agreed framework for cooperation, which has been developed at the request of the Moldovan government.

8 December 2017: NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller inaugurates the NATO Liaison Office in Moldova together with Moldovan Prime Minister Pavel Filip. The office is staffed by civilians and will support dialogue and cooperation between NATO and Moldova.

Relations with Sweden

NATO and Sweden actively cooperate in peace and security operations and have developed practical cooperation in many other areas including education and training, and defence reform.

Swedish Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg (Nov. 2014)

Highlights

- Swedish cooperation with NATO is based on a longstanding policy of military non-alignment and a firm national consensus, focusing on areas of common interest.

- Cooperation has been reinforced since Sweden joined NATO's Partnership for Peace in 1994 and became a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997.

- Sweden is one of NATO's most active partners and a valued contributor to NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS/Daesh – it is one of five countries that has enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with NATO.

- An important priority for cooperation is to develop interoperable capabilities and maintain the ability of the Swedish Armed Forces to work with those of NATO and other partner countries in multinational peace-support operations.

- In the current security context with heightened concerns about Russian military activities, NATO is stepping up cooperation with Sweden and Finland in the Baltic region.

- Sweden actively supports the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and hosts the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations at the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre.

- Sweden's role in training the forces of NATO partner countries is greatly valued, as is its support for a number of Trust Fund projects in other partner countries focused on issues related to defence reform and capacity-building.

More background information

▬▬ Key areas of cooperation

Security cooperation

Sweden is one of five countries (known as 'Enhanced Opportunity Partners'[1]) that make particularly significant contributions to NATO operations and other Alliance objectives. As such, the country has enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with the Allies.

In the current security context with heightened concerns about Russian military and non-military activities, NATO is stepping up cooperation with Sweden and Finland. This means expanding political dialogue, including at the highest levels, and exchanges of information on hybrid warfare; coordinating training and exercises; and developing better joint situational awareness to address common threats and develop joint actions, if needed. Both partners participate in the enhanced NATO Response Force (NRF) in a supplementary role and subject to national decisions, and also hold regular consultations with NATO on security in the Baltic Sea region.

At NATO's Wales Summit in September 2014, Sweden and Finland signed a memorandum of understanding on Host Nation Support, which addresses issues related to the provision of civil and military assistance to Allied forces located on, or in transit through, their territory in peacetime, crisis or war. The agreement was ratified by the Swedish parliament on 1 June 2016.

Sweden has been an active contributor to NATO-led operations. Its first contribution dates back to 1995 when it sent a battalion to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sweden has supported the peacekeeping force in Kosovo (KFOR) since 1999.

Swedish personnel worked alongside Allied forces as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan from 2003 to the completion of ISAF's mission in 2014. They provided specialist units and logistical support and led the multinational Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Mazar-e Sharif from 2006. Sweden is currently supporting the follow-on mission (known as Resolute Support) to further train, assist and advise the Afghan security forces and institutions. Sweden has also contributed USD 13 million to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund.

In April 2011, Sweden contributed to Operation Unified Protector (OUP), NATO's military operation in Libya under United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973. The Swedish Air Force deployed eight JAS Gripen aircraft to Sigonella Airbase in Sicily, Italy to enforce the no-fly zone over Libya, supported by an air-to-air refuelling capable C-130.

The country participates in numerous Partnership for Peace (PfP) exercises. It makes a number of units available, on a case-by-case basis, for multinational operations, training and exercises, including those led by the European Union (EU) and NATO. The Swedish Armed Forces aim to be able to sustain up to 2,000 personnel continuously deployed on operations, either nationally or internationally. This pool of forces includes significant land, maritime and air assets, including mechanised and armoured units, submarine, corvettes, combat and transport aircraft with a deployable airbase unit, combat and combat service support elements, as well as specialist support.

Sweden's close ties with its neighbours – Denmark, Finland and Norway – are reflected in its participation in Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO), a further practical and efficient way for like-minded states to contribute to regional and international security and to practise cooperation, including pooling and sharing of capabilities. In Sweden's case, this activity is pursued alongside the Nordic Battlegroup and cooperation with countries around the Baltic Sea and in northern Europe.

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[1]   Enhanced Opportunity Partners: Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Sweden

The country participates in the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC), which uses an evaluation and feedback programme to develop and train partner land, maritime, air or Special Operations Forces units that seek to meet NATO standards. Since 2011, Sweden has participated regularly in the Baltic Region Training Event – a series of planning, training and execution events for enhancing interoperability and building capabilities in the Baltic States, which is conducted by Allied Air Command Ramstein, Germany. Sweden has also joined the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Estonia and participated in NATO Cyber Coalition exercises.

Defence and security sector reform

Participating in peacekeeping and peace-support operations alongside NATO Allies has complemented Sweden's own process of military transformation. Participation in the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) influences Swedish planning and activities, aimed at developing the capabilities and enhancing the interoperability of the Swedish Armed Forces.

Sweden is cooperating with Estonia, Finland and Norway, among other countries, in the development of a multinational rapid-reaction force for EU-led peace-support operations. During periods that the Swedish parts of the force are not on stand-by for EU needs, they will be available for operations led by either the UN or NATO.

In the area of strategic airlift, Sweden participates in two initiatives: the Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) programme and the Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS).

Sweden's role in training the forces of NATO partner countries is greatly valued by the Allies. In April 1999, NATO formally recognised the military training centre in Almnäs as a PfP Training Centre. In 2004, the Centre moved to new premises in Kungsängen, north of Stockholm. The activities of the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre (SWEDINT) include exercises and training, with a focus on humanitarian assistance, rescue services, peace-support operations, civil emergency planning and the democratic control of the armed forces. The Centre regularly organises courses and training exercises within the PfP. In January 2012 – in support of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related Resolutions on strengthening the role of women in peace and security – the Nordic countries established a Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, to make sure that gender perspectives continue to be integrated into military operations.

Sweden continues to support a number of Trust Fund projects and DCB activities conducted in other partner countries, focused on areas such as training and evaluation of military units; medical rehabilitation of injured military personnel; explosive ordnance disposal and countering improvised explosive devices; and professional development of security sector employees.

Civil preparedness

Civil preparedness continues to be a major area of bilateral cooperation. The baseline requirements for national resilience provide valuable structure for cooperation and form a central part of Sweden's engagement with NATO and its Civil Emergency Planning Committee. Sweden also cooperates with NATO Allies in the field of regional assessments, critical infrastructure protection, and in providing mutual support in dealing with the consequences of a major accident or disaster in the Euro-Atlantic area.

In line with this, Sweden has participated in numerous NATO crisis management exercises, in addition to several maritime exercises. Additionally, Swedish civil resources have been listed with the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). Units include search and rescue teams, medical experts and protection and decontamination units. Sweden regularly conducts major multifunctional civil-military-police exercises (the Viking exercises), which involve many other nations as well as participants from international organisations, non-governmental organisations and agencies.

Security-related scientific cooperation

Under the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme, scientists and experts from Sweden have participated in numerous advanced research workshops and seminars on a range of topics. Key areas of cooperation include chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) defence, energy security, and

critical infrastructure protection against hybrid threats. NATO Allies have also approved a multi-year project co-led by the United States and Sweden in the field of counter-terrorism. The project aims to create long-term capacity for the evaluation of programmes to counter violent extremism (CVE) and to contribute to overall effectiveness, transparency and accountability of CVE programmes.

Framework for cooperation

NATO and Sweden detail areas of cooperation and timelines in Sweden's Individual Partnership Cooperation Programme (IPCP), which is jointly agreed for a two-year period. Key areas include security and peacekeeping cooperation, crisis management and civil emergency planning.

Participation in the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) helps develop the interoperability and capabilities of Swedish forces, which may be made available for NATO training, exercises and multinational crisis management and peace-support operations.

Since joining PfP, Sweden has played an active role and offers expertise to other partners and Allies, with a special focus on peacekeeping, civil emergency planning and civil-military cooperation.

Milestones in relations

1994: Sweden joins Partnership for Peace (PfP).

1995: Sweden joins the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP).

1996: Sweden contributes forces to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

1997: Sweden joins the newly created Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

1999: Swedish forces participate in the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

SWEDINT, the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre, is designated a PfP Training Centre.

2001: Swedish forces join NATO-led forces in Afghanistan.

2008: Sweden hosts a live demonstration, involving NATO Allies and Swedish civilian and military forces, to test new ways of effectively sharing critical information in emergency situations (Exercise Viking 2008).

September 2008: Sweden conducts a joint exercise with NATO in Enköping designed to enhance civil-military cooperation during civil emergency.

March 2010: Sweden co-hosts a seminar "NATO's New Strategic Concept – Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management" with Finland.

April 2010: Sweden participates in a NATO Response Force (NRF) maritime exercise (Brilliant Mariner).

May 2010: Sweden participates in an international cyber defence exercise (Baltic Cyber Shield) organised by several Swedish governmental institutions and the Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence.

2011: Sweden conducts multinational Exercise Viking 2011 with international organisations and NGOs participating in the operations.

April 2011: Sweden decides to contribute to Operation Unified Protector, NATO's military operation in Libya under UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973.

January 2012: A Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations is established, hosted by the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre.

January 2013: NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen visits Sweden to discuss how to further strengthen cooperation.

2013: Sweden contributes to the NATO Response Force and participates in Exercise Steadfast Jazz, which served to certify the NRF rotation for 2014.

January 2014: NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen visits Sweden to discuss further potential for the relationship.

February 2014: Sweden and Finland participate in Iceland Air Meet 2014 under the command of Norway, which had deployed to Iceland to provide airborne surveillance and interception capabilities as part of NATO's mission to meet Iceland's peacetime preparedness needs.

September 2014: At the Wales Summit, Sweden is identified as one of five countries that make particularly significant contributions to NATO operations and other Alliance objectives, which will have enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with the Allies. Along with Finland, Sweden signs a memorandum of understanding on Host Nation Support, which addresses issues related to the provision of civil and military assistance to Allied forces located on, or in transit through, their territory in peacetime, crisis or war.

January 2015: Following the completion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation in Afghanistan in December 2014, Sweden starts contributing to the follow-on NATO-led mission ("Resolute Support") to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions.

9-10 June 2015: The Director General of the NATO International Military Staff, Air Marshal Sir Christopher Harper, visits Ronneby air base and Stockholm, where he meets the Chief of Defence Staff of the Swedish Armed Forces, Lt Gen Gyllensporre. He commends Sweden for being a pro-active and effective contributor to international security.

12 June 2015: NATO Deputy Secretary General Alexander Vershbow visits Stockholm, where he welcomes the country's deep partnership with the Alliance in a speech to the "Folk och Försvar" (People and Defence) forum. He also meets Foreign Minister Margot Wallström and Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist.

10 November 2015: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomes efforts to strengthen defence cooperation among Nordic Allies and partners during talks with Nordic Defence Ministers in Stockholm. During his visit, the Secretary General also meets with Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Foreign Minister Margot Wallström and members of the Swedish Parliamentary Committees on Defence and Foreign Affairs.

1 December 2015: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has talks with Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström, along with Finnish Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Timo Soini, on the margins of NATO's meetings of foreign ministers in Brussels. They discuss ongoing work to expand exchanges of information, including on hybrid warfare, coordinating training and exercises, and developing better joint situational awareness to help NATO, Finland and Sweden more effectively to address common threats and develop joint actions, if needed. Also underway are talks on how to include the two partners in the enhanced NATO Response Force and regular consultations on security in the Baltic Sea region.

20 April 2016: Sweden participates in two days of air exercises in the Baltic region alongside NATO and partner air forces, practising emergency responses and sharpening cooperation.

27-28 April 2016: NATO's Chairman of the Military Committee, General Petr Pavel, visits Sweden for discussions with met with the Defence Minister and the Supreme Commander of the Swedish Armed Forces to discuss regional security challenges and opportunities for enhanced military cooperation.

19-20 May 2016: The Swedish foreign minister participates in a meeting with NATO foreign ministers devoted to NATO-EU cooperation.

8-9 July 2016: At the NATO Summit in Warsaw, the Allies underline the importance of further strengthening cooperation with Finland and Sweden, including through regular political consultations, shared situational awareness, and joint exercises, in order to respond to common challenges in a timely

and effective manner. Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven joins Summit discussions on current security challenges in Europe and on sustaining support for Afghanistan.

September 2017: Several NATO Allies participate in Aurora 2017, Sweden's largest national military exercise in over 20 years, involving almost 20,000 military personnel and over 40 agencies.

14-15 January 2018: The NATO Secretary General gives a keynote speech at the Folk och Försvar Security Conference in Sälen, welcoming Sweden's important contributions to Alliance-led missions and stressing the importance of close cooperation with Nordic partners to strengthen security in the region. During his visit, he also holds talks with Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Foreign Minister Margot Wallström, Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist and Speaker of the Parliament Urban Ahlin as well as visits the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations.

Relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1]

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia aspires to join NATO. Support for democratic, institutional, security sector and defence reforms are a key focus of cooperation. The country actively supports the NATO-led missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo, and works with the Allies and other partner countries in many other areas.

Highlights

- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace in 1995.
- The country joined the Membership Action Plan in 1999.
- Beyond the need to make progress on reforms, the country has to find a mutually acceptable solution with Greece to the issue over its name before it can be invited to join NATO. In this regard, NATO's Secretary General welcomed the agreement reached on 12 June between Prime Ministers Tsipras and Zaev on a solution to the name dispute between Athens and Skopje, calling on both countries to finalise the agreement.
- For many years, the country has provided valuable support to NATO-led operations and missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo.

More background information

The road to integration

The Allies are committed to keeping NATO's door open to Western Balkan partners that wish to join the Alliance, share its values and are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership. Euro-Atlantic integration is seen as the best way to ensure long-term, self-sustaining security and stability in the region.

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[1] Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

The Membership Action Plan (MAP) is a NATO programme of advice, assistance and practical support tailored to the individual needs of countries wishing to join the Alliance. Participation in the MAP does not prejudge any decision by the Alliance on future membership.

At the April 2008 Bucharest Summit, Allies agreed that an invitation to join the Alliance will be extended to the country as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the issue over its name has been reached with Greece. This agreement has been consistently reiterated at subsequent Summits. The Allies continue to encourage and support the continuation of reform efforts within the country, particularly with a view to ensuring effective democratic dialogue, media freedom, judicial independence and a fully functioning multi-ethnic society.

Key areas of cooperation

● Security cooperation

An important focus of NATO's cooperation with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is to develop the ability of the country's forces to work together with forces from NATO countries and other partners, especially in peacekeeping and crisis-management operations. Participation in joint planning, training and military exercises within the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme is essential in this regard. Moreover, in 2013, the country's Public Affairs Regional Centre in Skopje was recognised as a Partnership Training and Education Centre, opening its activities to Allies and partners.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia deployed troops in support of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan from 2002 to end 2014. Following the completion of ISAF's operation at the end of 2014, the country is currently supporting the follow-on mission ('Resolute Support') to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was a key partner in supporting NATO-led stabilisation operations in Kosovo in 1999 and NATO forces were deployed to the country to halt the spread of the conflict as well as to provide logistical support to the Kosovo Force (KFOR). The Allies also provided humanitarian assistance to help the country deal with the flood of refugees from Kosovo. The country continues to provide valuable host nation support to KFOR troops transiting its territory.

NATO came to the assistance of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, when violence between ethnic Albanian insurgents and security forces broke out in the west of the country in February 2001. Insurgents had taken control of a number of towns near the border with Kosovo, bringing the country to the brink of a civil war. NATO facilitated the negotiation of a ceasefire in June of that same year, which paved the way for a political settlement – the Ohrid Framework Agreement – in August 2001. In support of the settlement, NATO deployed a task force, "Essential Harvest", to collect weapons handed over by the insurgents, as they prepared to disband. The NATO-led international monitoring mission continued to operate in support of the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement until 31 March 2003, when the European Union assumed the lead.

A NATO military headquarters created in Skopje during the operational period has since been downsized and transformed into a Liaison Office which assists with security sector reform and host nation support to KFOR.

● Defence and security sector reform

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has initiated wide-ranging reforms that NATO is supporting. In the areas of defence and security sector reform, NATO and individual Allies have considerable expertise that the country can draw upon. In consultation with the Allies, the country continues to implement a broad range of reforms in line with its Strategic Defence Review.

The country's participation in the PfP Planning and Review Process facilitates cooperation in this area. The Allies have assisted in the development of a transformation plan for the country's armed forces. The plan includes detailed programmes covering logistics, personnel, equipment, training and a timetable for

the restructuring of key military units. Other key objectives include improving ethnic minority representation in civil/military defence structures and judicial and police reform.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia joined the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC) in 2005. The OCC is a mechanism through which units available for PfP operations can be evaluated and better integrated with NATO forces to increase operational effectiveness.

Through participation in the Building Integrity Programme, the country is working to strengthen good governance in the defence and security sector. This Programme seeks to raise awareness, promote good practice and provide practical tools to help nations enhance integrity and reduce risks of corruption in the security sector by strengthening transparency and accountability.

The country is also working with NATO to promote the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, which recognises the disproportionate impact that war and conflicts have on women and children. UNSCR 1325 calls for full and equal participation of women at all levels in issues ranging from early conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, peace and security.

- ## Civil emergency planning

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is enhancing its national civil emergency and disaster-management capabilities in cooperation with NATO and through participation in activities organised by the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre. In consultation with NATO, a national crisis-management system has been established to ensure that the structures in place serve effectively and efficiently in the case of a national crisis.

- ## Security-related scientific cooperation

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been actively engaged within the framework of the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme since 1998. The SPS Programme enables close collaboration on issues of common interest to enhance the security of NATO and partner countries. By facilitating international efforts, in particular with a regional focus, the Programme seeks to address emerging security challenges, support NATO-led operations and advance early warning and forecast for the prevention of disasters and crises.

Today, scientists and experts from the country are working to address a wide range of security issues. Recent activities have focused in particular on cyber defence and counter-terrorism, but there are also SPS projects and training courses underway that look at defence against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) agents, and environmental security.

- ## Public information

Given the country's aspirations to join NATO, it is important to continue to build public awareness of how NATO works and of the rights and obligations which membership would bring. Public diplomacy activities also aim to develop and maintain links with civil society actors and to facilitate security-related information activities and programmes in the country. NATO's Public Diplomacy Division plays a key role in this area, as do individual Allies and partner countries.

Framework for cooperation

In the Membership Action Plan (MAP) framework, the country sets out its reform plans and timelines in an Annual National Programme. Key areas include political, military and security sector reforms. Important priorities are efforts to meet democratic standards and ensure free and fair elections, as well as support for reducing corruption and fighting organised crime, judicial reform, improving public administration and promoting good neighbourly relations. NATO Allies provide feedback on the envisaged reforms and evaluate their implementation.

More specific and technical reforms in the defence area are developed through the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP), which the country joined in 1999. The role of the PARP is to provide a structured basis for identifying forces and capabilities that could be available to the Alliance for multinational training, exercises and operations. It also serves as the principal mechanism used to guide and measure defence and military reform progress. A biennial process, the PARP is open to all partners on a voluntary basis.

The NATO Liaison Office, Skopje, plays a role in assisting the implementation of the defence reform plans, including through its NATO Advisory Team, which is located within the country's defence ministry.

Beyond the focus on operational cooperation and support for reform, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia also cooperates with NATO and other partners in a wide range of areas through the PfP programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

To facilitate cooperation, the country has established a mission to NATO as well as a liaison office at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium.

Milestones in relations

1995: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia joins the Partnership for Peace (PfP).

1996: The country hosts its first PfP training exercise "Rescuer".

1997: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia becomes a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

1999: The country plays a key role in supporting NATO operations in Kosovo, and the Allies provide assistance to ease the humanitarian crisis as refugees from Kosovo flood into the country.

1999: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia joins NATO's Membership Action Plan (MAP) and the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP).

2001: Violence flares up in the west of the country. NATO plays a key role in facilitating negotiations on a cease-fire reached in June. NATO Allies deploy a task force to collect arms from former combatants and support the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Subsequently, they deploy a mission to protect international monitors, which is extended until December 2002.

2002: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia deploys personnel in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

April 2002: NATO HQ Skopje is created to advise on military aspects of security sector reform.

2003: The NATO-led peace-monitoring mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is handed over to the European Union.

2005: A combined medical team of the three MAP countries joins NATO-led forces in Afghanistan in August.

2007: The country hosts the EAPC Security Forum in Ohrid.

April 2008: At the Bucharest Summit, Allied leaders agree that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will be invited to start accession talks as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the issue over the country's name has been reached.

2 October 2008: President Branko Crvenkovski visits NATO Headquarters to meet Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, who stresses that the Alliance recognises the country's hard work in defence reform and commitment to NATO's values and operations.

12 February 2009: Foreign Minister Antonio Milososki and Defence Minister Zoran Konjanovski visit NATO Headquarters.

7-8 May 2009: During a trip to Western Balkan countries, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer underlines his conviction that Euro-Atlantic integration offers the only feasible way for the region to move forward and his firm support for NATO's "open door" policy.

15 January 2010: Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski meets Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at NATO Headquarters. They discussed the country's contribution to NATO operations, such as in Afghanistan, as well as the country's progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

18 June 2010: During a visit to Skopje, the Secretary General expresses strong support to the country's further Euro-Atlantic integration.

25 January 2012: Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski addresses the North Atlantic Council.

May 2012: President Gjorge Ivanov attends a meeting at NATO's Chicago Summit, joining counterparts from countries that are supporting the NATO-led stabilisation mission in Afghanistan. Also, Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki joins fellow foreign ministers from the three other countries that are aspiring to NATO membership in a meeting chaired by NATO's Deputy Secretary General.

September 2012: During a visit to NATO Headquarters of President Gjorge Ivanov, the Secretary General welcomes Skopje's commitment to continuing reforms and expresses his strong hope that a mutually acceptable solution to the issue of the country's name could be reached as soon as possible within the framework of the United Nations.

June 2013: The North Atlantic Council accepts the country's offer to make its Public Affairs Regional Centre in Skopje a Partnership Training and Education Centre, opening its activities to Allies and partners.

12 February 2014: Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski visits NATO Headquarters in Brussels. While praising the country's excellent cooperation with NATO, the Secretary General stresses that it will be key to keep the momentum of reform to realise the country's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

22 May 2014: During a visit to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Secretary General emphasises that NATO's door remains open to new members and urges the country's to strive to find an acceptable solution on the name issue.

11 March 2015: During a visit of Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski to NATO Headquarters, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg thanks the prime minister for his country's support for the NATO-led missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo. He also expresses concern over recent political developments in Skopje, encouraging all political forces to act responsibly and to focus on the reforms necessary for progress on the country's Euro-Atlantic agenda.

24 November 2015: President Gjorge Ivanov meets the Secretary General at NATO Headquarters to discuss the country's path toward NATO membership and political developments in the country. They also talk about the migration flows passing through the Balkans and the international response.

2 December 2015: In a statement on NATO's "open door" policy, NATO foreign ministers reiterate decisions made at the 2008 Bucharest Summit concerning the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, urging the country to find a mutually acceptable solution to the issue of its name with Greece in order to realise its NATO membership aspirations. They also express concerns over recent political developments in the country and encourage intensified efforts at political compromise and reform.

12 June 2017: Prime Minister Zoran Zaev visits NATO headquarters for talks on the partnership between the Alliance and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia . Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg congratulates Prime Minister Zaev on his appointment and welcomes the formation of a new government.

18 January 2018: During a visit to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia , the NATO Secretary General meets President Ivanov, Prime Minister Zaev, Foreign Minister Dimitrov, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Šekerinska, President of the Parliament Xhaferi and other high-level officials as well as members of parliament. He welcomes the country's efforts and progress towards long-term

political stability. He also commends the efforts being made to find a solution to the name issue, which is crucial for the country to be able to join NATO, and encourages the country's leadership to continue on the path of reform.

12 June 2018: The NATO Secretary General warmly welcomes the historic agreement reached between Prime Ministers Tsipras and Zaev on a solution to the name dispute between Athens and Skopje. He calls on both countries to finalise the agreement reached by the two leaders, saying it will set Skopje on its path to NATO membership and help to consolidate peace and stability across the wider Western Balkans.

Relations with Ukraine

A sovereign, independent and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security. Relations between NATO and Ukraine date back to the early 1990s and have since developed into one of the most substantial of NATO's partnerships. Since 2014, in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, cooperation has been intensified in critical areas.

Highlights

- Dialogue and cooperation started after the end of the Cold War, when newly independent Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1991) and the Partnership for Peace programme (1994).

- Relations were strengthened with the signing of the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, which established the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) to take cooperation forward.

- The Declaration of 2009 to Complement the NATO-Ukraine Charter mandated the NUC, through Ukraine's Annual National Programme, to underpin Ukraine's efforts to take forward reforms aimed at implementing Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations

- Cooperation has deepened over time and is mutually beneficial with Ukraine actively contributing to NATO-led operations and missions.

- Priority is given to support for comprehensive reform in the security and defence sector, which is vital for Ukraine's democratic development and for strengthening its ability to defend itself.

- In response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO has reinforced its support for capability development and capacity building in Ukraine.

- Since the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016, NATO's practical support for Ukraine has been subsumed in the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP) for Ukraine.

- In June 2017, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted legislation reinstating membership in NATO as a strategic foreign and security policy objective.

More background information

Response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict

From the very beginning of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO has adopted a firm position in full support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. The Allies immediately condemned – and have since then repeatedly stated that they will not recognise – Russia's illegal and illegitimate "annexation" of Crimea in March 2014. They also condemned Russia's deliberate destabilisation of eastern Ukraine caused by its military intervention and support for the militants. The Allies decided to suspend all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia, while leaving political and military channels of communication open. Since then, Allied Ambassadors reiterate NATO's firm position on Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty at meetings of the NATO-Russia Council, which continues to meet periodically.

Throughout the crisis, regular consultations have taken place in the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) in view of the direct threats faced by Ukraine to its territorial integrity, political independence and security. Allied leaders met with President Petro Poroshenko at the NATO summits in Wales (September 2014) and Warsaw (July 2016). Foreign and defence ministers as well as ambassadors regularly discussed the security situation in and around Ukraine. Joint statements issued by NUC foreign ministers in April 2014, December 2014 and May 2015 and by Heads of State and Government at the NATO summit meetings in Wales and Warsaw demonstrate NATO's unwavering support for and solidarity with Ukraine.

The Allies have also pledged to support the efforts of the Ukrainian government to implement wide-ranging reforms to meet the aspirations of Ukrainian people to see their country firmly anchored among European democracies.

In parallel to its political support to Ukraine, NATO has significantly stepped up its practical assistance to Ukraine. Immediately following the illegal and illegitimate "annexation" of Crimea by Russia, NATO foreign ministers agreed on measures to enhance Ukraine's ability to provide for its own security. They also decided to further develop their practical support to Ukraine, based on a significant enhancement of existing cooperation programmes as well as the development of substantial new programmes. At the summit in Warsaw, NATO's measures in support of Ukraine became part of the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP). The CAP is designed to support Ukraine's ability to provide for its own security and to implement wide-ranging reforms, including as set out in Ukraine's Strategic Defence Bulletin of 2016. It comprises eight Trust Funds set up exclusively for Ukraine, working in critical areas of reform and capability development in Ukraine's security and defence sector.

(see "Key areas of cooperation" below for more details).

Key areas of cooperation

Consultations and cooperation between NATO and Ukraine cover a wide range of areas including peace-support operations, defence and security sector reform, military-to-military cooperation, defence technology, interoperability and industry, civil preparedness, science and environment, and public diplomacy. Cooperation in many areas is being intensified to enhance Ukraine's ability to provide for its own security in the wake of the conflict with Russia and its efforts to implement wide-ranging reforms.

Peace-support operations

Ukraine has long been an active contributor to Euro-Atlantic security by deploying troops that work with peacekeepers from NATO and other partner countries. In spite of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Ukraine continues to contribute to NATO-led operations and missions.

Ukraine has supported NATO-led peace-support operations in the Balkans – both Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. It continues to contribute to the Kosovo Force (KFOR), currently with a heavy engineering unit with counter-improvised explosive devices capabilities.

In support of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, Ukraine allowed for over-flight clearance and the transit of supplies for forces deployed there. Ukraine also contributed medical personnel to support Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and instructors to the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan. Following the completion of ISAF's mission at the end of 2014, Ukraine is currently supporting the NATO-led mission to train, advise and assist Afghan security forces, known as the Resolute Support mission.

From March 2005, Ukraine contributed officers to the NATO Training Mission in Iraq, which terminated in December 2011.

Ukraine has deployed ships in support of Operation Active Endeavour – NATO's maritime operation in the Mediterranean aiming to helping deter, disrupt and protect against terrorism – six times since 2007, most recently in November 2010. At the end of 2013, it also contributed a frigate to NATO's Operation Ocean Shield, which fought piracy off the coast of Somalia. Since the creation of maritime operation Sea Guardian in 2016, Ukraine continues to provide information in support of NATO's maritime situational awareness in and around the Black Sea.

Ukraine is also the first partner country to have participated in the NATO Response Force (NRF), contributing a platoon specialised in nuclear, biological and chemical threats in 2011 and strategic airlift capabilities in 2011. In 2015 and 2016, Ukraine provided strategic airlift, naval and medical capabilities. Currently, Ukraine is contributing with strategic airlift capabilities.

Defence and security sector reform

Ukraine's cooperation with NATO in the area of defence and security sector reform is crucial to the ongoing transformation of Ukraine's security posture and remains an essential part of its democratic transition.

NATO has supported Ukraine's defence and related security sector reform through the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform, and the Planning and Review Process, the NATO Building Integrity Programme, the NATO Defence Education Enhancement Programme, the Joint Working Group on Defence Technical Cooperation and the advisory mission at the NATO Representation in Kyiv.

Through the Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine endorsed by the NATO-Ukraine Commission at the NATO Summit in Warsaw in 2016, NATO pledged to support Ukraine's goal to implement security and defence sector reforms according to NATO standards by providing strategic-level advice as well as 40 tailored support measures.

A key overarching objective of cooperation in this area is to strengthen democratic and civilian control of Ukraine's armed forces and security institutions. Allies contribute to the transformation of Ukraine's defence and security institutions into modern and effective organisations under civilian and democratic control, able to provide a credible deterrence to aggression and defence against military threats. NATO assists Ukraine in the modernisation of its force structure, command and control arrangements, the reform of its logistics system, defence capabilities, and plans and procedures. NATO also provides tailored assistance to strengthen good governance and fight against corruption.

The Planning and Review Process

Its participation in the Planning and Review Process (PARP) provides Ukraine with a fundamental mechanism to set realistic reform objectives and to improve its defence and security forces' functional ability to operate alongside Allies in crisis-response operations and other national and international activities to promote security and stability.

The PARP helps guide transformation and reform in the defence and related security sector. The 2018 Partnership Goal package – which sets out goals agreed with the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior – explicitly aims to support Ukraine's strategic organisational reforms and institution-building for defence and security sector organisations. This will support Ukraine in pursuing the reforms mandated in its 2015 National Security Strategy and Military Doctrine as well as the Strategic

Defence Bulletin approved in 2016. Among the Partnership Goals, 26 are assigned to the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces; 15 to the Ministry of Interior and its subordinate security organisations; and one to cyber defence.

Capacity-building and civilian control

NATO programmes and initiatives contribute to specific aspects of strengthening civilian control over defence and related security institutions, including in the intelligence sector. Improving the capacity of these institutions is of fundamental importance for Ukraine's development as a democratic country. These issues are key deliverables under NATO's Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine and the Partnership Goals agreed under the PARP. As part of wider cooperation in this area, a number of specific initiatives have been taken.

A Professional Development Programme (PDP) for civilians working in Ukraine's defence and security institutions was launched in October 2005. The budget for this programme was doubled in 2014, with a focus on supporting transformation and reform processes by introducing NATO standards and best practices, building Ukraine's own self-sustained capacity for professional development, and improving inter-agency cooperation and information-sharing. In 2017, the Programme also launched implementation of new concepts including the ″Champions 100″ project providing support to a pool of Ukrainian civil servants directly responsible for Euro-Atlantic integration processes.

In 2007, Ukraine joined the NATO Building Integrity (BI) Programme. In 2013, based on the completion of a new BI Self-Assessment and Peer Review Process, a set of recommendations was offered to strengthen integrity, transparency, accountability, and improve good governance and anti-corruption in the defence and related security sector. On this basis, an annual tailored programme of activities was developed to provide two levels of assistance – specific expertise to the institutions to enhance the good governance and management of defence resources (financial, human and material), and education and training activities to develop individual capacities. A review is currently being conducted of the implementation of anti-corruption and BI-related reforms launched since 2014.

A specific BI educational programme to raise awareness on corruption risks and embed BI principles in existing programmes of instruction was launched in 2015 with the military and related security institutions of Lviv, Kharkiv, Khmelnytskyi, Kyiv, Odessa and Zhytomyr, as well as the National Defence University of Kyiv. This work is being enhanced through a joint project with the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (*see below*). Additional capacity-building assistance is being provided to civilian institutions as well as to the defence and security sector.

NATO is also providing capacity building in the area of cyber defence. Expert talks with security sector institutions have been launched,with the aim of enhancing inter-agency cooperation and coordination, as well as supporting the development of Ukraine's national cyber security strategy.

Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP)

NATO developed a DEEP programme with Ukraine in response to a request from the Ukrainian Defence Minister in 2012. The programme is the biggest of its kind with any of NATO's partner countries. It aims to improve and restructure the military education and professional training systems. It focuses specifically on eight defence education institutions in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Odessa and Zhytomyr and five training centres for Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) in Desna, Yavoriv, Starychi, Mykolayv and Vasylkyv (this includes restoring some Navy Academy capacity in Odessa).

Additionally, DEEP advises on management of the academies and universities, including supporting faculty on how to teach and development of courses on leadership and decision-making processes. Support has also focused on building e-learning capacity and improving the English language skills of military professors. These efforts expanded to other areas such as organising simulation exercises and courses for demining instructors.

Starting in 2017, DEEP has shifted its assistance into curriculum development in the areas of civilian and democratic control, personnel management, strategic communication, leadership, quality management and NATO operational planning. Following a request from the Ministry of Defence, the programme has been extended until 2020.

Training and professionalisation of enlisted soldiers and NCOs is critically important for the success of overall reform in the armed forces. DEEP identified four gap areas in which it now facilitates Allied bilateral support: a) basic combat training programme; b) train-the-trainers courses for instructors; c) development of a professional NCO career system; and d) creation of a professional military education for NCOs.

Military career transition and resettling of former military personnel

NATO supports the reintegration of former military personnel into civilian life through a wide range of projects, adjusted to the new challenges brought up by the Russia-Ukraine conflict. NATO provides concrete assistance in the form of professional retraining and provides psychological rehabilitation services to mitigate post-traumatic stress syndrome among demobilised conscripts. Additionally, NATO is advising on the set-up of an integrated, comprehensive military career transition system through one of the Trust Funds launched at the Wales Summit in 2014 to support security and defence sector reform (*see below*).

Destroying stockpiles of weapons and munitions

Individual Allies are supporting the destruction of Ukraine's stockpiles of anti-personnel mines, munitions and small arms and light weapons through Partnership Trust Fund projects. Phase 1 of the Trust Fund led by the United States involved the safe destruction of 400,000 small arms and light weapons (SALW), 15,000 tons of munitions and 1,000 man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) in the 2006-2011 timeframe. A second phase started in 2012. As of May 2018, it has successfully destroyed more than 130,000 SALW, 27,200 tonnes of conventional ammunition and 1.7 million anti-personnel landmines. Its scope was extended in 2017-2018 to support enhanced ammunition safety management.

Another Trust Fund led by Germany supports the disposal of radioactive waste from former Soviet military sites in Ukraine. A project enabling Ukraine to recover and secure radioactive material according to international standards and to restore the site to its original condition was carried out in 2016-17. A follow-on project was launched in December 2017.

Air Situation Data Exchange (ASDE)

Ukraine joined the ASDE programme in July 2006. Through the exchange of filtered air situation information it reduces the risk of potential cross-border incidents and optimises responses to terrorist attacks using civil airplanes. Connections between NATO and Ukraine have been in operation via Hungary since end 2008 and via Turkey since mid-2011. Following the Russia-Ukraine crisis, air data information provided by NATO has been extended to cover a larger area.

Trust Funds promoting security and defence sector reform and capability development

At the Wales Summit in 2014, Allies decided to launch substantial new programmes to enhance NATO's assistance to capability development and sustainable capacity-building in Ukraine's security and defence sector. Six Trust Funds were set up, making use of a mechanism which allows individual Allies and partner countries to provide financial support for concrete projects on a voluntary basis. Subsequently, all Allies have contributed in one way or the other to the development of these Trust Funds. They include:

Trust Fund on Command, Control, Communications and Computers (C4)

The C4 Trust Fund assists Ukraine in reorganising and modernising its C4 structures and capabilities, facilitates their interoperability with NATO to contribute to NATO-led exercises and operations, and enhances Ukraine's ability to provide for its own defence and security.

The Trust Fund is led by Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom, with the NATO Communications and Information Agency as executing agent. NATO conducted a C4 Feasibility Study to assess Ukraine's capabilities and needs based on fact-finding trips to Ukraine to identify priority C4 requirements through

consultations with Ukrainian authorities. A final report on recommendations for reform, reorganisation and modernisation of Ukraine's Armed Forces and capabilities in the C4 area was delivered in September 2016.

Based on early project recommendations, three initial projects were launched:

■ Regional Airspace Security Programme (RASP) – to promote regional airspace security cooperation and interoperability with NATO, improve Ukraine's internal civil-military airspace cooperation, and to establish cross-border coordination capability with Allies for better handling of air security incidents.

■ Secure Tactical Communications Project – to assist Allies in providing secure communications equipment to enhance Ukraine's capabilities for secure command and control and situational awareness for its armed forces.

■ Knowledge Sharing – to provide NATO subject-matter expertise, training, standards, best practices, mentoring and advice to C4 project teams and subject-matter experts in Ukraine.

A fourth project is currently under development:

■ Situational Awareness – to provide the NATO standards, software tools (JOCWatch, JCHAT, iGeoSit), procedures as well as mentoring/subject matter experts support for capability development.

Trust Fund on Logistics and Standardization

This Trust Fund aims to support the ongoing reform of Ukraine's logistics and standardization systems for the armed forces as well as other national military formations, including the National Guard and the State Border Security Service, as appropriate.

Led by the Czech Republic, the Netherlands and Poland, the project builds on the findings of a Strategy Level Gap Analysis conducted in the course of 2015.

It complements and is aligned with other NATO activities performed in these areas such as those under the Planning and Review Process, Joint Working Group on Defence Technical Cooperation and Joint Working Group on Defence Reform.

Over the course of three years, the project aims will be achieved through the implementation of three capability-driven initiatives in support of long-term developments, with a focus on National Codification Capability Enhancement, Supply Chain Management Capability Improvement, and Standardization Management Capability Improvement.

Trust Fund on Cyber Defence

This Trust Fund, led by Romania, aims to help Ukraine develop strictly defensive, technical capabilities to counter cyber threats. Assistance includes the establishment of an incident management centre for monitoring cyber security incidents and laboratories to investigate cyber security incidents. The project also has a training and advisory dimension, derived from the requirements of Ukraine's security and defence sector institutions. Training has already been provided to Ukrainian personnel, as well as advice in the development of policy documents; other provisions of the Trust Fund are currently being implemented. The first phase of the project, completed in spring 2017, will be followed by a second phase.

Trust Fund on Medical Rehabilitation

This Trust Fund aims to ensure that patients – active and discharged Ukrainian servicemen and women and civilian personnel from the defence and security sector – have rapid access to appropriate care. Furthermore, it seeks to support Ukraine in enhancing its medical rehabilitation system to ensure that long-term sustainable services are provided.

The project, led by Bulgaria and executed by the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA), started in 2015 and runs over 48 months.

As of May 2018, the medical rehabilitation of 270 servicemen has been supported and 15 servicemen have been provided with prostheses. Support to an additional 100 servicemen will be provided in

2018-2019. Moreover, 13 servicemen from the Ministry of Defence have benefited from vocational rehabilitation services. Another 148 former servicemen and 140 civilians/internally displaced persons from the Donbas have accessed rehabilitation through sport. In partnership with the NATO-sponsored project on resettling former military personnel, more than 6,000 former servicemen have benefited from psychological support services. In 2017, support was also provided for Ukraine to participate at their first Invictus Games.

Five medical rehabilitation units in hospitals have received appropriate equipment to improve the quality of services. The first occupational therapy kitchen in Ukraine, the first modern rehabilitation swimming pool and the first wheelchair workshop in a governmental institution were delivered in 2016. More than 2,200 Ukrainian physical and psychological professionals from the medical rehabilitation sector, both from government and non-governmental organisations, have benefitted from professional development activities. Since March 2018, the Trust Fund is also supporting the development of internationally recognised academic curricula for prosthetists/orthotists and orthopaedic technologists, professions newly recognised in 2016.

Trust Fund on Military Career Transition

This Trust Fund, led by Norway, assists Ukraine in developing and implementing a sustainable, effective and integrated approach to the resettlement of military personnel embedded in the personnel management of the armed forces.

The project aims to increase understanding among Ukrainian officials of the main organisational and managerial concepts of social adaptation systems, and develop their professional skills. It will also help define parameters for the assistance for resettlement within the armed forces through a combination of seminars, workshops, study tours and analytical surveys.

Trust Fund on Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Countering Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED)

This Trust Fund, led by Slovakia, directly supports specific selected recommendations in the NATO EOD and C-IED Assistance Plan to Ukraine. The project selectively supports civil humanitarian activities in the clearance of explosive hazards, including IEDs. It will assist in setting the foundations for transformation of EOD and development of C-IED in Ukraine based on NATO policy and practice, particularly regarding multi-agency cooperation. Three primary initiatives covering doctrine, interoperability and civil support will be initiated over a two-year period, starting in summer 2018.

Military-to-military cooperation

Helping Ukraine implement its defence reform objectives is also a key focus of military-to-military cooperation, complementing the work carried out under the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform and the Planning and Review Process with military expertise.

Another important objective is to develop operational capabilities and interoperability with NATO forces through a wide range of activities and military exercises. These exercises allow military personnel to gain hands-on experience in working with forces from NATO countries and other partners. Ukraine is part of the Partnership Interoperability Initiative, launched at the 2014 Wales Summit, which aims to maintain the levels of interoperability developed by international forces serving in the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (2003-2014).

An important part of practical military-to-military cooperation is carried out under the Military Committee with Ukraine Work Plan, making use of the educational, training, exercise, assistance, and advisory activities which NATO offers to partner countries. The Bi-Strategic Command Military Partnerships Directorate is responsible for the Work Plan's implementation. All these activities focus on improving the interoperability and reinforcing the operational capabilities of Ukraine's armed forces, but also substantially contribute to ongoing security and defence reform.

Ukraine's active participation in the NATO Operational Capabilities Concept Evaluation and Feedback Programme supports the further development of the armed forces, while also enabling the Alliance to put together tailored force packages that can be deployed in support of NATO-led operations and missions.

The military side has also taken the lead in developing a legal framework to enable NATO and Ukraine to further develop operational cooperation:

- A Partnership for Peace (PfP) Status of Forces Agreement facilitates participation in PfP military exercises by exempting participants from passport and visa regulations and immigration inspection on entering or leaving the territory of the country hosting the event (entered into force in May 2000).

- A Host Nation Support Agreement addresses issues related to the provision of civil and military assistance to Allied forces located on, or in transit through, Ukrainian territory in peacetime, crisis or war (ratified in March 2004).

- A Strategic Airlift Agreement enables Ukraine to make a substantial contribution to NATO's capability to move outsized cargo by leasing Antonov aircraft to Allied armed forces – an arrangement which also brings economic benefits to Ukraine (ratified in October 2006).

Senior Ukrainian officers also regularly participate in courses at the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy and the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany. Contacts with these establishments have been instrumental in setting up a new multinational faculty at the Ukrainian Defence Academy.

Defence technical cooperation

Defence technical cooperation focuses on enhancing the interoperability of Ukrainian contributions to international operations with the forces of NATO nations.

Cooperation in this area began with the entry of Ukraine to the Partnership for Peace and, in particular, their participation in a number of groups that meet under the auspices of the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) – the senior NATO body responsible for promoting cooperation between Allies and partners in the armaments field. The CNAD identifies opportunities for cooperation between nations in capability development, defence equipment procurement processes, and the development of technical standards.

The Joint Working Group on Defence Technical Cooperation, which met for the first time in March 2004, works toward increased cooperation in this area between NATO and Ukraine. Current priorities include:

- Standardization and codification as a means for increasing interoperability of the Ukrainian armed forces with Allied forces.

- Implementation of the Trust Fund projects on command, control, communications and computers (C4) and demilitarization of expired ammunition and excess small arms and light weapons (*see above*).

- Cooperation in the framework of the CNAD and with the NATO Science and Technology Organization.

- Ukraine's participation in NATO's Smart Defence projects, with the country having joined three projects in 2017 – on "Malware Information Sharing Platform", "NATO Multinational Cyber defence education and training" and "Flexible and interoperable Toolbox meeting the future operational requirements in confined and shallow waters".

- Harbour protection and promotion of female leaders in security and defence.

- Support provided to Ukraine in the modernisation of their defence industry

- Continued use and enhancement of the Air Situation Data Exchange (ASDE) programme.

Civil preparedness

Civil preparedness remains an important driver of NATO cooperation with Ukraine. Since the start of the 2014 crisis in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, it has been at the forefront of Alliance solidarity and support.

In April 2014, a team of civil experts visited Kyiv to provide advice on Ukraine's contingency plans and crisis-management measures related to critical energy infrastructure and civil protection risks.

Today, NATO-Ukraine cooperation in the area of civil preparedness focuses on improving national capacity for civil preparedness and resilience in facing hybrid threats through the exchange of lessons learned, best practices and the provision of expert advice.

Ukraine is also a regular participant in disaster preparedness and response exercises organised by the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). Ukraine already hosted three such exercises in 2000, 2005 and 2015. The 2015 EADRCC exercise – which was inaugurated by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and President Petro Poroshenko – was one of the largest field exercises organised by the EADRCC, with over 1,100 participants from 26 Allied and partner nations.

NATO's Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme

Active engagement between Ukraine and the SPS Programme dates back to 1991. A Joint Working Group on Scientific and Environmental Cooperation oversees cooperation in this area. In April 2014, in response to the crisis in Ukraine, practical cooperation with Ukraine in the field of security-related civil science and technology has been further enhanced.

Today, SPS activities in Ukraine address a wide variety of emerging security challenges such as counter-terrorism, advanced technologies, cyber defence, energy security, and defence against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) agents. SPS activities also deal with human and social aspects of security, such as the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; support the development of advanced technologies with security applications; and assist with the detection and clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance. Many current activities help Ukraine to deal with the negative effects of the crisis, engaging Allied and Ukrainian scientists and experts in meaningful, practical cooperation, forging networks and supporting capacity-building in the country.

Through tailored capability and capacity-building measures, the SPS Programme is providing support to the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP) for Ukraine, endorsed at the 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw. In this context, one important project has assisted Ukraine in the area of humanitarian demining by enhancing the capacity of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) in undertaking demining operations in eastern parts of the country. Through this project, the SPS Programme was also able to immediately respond to an urgent request for equipment following the Balaklia Arms Depot explosion in Ukraine in March 2017. Moreover, an ongoing multi-year initiative for the development of a 3D mine detector will ensure the sustainability of the activities.

The Programme also helped to build capacity in the sphere of telemedicine and paramedicine in the framework of the CAP. As part of the project, two paramedic centres in Ukraine were equipped and 30 Ukrainian paramedics took part in a 'train-the-trainer' course in Romania. During the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre's (EADRCC) field exercise in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 2017, the telemedicine capabilities were successfully live-tested, allowing medical specialists to engage in disasters or incidents across national borders. The project has now been brought to a successful completion.

Ukrainian experts are also involved in a significant new SPS initiative developing innovative technologies for the stand-off detection of explosives, a project that is contributing to NATO's enhanced role in the international fight against terrorism. It will combine different detection technologies with a view to ensuring high performance, robustness and sensitivity.

Since 2014, a total of 58 SPS activities with Ukraine as leading partner were launched, with Ukrainian scientists and experts participating in a number of additional SPS-supported projects or workshops as researchers or speakers. In 2017 alone, 16 new SPS activities with Ukraine were approved by NATO Allies, making it the largest beneficiary of the SPS Programme. The Programme is also supporting young researchers and, since 2014, more than 300 young scientists from Ukraine have taken part in various in SPS activities.
(More on Ukraine's ongoing cooperation under the SPS Programme)

Public information/strategic communications

It is important for the Ukrainian administration and for the Alliance to inform its people about NATO-Ukraine relations and the benefits of cooperation in terms of the country's reform programme. The Allies cooperate with the national authorities of Ukraine in raising awareness about what NATO is today and explaining the NATO-Ukraine relationship.

The NATO Information and Documentation Centre, based in Kyiv, is NATO's principal public information facility organising seminars, round tables and other communications projects as well as coordinating visits by NATO officials to Ukraine and representatives of Ukrainian civil society to NATO Headquarters in Belgium.

NATO also provides advisory and funding support to building the capacity of the Ukrainian authorities in public diplomacy, media relations and strategic communications. In particular, NATO has supported the Ukraine Crisis Media Centre and the Kyiv Post newspaper in their efforts to provide an accurate and factual coverage of events in the occupied Crimea peninsula as well as in eastern Ukraine.

On 22 September 2015, the Strategic Communications Partnership Roadmap was signed by the Secretary of the Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council, Oleksandr Turchynov, and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. The objective is to provide the Ukrainian authorities with more structured and long-term advice, training support and expertise in the area of strategic communications.

Legal dialogue

As part of the Annual National Programme, NATO and Ukraine have conducted legal dialogues, at the expert level, in 2015 and 2016, to ensure that their mutually agreed activities are supported by a proper legal framework. Topics of discussion have included the status of the NATO Representation in Kyiv; the ongoing implementation of the SOFA Agreement; the delivery of Science for Peace and Security Trust Fund projects in Ukraine; and other topics of mutual interest.

Framework for cooperation

The 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership remains the basic foundation underpinning NATO-Ukraine relations. The NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) directs cooperative activities and provides a forum for consultation between the Allies and Ukraine on security issues of common concern. The NUC can meet at various levels, including heads of state and government, ministers of foreign affairs or defence, ambassadors and in various working-level formats.

The Declaration to Complement the Charter, signed in 2009, gave the NUC a central role in deepening political dialogue and cooperation to underpin Ukraine's reform efforts. The principal tool to support this process is the Annual National Programme (ANP), which reflects Ukraine's national reform objectives and annual implementation plans. The ANP is composed of five chapters focusing on: political and economic issues; defence and military issues; resources; security issues; and legal issues.

Allies assess progress under the ANP annually. The responsibility for implementation falls primarily on Ukraine and is coordinated by the office of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, who also chairs Ukraine's Commission for Cooperation with NATO. Through the ANP process, Allies encourage Ukraine to take the reform process forward vigorously to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the market economy. Helping Ukraine achieve a far-reaching transformation of the defence and security sector is another priority.

Joint working groups have been set up under the auspices of the NUC, to take work forward in specific areas. They include the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR), the Joint Working Group on Defence Technical Cooperation (JWGDTC), the Joint Working Group on Scientific and Environmental Cooperation (JWGSEC) and the Joint Working Group on Civil Emergency Planning (JWGCEP).

The NATO Representation to Ukraine supports cooperation on the ground. It consists of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre, established in 1997 to support efforts to inform the public about

NATO's activities and the benefits of NATO-Ukraine cooperation, and the NATO Liaison Office, established in 1999 to facilitate Ukraine's participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and to support its defence and security sector reform efforts by liaising with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, National Security and Defence Council, and other Ukrainian agencies. The NATO Representation to Ukraine leads on the provision of strategic-level advice under NATO's Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine.

Milestones in relations

1991: Immediately upon achieving independence with the break-up of the Soviet Union, Ukraine joins the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (the NACC was replaced in 1997 by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council).

1994: Ukraine joins Partnership for Peace (PfP), becoming the first of the Commonwealth of Independent States to do so.

1996: Ukrainian soldiers deploy as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

May 1997: The NATO Information and Documentation Centre opens in Kyiv.

July 1997: At a summit meeting in Madrid, Spain, the Allies and Ukraine sign the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, which sets out principles and arrangements for the further development of relations, identifies areas for consultation and cooperation, and establishes the NATO-Ukraine Commission.

1997: Ukraine establishes a diplomatic mission to NATO.

1998: The NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform is established.

1999: The NATO Liaison Office opens in Kyiv.

1999: The Polish-Ukrainian Battalion deploys as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

May 2000: The Ukrainian parliament ratifies the PfP Status of Forces Agreement.

September 2000: Ukraine hosts a multinational disaster-response exercise, Trans-Carpathia 2000.

May 2002: President Leonid Kuchma announces Ukraine's goal of eventual NATO membership. At a NUC meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, foreign ministers underline their desire to take the relationship forward to a qualitatively new level.

July 2002: A project for the safe destruction of 400,000 landmines is inaugurated in Donetsk.

November 2002: The NATO-Ukraine Action Plan is adopted at a NUC meeting of foreign ministers in November in Prague, the Czech Republic. The Action Plan aims to deepen and broaden the NATO-Ukraine relationship and to support Ukraine's reform efforts on the road towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

March 2004: The Ukrainian parliament ratifies the Host Nation Support Agreement with NATO.

June 2004: Ukraine signs a Strategic Airlift Agreement with NATO.

Autumn 2004: The Allies closely follow political developments surrounding the presidential elections in Ukraine and the ″Orange Revolution″, stressing the importance of respect for free and fair elections.

February 2005: The Allies invite newly-elected President Viktor Yushchenko to a summit meeting at NATO Headquarters. They express support for his ambitious reform plans and agree to refocus NATO-Ukraine cooperation in line with the new government's priorities.

April 2005: NUC foreign ministers meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania, launch an Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership and a package of short-term actions to strengthen support for key reforms.

October 2005: Ukraine hosts a multinational disaster-response exercise, Joint Assistance 2005.

October 2005: The North Atlantic Council visits Kyiv to discuss the Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine's foreign and defence ministers.

February 2006: A Resettlement and Retraining Centre is inaugurated in Khmelnytskyi.

June 2006: A contract is signed for the launch of a project with Ukraine to destroy 133,000 tons of conventional munitions, 1.5 million small arms and 1,000 man-portable air defence systems over an estimated 12 years.

September 2006: During a visit to NATO, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych reassures Allies of Ukraine's commitment to ongoing cooperation with NATO. However, he says the Ukrainian people are not yet ready to consider possible NATO membership.

October 2006: The Ukrainian parliament ratifies the Strategic Airlift Agreement.

June 2007: Ukraine deploys a ship for the first time in support of Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's maritime counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean. This is followed by a second deployment in the autumn.

2007: Ukraine sends medical personnel to support a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan.

April 2008: At the Bucharest Summit, Allied leaders agree that Ukraine will become a NATO member in future.

2008: Ukraine deploys a vessel in support of Operation Active Endeavour. This is followed by a second deployment in the autumn.

December 2008: NUC foreign ministers agree to enhance opportunities for assisting Ukraine in its efforts to meet membership requirements and to develop an Annual National Programme (ANP).

December 2008: The first Air Situation Data Exchange (ASDE) connection between Command Post Air Command West in L'viv and the NATO Command and Reporting Centre in Veszprem, Hungary becomes operational.

April 2009: Ukraine signs a land transit agreement for the supply of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

21 August 2009: A ″Declaration to Complement the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine″ is signed to reflect decisions taken at the Bucharest Summit and the foreign ministers' meeting in December 2008.

February 2010: The new Ukrainian government under President Viktor Yanukovych decides to continue present cooperation with NATO. However, Alliance membership for the country is taken off the agenda.

May 2010: A memorandum of understanding on Air Situation Data Exchange (ASDE) is signed, which aims to reduce airspace conflicts by minimising potential cross-border incidents and optimising responses to renegade situations with civil airplanes.

November 2010: Ukraine deploys a ship in support of Operation Active Endeavour.

April 2011: At their meeting in Berlin, NUC foreign ministers reaffirm their distinct partnership and agree to take forward practical cooperation activities.

May 2012: President Yanukovych attends NATO's Summit in Chicago to participate in a meeting with counterparts from countries that are contributing troops to ISAF.

November 2012: NATO initiates the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) with Ukraine in response to a request from the Ukrainian defence minister.

November 2012: The second ASDE connection between Command Post Air Command South in Odessa and the NATO Command and Reporting Centre in Erzurum, Turkey becomes operational.

February 2013: NUC defence ministers agree to reinforce NATO-Ukraine cooperation, including in training and exercises; retraining of former military officers in Ukraine; and the neutralisation of radioactive sources from former Soviet military sites. Ukraine becomes the first partner country to contribute to NATO's counter-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia, Operation Ocean Shield.

December 2013: NATO foreign ministers discuss developments in Ukraine. In a statement, they condemn the use of excessive force against peaceful demonstrators in Ukraine and call on all parties to refrain from provocations and violence.

March 2014: With its independence and territorial integrity under threat, Ukraine invokes a provision of the 2009 Declaration to Complement the NATO-Ukraine Charter and requests a meeting of the NUC. In a statement, the North Atlantic Council states that it considers the so-called referendum held on 16 March in Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea to be both illegal and illegitimate, urging Russian to de-escalate the situation, including by ceasing all military activities against Ukraine.

April 2014: NUC foreign ministers meet in Brussels. In their joint statement they are united in their condemnation of Russia's illegal military intervention in Ukraine, stating that they do not recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate "annexation" and calling on Russia to reverse it.

April and June 2014: At ministerial meetings in spring and summer, NATO agrees on concrete support measures for Ukraine to strengthen its ability to provide for its own security. Measures include a number of immediate and short-term actions to help Ukraine cope with the current conflict, and longer-term measures geared towards capacity-building, capability development, and deep reform of the armed forces and the security sector.

4-5 September 2014: At the NATO Summit in Wales, Allied leaders meet Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, reaffirming their support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and reiterating their condemnation of Russia's actions; they pledge to step up strategic consultations in the NUC to further reinforce support for Ukraine, including substantial new programmes to be based on Trust Funds.

2 December 2014: NUC foreign ministers meet to discuss the developments in Ukraine and to review progress made in joint work since the Wales Summit.

15 December 2014: Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk visits NATO Headquarters to discuss the Alliance's efforts to support Ukraine's government. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg underlines that NATO will stand by the country as it works towards the goal of a sovereign and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law.

29 December 2014: Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko signs into law a bill to cancel the non-bloc status of Ukraine and announces that Ukraine will start a process to achieve the criteria needed for NATO membership and also integrate into the Euro-Atlantic security space. He also indicates that a referendum would be held if his country were to apply for NATO membership.

January 2015: Following the completion of the ISAF operation in Afghanistan in December 2014, Ukraine starts contributing to the follow-on NATO-led mission ("Resolute Support") to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions.

29 January 2015: In talks with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg expresses concern about the escalation of violence in the country and says that NATO will continue its strong political and practical support for Ukraine.

13 May 2015: In Antalya, Turkey, NUC foreign ministers reaffirm their firm support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, call on Russia to reverse the illegal and illegitimate "annexation" of Crimea, welcome the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements signed on 12 February 2015, and encourage Ukraine to continue reform efforts.

21-25 September 2015: Ukraine hosts a major consequence-management field exercise near Lviv, jointly organised by NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre and Ukraine's State Emergency Service. NATO's Secretary General and the Ukrainian President attend the opening ceremony.

22 September 2015: During a visit to Kyiv, NATO's Secretary General addresses the National Security and Defence Council and has meetings with key members of the government and the speaker of the parliament. An agreement is signed to formalise the diplomatic status of NATO's Representation in Ukraine.

2 December 2015: NATO foreign ministers meet their Ukrainian counterpart, Pavlo Klimkin, to review NATO's assistance to Ukraine as well as the current security situation in the country.

17 December 2015: Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko visits NATO Headquarters for a bilateral meeting with NATO's Secretary General to discuss the outlook for NATO-Ukraine cooperation in 2016.

8 March 2016: Defence Minister Stepan Poltorak briefs the NATO-Ukraine Commission in Brussels on progress with defence reform in Ukraine.

11 March 2016: Following its ratification by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Agreement between NATO and the Government of Ukraine on the Status of the NATO Representation to Ukraine enters into force.

15 June 2016: NATO defence ministers agree to boost NATO's support for Ukraine with a Comprehensive Assistance Package, which aims to help Ukraine strengthen its defences by building stronger security structures. They also exchange views with Ukrainian Defence Minister Stepan Poltorak on the current security situation in eastern Ukraine and the progress of government reforms.

9 July 2016: At the NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders meet President Poroshenko and agree to step up support for Ukraine, endorsing a Comprehensive Assistance Package which aims to help make the country's defence and security institutions more effective, efficient and accountable. They also review the security situation and welcome the government's plans for reform.

20 October 2016: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko meet at NATO Headquarters to discuss the security situation in Ukraine and how the Alliance can continue to support Kyiv. Stoltenberg welcomes the recent efforts by leaders of the Normandy Format in Berlin to create a new roadmap for implementing the Minsk Agreements.

15 November 2016: At a meeting of the NUC at NATO Headquarters, Vadym Chernysh, Minister of Ukraine for the Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons, briefs Allies on the security situation in eastern Ukraine, as well as the challenges faced by refugees and internally displaced people.

7 December 2016: The NUC meets at the level of foreign ministers at NATO Headquarters to discuss Russia's continued aggressive actions, the importance of implementing the Minsk Agreements and NATO's enduring support for Ukraine.

9 February 2017: Ukrainian Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman meets NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller at NATO Headquarters. In a joint press conference, she underlines the deep concern over the recent spike in violence in eastern Ukraine and the continued strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which had been expressed by all Allies during a special meeting of the NUC the previous evening. She also commends Ukraine for continuing on the path of reform and anti-corruption despite these very difficult circumstances.

31 March 2017: At a meeting of the NUC at NATO Headquarters, Allied foreign ministers reaffirm their strong support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, and review NATO's ongoing political and practical support to the country. Ministers welcome the opening in Kharkiv of a rehabilitation facility for wounded service personnel, paid for by NATO's Medical Rehabilitation Trust Fund. Several Allies also announce that they will offer assistance to Ukraine following the explosions at the Balaklia arms depot.

8 June 2017: The Ukrainian parliament votes to restore NATO membership as the country's strategic foreign policy objective, passing a bill to amend Ukrainian laws on national security and internal and foreign policies.

9-10 July 2017: The North Atlantic Council visits Ukraine to mark the 20th anniversary of the Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine. The NATO Ambassadors take part in a meeting of the NUC, hosted by President Poroshenko. During the two-day visit, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has bilateral meetings with the President, the Prime Minister and other senior officials. As the first NATO Secretary General to do so, he also addresses the plenary of the Verkhovna Rada -- the Ukrainian Parliament -- with a speech on NATO's support for Ukraine's independence and the country's reform path in line with Euro-Atlantic principles.

18-19 April 2018: At the invitation of Chief of Defence of the General Staff General Viktor Muzhenko, the Military Committee (MC) pays a two-day visit to Ukraine (Lviv). The main aim of this visit is to provide the Military Committee with first-hand knowledge of the state of progress in defence reform in the Ukrainian Armed Forces and to underline NATO's steady support for Ukraine. Apart from holding a meeting of the MC in Permanent Session with Ukraine, the visit provides an opportunity for the MC to enhance military-to-military relations with the Ukrainian Armed Forces; to witness military training; and to engage with the multinational training group members.

Mediterranean Dialogue

NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue was initiated in 1994 by the North Atlantic Council. It currently involves seven non-NATO countries of the Mediterranean region: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

Origins and Objectives

The Dialogue reflects the Alliance's view that security in Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean. It is an integral part of NATO's adaptation to the post-Cold War security environment, as well as an important component of the Alliance's policy of outreach and cooperation.

The Mediterranean Dialogue's overall aim is to:

- contribute to regional security and stability

- achieve better mutual understanding

- dispel any misconceptions about NATO among Dialogue countries

Key Principles

The successful launch of the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and its subsequent development has been based upon a number of principles:

- **Non discrimination**: all Mediterranean partners are offered the same basis for their cooperation with NATO.

- **Self-differentiation**, allowing a tailored approach to the specific needs of each of our MD partner countries. Particularly Individual Cooperation Programmes (ICP) allow interested MD countries and NATO to frame their practical cooperation in a more prospective and focused way, enabling interested countries to outline the main short and long-term objectives of their cooperation with the Alliance, in accordance with NATO's objectives and policies for the Mediterranean Dialogue.

- **Inclusiveness**: all MD countries should see themselves as share holders of the same cooperative effort.

- **Two-way engagement**: the MD is a ″two-way partnership″, in which NATO seeks partners' contribution for its success, through a regular consultation process; special emphasis is placed on practical cooperation.

- **Non imposition**: MD partners are free to choose the pace and extent of their cooperation with the Alliance; NATO has no wish to impose anything upon them.

- **Complementarity and mutual reinforcement**: efforts of the MD and other international institutions for the region are complementary and mutually reinforcing in nature; such as, for example, those of the EU's "Union For the Mediterranean", the OSCE's "Mediterranean Initiative", or the "Five plus Five".

- **Diversity**: the MD respects and takes into account the specific regional, cultural and political contexts of the respective partners.

Moreover, the MD is progressive in terms of participation and substance. Such flexibility has allowed the number of Dialogue partners to grow - witness the inclusion of Jordan in November 1995 and Algeria in March 2000 - and the content of the Dialogue to evolve over time.

The Dialogue is primarily bilateral in structure (NATO+1). Despite the predominantly bilateral character, the Dialogue nevertheless allows for multilateral meetings on a regular basis (NATO+7).

In principle, activities within the Mediterranean Dialogue take place on a self-funding basis. However, Allies agreed to consider requests for financial assistance in support of Mediterranean partners' participation in the Dialogue. A number of measures have recently been taken to facilitate cooperation, notably the revision of the Dialogue's funding policy to allow funding up to 100 percent of the participation costs in Dialogue's activities and the extension of the NATO/PfP Trust Fund mechanisms to MD countries.

The political dimension

The Mediterranean Dialogue is based upon the twin pillars of political dialogue and practical cooperation.

The Mediterranean Cooperation Group (MCG), established at the Madrid Summit in July 1997 under the supervision of the North Atlantic Council (NAC), had the overall responsibility for the Mediterranean Dialogue, until it was replaced in 2011 by the Political and Partnerships Committee, which is responsible for all partnerships. The Committee meets at the level of Political Counsellors on a regular basis to discuss all matters related to the Dialogue including its further development.

Political consultations in the NATO+1 format are held on a regular basis both at Ambassadorial and working level. These discussions provide an opportunity for sharing views on a range of issues relevant to the security situation in the Mediterranean, as well as on the further development of the political and practical cooperation dimensions of the Dialogue.

Meetings in the NATO+7 format, including NAC+7 meetings, are also held on a regular basis, in particular following the NATO Summit and Ministerial meetings, Chiefs-of-Defence meetings, and other major NATO events. These meetings represent an opportunity for two-way political consultations between NATO and MD partners.

At the June 2004 Istanbul Summit, NATO's Heads of State and Government elevated the MD to a genuine partnership through the establishment of a more ambitious and expanded framework, which considerably enhanced both the MD's political and practical cooperation dimensions.

Since then, the constant increase in the number and quality of the NATO-MD political dialogue has recently reached a sustainable level. Consultations of the 29 Allies and seven MD countries take place on a regular basis on a bilateral and multilateral level, at Ministerial, Ambassadorial and working level formats. That has also included three meetings of the NATO and MD Foreign Ministers in December 2004, 2007 and 2008 in Brussels. Two meetings of NATO and MD Defense Ministers in 2006 and 2007 in Taormina, Italy and Seville, Spain. Ten meetings of the Chief of Defense of NATO and MD countries have

also take place so far. The first ever NAC+7 meeting took place in Rabat, Morocco, in 2006 and, more recenty, the first MD Policy Advisory Goup meeting with all seven MD partners took place in San Remo, Italy, on 15-16 September 2011.

The political dimension also includes visits by NATO Senior Officials, including the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General, to Mediterranean Dialogue countries. The main purpose of these visits is to conduct high-level political consultations with the relevant host authorities on the way forward in NATO's political and practical cooperation under the Mediterranean Dialogue.

The new Strategic Concept, which was adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2011, identifies cooperative security as one of three key priorities for the Alliance, and constitutes an opportunity to move partnerships to the next generation. Mediterranean Dialogue partners were actively involved in the debate leading to its adoption.

The Strategic Concept refers specifically to the MD, stating that: *"We are firmly committed to the development of friendly and cooperative relations with all countries of the Mediterranean, and we intend to further develop the Mediterranean Dialogue in the coming years. We will aim to deepen the cooperation with current members of the Mediterranean Dialogue and be open to the inclusion in the Mediterranean Dialogue of other countries of the region."*

MD partners have reiterated their support for enhanced political consultations to better tailor the MD to their specific interests and to maintain the distinctive cooperation framework of the MD.

The practical dimension

Measures of practical cooperation between NATO and Mediterranean Dialogue countries are laid down in an annual Work Programme which aims at enhancing our partnership through cooperation in security-related issues.

The annual Work Programme includes seminars, workshops and other practical activities in the fields of modernisation of the armed forces, civil emergency planning, crisis management, border security, small arms & light weapons, public diplomacy, scientific and environmental cooperation, as well as consultations on terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

There is also a military dimension to the annual Work Programme which includes invitations to Dialogue countries to observe - and in some cases participate - in NATO/PfP military exercises, attend courses and other academic activities at the NATO School (SHAPE) in Oberammergau (Germany) and the NATO Defense College in Rome (Italy), and visit NATO military bodies.

The military programme also includes port visits by NATO's Standing Naval Forces, on-site train-the-trainers sessions by Mobile Training Teams, and visits by NATO experts to assess the possibilities for further cooperation in the military field.

Furthermore, NATO+7 consultation meetings on the military programme involving military representatives from NATO and the seven Mediterranean Dialogue countries are held twice a year.

State of play

At their Summit meeting in Istanbul in June 2004, NATO's HOSG invited Mediterranean partners to establish a more ambitious and expanded framework for the Mediterranean Dialogue, guided by the principle of joint ownership and taking into consideration their particular interests and needs. The aim is to contribute towards regional security and stability through stronger practical cooperation, including by enhancing the existing political dialogue, achieving interoperability, developing defence reform and contributing to the fight against terrorism.

Since the June 2004 Istanbul Summit, an annual Mediterranean Dialogue Work Programme (MDWP) focusing on agreed priority areas has been the main cooperation instrument available and has been

expanded progressively in more than 30 areas of cooperation, going from about 100 activities in 2004, to over 700 activities and events in 2011.

While the MDWP is essentially military (85 percent of the activities), it comprises activities in a wide range of areas of cooperation including Military Education, Training and Doctrine, Defence Policy and Strategy, Defence Investment, Civil Emergency Planning, Public Diplomacy, Crisis Management, Armaments and Intelligence related activities.

At their Berlin meeting in April 2011, NATO Foreign Ministers endorsed the establishment of a single Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM) for all partners. As of 1 January 2012, the single partnership menu will be effective, thus dramatically expanding the number of activities accessible to MD countries.

A number of cooperation tools have also been progressively opened to MD countries, such as:

- The e-Prime database which provides electronic access to the MDWP allowing close monitoring of cooperation activities;

- The full package of Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC) to improve partners' capacity to contribute effectively to NATO-led Crisis Response Operations through achieving interoperability;

- The Trust Fund mechanism that currently includes ongoing substantial projects with MD countries such as Jordan and Mauritania;

- The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC) aims at improving partners' capacity in supporting NATO's response to crises;

- The Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism (PAP-T) aims at strengthening NATO's ability to work effectively with MD partners in the fight against terrorism;

- The Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) action plan aims at improving the civil preparedness againts CBRN attacks on populations and critical infrastructures.

The NATO Training Cooperation Initiative (NTCI), launched at the 2007 Riga Summit, aims at complementing existing cooperation activities developed in the MD framework through: the establishment of a "NATO Regional Cooperation Course" at the NATO Defence College (NDC) in Rome, which consists in a ten-week strategic level course also focusing on current security challenges in the Middle East. Individual Partnership Cooperation Programmes

The Individual and Partnership Cooperation Programme (IPCP), which replaces the previous Individual Cooperation Programme (ICP) framework document, aims at enhancing bilateral political dialogue as well as at tailoring the cooperation with NATO according to key national security needs, framing NATO cooperation with MD partner countries in a more strategic way. Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia have all agreed tailored Individual Cooperation Programmes with NATO. This is the main instrument of focused cooperation between NATO and MD countries.

Taking into account changes in the Middle East and North Africa, NATO stands ready to support and assist those Mediterranean Dialogue countries undergoing transition, if they so request. Drawing on in-house experience and expertise, through Individual Partnership Cooperation Programmes the Alliance could provide assistance in the areas of security institutions building, defence transformation, modernisation and capacity development, civil-military relations, and defence-related aspects of the transformation and reform of the security sector.

Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI)

▬▬ Reaching out to the broader Middle East

NATO's Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, launched at the Alliance's Summit in the Turkish city in June 2004, aims to contribute to long-term global and regional security by offering countries of the broader Middle East region practical bilateral security cooperation with NATO.

ICI focuses on practical cooperation in areas where NATO can add value, notably in the security field. Six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council were initially invited to participate. To date, four of these -- Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates -- have joined. Saudia Arabia and Oman have also shown an interest in the Initiative.

Based on the principle of inclusiveness, the Initiative is, however, open to all interested countries of the broader Middle East region who subscribe to its aims and content, including the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Each interested country will be considered by the North Atlantic Council on a case-by-case basis and on its own merit. Participation of countries in the region in the Initiative as well as the pace and extent of their cooperation with NATO will depend in large measure on their individual response and level of interest.

▬▬ What key principles is the Initiative based on?

The ICI is based on a number of important principles, including:

- **Non discrimination**: all ICI partners are offered the same basis for their cooperation with NATO.

- **Self-differentiation:** a tailored approach to the specific needs of each of our ICI partner countries. Particularly Individual Partnership Cooperation Programmes (IPCP), allow interested ICI countries and NATO to frame their practical cooperation in a more prospective and focused way, enabling interested countries to outline the main short and long-term objectives of their cooperation with the Alliance, in accordance with NATO's objectives and policies for the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

- **Inclusiveness**: all ICI countries should see themselves as stakeholders of the same cooperative effort.

- **Two-way engagement**: the ICI is a ″two-way" partnership, in which NATO seeks partners' contribution for its success, through a regular consultation process; special emphasis is placed on practical cooperation.

- **Non imposition**: ICI partners are free to choose the pace and extent of their cooperation with the Alliance; NATO has no wish to impose anything upon them

- **Complementarity and mutual reinforcement**: efforts of the ICI and other international institutions for the region are complementary and mutually reinforcing in nature.

- **Diversity**: the ICI respects and takes into account the specific regional, cultural and political contexts of the respective partners.

What does this mean in practice?

The Initiative offers a 'menu' of bilateral activities that countries can choose from, which comprises a range of cooperation areas, including: tailored advice on defence transformation, defence budgeting, defence planning and civil-military relations; military-to-military cooperation to contribute to interoperability through participation in selected military exercises and related education and training activities that could improve the ability of participating countries' forces to operate with those of the Alliance; and through participation in selected NATO and PfP exercises and in NATO-led operation on a case-by-case basis; cooperation in the fight against terrorism, including through intelligence-sharing; cooperation in the Alliance's work on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; cooperation regarding border security in connection with terrorism, small arms and light weapons and the fight against illegal trafficking; civil emergency planning, including participating in training courses and exercises on disaster assistance.

Individual and Partnership Cooperation Programme (IPCP) allow interested ICI countries and NATO to frame their practical cooperation in a more prospective and focused way, enabling interested countries to outline the main short and long-term objectives of their cooperation with the Alliance.

How did the Initiative evolve?

NATO recognizes that dealing with today's complex new threats requires wide international cooperation and collective effort. That is why NATO has developed, and continues to develop, a network of partnerships in the security field.

The Initiative was preceeded by a series of high level consultations conducted by the then Deputy Secretary General of NATO, Ambassador Minuto Rizzo, with six countries of the region in May, September and December 2004.

These were: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. During these consultations all of the countries expressed their interest in the Initiative.

ICI was launched at the Summit meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government in Istanbul, 28 June 2004. Following the Summit, from September to December 2004, the Deputy Secretary General of NATO paid a second round of visits to the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, to discuss the way ahead.

In the first three months of 2005, three countries: Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar formally joined the ICI. In June 2005, the United Arab Emirates joined the Initiative.

The ICI has since developed both in the political and in the practical dimensions. While the political dialogue has evolved to include high-level meetings, the practical dimension was progressively enhanced through the opening of new partnership tools and activities as well as through the contribution of these countries to NATO-led operations. The multilateral dimension of the partnership also developed, with the first NAC+4 meeting held in November 2008, followed by two other such meetings in 2009 and 2010.

Since the Istanbul Summit in 2004, an annual Menu of Practical Activities focusing on agreed priority areas has been opened to ICI countries and has been gradually enhanced. Whereas in 2007, the offer of cooperation to ICI countries included 328 activities/events, the 2011 Menu of Practical Activities now contains about 500 activities.

The NATO Training Cooperation Initiative (NTCI), launched at the 2007 Riga Summit, aims at complementing existing cooperation activities developed in the ICI framework through the establishment of a "NATO Regional Cooperation Course" at the NATO Defence College (NDC) in Rome, which consists in a ten-week strategic level course also focusing on current security challenges in the Middle East. ICI partners, as well as Saudi Arabia, actively participate in these courses.

The importance of public diplomacy has been underlined by ICI nations. High visibility events gave way to informal discussions on security related issues of common interest. The ICI Ambassadorial Conferences in Kuwait (2006), Bahrain (2008) and the United Arab Emirates (2009), which were attended by the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General and the 28 NATO Permanent Representatives, as well as by high-ranking officials, policymakers and opinion leaders from ICI countries, focused on discussing and addressing the perception of NATO in the Gulf, as well as ways to develop NATO-ICI partnership in its two dimensions. The fourth ICI Ambassadorial Conference took place in Qatar in February 2011 and focused on deepening NATO-ICI partnership.

The new Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, identifies cooperative security as one of three core tasks for the Alliance. It refers specifically to the ICI, and states: "We attach great importance to peace and stability in the Gulf region, and we intend to strengthen our cooperation in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. We will aim to develop a deeper security partnership with our Gulf partners and remain ready to welcome new partners in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative."

With the approval of the new partnership policy at the meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Berlin in April 2011, all NATO partners will have access in principle to the same range and number of activities. This will dramatically expand the number of activities accessible to ICI countries.

ICI partners have also increasingly demonstrated their readiness to participate in NATO-led operations, acting as security providers. Today, several ICI partners actively contribute to the NATO ISAF operation in Afghanistan. Following the launch of Operation Unified Protector (OUP) in Libya, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates promptly provided air assets to the operation and were recognised as contributing nations, playing a key role in the success of the operation.

Which NATO bodies have a central role?

Following the launch of the ICI, NATO countries decided to establish the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Group, composed of political counsellors from the 28 delegations of member countries to NATO, which was replaced in 2011 by the Political and Partnerships Committee, which responsible for all partnerships.

he Committee is in charge of defining the procedures for the development of a menu of practical activities with interested countries and ensuring its succesful implementation. It also reports to the Council or to NATO's Senior Political Committee and prepares the ground for the decisions to be adopted by the North Atlantic Council on ICI.

In addition, the Committee engages countries participating in the Initiative on a '28+1' basis for the development of individual workplans and follows up on their implementation.

A "comprehensive approach" to crises

Lessons learned from NATO operations show that addressing crisis situations calls for a comprehensive approach combining political, civilian and military instruments. Building on its unique capabilities and operational experience, including expertise in civilian-military interaction, NATO can contribute to the efforts of the international community for maintaining peace, security and stability, in full coordination with other actors. Military means, although essential, are not enough on their own to meet the many complex challenges to our security. The effective implementation of a comprehensive approach to crisis situations requires nations, international organisations and non-governmental organisations to contribute in a concerted effort.

Highlights

- Different actors contribute to a comprehensive approach based on a shared sense of responsibility, openness and determination, taking into account their respective strengths, mandates and roles, as well as their decision-making autonomy.

- In December 2017, NATO reviewed the tasks of its 2011 Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, validating the importance of civilian-military interaction and cooperation with other actors.

- These tasks are being implemented by a dedicated civilian-military task force that involves all relevant NATO bodies and commands.

- The Action Plan covers four key areas: planning and conduct of operations; lessons learned, training, education and exercises; cooperation with external actors; and strategic communications.

- Implementation of the comprehensive approach is integral to many recent and ongoing NATO activities, such as its contributions to the international community's fight against terrorism and efforts to project stability, and its role in responding to hybrid threats.

More background information

Planning and conduct of operations

NATO takes full account of all military and non-military aspects of crisis management, and is working to improve practical cooperation at all levels with all relevant organisations and actors in the planning and conduct of operations. The Alliance promotes the clear definition of strategies and objectives among all relevant actors *before* launching an operation, as well as enhanced cooperative planning.

The Allies agree that, as a general rule, elements of stabilisation and reconstruction are best undertaken by those actors and organisations that have the relevant expertise, mandate and competence. However, there can be circumstances which may hamper other actors from undertaking these tasks, or undertaking them without support from NATO.

To improve NATO's contribution to a comprehensive approach of the international community when addressing crises, NATO bodies as well as individual Allies follow the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan to promote integrated civil-military planning across NATO's three core tasks (i.e. collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security). The principles of the comprehensive approach – coherence of actions, civil-military interaction and reaching out to external partners – are integral to the activities of the NATO Headquarters' Crisis Management Task Force as well as the NATO Command and Force Structures.

The planning and conduct of NATO operations and missions now integrate perspectives from different priority areas including: gender; the Women, Peace and Security agenda; children and armed conflict; building integrity; cultural property protection; combating trafficking in human beings; and environmental protection.

Lessons learned, training, education and exercises

Applying a comprehensive approach means a change of mindset. The Alliance therefore emphasises joint training of civilian and military personnel to promote the sharing of lessons learned and to build trust and confidence between NATO, its partners and other international and local actors.

In some cases, lessons learned are being developed at staff level, for example, with the United Nations, related to Libya. Another example is the NATO Defence Education Enhancement Programme, which, as a matter of principle, reaches out to external providers and enablers including international organisations and non-governmental organisations, addressing both civilian and military experts. And Sweden, a key NATO partner, designed its 2018 Viking exercise (involving 2,500 participants from 50 countries and 35 organisations) on comprehensive approach principles.

Enhancing cooperation with external actors

Cooperation has become well established with the United Nations and its agencies, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, in particular, as well as with the World Bank, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Organization for Migration, the African Union, INTERPOL and the League of Arab States. Closer links are developed with non-governmental organisations as well.

The scope of cooperation ranges from political dialogue, including through regular staff talks, "NATO education days" and the yearly Comprehensive Approach Awareness Course, to practical cooperation during operations and missions. High-level officials from these organisations are regularly invited to meetings of the North Atlantic Council, including at the level of heads of states and governments, to discuss closer cooperation and issues of common interest.

The implementation of the comprehensive approach has helped to build mutual awareness with these organisations. This has allowed the Alliance to broaden the range of its external interlocutors, who are becoming more accustomed to work with NATO and better informed about the role of military in complex environments.

Strategic communications

To be effective, a comprehensive approach to crisis management must be complemented by sustained and coherent public messages. NATO's information campaigns are substantiated by systematic and updated information, documenting progress in relevant areas. Efforts are also being made to share communication strategies with international actors and to coordinate communications in theatre.

Cooperation with the African Union

Since 2005, NATO has been cooperating with the African Union (AU) – a regional organisation with 55 members created in 2002. The NATO-AU relationship started modestly with AU requests for logistics and airlift support for its mission in Sudan. The cooperation has evolved over time and, although primarily based on ad-hoc military-technical cooperation, NATO Allies committed to expanding cooperation with the AU in 2016, with the aim of making it an integral part of NATO's efforts to work more closely with its partners to tackle security challenges emanating from the south.

Highlights

- NATO has developed cooperation with the African Union principally in three areas: operational support; capacity-building support; and assistance in developing and sustaining the African Standby Force (ASF).

- Operational support includes strategic air- and sealift, as well as planning support for the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

- Capacity-building support includes inviting AU officers to attend courses at NATO training and education facilities and delivering courses through NATO's Mobile Training Teams.

- Support for the development and sustainment of the ASF includes exercises and tailor-made training, as well as assistance in developing ASF-related concepts.

- NATO has also established a liaison office at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is led by a Senior Military Liaison Officer and provides, at AU's request, subject matter experts, who work in the AU's Peace and Security Department alongside African counterparts.

- NATO coordinates its AU-related work with bilateral partners and other international organisations, including the European Union and the United Nations.

More background information

▬▬ Context and principal areas of NATO-AU cooperation

NATO-AU cooperation has mainly been pragmatic and driven by requests from the African Union for support in very specific areas. The principal areas of cooperation are: operational support, capacity-building support and support for the development of the African Union Standby Force. However, at the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO leaders committed to increasing political and practical cooperation with the African Union in order to be able to respond to common threats and challenges together.

At the same time, Allies also approved NATO's Framework for the South, which aims to integrate and streamline NATO's approach to tackle challenges by focusing on improved capabilities, enhanced anticipation and response, as well as boosting NATO's regional partnership and capacity-building efforts. Similarly, Allies agreed to the Projecting Stability initiative, a new vision to cooperate with partners beyond NATO territory, with an aim to develop a more strategic, coherent and effective approach to partnerships.

NATO's cooperation with the African Union is an integral part of both NATO's Framework for the South and the Alliance's efforts in Projecting Stability. Since the Warsaw Summit, NATO has strengthened its approach to the south and its partnerships in the region, and is continuing to develop relations with the AU.

From a practical point of view, Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples is the NATO operational headquarters designated to implement the Alliance's practical cooperation with the AU.

JFC Naples is also the home of NATO's Strategic Direction South Hub, which was inaugurated in September 2017 as a way to face the current and evolving security issues from NATO's southern neighbourhood and enhance the Alliance's relationships with partners from the south.

Operational support

Logistical support

In January 2007, the AU made a general request to all partners, including NATO, for financial and logistical support to AMISOM. It later made a more specific request to NATO in May 2007, requesting strategic airlift support for AU member states willing to deploy in Somalia under AMISOM. In June 2007, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) agreed, in principle, to support this request. NATO's support was initially authorised until August 2007. Strategic sealift support was requested at a later stage and agreed in principle by the NAC in September 2009.

Strategic airlift and sealift support requests for AMISOM from the AU have been renewed on an annual basis. The current NAC agreement to support the AU with strategic air- and sealift for AMISOM extends until January 2019.

Planning support

NATO provides subject matter experts for the AU Peace Support Operations Department. These experts have made significant contributions to AU priority areas. They have shared their knowledge and expertise in planning across various domains including maritime, finance, monitoring, procurement, air movement coordination, communications, information technology, logistics, human resources, military manpower management and contingencies. NATO's contribution of subject matter experts responds to annual requests from the AU. The areas requested vary from year to year based on AU priorities. In this capacity, NATO experts work side-by-side with AU counterparts, offering expertise in specific domains for periods of six to twelve months, renewable at the AU's request. The most recent request from the AU calls for support in strategic planning, as well as planning for movements and exercises.

Capacity-building support

Education and training

NATO offers opportunities for AU personnel to attend courses at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, the NATO Defense College in Rome, and other NATO training facilities such as

NATO-accredited Centres of Excellence in the respective sponsoring nations. These education and training courses are offered based upon AU requirements and the availability of NATO training venues. On average, 20 AU students are sponsored at NATO training venues per year.

Mobile training

Since 2015 and in response to an AU request, NATO delivers dedicated training to African Union officers though Mobile Education and Training Teams that deliver tailored courses in Africa. NATO has progressively increased the number of courses delivered and, in 2018, is providing three courses – two in exercise planning and one in logistics/supply chain management. The objective is to reach a wider audience of AU staff, including the Regional Economic Communities, through the delivery of tailored training modules on themes identified by the AU. On average, 30 AU students participate in each training session.

- ## Support for the development of the African Standby Force

NATO has been providing expert and training support to the African Standby Force (ASF) at the AU's request. The ASF is intended to be deployed in Africa in times of crisis and it is part of the AU's efforts to develop long-term peacekeeping capabilities. The ASF represents the AU's vision for a continental, on-call security apparatus, and shares similarities with the NATO Response Force.

At the AU's request, the Alliance offers capacity-building support through courses and training events. NATO has also organised certification/evaluation and training programmes for AU staff which support the ASF's operational readiness. For instance, NATO has trained AU officials participating in military exercises and provided military experts to assist in the evaluation and lessons learned procedures of an exercise. NATO has also supported various ASF preparatory workshops designed to develop ASF-related concepts. The Alliance is also specifically engaged in providing support to bringing the ASF's Continental Logistics base in Douala, Cameroon to full operational capacity.

NATO experts were also involved in supporting the preparation phases of Exercise Amani Africa II (October-November 2015) in South Africa, and also played an active role in the execution phase. This was the first field training exercise for the ASF which brought together regional standby brigades from across the continent. African military, police and civilians participated in testing the ASF's rapid deployment capability and the ASF's level of readiness for full operational capability.

NATO representation in Addis Ababa

NATO liaison office

NATO has a liaison office to the headquarters of the African Union. The liaison office is comprised of a Senior Military Liaison Officer, a Deputy and one support staff. The NATO Senior Military Liaison Officer is the primary coordinator for the Alliance's activities with the AU. The size of NATO's presence on the ground in Addis Ababa is based upon the requests from the AU and the availability of resources from Allies. Since 2015, five countries have contributed to the mission in Addis Ababa (France, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands and Turkey).

NATO Contact Point Embassy

The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Addis Ababa provides diplomatic support as the official NATO Contact Point Embassy to the African Union. The Ambassador will regularly host other NATO Ambassadors and Defence Attachés based in Addis Ababa to share information on NATO activities with the African Union. Norway has extended its offer to serve as the NATO Contact Point Embassy until December 2020.

Other staff-level engagements in Addis Ababa

For work with the African Union, the NATO Senior Military Liaison Officer in Addis Ababa coordinates with Allied Defence Attachés, bilateral partners and other international organisations based in Addis Ababa, including the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU).

Expanding areas of cooperation

At the 2016 Summit in Warsaw, Allied Heads of State and Government committed to expanding NATO's political and practical partnership with the AU in order to address common challenges. This has helped fuel a new momentum in NATO-AU relations to expand areas of cooperation.

In April 2018, for instance, the NATO Defense College hosted a seminar in Rome, Italy which convened senior officials from both NATO and the African Union in order to develop a series of pragmatic proposals to increase and enhance areas of cooperation. These include proposals in the areas of counter-terrorism, countering improvised explosive devices, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, building integrity, and support to AU peace-support operations.

Milestones in NATO support to the AU

Starting in 2005 with the provision of NATO logistical support to the AU to expand its mission in Darfur, the NATO-AU relationship has developed over time.

- 2005 – NATO provides strategic airlift to the African Union Mission in Sudan.

- 2007 – Allies agree to provide strategic airlift to support the African Union's involvement in Somalia (AMISOM) and in 2009, further agree to provide strategic sealift.

- 2011 – African Union Commission Chairperson Jean Ping visits NATO twice in the context of Operation Unified Protector – the UN-mandated operation set up to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas, in Libya, under threat of attack.

- 2014 – African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security Ambassador Smail Chergui visits NATO and signs the technical agreement on NATO-AU cooperation.

- 2015 - NATO opens its liaison office at African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa.

- 2015 – NATO and the African Union begin a programme of annual military-to-military staff talks.

- 2015 – NATO enhances the programme of mobile training solutions offered to AU officers.

- 2016 – NATO leaders agree to further strengthen and expand the Alliance's political and practical cooperation with the African Union at the Warsaw Summit.

Enlargement

NATO's door remains open to any European country in a position to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership, and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. Since 1949, NATO's membership has increased from 12 to 29 countries through seven rounds of enlargement. Currently, four partner countries have declared their aspirations to NATO membership: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1] and Ukraine.
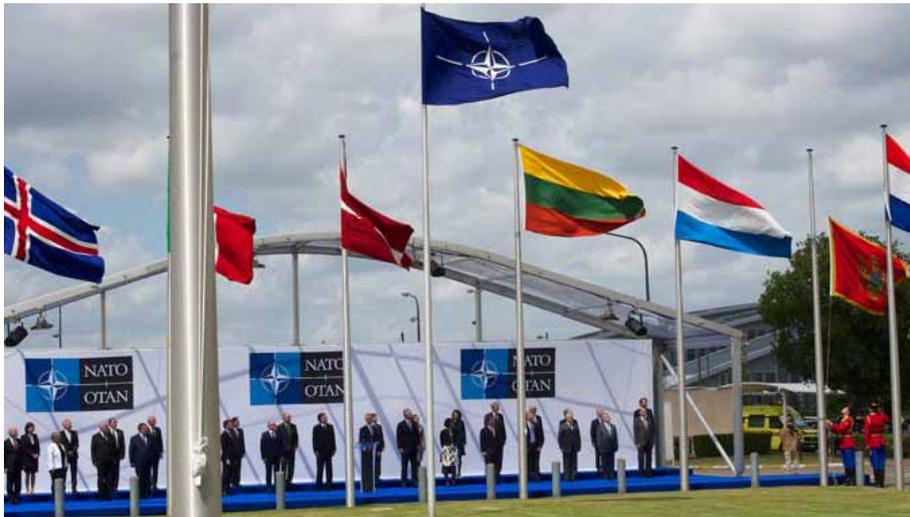
Montenegro became the latest country to join the Alliance on 5 June 2017

Highlights

- NATO's "open door policy" is based on Article 10 of its founding treaty. Any decision to invite a country to join the Alliance is taken by the North Atlantic Council on the basis of consensus among all Allies. No third country has a say in such deliberations.

- NATO's ongoing enlargement process poses no threat to any country. It is aimed at promoting stability and cooperation, at building a Europe whole and free, united in peace, democracy and common values.

- Having been invited to start accession talks to join the Alliance in December 2015, Montenegro became the newest member of NATO on 5 June 2017.

- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been assured that it will be invited to become a member as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the issue over the country's name has been reached with Greece. In this regard, NATO's Secretary General welcomed the agreement reached on 12 June between Prime Ministers Tsipras and Zaev on a solution to the name dispute between Athens and Skopje, calling on both countries to finalise the agreement.

- Bosnia and Herzegovina was invited to join the Membership Action Plan (MAP) in April 2010 but its participation is pending the resolution of a key issue concerning immovable defence property.

- At the 2008 Bucharest Summit, the Allies agreed that Georgia and Ukraine will become members of NATO in future.

[1] Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

More background information

Aspirant countries

Countries that have declared an interest in joining the Alliance are initially invited to engage in an Intensified Dialogue with NATO about their membership aspirations and related reforms.

Aspirant countries may then be invited to participate in the MAP to prepare for potential membership and demonstrate their ability to meet the obligations and commitments of possible future membership. Participation in the MAP does not guarantee membership, but it constitutes a key preparation mechanism.

Countries aspiring to join NATO have to demonstrate that they are in a position to further the principles of the 1949 Washington Treaty and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. They are also expected to meet certain political, economic and military criteria, which are laid out in the 1995 Study on NATO Enlargement.

1995 Study on Enlargement

In 1995, the Alliance published the results of a Study on NATO Enlargement that considered the merits of admitting new members and how they should be brought in. It concluded that the end of the Cold War provided a unique opportunity to build improved security in the entire Euro-Atlantic area and that NATO enlargement would contribute to enhanced stability and security for all. It would do so, the Study further concluded, by encouraging and supporting democratic reforms, including the establishment of civilian and democratic control over military forces; fostering patterns and habits of cooperation, consultation and consensus-building characteristic of relations among members of the Alliance; and promoting good-neighbourly relations.

It would increase transparency in defence planning and military budgets, thereby reinforcing confidence among states, and would reinforce the overall tendency toward closer integration and cooperation in Europe. The Study also concluded that enlargement would strengthen the Alliance's ability to contribute to European and international security and strengthen and broaden the transatlantic partnership.

According to the Study, countries seeking NATO membership would have to be able to demonstrate that they have fulfilled certain requirements. These include:

- a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy;

- the fair treatment of minority populations;

- a commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflicts;

- the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to NATO operations; and

- a commitment to democratic civil-military relations and institutional structures.

Once admitted, new members would enjoy all the rights and assume all the obligations of membership. This would include acceptance at the time that they join of all the principles, policies and procedures previously adopted by Alliance members.

Accession process

Once the Allies have decided to invite a country to become a member of NATO, they officially invite the country to begin accession talks with the Alliance. This is the first step in the accession process on the way to formal membership. The major steps in the process are:

1. Accession talks with a NATO team

These talks take place at NATO Headquarters in Brussels and bring together teams of NATO experts and representatives of the individual invitees. Their aim is to obtain formal confirmation from the invitees of

their willingness and ability to meet the political, legal and military obligations and commitments of NATO membership, as laid out in the Washington Treaty and in the Study on NATO Enlargement.

The talks take place in two sessions with each invitee. In the first session, political and defence or military issues are discussed, essentially providing the opportunity to establish that the preconditions for membership have been met. The second session is more technical and includes discussion of resources, security, and legal issues as well as the contribution of each new member country to NATO's common budget. This is determined on a proportional basis, according to the size of their economies in relation to those of other Alliance member countries.

Invitees are also required to implement measures to ensure the protection of NATO classified information, and prepare their security and intelligence services to work with the NATO Office of Security.

The end product of these discussions is a timetable to be submitted by each invitee for the completion of necessary reforms, which may continue even after these countries have become NATO members.

2. Invitees send letters of intent to NATO, along with timetables for completion of reforms

In the second step of the accession process, each invitee country provides confirmation of its acceptance of the obligations and commitments of membership in the form of a letter of intent from each foreign minister addressed to the NATO Secretary General. Together with this letter they also formally submit their individual reform timetables.

3. Accession protocols are signed by NATO countries

NATO then prepares Accession Protocols to the Washington Treaty for each invitee. These protocols are in effect amendments or additions to the Treaty, which once signed and ratified by Allies, become an integral part of the Treaty itself and permit the invited countries to become parties to the Treaty.

4. Accession protocols are ratified by NATO countries

The governments of NATO member states ratify the protocols, according to their national requirements and procedures. The ratification procedure varies from country to country. For example, the United States requires a two-thirds majority to pass the required legislation in the Senate. Elsewhere, for example in the United Kingdom, no formal parliamentary vote is required.

5. The Secretary General invites the potential new members to accede to the North Atlantic Treaty

Once all NATO member countries notify the Government of the United States of America, the depository of the Washington Treaty, of their acceptance of the protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of the potential new members, the Secretary General invites the new countries to accede to the Treaty.

6. Invitees accede to the North Atlantic Treaty in accordance with their national procedures

7. Upon depositing their instruments of accession with the US State Department, invitees formally become NATO members

Evolution of NATO's "open door policy"

NATO's "open door policy" is based upon Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, which states that membership is open to any "European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area".

The enlargement of the Alliance is an ongoing and dynamic process. Since the Alliance was created in 1949, its membership has grown from the 12 founding members to today's 29 members through seven rounds of enlargement in 1952, 1955, 1982, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2017.

The first three rounds of enlargement – which brought in Greece and Turkey (1952), West Germany (1955) and Spain (1982) – took place during the Cold War, when strategic considerations were at the forefront of decision-making.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 signalled the end of the Cold War and was followed by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the breakup of the Soviet Union. The reunification of Germany in October 1990 brought the territory of the former East Germany into the Alliance. The new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe were eager to guarantee their freedom by becoming integrated into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

NATO enlargement was the subject of lively debate in the early 1990s. Many political analysts were unsure of the benefits that enlargement would bring. Some were concerned about the possible impact on Alliance cohesion and solidarity, as well as on relations with other states, notably Russia. It is in this context that the Alliance carried out a Study on NATO Enlargement in 1995 (see above).

Post-Cold War enlargement

Based on the findings of the Study on Enlargement, the Alliance invited the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin accession talks at the Alliance's Madrid Summit in 1997. These three countries became the first former members of the Warsaw Pact to join NATO in 1999.

At the 1999 Washington Summit, the Membership Action Plan was launched to help other aspirant countries prepare for possible membership.

Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia were invited to begin accession talks at the Alliance's Prague Summit in 2002 and joined NATO in 2004. All seven countries had participated in the MAP.

At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, Allied leaders took a number of steps related to the future enlargement of the Alliance. Several decisions concerned countries in the Western Balkans (see Milestones below). The Allies see the closer integration of Western Balkan countries into Euro-Atlantic institutions as essential to ensuring long-term self-sustaining stability in this region, where NATO has been heavily engaged in peace-support operations since the mid 1990s.

Allied leaders also agreed at Bucharest that Georgia and Ukraine, which were already engaged in Intensified Dialogues with NATO, will one day become members. In December 2008, Allied foreign ministers decided to enhance opportunities for assisting the two countries in efforts to meet membership requirements by making use of the framework of the existing NATO-Ukraine Commission and NATO-Georgia Commission – without prejudice to further decisions which may be taken about their applications to join the MAP. *(For further information on NATO's cooperation with Georgia and Ukraine see pages on Relations with Georgia and Relations with Ukraine.)*

Milestones

4 April 1949: Signature of the North Atlantic Treaty by 12 founding members: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. Article 10 of the Treaty provides the basis for NATO's "open door policy".

18 February 1952: Accession of Greece and Turkey.

6 May 1955: Accession of the Federal Republic of Germany.

30 May 1982: Spain joins the Alliance (and the integrated military structure in 1998).

October 1990: With the reunification of Germany, the new German Länder in the East become part of NATO.

January 1994: At the Brussels Summit, Allied leaders reaffirm that NATO remains open to the membership of other European countries.

28 September 1995: Publication of NATO Study on Enlargement.

8-9 July 1997: At the Madrid Summit, three partner countries – the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland – are invited to start accession talks.

12 March 1999: Accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, bringing the Alliance to 19 members.

23-25 April 1999: Launch of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) at the Washington Summit. (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia join the MAP.)

14 May 2002: NATO foreign ministers officially announce the participation of Croatia in the MAP at their meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland.

May 2002: President Leonid Kuchma announces Ukraine's goal of eventual NATO membership.

21-22 November 2002: At the Prague Summit, seven partner countries – Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia – are invited to start accession talks.

26 March 2003: Signing ceremony of the Accession Protocols of the seven invitees.

29 March 2004: Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

21 April 2005: Launch of the Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership and related reforms, at an informal meeting of foreign ministers in Vilnius, Lithuania.

21 September 2006: NATO foreign ministers in New York announce the decision to offer an Intensified Dialogue to Georgia.

28-29 November 2006: At the Riga Summit, Allied leaders state that invitations will be extended to MAP countries that fulfil certain conditions.

2-4 April 2008: At the Bucharest Summit, Allied leaders invite Albania and Croatia to start accession talks; assure the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that it will be invited once a solution to the issue of the country's name has been reached with Greece; invite Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro to start Intensified Dialogues; and agree that Georgia and Ukraine will become members in future.

9 July 2008: Accession Protocols for Albania and Croatia are signed. Allied foreign ministers agree that Georgia should develop an Annual National Programme under the auspices of the NATO-Georgia Commission.

1 April 2009: Accession of Albania and Croatia.

4 December 2009: NATO foreign ministers invite Montenegro to join the MAP.

22 April 2010: NATO foreign ministers invite Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the MAP, authorising the North Atlantic Council to accept the country's first Annual National Programme only when the immovable property issue has been resolved.

2 December 2015: NATO foreign ministers meeting in Brussels invite Montenegro to start accession talks to join the Alliance, while encouraging further progress on reforms, especially in the area of rule of law. In a statement on NATO's "open door" policy, ministers reiterate decisions made at the 2008 Bucharest Summit concerning the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and encourage Bosnia and Herzegovina to undertake the reforms necessary for the country to realise its Euro-Atlantic aspirations and to activate its participation in MAP. Ministers also reiterate their decisions at Bucharest and subsequent decisions concerning Georgia, welcoming the progress the country has made in coming closer to the Alliance and expressing their determination to intensify support for Georgia.

19 May 2016: Allied ministers sign the Accession Protocol, following which Montenegro has 'Invitee' status and starts attending North Atlantic Council and other NATO meetings.

5 June 2017: Accession of Montenegro

Relations with the European Union

Sharing strategic interests and facing the same challenges, NATO and the European Union (EU) cooperate on issues of common interest and are working side by side in crisis management, capability development and political consultations. The EU is a unique and essential partner for NATO. The two organisations share a majority of members and have common values.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets with the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk on 3 Dec. 2014

Highlights

■ Relations between NATO and the EU were institutionalised in 2001, building on steps taken during the 1990s to promote greater European responsibility in defence matters (NATO-Western European Union cooperation[1]).

■ The 2002 NATO-EU Declaration on a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) set out the political principles underlying the relationship and reaffirmed EU assured access to NATO's planning capabilities for the EU's own military operations.

■ In 2003, the so-called "Berlin Plus" arrangements set the basis for the Alliance to support EU-led operations in which NATO as a whole is not engaged.

■ At the 2010 Lisbon Summit, the Allies underlined their determination to improve the NATO-EU strategic partnership. The 2010 Strategic Concept committed the Alliance to working more closely with other international organisations to prevent crises, manage conflicts and stabilise post-conflict situations.

■ In Warsaw in July 2016, the two organisations outlined areas for strengthened cooperation in light of common challenges to the east and south, including countering hybrid threats, enhancing resilience, defence capacity building, cyber defence, maritime security, and exercises. As a follow-up, in December 2016, NATO foreign ministers endorsed 42 measures to advance NATO-EU cooperation in agreed areas. Further areas of joint work were agreed in December 2017.

[1] At that time, the Western European Union (WEU) was acting for the European Union in the area of security and defence (1992 Maastricht Treaty). The WEU's crisis-management role was transferred to the European Union in 1999.

- On 10 July 2018, the two organisations agree to focus on swift progress in the areas of military mobility, counter-terrorism and strengthening resilience to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear-related risks as well as promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

- Close cooperation between NATO and the EU is an important element in the development of an international "comprehensive approach" to crisis management and operations, which requires the effective application of both military and civilian means.

- NATO and the EU currently have 22 member countries in common.[2]

Towards a more strategic partnership

Strengthening the NATO-EU strategic partnership is particularly important in the current security environment, in which both organisations and their members are facing the same challenges to the east and south.

In Warsaw in July 2016, Allied leaders underlined that the EU remains a unique and essential partner for NATO. Enhanced consultations at all levels and practical cooperation in operations and capability development have brought concrete results. The security challenges in the two organisations' shared eastern and southern neighbourhoods make it more important than ever to reinforce the strategic partnership.

Allied leaders welcomed the joint declaration issued in Warsaw by the NATO Secretary General, the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, which outlines a series of actions the two organisations intend to take together in concrete areas, including countering hybrid threats, enhancing resilience, defence capacity building, cyber defence, maritime security, and exercises.

As a follow-up, in December 2016, NATO foreign ministers endorsed 42 measures to advance how NATO and the EU work together, including:

- measures to bolster resilience to hybrid threats, ranging from disinformation campaigns to acute crises;

- cooperation between NATO's Operation Sea Guardian and the EUNAVFOR Operation Sophia in the Mediterranean;

- exchange of information on cyber threats and the sharing of best practices on cyber security;

- ensuring the coherence and complementarity of each other's defence planning processes;

- parallel and coordinated exercises;

- efforts to support the local capacities of partner countries in the sectors of security and defence.

In December 2017, further steps were taken to boost NATO-EU cooperation through the addition of 32 new measures including in three new areas:

- military mobility to ensure that forces and equipment can move quickly across Europe if needed, which requires procedures for rapid border crossing, sufficient transport assets and robust infrastructure (roads, railways, ports and airports);

- information-sharing in the fight against terrorism and strengthening coordination of counter-terrorism support for partner countries;

- promoting women's role in peace and security.

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[2] 29 NATO member countries: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States. 28 EU member countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom.

On 10 July 2018, just ahead of the NATO Summit in Brussels, the two organisations underlined the essential nature of continued cooperation to address multiple and evolving security challenges. They agree to focus on swift progress in the areas of military mobility, counter-terrorism and strengthening resilience to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear-related risks as well as promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda. They also welcome the complementary and mutually reinforcing efforts of the EU and NATO to strengthen capabilities in defence and security.

The NATO Secretary General and the EU High Representative regularly report to NATO Allies and EU member states on progress in cooperation. (See reports: June 2017, November 2017, June 2018)

Non-EU European Allies make a significant contribution to these efforts. For the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, their fullest involvement in these efforts is essential.

NATO and the EU can and should play complementary and mutually reinforcing roles in supporting international peace and security. The Allies are determined to make their contribution to create more favourable circumstances through which they will:

- fully strengthen the strategic partnership with the EU, in the spirit of full mutual openness, transparency, complementarity and respect for the autonomy and institutional integrity of both organisations;

- enhance practical cooperation in operations throughout the crisis spectrum, from coordinated planning to mutual support in the field;

- broaden political consultations to include all issues of common concern, in order to share assessments and perspectives;

- cooperate more fully in capability development, to minimise duplication and maximise cost effectiveness.

Cooperation in the field

Combating illegal trafficking in humans in the Aegean and the Central Mediterranean

NATO defence ministers decided on 11 February 2016 to deploy ships to the Aegean Sea to support Greece and Turkey, as well as the European Union's border agency Frontex in their efforts to tackle the refugee and migrant crisis. Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2) is conducting reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance in the territorial waters of Greece and Turkey, as well as in international waters. The deployment in the Aegean Sea aims to support international efforts to cut the lines of human trafficking and illegal migration. NATO ships are providing real-time information to the coastguards and relevant national authorities of Greece and Turkey, as well as to Frontex, helping them in their efforts to tackle this crisis.

In October 2016, ministers agreed to extend NATO's deployment in the Aegean Sea and also decided that NATO's new Operation Sea Guardian will support the EU's Operation Sophia in the Central Mediterranean with NATO ships and planes, ready to help increase the EU's situational awareness and provide logistical support.

The Western Balkans

In July 2003, the EU and NATO published a "Concerted Approach for the Western Balkans". Jointly drafted, it outlines core areas of cooperation and emphasises the common vision and determination both organisations share to bring stability to the region.

- *The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[3]*
  On 31 March 2003, the EU-led Operation Concordia took over the responsibilities of the NATO-led mission, Operation Allied Harmony, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This mission, which ended in December 2003, was the first ″Berlin Plus″ operation in which NATO assets were made available to the EU.

- *Bosnia and Herzegovina*
  Building on the results of Concordia and following the conclusion of the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU deployed a new mission called Operation Althea on 2 December 2004. The EU Force (EUFOR) operates under the ″Berlin Plus″ arrangements, drawing on NATO planning expertise and on other Alliance's assets and capabilities. The NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe is the Commander of Operation Althea. The EU Operation Headquarters (OHQ) is located at SHAPE.

- *Kosovo*
  NATO has been leading a peacekeeping force in Kosovo (KFOR) since 1999. The EU has contributed civil assets to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for years and agreed to take over the police component of the UN Mission. The European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo, which deployed in December 2008, is the largest civilian mission ever launched under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The central aim is to assist and support the Kosovo authorities in the rule of law area, specifically in the police, judiciary and customs areas. EULEX works closely with KFOR in the field.

Cooperation in other regions

- *Afghanistan*
  Over the past decade, NATO and the EU have played key roles in bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan, as part of the international community's broader efforts to implement a comprehensive approach to assist the country. The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) helped create a stable and secure environment in which the Afghan government as well as other international actors could build democratic institutions, extend the rule of law and reconstruct the country. Both ISAF and its successor Resolute Support Mission have cooperated with the EU's Rule of Law Mission (EUPOL), which operated in Afghanistan from June 2007 to December 2016. EUPOL Advisers at the Afghan Ministry of Interior and the Afghan National Police supported the reform of the ministry and the development of civilian policing. The EU also initiated a programme for justice reform and helped to fund civilian projects in NATO-run Provincial Reconstruction Teams that were led by an EU member country.

- *Darfur*
  Both NATO and the EU supported the African Union's mission in Darfur, Sudan in particular with regard to airlift rotations.

- *Piracy*
  For several years NATO's naval forces deployed under Operation Ocean Shield (2008-2016) and EU naval forces (Operation Atalanta) worked side by side with other actors, off the coast of Somalia for anti-piracy missions.

Other areas of cooperation

Political consultation

The range of subjects discussed between NATO and the EU has expanded considerably over the past two years, particularly on security issues within the European space or its immediate vicinity. Since the crisis in Ukraine, both organisations have regularly exchanged views on their respective decisions, especially

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3   Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

with regard to Russia, to ensure that their messages and actions complement each other. Consultations have also covered developments in the Western Balkans, Libya and the Middle East.

Capabilities

Together with operations, capability development is an area where cooperation is essential and where there is potential for further growth. The NATO-EU Capability Group was established in May 2003 to ensure the coherence and mutual reinforcement of NATO and EU capability development efforts.

Following the creation, in July 2004, of the European Defence Agency (EDA) to coordinate work within the EU on the development of defence capabilities, armaments cooperation, acquisition and research, EDA experts contribute to the work of the Capability Group.

Among other issues, the Capability Group has addressed common capability shortfalls in areas such as countering improvised explosive devices and medical support. The Group is also playing an important role in ensuring transparency and complementarity between NATO's work on Smart Defence and the EU's Pooling and Sharing initiative.

Terrorism and WMD proliferation

Both NATO and the EU are committed to combating terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). They have exchanged information on their activities in the field of protection of civilian populations against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks.

Civil emergency planning

The two organisations also cooperate in the field of civil emergency planning by exchanging inventories of measures taken in this area.

Participation

With the enlargement of both organisations in 2004, followed by the accession of Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia to the EU, the two organisations have 22 member countries in common. Albania, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Turkey and the United States, which are members of NATO but not of the EU, participate in all NATO-EU meetings. So do Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden, and since 2008, Malta, which are members of the EU and of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme.

However, Cyprus, which is not a PfP member and does not have a security agreement with NATO on the exchange of classified documents, cannot participate in official NATO-EU meetings. This is a consequence of decisions taken by NATO in December 2002. Informal meetings including Cyprus take place occasionally at different levels.

Framework for cooperation

An exchange of letters between the NATO Secretary General and the EU Presidency in January 2001 defined the scope of cooperation and modalities of consultation on security issues between the two organisations. Cooperation further developed with the signing of the NATO-EU Declaration on ESDP in December 2002 and the agreement, in March 2003, of a framework for cooperation.

NATO-EU Declaration on ESDP: The NATO-EU Declaration on ESDP, agreed on 16 December 2002, reaffirmed the EU assured access to NATO's planning capabilities for its own military operations and reiterated the political principles of the strategic partnership: effective mutual consultation; equality and due regard for the decision-making autonomy of the EU and NATO; respect for the interests of EU and NATO member states; respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations; and coherent, transparent and mutually reinforcing development of the military capability requirements common to the two organisations.

The "Berlin Plus" arrangements: As part of the framework for cooperation adopted on 17 March 2003, the so-called "Berlin Plus" arrangements provide the basis for NATO-EU cooperation in crisis

management in the context of EU-led operations that make use of NATO's collective assets and capabilities, including command arrangements and assistance in operational planning. In effect, they allow the Alliance to support EU-led operations in which NATO as a whole is not engaged.

NATO and the EU meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common interest. Meetings take place at different levels including at the level of foreign ministers, ambassadors, military representatives and defence advisors. There are regular staff-to-staff talks at all levels between NATO's International Staff and International Military Staff, and their respective EU interlocutors (the European External Action Service, the European Defence Agency, the European Commission and the European Parliament).

Permanent military liaison arrangements have been established to facilitate cooperation at the operational level. A NATO Permanent Liaison Team has been operating at the EU Military Staff since November 2005 and an EU Cell was set up at SHAPE (NATO's strategic command for operations in Mons, Belgium) in March 2006.

Milestones

February 1992: The EU adopts the Maastricht Treaty, which envisages an intergovernmental Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the eventual framing of a common defence policy (ESDP) with the WEU as the EU's defence component.

Close cooperation is established between NATO and the WEU.

June 1992: In Oslo, NATO foreign ministers support the objective of developing the WEU as a means of strengthening the European pillar of the Alliance and as the defence component of the EU, that would also cover the "Petersberg tasks" (humanitarian search and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, crisis-management tasks including peace enforcement and environmental protection).

January 1994: Allied leaders agree to make collective assets of the Alliance available, on the basis of consultations in the North Atlantic Council, for WEU operations undertaken by the European Allies in pursuit of their CFSP. NATO endorses the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces, which provides for "separable but not separate" deployable headquarters that could be used for European-led operations and is the conceptual basis for future operations involving NATO and other non-NATO countries.

June 1996: In Berlin, NATO foreign ministers agree for the first time to build up a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within NATO, with the aim of rebalancing roles and responsibilities between Europe and North America. An essential part of this initiative was to improve European capabilities. They also decide to make Alliance assets available for WEU-led crisis-management operations. These decisions lead to the introduction of the term ″Berlin Plus″.

December 1998: At a summit in St Malo, France and the United Kingdom make a joint statement affirming the EU's determination to establish a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

April 1999: At the Washington Summit, Heads of State and Government decide to develop the "Berlin Plus" arrangements.

June 1999: A European Council meeting in Cologne, Germany decides ″to give the European Union the necessary means and capabilities to assume its responsibilities regarding a common European policy on security and defence″.

December 1999: At the Helsinki Council meeting, EU members establish military ″headline goals″ to allow the EU to deploy up to 60,000 troops by 2003 for 'Petersberg tasks'. EU members also create political and military structures including a Political and Security Committee, a Military Committee and a Military Staff. The crisis-management role of the WEU is transferred to the EU. The WEU retains residual tasks.

September 2000: The North Atlantic Council and the EU's interim Political and Security Committee meet for the first time to take stock of progress in NATO-EU relations.

December 2000: Signature of the EU's Treaty of Nice containing amendments reflecting the operative developments of the ESDP as an independent EU policy (entry into force February 2003).

January 2001: Beginning of institutionalised relations between NATO and the EU with the establishment of joint meetings, including at the level of foreign ministers and ambassadors. Exchange of letters between the NATO Secretary General and the EU Presidency on the scope of cooperation and modalities for consultation.

May 2001: First formal NATO-EU meeting at the level of foreign ministers in Budapest. The NATO Secretary General and the EU Presidency issue a joint statement on the Western Balkans.

November 2002: At the Prague Summit, NATO members declare their readiness to give the EU access to NATO assets and capabilities for operations in which the Alliance is not engaged militarily.

December 2002: EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP.

March 2003: Agreement on the framework for cooperation. Entry into force of a NATO-EU security of information agreement. Transition from the NATO-led Operation Allied Harmony to the EU-led Operation Concordia in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

May 2003: First meeting of the NATO-EU Capability Group.

July 2003: Development of a common strategy for the Western Balkans.

November 2003: First joint NATO-EU crisis-management exercise.

February 2004: France, Germany and the United Kingdom launch the idea of EU rapid-reaction units composed of joint battle groups.

December 2004: Beginning of the EU-led Operation Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

September 2005: Transatlantic informal NATO-EU ministerial dinner, New York.

October 2005: Agreement on Military Permanent Arrangements establishing a NATO Permanent Liaison Team at the EU Military Staff and an EU cell at SHAPE.

November 2005: NATO Permanent Liaison Team set up at the EU Military Staff.

March 2006: EU cell set up at SHAPE.

April 2006: Transatlantic informal NATO-EU ministerial dinner, Sofia.

2006 - 2010: Transatlantic informal NATO-EU ministerial dinners are held in New York (Sep. 2006); Brussels (Jan. 2007); Oslo (April 2007); New York (Sep. 2007); Brussels (Dec. 2007); New York (Sep. 2008); Brussels (Dec. 2008); Brussels (March 2009); and New York (Sep. 2010).

November 2010: At the Lisbon Summit, the Allies underline their determination to improve the NATO-EU strategic partnership and welcome recent initiatives from several Allies and ideas proposed by the Secretary General in this regard.

September 2011: Transatlantic informal NATO-EU ministerial dinner, New York.

September 2012: Transatlantic informal NATO-EU ministerial dinner, New York.

11 February 2013: President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso visits NATO Headquarters.

May 2013: The NATO Secretary General addresses the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs and Subcommittee on Security and Defence.

June 2013: The NATO Secretary General participates in an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers.

December 2013: The NATO Secretary General addresses the European Council in Brussels.

5 March 2014: NATO and EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) ambassadors hold informal talks on Ukraine.

10 June 2014: NATO and EU PSC ambassadors hold more informal talks on Ukraine.

10 February 2016: A Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence was concluded between the NATO Computer Incident Response Capability (NCIRC) and the Computer Emergency Response Team of the European Union (CERT-EU), providing a framework for exchanging information and sharing best practices between emergency response teams.

11 February 2016: At the request of Germany, Greece and Turkey, NATO defence ministers agree that the Alliance should join international efforts to stem illegal trafficking and illegal migration in the Aegean Sea, cooperating with the European Union's border management agency, Frontex.

10 March 2016: Visiting the European Commission to meet Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stresses the vital importance of the NATO-EU relationship and welcomes the organisations' deepening ties.

12-13 May 2016: An informal EU-NATO Directors General Conference takes place at NATO Headquarters to enhance staff-to-staff interaction between the organisations' respective military staffs on topics of current relevance and common interest related to security and defence.

20 May 2016: High Representative Federica Mogherini visits NATO Headquarters for a meeting with NATO foreign ministers to discuss areas for expanded NATO-EU cooperation ahead of upcoming EU and NATO summit meetings.

24 June 2016: In a statement on the outcome of the British referendum on membership of the EU, the NATO Secretary General underlines his confidence that the United Kingdom's position in NATO will remain unchanged and that the country – a strong and committed NATO Ally – will continue to play its leading role in the Alliance.

July 2016: In Warsaw, a joint declaration expresses the determination to give new impetus and new substance to the NATO-EU strategic partnership in light of common challenges. Areas for strengthened cooperation include: countering hybrid threats; operational cooperation including at sea; cyber security and defence; defence capabilities; defence industrial cooperation; exercises; and building the defence capabilities of partners to the East and South.

27 October 2016: NATO defence ministers meet with EU High Representative Federica Mogherini and the defence ministers of Finland and Sweden to discuss ways to deepen NATO-EU cooperation in the areas of countering hybrid threats, cyber defence, coordinated exercises and supporting partners. Ministers agree to extend NATO's deployment in the Aegean Sea in support of the efforts of Greece, Turkey and the EU's border agency Frontex to break the lines of human trafficking. They also decide that NATO's new Operation Sea Guardian will support the EU's Operation Sophia in the Central Mediterranean with NATO ships and planes, ready to help increase the EU's situational awareness and provide logistical support.

15 November 2016: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets with EU defence ministers for talks on European defence and closer NATO-EU cooperation. He stresses that efforts to strengthen European defence can contribute to a stronger NATO, through better defence capabilities and higher defence spending in Europe.

25 November 2016: Senior officials from NATO and the EU meet to discuss the next practical steps in NATO-EU cooperation on cyber defence.

30 November 2016: The Director General of the NATO International Military Staff and the Director General of the European Union Military Staff co-chair a conference at the EUMS Headquarters focused on increasing informal dialogue and cooperation, and supporting implementation of the NATO-EU Joint Declaration signed on the margins of the NATO Summit in Warsaw.

7 December 2016: NATO foreign ministers approve a series of more than 40 measures to advance how NATO and the EU work together including on countering hybrid threats, cyber defence, and making their common neighbourhood more stable and secure.

15 December 2016: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets with EU leaders for talks on European defence and closer NATO-EU cooperation. He stresses that closer cooperation between NATO and the EU is important today because of new security threats, efforts to strengthen European defence and to build the partnership between Europe and North America.

10 February 2017: NATO convenes an informal workshop on how to reinforce security dialogue in the Euro-Atlantic region, focusing on the importance of NATO, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) supporting each other to improve existing arms control mechanisms.

24 March 2017: The North Atlantic Council and the EU's Political and Security Committee meet to discuss NATO-EU cooperation, in particular the implementation of the joint declaration signed in Warsaw in July 2016, which led to a common set of proposals endorsed by the respective Councils of both organisations in December 2016.

19 June 2017: A first progress report on NATO-EU Cooperation – authored jointly by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and EU High Representative / Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini – concludes that the two organisations are making substantial progress in complementing each other's work since the agreement in Warsaw in July 2016 to work more closely together in areas ranging from resilience to hybrid threats, through greater coherence on capability development to helping build the defence capacities of partner countries.

5 December 2017: In a meeting with EU High Representative Federica Mogherini, NATO foreign ministers agree to step up NATO's cooperation with the European Union through an additional common set of 32 new proposals on the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO. Joint work will include three new areas: military mobility, information- sharing in the fight against terrorism, and promoting women's role in peace and security. A second progress report on NATO-EU Cooperation is issued.

8 June 2018: A third progress report on NATO-EU Cooperation is released to the public and highlights the qualitative and quantitative increase in cooperation between NATO and the EU.

10 July 2018: In a joint declaration, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the NATO Secretary General underline the importance of continued EU-NATO cooperation to address multiple and evolving security challenges as well as steps being taken by both organisations to strengthen capabilities in defence and security.

Civil preparedness

The effective transportation of forces and military equipment relies on civil resources and infrastructure, such as railways, ports, airfields and grids. These assets are vulnerable to external attack and internal disruption. Civil preparedness means that basic government functions can continue during emergencies or disasters in peacetime or in periods of crisis. It also means that the civilian sector in Allied nations would be ready to provide support to a NATO military operation.

Highlights

- Under Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty, all Allies are committed to building resilience, which is the combination of civil preparedness and military capacity.

- Allies agreed baseline resilience requirements in seven strategic sectors – continuity of government, energy, population movements, food and water resources, mass casualties, civil communications and transport systems.

- To deter or counter potential threats or disruption to the civil sector, effective action requires clear plans and response measures, defined well ahead of time and exercised regularly.

- That is why there is a need to complement military efforts to defend Alliance territory and populations with robust civil preparedness.

More background information

Strategic areas

NATO civil preparedness is primarily concerned with aspects of national planning which affect the ability to contribute to Allied efforts in continuity of government, continuity of essential services to the population and civil support to military operations.

These three critical civilian functions have been translated into seven baseline resilience requirements and agreed by NATO in February 2016. Together with a package of resilience guidelines, assessment and

a tailored toolbox, their objective is to support nations in achieving national resilience and provide benchmarks against which to assess the state of civil preparedness. These are:

- Continuity of government and critical government services;
- Energy supplies;
- Ability to deal effectively with uncontrolled movement of people;
- Food and water resources;
- Ability to deal with mass casualties;
- Telecommunications and cyber networks;
- Transportation systems.

At the 2016 Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders committed to continue enhancing NATO's resilience and to further developing individual and collective capacity to resist any form of armed attack. Civil preparedness is a central piece of Allies' resilience and a critical enabler for Alliance collective defence. NATO can support Allies in assessing and, upon request, enhancing their civil preparedness.

In 2017, Allies took further steps to implement their commitment. NATO provided nations with evaluation criteria to assist them in conducting national resilience self-assessments. In July 2017, NATO produced an Alliance-wide assessment of national resilience which generated an overview of the state of civil preparedness. This identified areas where further efforts are required to enhance resilience and deal with a wide range of threats, including terrorism.

Context

Why is civil preparedness essential to collective defence? In large operations, around 90 per cent of military transport uses civilian assets chartered or requisitioned from the commercial sector. The military medical system relies on the ability to evacuate casualties. Civilian medical infrastructure must be able to cope with both an increase in demand from civilian casualties as well as the military casualty treatment and evacuation chain.

Deployed NATO forces need access to host nations' industrial infrastructure, access to the power grid, food, water and fuel supplies, access to civilian telecommunications infrastructure, and building materials.

They also require local civilian expertise and manpower. On average, 75 per cent of host nation support to NATO operations is sourced from local commercial infrastructure and services.

These civil assets are often highly vulnerable because they have been designed to generate maximum profit as opposed to providing redundancy and resilience in times of crisis. In addition, hybrid threats are blurring the traditional divisions of war and peace, rendering government powers based on wartime emergency legislation increasingly impractical or even obsolete. In today's security environment, resilience to such challenges requires a full range of capabilities, military and civilian, and active cooperation across government and the private sector. To train Allies' responses to crisis situations, civil preparedness elements are being built into NATO's military exercises, such as Trident Juncture 2018.

Enhancing resilience also requires continued engagement with partners and other international bodies, including the United Nations and particularly the European Union, as well as continuously updated situational awareness.

History

During the Cold War, many of the civil assets, such as railways, ports, airfields, grids or airspace were in state hands and easily transferred to NATO control in a crisis or wartime situation.

Following the fall of the Berlin wall, the significantly reduced threat meant that the likelihood of a direct attack on mainland Europe diminished. Consequently, attention to and investment in civil preparedness started to decline.

As threats from international terrorism and religious extremism became more prevalent, NATO assumed an expeditionary stance which demanded different capabilities and capacities than those developed during the Cold War. During this period, outsourcing of non-combat essential military tasks, requirements and capabilities became the norm and was also embraced by new NATO member countries. Although cost-effective, the result has been an incremental increase in military dependency on civilian resources and infrastructure. For example, in large-scale operations around 90 per cent of military transport is now provided by the commercial sector, as is 40 per cent of military satellite communications, while 75 per cent of all host nation support is dependent on the use of locally procured infrastructure and services.

Recent events, particularly the conflict in eastern Ukraine, have refocused attention on challenges closer to Alliance territory. As part of its response, the Alliance agreed and is implementing a set of assurance and adaptation measures known as the Readiness Action Plan (RAP). To be fully effective, the RAP must be complemented by civil preparedness.

Consequently, nations are re-evaluating their own vulnerabilities and preparedness to effectively deter and defend against contemporary security threats.

NATO's capabilities

NATO's modern defence posture is based on an effective combination of two key pillars: cutting-edge weapons systems and platforms, and forces trained to work together seamlessly. As such, investing in the right capabilities is an essential part of investing in defence. NATO plays an important role in assessing what capabilities the Alliance needs; setting goals for national or collective development of capabilities; and facilitating national, multinational and collective capability development and innovation.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg visiting the AGS Global Hawk display

Highlights

■ The Strategic Concept identifies collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security as NATO's core tasks. Deterrence based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and ballistic missile defence capabilities, remains a core element of NATO's overall strategy.

■ Allies have agreed to develop and maintain the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against potential adversaries, using multinational approaches and innovative solutions where appropriate. The NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) is the primary means to identify and prioritise the capabilities required for full-spectrum operations, and to promote their development and delivery.

■ Developing and procuring capabilities through multinational cooperation helps generate economies of scale, reduces costs, and delivers interoperability by design. NATO actively supports Allies in the identification, launch and implementation of multinational cooperation.

■ To acquire vital capabilities, the Alliance must work closely with industry; build a stronger defence industry among Allies; foster greater industrial and technological cooperation across the Atlantic and within Europe; and maintain a robust industrial base throughout Europe and North America.

Current objectives

As outlined in the 2010 Strategic Concept, Alliance leaders are committed to ensuring that NATO has the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against any threat to the safety and security of Allies' populations and territories. Therefore, the Alliance will:

- maintain an appropriate mix of nuclear, missile defence and conventional forces;

- maintain the ability to sustain concurrent major joint operations and several smaller operations for collective defence and crisis response, including at strategic distance;

- develop and maintain robust, mobile and deployable conventional forces to carry out both its Article 5 responsibilities and expeditionary operations, including with the NATO Response Force;

- carry out the necessary training, exercises, contingency planning and information exchange for assuring its defence against the full range of conventional and emerging security challenges, and provide appropriate visible assurance and reinforcement for all Allies;

- ensure the broadest possible participation of Allies in collective defence planning on nuclear roles, in peacetime basing of nuclear forces, and in consultation, command and control (C3) arrangements;

- develop the capability to defend NATO European populations, territories and forces against ballistic missile attack as a core element of its collective defence;

- further develop its capacity to defend against the threat of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons;

- further develop its ability to prevent, detect, defend against and recover from cyber attacks by using the NATO planning process to enhance and coordinate national cyber defence capabilities, by bringing all NATO bodies under centralised cyber protection, and by integrating NATO cyber awareness, warning and response capabilities with member countries;

- enhance collective capacity to contribute to the fight against terrorism, including through improved threat analysis, consultations with partners, and the development of appropriate military capabilities – including helping to train partner forces to fight terrorism themselves;

- ensure that NATO assesses the security impact of emerging technologies for inclusion in military planning;

- continue to review its overall posture in deterring and defending against the full range of threats to the Alliance, taking into account changes to the evolving international security environment.

Meeting immediate and long-term challenges

The Allies provided political guidance in 2015 that further refined the overarching aims and objectives of the 2010 Strategic Concept. This guidance established expectations for what the Alliance should be able to do in broad quantitative and qualitative terms, especially in the prevailing geo-strategic security environment. By setting related priorities, this guidance mandates the delivery of the required capabilities through the NATO Defence Planning Process. It will be reviewed in 2019.

NATO Defence Planning Process

The NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) aims to harmonise national and Alliance defence planning activities. It details how the aims and objectives of the Alliance, as set out in the political guidance, are to be met. By setting targets for implementation by Allies, either individually or collectively, it guides national, multinational and collective capability development and delivery.

By participating in the NDPP, Allies can harmonise their national defence plans with those of NATO without compromising their national sovereignty. This helps Allies identify, develop and deliver a fair share of the overall forces and capabilities needed for the Alliance to be able to undertake its full range of missions.

More information

NATO Response Force

The NATO Response Force (NRF) is a technologically advanced, multinational force made up of land, air, maritime and Special Operations Forces (SOF) components that the Alliance can deploy quickly to wherever it is needed. It has the overarching purpose of being able to provide a rapid military response to an emerging crisis, whether for collective defence purposes or for other crisis response operations. In light of the changing security environment to the east and south of Alliance borders, Allies decided to enhance the NRF by both enlarging it and creating a spearhead force within it. Known as the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), this spearhead force is able to begin deployment at very short notice, particularly on the periphery of NATO's territory.

More information

▬▬ Critical long-term enabling capabilities

Information superiority helps commanders in the battlespace make the best decisions, creating the circumstances for success at lower risk and greater speed. NATO will therefore continue to develop and acquire a range of networked information systems (Automated Information Systems) that support NATO's Strategic Commands. These systems cover a number of domains – including land, air, maritime, intelligence and logistics – with a view to enabling more informed and effective holistic oversight, decision-making and command and control.

Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance

The Alliance has long recognised the fundamental importance of Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) to its strategic preparedness and to the success of its operations and missions. The aim of this capability is to support the coordinated collection, processing and sharing within NATO of ISR material gathered by the future Alliance Ground Surveillance system (AGS), the current NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force (NAEW&C Force) and Allies' own ISR assets.

In early 2016, NATO defence ministers declared an initial operational JISR capability centred on enhancing the situational awareness of NATO's highest readiness forces. This initial operational capability was only the first milestone for the overall JISR initiative. Further work is ongoing to sustain these achievements and expand their scope, indeed the follow programme to the initial operational capability has just been completed in June 2018. Through incremental upgrades, NATO aims to have an enduring JISR capability to strengthen the Alliance's 360 degree awareness.

More information

Alliance Ground Surveillance

The Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) programme represents an excellent example of transatlantic cooperation, thanks to the multinational industrial cooperation on which the programme has been founded. The AGS system is an essential enabling capability for forces across the full spectrum of NATO's current and future operations and missions. Using advanced radar sensors, it will be able to continuously detect and track moving objects (such as tanks, trucks or helicopters that are moving on or near the ground) in all weather conditions and provide radar imagery of areas of interest on the ground and at sea.

As such, AGS will complement the NATO Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), which already monitors Alliance airspace. The AGS Core will be an integrated system consisting of air, ground and support segments. The air segment includes five unmanned aircraft and is expected to be operational in the 2019/2020 timeframe.

More information

NATO Airborne Warning & Control System

As one of the most visible and tangible examples of what cooperation between Allies can achieve, the NATO Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS) provides NATO-owned and operated airborne

command and control, air and maritime surveillance, and battlespace management capability. An iconic capability, AWACS has continuously proven itself a critical asset over Libya and Afghanistan, and most recently safeguarding the Alliance's eastern perimeter and providing support to the Global Coalition forces in their fight against ISIS.

AWACS aircraft will continue to be modernised and extended in service until 2035. The modernisation of NATO's AWACS fleet is vital to ensuring the security of all Allies and will strengthen the Alliance's awareness and capacity for strategic anticipation.

More information

Alliance Future Surveillance and Control capability

At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO leaders launched the Alliance Future Surveillance and Control (AFSC) initiative in order to determine how NATO will maintain its situational awareness and command Allied forces after the retirement of NATO AWACS in 2035. NATO is now moving forward to redefine its means for surveillance and control in the future.

In cooperation with Allied experts from a range of communities and backgrounds – including military, industry, and science and technology – NATO is launching studies to evaluate new technologies. These studies will inform decisions by NATO, individual Allies or multinational groups to develop and acquire new systems in the future. These solutions could include combinations of interconnected air, ground, space or unmanned systems to collect and share information.

Ballistic Missile Defence

In the context of a broader response to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, NATO continues to develop Ballistic Missile Defence . Originally, this programme was launched in 2005 to protect deployed Allied forces against ballistic missile threats with ranges up to 3,000 kilometres. At the Lisbon Summit in 2010, NATO's leaders decided to expand its scope to also protect NATO European civilian populations and territory. During the 2016 Warsaw Summit, Allies officially declared initial operational capability of NATO BMD, which offers a stronger capability to defend Alliance civilian populations, territory and forces across southern NATO Europe against a ballistic missile attack. The ultimate aim of NATO BMD is to achieve the full operational capability providing coverage and protection to all NATO Europe.

More information

Air command and control

NATO is implementing a fully interoperable Air Command and Control System (ACCS). This system will provide a fully integrated set of tools to support the conduct of all air operations in both real-time and non-real-time environments. The system is composed of static and deployable elements with equipment that will be used within the NATO Command Structure and by individual Allies. With the further inclusion of command and control functionality for Ballistic Missile Defence, ACCS will provide a fully integrated system for air and missile defence. At present, ACCS is scheduled to be fully fielded in the 2021-2024 timeframe. Ultimately, ACCS will make available the capability to plan, direct, task, coordinate, supervise, assess and report on the operation of all allocated air assets in peace, crisis and conflict situations.

More information

Federated Mission Networking

Federated Mission Networking (FMN) is a key contribution to the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), helping Allied and partner forces to better communicate, train and operate together. The program aims to support command sund control, as well as decision-making in future operations, by enabling improved information-sharing through common standards, protocols and procedures.

FMN is based on the lessons learned from the Afghanistan Mission Network (AMN) – particularly the need for harmonised operational processes and scalable supporting systems for all future coalition missions.

The objectives of FMN are to ensure consultation, command and control (C3), interoperability and readiness. FMN will underpin the Alliance's ability to connect its information systems and operate effectively, including together with partners, on training, exercises and operations.

More information

Cyber defence

Cyber threats and attacks are becoming more common, sophisticated and damaging. The Alliance is faced with an evolving, complex threat environment. NATO and its Allies rely on strong and resilient cyber defences to fulfil the Alliance's core tasks of collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. NATO needs to be prepared to defend its networks and operational capabilities against the growing sophistication of the cyber threats and attacks it faces.

NATO's main focus in cyber defence is to protect its own networks (including operations and missions) and to enhance resilience across the Alliance.

At the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, Allies recognised that international law applies in cyberspace, and that the impact of cyber-attacks could be as harmful to our societies as a conventional attack. As a result, cyber defence was recognised a part of NATO's core task of collective defence.

At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, Allies reaffirmed NATO's defensive mandate and recognised cyberspace as a domain of operations in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea. Allies also pledged to strengthen and enhance the cyber defences of their national infrastructures and networks. The Cyber Defence Pledge aims to ensure that the Alliance keeps pace with the fast-evolving cyber threat landscape and that Allies are capable of defending themselves in cyberspace.

More information

Logistics

Logistics planning is an integral part of NATO's defence planning process. In concrete terms, logistics planning is done through the force planning process and Partnership for Peace (PfP) Planning and Review Process (PARP). In consultation with participating countries, Strategic Commanders identify the logistic capabilities needed to deploy, sustain and redeploy Alliance forces.

Logistic capabilities can be called upon by NATO commanders as part of the operational planning process to be used in a NATO-led operation. National and NATO logistic plans must ensure that logistic resources of sufficient quantity and quality are available at the same readiness and deployability levels to support forces as needed.

More information

Delivering capabilities through multinational cooperation

NATO began to adapt its defensive posture in 2014 in response to the major changes in the security environment. Allies agreed at the 2016 Warsaw Summit to further strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture in order to better protect their citizens, territories and forces and to enhance NATO's efforts to project stability in its neighbourhood.

Multinational approaches

Many of the capabilities required to address today's challenges can be very expensive when pursued by countries individually. Multinational approaches to capability delivery not only distribute the costs but can also generate economies of scale. For NATO, multinational cooperation remains an important means of delivering the capabilities that Allies need. Developing greater European military capabilities through multinational cooperation will continue to strengthen the transatlantic link, enhance the security of all Allies and foster an equitable sharing of the burdens, benefits and responsibilities of Alliance membership. In this context, NATO works closely with the European Union to ensure complementarity of

efforts. Allies also contribute to maintaining a strong defence industry in Europe by making the fullest possible use of defence industrial cooperation across the Alliance.

Framework Nations Concept

In June 2014, NATO defence ministers agreed the Framework Nations Concept, which sees groups of countries coming together for two purposes. Firstly, the FNC aims to maintain current capabilities and to act as a foundation for the coherent development of new capabilities in the medium to long term. This builds on the notion of multinational development of capabilities. Secondly, the Framework Nations Concept reinforces engagement between nations as a mechanism for collective training and exercises in order to prepare groupings of forces. For example, those Allies that maintain a broad spectrum of capabilities provide a framework for other Allies to "plug" into.

Strategic and intra-theatre lift capabilities

Strategic and intra-theatre lift capabilities are a key enabler for operations and allow forces and equipment to be deployed quickly to wherever they are needed. While there is significant procurement nationally, many Allies have pooled resources, including with partner countries, to acquire new capacities for additional transport to swiftly move troops, equipment and supplies across the globe.

More information

Air-to-air-refuelling

Air-to-air refuelling (AAR) tankers are a critical enabler for the projection of air power. In coalition operations AAR tankers are a pooled asset, which means that interoperability is essential. The modernisation of AAR tankers in Europe has been achieved through a multinational programme that will lead to a fleet of multi-role tanker transport to be delivered in the 2020-24 timeframe. Through close cooperation with the European Defence Agency and the Joint Air Power Competence Centre (a NATO Centre of Excellence located in Germany), NATO continues to develop the interoperability and training required to enable this capability.

Provision of precision munitions

The supply of sufficient inventories of precision munitions is necessary for enabling NATO operations. Groups of Allies have established frameworks in the air, land and maritime domains for aggregating their individual requirements. These efforts will enable them to achieve lower acquisition cost and save money by pursuing multinational warehousing solutions for storage. At the same time, technical and legal hurdles for sharing and exchanging munitions are being reduced, giving participating Allies greater flexibility for managing their munitions stockpiles. In the long run, Allies aim to further harmonise their munitions inventories to enable them to operate seamlessly and effectively together.

Special Operations Forces

Special Operations Forces are an important and highly versatile tool in NATO's deterrence and defence toolbox. NATO recognised their importance with the establishment of its Special Operations Headquarters in Mons, Belgium in 2010. The increasingly multinational nature of their operations makes cooperation in this area particularly compelling. Within this context, several Allies have initiated a series of efforts to create deployable multinational command and control elements and to cooperate on the creation of aviation units for employing Special Operations Forces in NATO missions.

Anti-submarine warfare

Modern submarines constitute one of the most demanding challenges to the Alliance in the maritime domain. Delivering the right capabilities will be critical in order to adequately protect NATO assets and ensure freedom of navigation and a NATO Future ASW Vision has been developed. Groups of Allies have started to cooperate on various approaches – including the development of Maritime Multi Mission Aircraft capabilities the fielding of Maritime Unmanned Systems and networking underwater assets via digital communication – to increase their maritime situational awareness and ensure that they can effectively respond to threats in this area.

Supporting national capability development efforts

The overwhelming majority of military capabilities available for NATO operations are provided by NATO members. While national capability development is a sovereign responsibility, NATO plays an important supporting role in facilitating national capability development and delivery. In accordance with the NATO Defence Planning Process, which aims to harmonise national and Alliance defence planning activities, there are a number of national capability development efforts undertaken with the strong leadership and support of NATO bodies and agencies..

Countering improvised explosive devices

As seen in Afghanistan and elsewhere, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) have proven to be the weapon of choice for non-conventional adversarial forces. NATO must be prepared to counter IEDs in any land or maritime operation involving asymmetrical threats, in which force protection will remain a paramount priority.

Institutionalising counter-IED lessons learned across the last two decades of operations, NATO's ambitious Counter-IED Action Plan has increased its focus on capabilities for attacking threat networks behind these destructive devices. Although developed in the counter-IED context, such capabilities can also contribute to counter-piracy, counter-proliferation and counter-terrorism operations.

More information

21st century ground-based air defence

Modern air defence systems must be able to respond to a wide range of airborne threats, from hypersonic cruise missiles and fifth-generation fighters to threats from low-altitude, small-size and low-speed unmanned aerial vehicles as well as from rockets, artillery and mortar systems. NATO's 21st century ground-based air defence initiative aims to harmonise national requirements and industrial capacity to respond to the current and next generation of air threats. Multinational cooperation in science and technology, procurement and increased industry engagement is critical to the initiative's success.

Dismounted soldier systems

In NATO operations, all individuals deployed in the field – regardless of whether they are soldiers, marines, sailors or airmen/airwomen – are equipped with the appropriate gear to successfully carry out their missions. In order to maximise battlefield effectiveness and survivability, it is essential that everything soldiers are wearing, carrying and consuming is safe, interoperable and reliable. As such, the aim of dismounted soldier systems is the standardization and harmonisation of individual combat and support equipment for NATO and partner nations.

Deployable Air Base Concept

The NATO Deployable Air Base (NDAB) concept provides NATO with the capability to deliver a deployed air base, which in the worst-case scenario would be built up from a bare-base airfield. The NDAB is designed to support military operations 24/7 in all weathers. With the addition of Deployable Air Traffic services the NDAB could also be available for use by civil air traffic.

Digital acoustic underwater networks

Aimed at enhancing anti-submarine warfare capabilities, NATO has developed the first-ever standard for digital underwater acoustic communications. Based upon the JANUS protocol, this standard is a key enabler for interoperability of maritime underwater systems. The advanced capability provides NATO maritime forces with a key technological edge as part of its efforts to improve maritime engagement capabilities across the Alliance.

More information

Modular ship design

Modular ship design specifications are innovative implementations in shipbuilding that expand the range of achievable missions, extend the lifespan of maritime platforms and enable reduced fleet sizes without impacting operational capacity. They also promote interoperability between Allied maritime forces as NATO works to improve overall maritime engagement capabilities. Allied navies are cooperating on the development and implementation of standards to enable a 'plug-and-play' concept that will allow ship combat and support systems to be optimised to each specific mission and share capabilities, with only minimal disruption to readiness and availability. Modular ship design principles are expected to be implemented on all next-generation Allied surface vessels.

Other initiatives

Maritime security

Alliance maritime capabilities have an enduring value and provide an important cross-cutting contribution to Alliance security. In January 2011, NATO adopted the Alliance Maritime Strategy. Consistent with the 2010 Strategic Concept, the Strategy sets out ways in which NATO's unique maritime power can be used to address critical security challenges and play a key role in deterrence and collective defence, crisis management, cooperative security and maritime security. In the current security context, the Alliance's naval forces provide essential contributions to maritime situational awareness, assurance measures and current operations.

The Alliance continues to implement its maritime strategy through capability development, an enhanced programme of maritime exercises and training, and the enhancement of cooperation with non-NATO partners, including other international organisations such as the European Union. NATO's naval forces contribute to helping address numerous security challenges, including NATO's maritime role in the Mediterranean through Operation Sea Guardian (a broader non-Article 5 maritime security operation) as well as NATO's activity in the Aegean Sea.

More information

Total system approach to aviation

The Alliance will continue to develop its capabilities to ensure appropriate access to airspace by addressing all aspects related to aviation – including air traffic management, aeronautical technologies, airfield capabilities, manned aircraft and remotely piloted air systems, airworthiness, licensing and training – in the context of global aviation developments in the civil and military domain. The success of Alliance air missions depends on a combination of technical, organisational, procedural and human factors – all working seamlessly towards the mitigation of hazards and risks – ensuring safety and security in order to strengthen support for training, exercises and operations in the air domain.

Engagement with industry

The majority of capabilities are produced, maintained and repaired, modernised and adapted, and retired by industry. Allies recognised the relevance of engaging closer, and earlier in the capability development process, with the defence and security industry. Allies also recognise the need to maintain a strong defence industrial base in Europe and across the Atlantic, including through small- and medium-sized enterprises. New challenges are dealt with through innovative capabilities. A sustainable, innovative and globally competitive industry is therefore critical to the Alliance's success.

More information

Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance

Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) is vital for all military operations. It provides decision-makers and action-takers with a better situational awareness of what is happening on the ground, in the air or at sea. This means that Allies work together to collect, analyse and share information to maximum effect. This makes Joint ISR a unique example of cooperation and burden-sharing across the Alliance.

Highlights

- NATO is establishing a permanent JISR system providing information and intelligence to key decision-makers, helping them make well-informed, timely and accurate decisions.

- JISR brings together data and information gathered through projects such as NATO's Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) system or NATO AWACS surveillance aircraft as well as a wide variety of national JISR assets from the space, air, land and maritime domains.

- Both surveillance and reconnaissance includes visual observation (from soldiers on the ground) and electronic observation (for example from satellites, unmanned aircraft systems, ground sensors and maritime vessels), which are then analysed, turning information into intelligence.

- The Initial Operational Capability (IOC) for JISR, declared in February 2016, represents a significant achievement, enabling better connectivity between NATO and Allies' capabilities.

- IOC is only the first milestone for the JISR initiative. Further work is needed to sustain these achievements.

More background information

▬ Components

Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) provides the foundation for all military operations, and its principles have been used in warfare for centuries. The individual elements of ISR are:

■ Intelligence: the final product derived from surveillance and reconnaissance, fused with other information;

■ Surveillance: the persistent monitoring of a target; and

■ Reconnaissance: information-gathering conducted to answer a specific military question.

Both surveillance and reconnaissance can include visual observation (for example soldiers on the ground covertly watching a target, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) with cameras), as well as electronic observation.

The difference between surveillance and reconnaissance has to do with time and specificity; surveillance is a more prolonged and deliberate activity, while reconnaissance missions are generally rapid and targeted to retrieve specific information.

Once surveillance and reconnaissance information has been obtained, intelligence specialists can analyse it, fuse it with other information from other data sources and produce the intelligence which is then used to inform military and civilian decision-makers, particularly for the planning and conduct of operations.

While all countries have their own sources and methods for the production of intelligence, it is not always easy for them to share their intelligence with Allies. Sometimes this is due to security concerns, sometimes to internal procedural requirements, and sometimes to technological constraints.

The objective of NATO Joint ISR is to champion the concept of "need to share" over the concept of "need to know". This does not mean that all Allies will automatically share everything, but rather that NATO can facilitate the procedures and technology to promote sharing while simultaneously providing information assurance (i.e., the protection of data and networks). This way, Allies can have a holistic picture of whatever crisis is occurring and NATO decision-makers can make well-informed, timely and accurate decisions.

▬ Mechanism

The experience the Alliance gained from its operations in Afghanistan and Libya has resulted in collection assets (for example information gathering equipment such as surveillance aircraft) becoming far more accessible to military personnel, even at the lowest tactical levels. Assets that would have been used only for strategic purposes at the discretion of military generals years ago are now widely available and their use is decentralised. This shift occurred because NATO member countries procured significant numbers of maritime, land and airborne collection assets to help them locate adversaries, who often operate in complex environments and among civilian populations.

To enable information-gathering to take place, and to ensure that information is analysed and intelligence is produced for decision-makers, there are a number of primary actors involved, including:

■ Surveillance and reconnaissance collection assets
Their role is to collect information. Examples include Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS), AWACS surveillance aircraft which use radar, observation satellites, electronic assets and special ground reconnaissance troops.

■ Intelligence analysts
  Their role is to exploit and analyse information from multiple sources. Examples include national military and civilian analysts working at the strategic level in intelligence organisations, imagery analysts at all levels, and encryption experts.

■ Decision-makers
  Their role is to use intelligence to inform their decision-making. Examples include political leaders and military commanders.

Evolution

Based on the experience NATO Allies gained in recent operations, the Alliance is looking to establish a permanent, effective ISR system. NATO aims to provide Allies with a mechanism which brings together data and information gathered through Smart Defence projects such as the AGS system or AWACS, as well as a wide variety of national ISR capabilities, including troops on the ground, maritime and air assets, space-based platforms such as satellites, and Special Operations Forces.

To provide a foundation for NATO's Joint ISR ambition, the Alliance is currently developing a JISR project aimed at providing the following pillars:

■ Training and education
  The personnel involved with the Joint ISR capability in NATO will possess expertise to guarantee the efficiency of the JISR enterprise. This area of the project examines ways to ensure that NATO personnel receive the highest standard of ISR training and education.

■ Doctrine and procedures
  To improve interoperability, efficiency, coherence and effectiveness, Joint ISR doctrine and procedures will be continuously developed and reviewed, from strategic thinking to tactical procedures.

■ Networking environment
  NATO communication and information systems (CIS) will guarantee efficient collaboration and sharing of ISR data, products and applications between the Allies. This is the core business of NATO's Joint ISR effort.

NATO's 2012 Chicago Summit established the objective to strengthen cooperation and ensure tighter connections between Allied forces. During the Summit, the Allied Heads of State and Government expressed the ambition to provide NATO with an enduring and permanently available JISR capability, giving the Alliance the eyes and ears it needs to achieve strategic decision advantage. At the 2014 Wales Summit, Allies reconfirmed that Joint ISR remained a high NATO priority.

At their meeting on 10 February 2016, defence ministers declared IOC for Joint, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance. It represents a significant achievement, enabling better connectivity between NATO and Allies' capabilities and enhancing situational awareness throughout the NATO Response Force (NRF).

IOC is only the first milestone for the JISR initiative. Further work is needed to sustain these achievements, and expand them beyond the scope of the NRF. An enduring JISR capability is now being developed in a phased approach; ongoing work will further improve on and build synergy in the management of Allies' diverse inputs and capabilities for NATO's 360 degree situational awareness.

Technical trials take place every two years in order to demonstrate and assess progress on the Alliance's JISR capabilities in a real-world environment. Unified Vision 2018 (UV18), scheduled for June, will test ISR capabilities with a focus on challenges ranging from conventional threats to terrorism. The latest technology available will be utilised in order to merge intelligence feeds and exploit raw data into intelligence for decision-makers at sites distributed across NATO territories in both Europe and North America.

Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS)

NATO is acquiring the Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) system that will give commanders a comprehensive picture of the situation on the ground. NATO's past and current operations to protect civilians showed how important such a capability is. A group of Allies is acquiring five Global Hawk remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) and the associated ground command and control stations that make up the AGS system. NATO will then operate and maintain them on behalf of all 29 Allies.

Highlights

- The AGS system consists of air, ground and support segments, performing all-weather, persistent wide-area terrestrial and maritime surveillance in near real-time.

- The AGS will be able to contribute to a range of missions such as protection of ground troops and civilian populations, border control and maritime safety, the fight against terrorism, crisis management and humanitarian assistance in natural disasters.

- The AGS system also includes European-sourced ground assets that will provide in-theatre support to commanders of deployed forces.

- The AGS system is being acquired by 15 Allies and will be made available to the Alliance in 2019.

More background information

Overview

The AGS system is being acquired by 15 Allies (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United States), and will be made available to the Alliance in 2019. All Allies will contribute to the development of the AGS capability through financial contributions covering the establishment of the AGS main operating base, as well as to communications and life-cycle support of the AGS fleet. Some Allies will replace part

of their financial contribution through interoperable contributions in kind (national surveillance systems that will be made available to NATO).

The NATO-owned and -operated AGS Core capability will enable the Alliance to perform persistent surveillance over wide areas from high-altitude, long-endurance (HALE) aircraft, operating at considerable stand-off distances and in any weather or light condition. Using advanced radar sensors, these systems will continuously detect and track moving objects throughout observed areas and will provide radar imagery of areas of interest and stationary objects.

The Main Operating Base for AGS, located at Sigonella Air Base in Italy, serves a dual purpose as a NATO Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) deployment base and data exploitation and training centre.

Just as NATO Airborne Early Warning & Control (NAEW&C) aircraft – also known as AWACS or "NATO's eyes in the sky" – monitor Alliance airspace, AGS will be able to observe what is happening on the earth's surface, providing situational awareness before, during and, if needed, after NATO operations.

AGS responds to one of the major capability commitments of the 2010 Lisbon Summit.

Components

The AGS Core will be an integrated system consisting of an air segment, a ground segment and a support segment.

The air segment consists of five RQ-4B Global Hawk Block 40 aircraft and remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) flight control element. The aircraft will be equipped with a state-of-the-art, multi-platform radar technology insertion programme (MP-RTIP) ground surveillance radar sensor, as well as an extensive suite of line-of-sight and beyond-line-of-sight, long-range, wideband data links.

The ground segment will provide an interface between the AGS Core system and a wide range of command, control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C2ISR) systems to interconnect with and provide data to multiple deployed and non-deployed operational users, including reach-back facilities remote from the surveillance area.

The ground segment consists of a number of ground stations in various configurations, such as mobile and transportable, which will provide data-link connectivity, data-processing and exploitation capabilities and interfaces for interoperability with C2ISR systems.

The AGS Core support segment will include dedicated mission support facilities at the AGS Main Operating Base (MOB) in Sigonella.

Interoperable contributions in kind, such as national surveillance systems and data / communications, will also be made available to NATO and will complement AGS with additional surveillance capabilities.

The composition of the AGS Core system and these contributions in kind will provide NATO with considerable flexibility in employing its ground surveillance capabilities.

This will be supplemented by additional interoperable national airborne surveillance systems from NATO member countries, tailored to the needs of a specific operation or mission conducted by the Alliance.

Mechanisms

The NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance Management Organisation (NAGSMO) and its executive body - NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance Management Agency (NAGSMA) - are responsible for the acquisition of the AGS Core capability on behalf of the 15 acquiring countries. The NATO AGS Force (AGSF), activated in September 2015, with its AGS Staff Element Implementation Office (AGS-SEIO) located at the headquarters of Allied Command Operations (SHAPE) and its Advanced Echelon (ADVON) located at Sigonella are responsible for ensuring the successful operational integration and employment of the NATO AGS Core capability.

NAGSMA, representing the 15 AGS acquisition nations, awarded the prime contract for the system to Northrop Grumman in May 2012 during the Chicago Summit. The company's primary industrial team includes Airbus Defence and Space (Germany), Leonardo (Italy) and Kongsberg (Norway), as well as leading defence companies from all acquiring countries, which are contributing to the delivery of the AGS system.

The engagement of NATO common funds for infrastructure, communications, operation and support will follow normal funding authorisation procedures applicable within the Alliance.

By the time AGS becomes fully operational, France and the United Kingdom will sign Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), outlining the modalities for making their contributions in kind available to the Alliance.

Supporting NATO's core tasks

The 2010 Lisbon Summit set out the vision of Allied Heads of State and Government for the evolution of NATO and the security of its member countries. This vision is based on three core tasks, which are detailed in the 2010 Strategic Concept:

- collective defence

- crisis management

- cooperative security AGS was recognised at Lisbon as a critical capability for the Alliance and is planned to be a major contributor to NATO's Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) ambition.

AGS will contribute to these three core tasks through using its MP-RTIP radar sensor to collect information that will provide political and military decision makers with a comprehensive picture of the situation on the ground.

Facts and figures

General characteristics of the RQ-4B Global Hawk Block 40 remotely piloted aircraft:

- Primary function: High-altitude, long-endurance intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance

- Power Plant: Rolls Royce-North American AE 3007H turbofan

- Thrust: 7,600 lbs

- Wingspan: 130.9 ft / 39.8 m

- Length: 47.6 ft / 14.5 m

- Height: 15.3 ft / 4.7 m

- Weight: 14,950 lbs / 6,781 kg

- Maximum take-off weight: 32,250 lbs / 14,628 kg

- Fuel capacity: 17,300 lbs / 7,847 kg

- Payload: 3,000 lbs / 1,360 kg

- Speed: 310 knots / 357 mph / 575 kph

- Range: 8,700 nautical miles / 10,112 miles / 16,113 km

- Ceiling: 60,000 ft / 18,288 m

Evolution

Originating from the Defence Planning Committee in 1992, the AGS programme was defined as a capability acquisition effort in 1995, when the NATO defence ministers agreed that "the Alliance should pursue work on a minimum essential NATO-owned and -operated core capability supplemented by interoperable national assets."

The AGS programme was to provide NATO with a complete and integrated ground surveillance capability that would offer the Alliance and its member countries unrestricted and unfiltered access to ground surveillance data in near real time, and in an interoperable manner. It was to include an air segment comprising airborne radar sensors, and a ground segment comprising fixed, transportable and mobile ground stations for data exploitation and dissemination, all seamlessly interconnected linked through high-performance data links.

From the outset, the AGS capability was expected to be based on one or more types of ground surveillance assets either already existing or in development in NATO member countries, an approach that later also came to include proposed developmental systems based on US or European radars. However, all those approaches failed to obtain sufficient support by the Allies to allow their realisation. In 2001, the North Atlantic Council (Reinforced) decided to revitalise AGS through a developmental programme available to all NATO countries and a corresponding cooperative radar development effort called the Transatlantic Cooperative AGS Radar (TCAR).

In 2004, NATO decided to move ahead with what was labelled as a mixed-fleet approach. The air segment was to include Airbus A321 manned aircraft and Global Hawk unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), both carrying versions of the TCAR radar, while the ground segment was to comprise an extensive set of fixed and deployable ground stations.

Due to declining European defence budgets, NATO decided in 2007 to discontinue the mixed-fleet approach and instead to move forward with a simplified AGS system where the air segment was based on the off-the-shelf Global Hawk Block 40 UAV and its associated MP-RTIP sensor. The ground segment, which would largely be developed and built by European and Canadian industry, remained virtually unchanged as its functional and operational characteristics were largely independent of the actual aircraft and sensor used.

In February 2009, the NATO Allies participating in the AGS programme started the process to sign the Programme Memorandum of Understanding (PMOU). This was a significant step forward on the road towards realising an urgently required, operationally essential capability for NATO. NAGSMA was established in September 2009, after all participating countries had agreed on the PMOU. The PMOU serves as the basis for the procurement of this new NATO capability.

Another important milestone for the AGS programme was the 2010 Lisbon Summit, where the strong operational need for a NATO-owned and -operated AGS capability was reconfirmed with NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept. AGS also featured in the Lisbon Package as one of the Alliance's most pressing capability needs.

On 3 February 2012, the North Atlantic Council decided on a way ahead to collectively cover the costs for operating AGS for the benefit of the Alliance. The decision to engage NATO common funding for infrastructure, satellite communications and operations and support paves the way for awarding the AGS acquisition contract. In addition, an agreement was reached to make the UK Sentinel system and the future French Heron TP system available as national contributions in kind, partly replacing financial contributions from those two Allies.

In the margins of the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago, NATO nations took an important step towards the delivery of a NATO-owned and -operated ground surveillance and reconnaissance capability. A procurement contract for the AGS system was signed on 20 May 2012, paving the way for the delivery of a vital capability that will be made available to all NATO member nations. The AGS acquisition contract includes the purchase and initial operation and maintenance of unmanned aircraft equipped with advanced ground surveillance radar sensors.

In September 2015, NATO AGS achieved important milestones such as the first live ground testing of NATO's first Global Hawk and the activation of NATO AGS Force, meaning Allies formally agreed the configuration (number of staff, their rank structure, etc.) of the unit responsible for operating the AGS Global Hawk aircraft from Sigonella Air Base.

Between September and December 2015, other important milestones were achieved:

- the AGS Operations Centre in Sigonella was handed over from Host Nation Italy to NATO;

- Mobile General Ground Station (MGGS) and Transportable General Ground Station (TGGS) roll-outs took place;

- the first test flight of NATO's first Global Hawk occurred in Palmdale, California; and

- AGS successfully participated in exercise Trident Juncture 2015 from the NATO AGS Capability Testbed (NACT) in the Netherlands.

Throughout 2016 and 2017, several test flights took place in order to further develop AGS capabilities. These included the first flight remotely controlled from the AGS Operations Centre in Sigonella at the end of 2017.

An intensive process of re-baselining the core acquisition contract took place and was finalised and signed in May 2018. This process helps ensure that AGS will deliver an operationally suitable capability that can be certified for operations within global airspace.

The first NATO Global Hawk is expected to fly from the United States to its new home in Sigonella in 2019.

Exercises

Exercises are important tools through which the Alliance tests and validates its concepts, procedures, systems and tactics. More broadly, they enable militaries and civilian organisations deployed in theatres of operation to test capabilities and practise working together efficiently in a demanding crisis situation.

Highlights

- Exercises allow NATO to test and validate concepts, procedures, systems and tactics.

- They enable militaries and civilian organisations deployed on the ground to work together to identify ″best practices″ (what works) and ″lessons learned″ (what needs improving).

- Exercises also contribute to improved interoperability and defence reform.

- NATO has recently boosted its exercise programme in light of the changed security environment.

- Exercises are planned in advance and vary in scope, duration and form – ranging between live exercises in the field to computer-assisted exercises that take place in a classroom.

- To foster and support interoperability, NATO exercises are as open as possible to all formal partner countries.

- The Alliance has been conducting exercises since 1951.

More background information

The aim of NATO exercises

The rationale for planning and executing military exercises is to prepare commands and forces for operations in times of peace, crisis and conflict. Their aims and objectives must therefore mirror current operational requirements and priorities. The exercises are executed in three forms: a live exercise (LIVEX) in which forces actually participate; a command-post exercise (CPX), which is a headquarters

exercise involving commanders and their staffs, and communications within and between participating headquarters; and an exercise study, which may take the form of a map exercise, a war game, a series of lectures, a discussion group or an operational analysis.

Exercises serve a number of specific purposes:

- *Training and experience*

Exercises allow forces to build on previous training in a practical way, thereby heightening forces' level of proficiency in a given area. Exercises have varying levels of complexity but most assume that basic training is complete and that a sufficient number of trained personnel are available.

- *Testing and validating structures*

Exercises are designed to practise the efficiency of structures as well as personnel. This is particularly true when periodically the NATO military command structure is reformed and new headquarters need to test their ability to fulfil new responsibilities. A structure consists of many components – concepts, doctrine, procedures, systems and tactics – that must function together. Supply structures, for instance, require specialised training, equipment and operating procedures, which must be combined to effectively support a mission's objectives. Putting these structures into practice allows them to be tested and, if need be, refined.

- *Interoperability*

NATO-led forces must be able to work together effectively despite differences in doctrine, language, structures, tactics and training. Interoperability is built, in part, through routine inter-forces training between NATO member states and through practical cooperation between personnel from Allied and partner countries. Exercises are as open as possible to all formal partners, either as observers or as participants, and in some cases even as hosts of an exercise. Endorsement by the Military Committee and approval by the North Atlantic Council are, however, required before a partner can observe or participate in an exercise.

- *Defence reform*

Participation in NATO exercises is one of the options available to help with defence reform. They provide the possibility for NATO member countries to test reforms implemented nationally and give partner countries the opportunity to be involved in and observe the structures and mechanisms that Alliance members have in place.

The making of an exercise

Exercise scenarios

During an exercise, forces are asked to respond to a fictitious scenario that resembles what might occur in real life. Exercises cover the full range of military operations, from combat to humanitarian relief and from stabilisation to reconstruction. They can last from a day to several weeks and can vary in scope from a few officers working on an isolated problem, to full-scale combat scenarios involving aircraft, navy ships, artillery pieces, armoured vehicles and thousands of troops.

Alliance exercises are supported by NATO countries and, as appropriate, by partner countries, which provide national commitments in the form of troops, equipment or other types of support. The participating countries are normally responsible for funding any form of national contribution.

Each exercise has pre-specified training objectives which drive the selection of activities. Objectives may be to build skills and knowledge, practise coordination mechanisms, or validate procedures.

At the conclusion of an exercise, commanders and, in many cases, troops collectively review their performance. This process allows them to identify areas that work well ("best practices") and areas that can be improved ("lessons learned"). In this way, exercises facilitate continuous improvement of interoperability, efficiency and performance.

Military Training and Exercise Programme

Events and activities related to NATO training and exercises are developed by NATO's two strategic commands – Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT). This process culminates with the publication of the annual Military Training and Exercise Programme (MTEP). Since July 2012, ACO is responsible for setting the training requirements and conducting NATO's evaluations, while ACT is responsible for managing the MTEP and executing the exercise programme.

The MTEP provides detailed information on training, exercises and related activities scheduled for the next five calendar years. The detailed specifications of an exercise are developed one or two years prior to the start of the exercise.

The document is based on the priorities and intent of the Strategic Commanders. The areas typically included are current and future operations, the NATO Response Force, transformational experimentation and NATO's military cooperation programmes.

NATO exercise requirements are coordinated during MTEP Programming Board Meetings (which are open to representatives from partner countries) starting at least 18 months before the beginning of the next cycle. Preliminary planning culminates in the NATO Training and Exercise Conference, where NATO Commands, NATO member and partner countries, and other invitees conduct final exercise coordination and provide support to the annual MTEP.

Political exercises

Exercises are organised in both the military and civilian structures of the Alliance. NATO holds exercises based on its political arrangements, concepts and procedures so as to refine consultations and decision-making architecture and capabilities. Political exercises also aim to ensure that primary advisers – non-elected senior political officials and military commanders in capitals and within the NATO structures – are provided with opportunities to maintain their awareness of how complex, multinational organisations such as NATO work. In some instances, partners engaged in NATO-led operations are able to participate in certain aspects of these exercises.

● **Transparency**

NATO, and more specifically Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), publishes its annual exercise programme online. In the spirit of the Vienna Document on ensuring military transparency, NATO also adheres to the following rules: when an exercise exceeds 9,000 personnel, it is subject to notification (at least 42 days in advance); when it exceeds 13,000 personnel, observers are allowed to follow the exercise. The naming convention explained below is also a source of information and, therefore of transparency.

Every year within the framework of the Vienna Document and as part of an important confidence- and security-building measure, officials from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) meet to exchange information on their armed forces, military organisation, manpower and major weapon and equipment systems. They also share information on their defence planning and budgets during the year.

● **What is in an exercise name?**

At the present time, NATO exercises are identified by two words. The first letter of the first word denotes the NATO command responsible for scheduling the exercise.

S

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe

T

Allied Command Transformation

B

Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum

N

Allied Joint Force Command Naples

The first letter of the second word denotes the element(s) concerned.

A

Air

L

Land

M

Maritime

J

Joint

S

Special Operations Forces

For instance, **B**rilliant **J**ump is a **j**oint exercise conducted by JFC **B**runssum.

The strategic commands in the lead

ACO and ACT work closely together on NATO military exercises. Both are assisted by the Alliance's network of education, training, and assessment institutions, as well as national structures.

Since July 2012, ACO has been given the main responsibility for setting collective training requirements and conducting the evaluation of headquarters and formations. ACT has been given the responsibility of managing collective training and exercises, based on ACO's requirements. ACT also holds lead responsibility for NATO and Partnership for Peace (PfP) joint education, individual training and associated policy and doctrine development, as well as for directing NATO schools (NATO's PfP is a major programme of bilateral cooperation with countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus).

Exercises through time

NATO has been conducting Alliance-level exercises since 1951. In the early years of the Alliance, NATO forces conducted exercises to strengthen their ability to practise collective defence. In other words, they were conducted to ensure that forces were prepared in the case of an attack.

An integrated force under centralised command was called for in September 1950. By December 1950, the first Supreme Allied Commander Europe, US General Dwight D. Eisenhower, was appointed. Following this appointment, national forces were put under centralised command.

The Alliance's first exercises were held in the autumn of 1951. During 1953, there were approximately 100 exercises of various kinds conducted by NATO commanders. From this point on, NATO forces were no longer a collection of national units, but were beginning to gain cohesion. A year after Allied Command Europe became operational, General Eisenhower reported that "*the combat readiness of our troops has improved markedly*".

During the '70s and the '80s, NATO maintained a very active exercise programme to train forces in as many demanding scenarios as possible. Exercises were considered an essential part of the Alliance's deterrence posture and helped to ensure that forces were prepared for a potential aggression throughout the Cold War.

In 1994, the Alliance launched the Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative. One of the initiative's objectives is to promote closer military cooperation and interoperability between NATO and non-NATO countries in the Euro-Atlantic area. From that time on, PfP members were able to participate in peacekeeping field exercises.

In 2002, the NATO Response Force (NRF) was created. It is a highly ready and technologically advanced multinational force that the Alliance can deploy quickly, wherever needed. The original NRF concept was revised in 2009 and since then, the emphasis has been placed on exercises conducted in support of the NRF. This training is intended to ensure that the NRF is able to deploy quickly and operate effectively in a variety of situations.

At the 2004 Istanbul Summit, Alliance leaders elevated the Mediterranean Dialogue initiative to a genuine partnership to include increased participation in exercises and individual training at NATO institutions. At the same time, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative was introduced, paving the way for cooperation between NATO and countries from the broader Middle East in areas such as education and training, and made provision for partners to engage in joint training for terrorism. Since the Lisbon Summit in November 2010 and the introduction of the 2010 Strategic Concept and the new partnerships policy, NATO exercises have been open to all partners.

At the Chicago Summit in 2012, NATO leaders started talking about "expanding education, training and exercises" and introduced the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), which aimed to ensure that the high level of interoperability Allied forces gained during their operational experience in Afghanistan, Libya, the Horn of Africa and the Balkans, was maintained. It was in February 2013 that NATO defence ministers endorsed plans to revitalise NATO's exercise programme. These plans set the course for a more rigorous multi-year training schedule to ensure NATO and partner forces retain the ability to work efficiently together. Following Russia's illegal "annexation" of Crimea in March 2014, the number of exercises undertaken that year was increased and at their 2014 Summit in Wales, NATO leaders made a pledge to increase the focus on collective defence scenarios. Since then, at the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO leaders have agreed on a strengthened deterrence and defence posture that draws upon all the tools at NATO's disposal, including military exercises. Exercises continue to ensure that Allies are able to meet NATO's level of ambition, and to demonstrate that capability for deterrence purposes.

NATO Defence Planning Process

The aim of the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) is to provide a framework within which national and Alliance defence planning activities can be harmonised to enable Allies to provide the required forces and capabilities in the most effective way. It should facilitate the timely identification, development and delivery of the necessary range of forces that are interoperable and adequately prepared, equipped, trained and supported, as well as the associated military and non-military capabilities, to undertake the Alliance's full spectrum of missions.

Highlights

- Through the NDPP, NATO identifies the capabilities that it requires, and promotes their development and acquisition by Allies.

- The NDPP provides a framework within which Allies harmonise their national defence plans with those of NATO, without compromising their national sovereignty.

- The NDPP apportions requirements to each Ally as Capability Targets on the basis of a fair share of the overall requirement, facilitates their implementation and regularly assesses progress.

- NATO defence planning encompasses 14 different planning domains, each of which is involved in capability development. The NDPP aims to provide a common framework that can minimise duplication and maximise coherence across the various planning domains.

The NATO Defence Planning Process' five steps

Key characteristics

The NDPP is the primary means to facilitate the identification, development and delivery of NATO's present and future capability requirements. It apportions those requirements to each Ally as Capability Targets, facilitates their implementation and regularly assesses progress. It achieves this by providing a framework for the harmonisation of national and Alliance defence planning activities that is aimed at the

timely development and delivery of the capabilities, both military and non-military, needed to meet the agreed security and defence objectives inherent to the Strategic Concept.

The key characteristics of the NDPP are:

- It is a coherent and integrated process in which Allies undertake to deliver the required capabilities in the short and medium term (up to 20 years into the future).

- It takes a threat/risk-informed, capability-based approach that provides sufficient detail to enable Allies to develop the forces and capabilities necessary to undertake the full range of NATO missions and tasks.

- It is sufficiently flexible to respond to the circumstances of both individual Allies and the overall Alliance; it informs and guides national defence plans, provides transparency, promotes multinational approaches and offers opportunities to capitalise on best practices.

The NDPP provides a common framework for the integration and rationalisation of capability development across all NATO structures. Fourteen different planning domains have been identified, each of which is engaged in capability development to some extent. These planning domains are: air and missile defence; aviation planning; armaments; civil emergency planning; consultation, command and control; cyber defence; force planning; intelligence; logistics; medical; nuclear deterrence; resources; science and technology; and standardization and interoperability.

The NDPP methodology is not static, and it continues to evolve. In 2009, initiatives were taken to improve the harmonisation of the various planning domains, and Allies were encouraged to integrate their national defence planning activities to complement NATO efforts. In 2016, the NDPP was considerably enhanced. This included an updated methodology to address the derivation of requirements in Step 2 *(see below)*. The four-year NDPP cycle remained, but the planning period was amended and divided into the short term (0-6 years), the medium term (7-19 years) and the long term (20+ years). The NDPP focuses on the short and medium term.

The five steps

The NDPP consists of five steps conducted over a period of four years. Although the five steps are generally carried out sequentially, Step 4 (facilitate implementation) is a continuing activity, and Step 5 (review results) is carried out twice within each four-year cycle.

Step 1 - Establish political guidance

A single, unified political guidance document for defence planning sets out the overall aims and objectives to be met by the Alliance. It translates guidance from higher strategic policy documents, such as the Strategic Concept, in sufficient detail to direct the defence planning efforts of the planning domains in order to determine the capabilities required.

Political guidance includes a definition of the number, scale and nature of the operations the Alliance should be able to conduct in the future (commonly referred to as NATO's Level of Ambition). It also defines the qualitative capability requirements to support this ambition. In doing this, it steers capability development efforts within the Allies and NATO. It defines associated priorities and timelines for use by the planning domains.

Political guidance is normally reviewed every four years, by the Defence Policy and Planning Committee 'Reinforced'. The DPPC(R) is responsible for the development of defence planning-related policy, and the overall coordination and direction of NDPP activities.

Step 2 - Determine requirements

NATO's capability requirements are consolidated into a single list called the Minimum Capability Requirements. These requirements are identified by the two Strategic Commands (Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT)), supported by the planning domains. ACT has the lead in determining the requirements. The process is structured, comprehensive, transparent and

traceable and uses analytical tools coupled with relevant NATO expert analysis. This is done once every four years, although out-of-cycle activity for particular capabilities can be undertaken as circumstances dictate.

Step 3 - Apportion requirements and set targets

The target setting process apportions the Minimum Capability Requirements to the Allies (either individually, multinationally or collectively) in the form of target packages. The Strategic Commands (with ACT in the lead, and supported by the NATO International Staff) develop a target package for each Ally for existing and future capabilities, with associated priorities and timelines. Targets are expressed in capability terms and are flexible enough to allow innovative solutions to be developed rather than replacing 'like with like'. The apportionment process applies the political principles of fair burden-sharing and reasonable challenge in determining the Capability Target package of each Ally.

Following a round of consultations with Allies on the Capability Target packages, the lead passes from the Strategic Commands to the NATO International Staff. Allies review the Capability Target packages during a series of Multilateral Examinations and agree the target package for each Ally on the basis of "consensus minus one", meaning that an individual Ally cannot veto what otherwise would be a unanimous decision on its own Capability Target package.

Agreed Capability Target packages are subsequently forwarded to the North Atlantic Council for submission to defence ministers for adoption. Defence ministers agree to take the assigned Capability Target packages into their own national defence planning process. A Capability Target Summary Report is also prepared for defence ministers, this includes an assessment by the Military Committee of the potential risk and possible impact caused by the removal of targets from packages on the delivery of the Alliance's Level of Ambition.

Step 4 - Facilitate implementation

Step 4 assists national measures, facilitates multinational initiatives and directs NATO efforts to fulfil agreed targets and priorities in a coherent and timely manner. Unlike other steps in the process, this step – or function - is continuous in nature.

Step 5 - Review results

Step 5 of the NDPP seeks to examine the degree to which NATO's political objectives, ambitions and associated Capability Targets are being met and to offer feedback and direction for the next cycle of the defence planning process. Step 5 provides an overall assessment of the degree to which the Alliance's forces and capabilities are able to meet the political guidance, including the NATO Level of Ambition. It is carried out by a Defence Planning Capability Review, led by the NATO International Staff with support from the Strategic Commands. The Capability Review scrutinises and assesses Allies' defence policies and plans, including their financial plans, with a particular emphasis on capability development and the implementation of NATO Capability Targets.

Every two years, Allies complete a Defence Planning Capability Survey, which seeks data on Allies' national plans and policies, including efforts (national, multinational and collective) to address their NATO Capability Targets. The survey also seeks information on the national inventory of military forces and associated capabilities, any relevant non-military capabilities potentially available for Alliance operations, and national plans for defence expenditure, including the breakdown of spending between personnel, operating costs and investment in major equipment and associated research and development.

Assessments are produced by the International Staff, supported by the Strategic Commands and the planning domains, for each Ally. The assessments comprise a detailed Staff Analysis, produced for the information of Allies, and a shorter Overview, drawn from the Staff Analysis. The Staff Analyses constitute a comprehensive analysis of national plans and capabilities, including force structures, specific circumstances and priorities. The Staff Analysis includes a statement by the Strategic Commands regarding the impact each country's plans have on the ability of Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) to conduct NATO's current and expected missions and tasks.

The assessments are submitted for examination to the DPPC(R) for review during a series of multilateral examinations, which use the same 'consensus minus one' approach as used in Step 3.

As part of Step 5, the Strategic Commands produce a Suitability and Risk Assessment, which provides the basis for the Military Committee to develop a Suitability and Risk Assessment. This includes an assessment of the risks posed by any shortfalls in NATO's forces and capabilities, as well as an assessment of the suitability of Allies' plans to enable NATO to meet its Level of Ambition, and a list of any Main Shortfall Areas.

Utilising the assessments of individual Allies' capabilities and plans, the DPPC(R) prepares a NATO Capability Report, highlighting individual and collective progress on capability development as it relates to NATO's Level of Ambition. The Capability Report, incorporating the approved Overviews of the assessments in respect of each Ally, is passed to the North Atlantic Council for agreement, and then to Allied Defence Ministers for endorsement (normally in the month of June of even years).

Support structures

The Defence Policy and Planning Committee (DPPC) is the senior committee for defence planning. It is responsible for the development of defence planning-related policy and the overall coordination of NDPP activities.

The DPPC is the central body that oversees the work of the NATO bodies and committees responsible for the defence planning domains on behalf of the North Atlantic Council. It can provide feedback and defence planning-related direction to them. The DPPC will often meet with appropriate subject matter experts invited to reinforce the regular representatives. When meeting in this format, the DPPC is referred to as the DPPC 'Reinforced', or DPPC(R).

NATO Headquarters

NATO Headquarters is the political and administrative centre of the Alliance. It is located at Boulevard Leopold III in Brussels, Belgium. It offers a venue for representatives and experts from all member countries to consult on a continuous basis, a key part of the Alliance's consensual decision-making process, and to work with partner countries.

Highlights

- NATO Headquarters is the political and administrative centre of the Alliance.
- It is the permanent home of the North Atlantic Council – NATO's senior political decision-making body.
- It is also home to national delegations of member countries and to liaison offices or diplomatic missions of partner countries.
- The work of these delegations and missions is supported by NATO's International Staff and International Military Staff, also based at the Headquarters.
- The Headquarters hosts roughly 6,000 meetings every year.
- Initially based in London, the Headquarters was moved to Paris in 1952 before being transferred to Brussels, Belgium in 1967.

Role, responsibilities and people

NATO Headquarters is where representatives from all the member states come together to make decisions on a consensus basis. It also offers a venue for dialogue and cooperation between partner countries and NATO member countries, enabling them to work together in their efforts to bring about peace and stability.

Roughly 4,000 people work at NATO Headquarters on a full-time basis. Of these, some 2,000 are members of national delegations and supporting staff members of national military representatives to NATO. About 300 people work at the missions of NATO's partners countries. Some 1,000 are civilian

members of the International Staff or NATO agencies located within the Headquarters and about 500 are members of the International Military Staff, which also includes civilians.

Working mechanism

With permanent delegations of NATO members and partners based at the Headquarters, there is ample opportunity for informal and formal consultation on a continuous basis, a key part of the Alliance's decision-making process.

Meetings at NATO Headquarters take place throughout the year, creating a setting for dialogue among member states. More than 5,000 meetings take place every year among NATO bodies, involving staff based at the Headquarters as well as scores of experts who travel to the site.

Evolution

In 1949, Allied countries established NATO's first Headquarters in London, the United Kingdom, at 13 Belgrave Square.

As NATO's structure developed and more space was needed, its Headquarters moved to central Paris in April 1952. At first it was temporarily housed at the Palais de Chaillot, but then moved to a purpose-built edifice at Porte Dauphine in 1960.

In 1966, however, France decided to withdraw from NATO's integrated military command structure, which called for another move – this time to Brussels. The new site in Belgium was constructed in a record time of six months and was inaugurated on 16 October 1967.

By 1999, NATO Heads of State and Government came to realise that, with NATO's enlargement and transformation, the facilities no longer met the requirements of the Alliance. They agreed to construct a new Headquarters situated across the road from the existing Headquarters, Boulevard Léopold III, Brussels. The construction of the building was finalised in 2017 and the move took place in 2018.

The design of the new building reflects the unity and adaptability of the Alliance. Its unity is manifest through the concept of interlocking fingers, while its adaptability is ensured by state-of-the-art facilities, allowing the building to adapt to the Alliance's evolving needs. It is also equipped for the 21st century with cutting-edge information and communications technologies. Furthermore, the building helps reduce NATO's environmental footprint by reducing energy consumption (geothermal heating in the winter and cooling in the summer), making full use of natural light via huge glass surfaces, and reducing water consumption (rain water collection via the sloped wings of the construction).

Rapid Deployable Corps

NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps are High Readiness Headquarters, which can be quickly dispatched to lead NATO troops on missions within or beyond the territory of NATO member states.

Highlights

- NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps are High Readiness Headquarters, which can be quickly dispatched to lead NATO troops wherever necessary.
- The corps can be deployed for a wide range of missions: from disaster management, humanitarian assistance and peace support to counter-terrorism and high-intensity war fighting.
- There are currently nine NATO Rapid Deployable Corps, which are each capable of commanding up to 60,000 soldiers.
- The political authorisation of the North Atlantic Council (NAC), NATO's principal political decision-making body, is required to deploy the corps.

More background information

▬▬ Mission

The Rapid Deployable Corps can be deployed for a wide range of missions: from disaster management, humanitarian assistance and peace support to counter-terrorism and high-intensity war fighting. They can command and control forces from the size of a brigade numbering thousands of troops up to a corps of tens of thousands. There are currently nine NATO Rapid Deployable Corps, which are each capable of commanding up to 60,000 soldiers.

The general requirement for High Readiness Forces Headquarters is to be ready to deploy its first elements within ten days and the entire force within two months.

● **On standby**

The corps participate in the NATO Response Force (NRF) - a highly ready and technologically advanced force made up of land, air, sea, and Special Operations Forces components that can be deployed at short notice to wherever needed. Under the NRF's rotation system, a designated Rapid Deployable Corps assumes command of the land component of the NRF for a fixed 12-month period, during which it is on standby. This means that the headquarters must be able to deploy on short notice. Prior to this, the corps undergoes an intense six-month training programme, which tests its procedures for planning and conducting combined joint crisis-response operations.

The various corps also play a central role in NATO's ongoing operations. The Spanish corps commanded the land elements of the NRF that were deployed to Pakistan in late 2005 as part of NATO's disaster assistance to the country following the devastating October 2005 earthquake. In 2006, the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) commanded the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF. The NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy, the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Turkey, Eurocorps and 1 German-Netherlands Corps have also commanded ISAF. In addition, ARRC and Eurocorps played an important role in NATO's operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1] and Kosovo.

● **A broad spectrum of capabilities**

The Rapid Deployable Corps possess a broad spectrum of capabilities. Each corps has undergone an intense NATO operational evaluation programme in order to qualify as a NATO Rapid Deployable Headquarters. The headquarters have all had to demonstrate their capabilities in 50 areas, both in the barracks and in the field. This includes planning, logistics, administration, and command and control.

This certification process is designed to ensure that the headquarters are capable of meeting the exacting challenges of a rapid deployment into various operational environments.

Participants

The corps are multinational, but are sponsored and paid by one or more 'framework nations' who provide the bulk of the headquarters' personnel, equipment and financial resources.

The United Kingdom is the framework nation of the ARRC, while France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Turkey have sponsored the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps France, Greece Italy, Spain and Turkey, respectively. Germany and the Netherlands share costs for the German-Netherlands Rapid Deployable Corps, while Denmark, Germany and Poland are the three framework nations of the Multinational Corps Northeast and Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Spain are the Eurocorps framework nations.

The corps are open to personnel contributions from all the other NATO nations and several nations participate within each Rapid Deployable Corps.

Command structure

All Rapid Deployable Corps Headquarters, except Eurocorps, belong to NATO's integrated military structure. This means that they operate under the direct operational command of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). The political authorisation of the North Atlantic Council (NAC), NATO's principal political decision-making body, is required to deploy the corps, and is given on a case-by-case basis as the result of a consensual decision between all of the 29 NATO nations. In addition, any commitment of the Eurocorps requires an exclusive decision of the member states Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Spain.

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[1]   Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Evolution

The Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), originally based in Rheindalen, Germany, but now in Innsworth, United Kingdom, was the first such corps, created in 1992. Following a review of NATO force structures, four more High Readiness Force Headquarters were established in 2002 and three other were established in 2005 and 2006 reaching the total of nine High Readiness Force Headquarters.

These are: the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) in Innsworth, the United Kingdom; the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy (NRDC-IT) in Solbiate Olana near Milan; the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Spain (NRDC-Spain) in Valencia; the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Turkey (NRDC-T) based near Istanbul; the 1 German-Netherlands Corps based in Münster, Germany; the Rapid Reaction Corps France (RRC-FR) in Lille;·the NATO Deployable Corps Greece (NRDC-GR) based in Thessaloniki; and the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC-NE) based in Szczecin, Poland.

In addition, Eurocorps, based in Strasbourg, France, has a technical agreement with NATO since 2002 and can be used for NATO missions.

Education and training

In order to fulfil its fundamental and enduring purpose, the Alliance must maintain the capabilities to prevent, detect, deter and defend against any threat of aggression. For this reason, NATO conducts education and training programmes to increase cohesion, effectiveness and readiness of its multinational forces. Furthermore, NATO assists partner countries in their education and training reform efforts.

Highlights

- Since its inception in 1949, NATO has been engaging in education and training activities, which have expanded geographically and institutionally over time.

- The establishment of Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in 2002 is testimony of NATO's resolve to boost education and training. ACT is entirely dedicated to leading the transformation of NATO's military structure, forces, capabilities and doctrine, including through exercise and training design and management.

- ACT has a holistic approach to education and training: it provides unity of effort and helps identify gaps and avoid duplication, while ensuring greater effectiveness and efficiency through global programming. These efforts are complementary to national programmes.

- Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) provides strategic-level guidance and sets the priorities and requirements for NATO Education, Training, Exercises and Evaluation (ETEE).

- NATO's education and training programmes help to improve "interoperability" of multinational forces, i.e. their ability to work together.

- The Alliance is committed to effective cooperation and coordination with partner countries and international organisations, such as the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union

Transformation through education and training

NATO's education and training activities support the continuing process of transformation. Through the constant adaptation of its courses, training events and the introduction of new concepts and capabilities, NATO is using its exercises as a venue for ensuring the Alliance's ability to respond to emerging security challenges. In this respect, NATO's activity has four core dimensions: education, individual and collective training, exercises and their respective evaluation.

Throughout its **education** programmes, NATO intends to enhance individual knowledge and skills, and to develop competencies to confront a variety of challenges.

Individual training activities focus on the development of abilities necessary to perform tasks and duties, therefore seeking a response for predictable situations. The acquired knowledge is further developed through practical application in the framework of **collective training**.

Exercises take training a step further by testing acquired knowledge during scenario-based live or computer-assisted simulations. They may involve a large number of participants from different countries. Exercising is paramount for maintaining, testing and evaluating the readiness and interoperability of Allies, partners and non-NATO entities.

Allies and partner countries demonstrate their commitment to supporting the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and related Resolutions by taking actions to promote the Women, Peace and Security agenda also through education and training.

1. Organisation of training in NATO

Collective education and training has been ongoing since the inception of the Alliance in 1949. Over time, it has expanded both geographically and institutionally to become an integral part of NATO's ability to provide security.

As a priority, NATO is ensuring that its commands and multinational forces remain ready, responsive, adaptable and interoperable, despite differences in tactics, doctrine, training, structures and language.

There are a number of organisations through which NATO education and training is implemented. Some operate under the direction of the Alliance and others are external, but complementary to Alliance structures.

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE)

Allied Command Operations (ACO), located at SHAPE, plays an important role in the field of education and training. It develops and maintains forces standards; provides guidance on exercise programmes and their evaluation; identifies requirements related to training and force development capabilities. ACO and ACT manage the education, training, exercise and evaluation process.

Allied Command Transformation

Allied Command Transformation (ACT) was created as part of the reorganisation of NATO's Command Structure in 2002. This represented an important step for improving readiness and interoperability through the coordination of education and individual training, with collective training and exercises. This Strategic Command, located in Norfolk, Virginia, United States, holds lead responsibility for directing NATO schools as well as for the development of joint education, individual training, and associated policy and doctrine between NATO and Partnership Training and Education Centres. Since July 2012, ACT has also been given the responsibility of managing collective training and exercises based on ACOs' requirements.

Starting from specific requirements and analyses, ACT identifies and develops the most appropriate education and training solution for every discipline. To this extent, annual conferences keep the disciplines aligned with the ever-evolving requirements, and guarantee responsive and flexible education and training cycles. Once the solutions are defined, delivery of courses, training and exercises is synchronised with all stakeholders.

An integrated force under centralised command

Even in the early years of the Alliance, NATO forces conducted joint training[1] to strengthen their ability to practise collective defence. Following the outbreak of the Korean War, the Allies understood the importance of an integrated force under centralised command. This was materialised by the appointment of the first Supreme Allied Commander Europe, US General Dwight D. Eisenhower, in December 1950.

NATO education and training facilities

Below are listed seven education and training facilities currently in place. The last three are under the direct control of Allied Command Transformation:

- The NATO Defense College (NDC) in Rome, Italy, is NATO's primary strategic-level educational facility and includes areas of study such as trends in the international security environment and their potential effects on NATO countries. It provides training for senior commanders.

- The NATO School in Oberammergau (NSO), Germany, is the primary operational-level training centre for students. Operational-level training focuses on joint planning of NATO operations, operations planning, defence planning, logistics, communications, civil emergency planning, and civil-military cooperation.

- The NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Greece, conducts theoretical and practical training, including simulation, for NATO forces in surface, sub-surface, aerial surveillance, and special operations activities.

- The NATO Communications and Information Systems School (NCISS) in Latina, Italy, provides cost-effective, highly developed formal training to personnel (military and civilian) from NATO and non-NATO countries for the efficient operation and maintenance of NATO communications and information systems.

- The Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) in Stavanger, Norway, provides NATO's training focal point for full-spectrum joint operational-level warfare.

- The Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC) in Bydgoszcz, Poland, supports training for NATO and partner forces to improve joint and combined tactical interoperability. The JFTC conducts joint training for tactical-level command posts and staffs in support of tactical-level commanders.

- The Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) in Lisbon, Portugal is NATO's lead agency for the analysis of operations, training and experiments, and for the collection and dissemination of lessons learned. The JALLC deploys project teams worldwide, delivering analysis support to NATO at the strategic and operational levels.

NATO education and training providers

These are entities that have a relationship with NATO, but are typically administered by sponsor countries, national authorities or civil organisations. They are open to participation by personnel from member and partner countries and may sometimes welcome individuals coming from other organisations.

- *Centres of Excellence*

The Centres of Excellence are nationally or multinationally sponsored entities that provide high-quality expertise and experience to the benefit of the Alliance, especially in support of transformation. They provide opportunities to enhance training and education, assist in doctrine development, identify lessons learned, improve interoperability and capabilities, and test and validate concepts through experimentation. There are 24 Centres of Excellence that offer specialised courses to military and civilian personnel within their field of expertise.

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[1] Joint training means forces from two or more military departments working under a single command and combined forces are forces from different countries working under a single command.

■ *Partnership Training and Education Centres*

Partnership Training and Education Centres (PTECs) are a global network of educational and training establishments promoting collaborative initiatives and high-quality instruction to enhance capacity-building, interoperability and a comprehensive understanding of wider security issues.

■ *Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes*

The PfP Consortium - an Austrian-German-Swiss-US initiative - was established in 1999 to help promote education in security-related topics by facilitating cooperation between both civilian and military institutions in NATO and partner countries in support of NATO priorities such as defence institution building and defence reform.

Other education and training facilities

Organisations that are not directly related to NATO may support the Alliance in its education and training activities. These facilities can come from national, multinational and non-governmental organisations, such as military schools and universities.

2. Education and training in NATO-led operations

NATO's efforts to project stability to crisis areas go beyond deploying troops. They include education and training to help partners develop security institutions and provide for their own security.

Afghanistan

NATO is currently conducting Resolute Support, a non-combat mission which provides training, advice and assistance to Afghan security forces and institutions. Resolute Support was launched on 1 January 2015 and its key functions include supporting planning, programming and budgeting; assuring transparency, accountability and oversight; supporting the adherence to the principles of rule of law and good governance; supporting the establishment and sustainment of processes such as force generation, recruiting, training, managing and development of personnel.

An important aspect of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan is assisting the country in developing its security institutions and forces. The Alliance deploys Tactical Advice and Assistance Teams to Afghan National Defence and Security Forces units at various levels of command.

On 20 November 2010, NATO and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan signed a Declaration on an Enduring Partnership. This Enduring Partnership is intended to provide long-term political and practical support to Afghanistan as it rebuilds its security institutions and assumes full responsibility for its own security. It includes a series of agreed programmes and activities undertaken as part of the ongoing cooperation between NATO and Afghanistan. This includes the Professional Military Education Programme for Afghanistan, which aims to further develop Afghan institutions, as well as other initiatives such as a counter-narcotics training pilot project.

On the occasion of NATO's Warsaw Summit in 2016, the Alliance and the Afghan authorities reaffirmed their mutual commitment to ensuring long-term security and stability. NATO and its operational partners will continue to sustain the Resolute Support mission through continuous delivery of training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security institutions and forces.

Iraq

The NATO Training and Capacity Building programme in Iraq began in January 2017 and aims at increasing Iraq's training capacity in the medium and long term. It includes courses on countering improvised explosive devices, explosive ordnance disposal and de mining; civil-military planning support to operations; civil emergency planning; training in military medicine; technical maintenance of Soviet-era military equipment; and reform of the Iraqi security institutions.

NATO-Iraq relations are underpinned by an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (September 2012), which provides a framework for political dialogue and tailored cooperation in mutually agreed areas, and a Defence Capacity Building Package for Iraq (2015).

NATO retains a presence in Iraq, which includes a NATO core team and rotating mobile training teams. The core team is a mix of permanent, military and civilian NATO personnel; the mobile training teams deploy as required to support specific training and capacity-building activities.

NATO is currently planning for a potential training mission in Iraq aimed at training Iraqi instructors and developing military schools. The objective is to help Iraqi forces fight terrorism, stabili se their country and prevent the re-emergence of ISIS.

Training bodies and institutions: stepping up cooperation with partners

After the Cold War, NATO members reduced the numbers of military personnel, equipment and bases and transformed their forces to meet different needs. Many partner countries are still going through this process, often with limited resources and expertise.

NATO works with partners from Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Mediterranean, the Gulf region and individual partners across the globe. The main frameworks for cooperation are Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI).

NATO is using education to support defence institutional reform in partner countries. Initially, NATO's education and training programmes focused on increasing interoperability between NATO and partner forces. They were later expanded to provide the means for members and partners to collaborate on how to build, develop and reform educational institutions in the security, defence and military domains.

At the 2004 Istanbul Summit, Alliance leaders elevated the MD initiative to a genuine partnership to include increased participation in exercises and individual training at NATO institutions. At the same time, the ICI was introduced, which paved the way for cooperation between NATO and countries from the broader Middle East in areas such as education and training.

In February 2005, the North Atlantic Council started developing the Education and Training for Defence Reform (EfR) initiative. EfR helps educators incorporate principles linked to defence institution building into their curricula. Since the courses are aimed at civil servants and other persons participating in defence institution building, they contribute indirectly to improving defence reform.

At the 2014 Wales Summit, Allies endorsed the Partnership Interoperability Initiative, launching the Interoperability Platform. This widened opportunities for partner participation in NATO exercises, with the aim of increasing interoperability and preparedness for crisis management situations.

Recognising the importance of a strengthened strategic partnership, European Union members and NATO Allies - at the 2016 Warsaw Summit - decided to find ways to better provide security in Europe and beyond. In this regard, the Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO underlines the importance of stepping up coordination on exercises.

NATO training opens up to partners

Over the last decades, the Alliance has developed structured partnerships, including with international organisations. To this extent, the education and training activities, as well as the possibility to exercise together, enhance the ability to give coherent and effective responses to complex security challenges.

■ Partnership for Peace programme

When NATO invited former Warsaw Pact countries, former Soviet Republics and non-member western European countries to join the PfP programme in 1994, participating countries committed themselves to increasing interoperability with NATO forces. This opened the way for joint training and marked the beginning of NATO's support for defence reform.

NATO training institutions soon followed suit. The first officers' course for partner countries was conducted in October 1994 at the NATO Communications and Information Systems School. Similarly, the NATO Defense College integrated PfP issues into its Senior Course.

- Mediterranean Dialogue

The MD was created in 1994, initially as a forum for political dialogue. In 1997, at a meeting in Sintra, Portugal, the Alliance decided to open selected military training activities to countries participating in this initiative (currently seven countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia).

- Istanbul Cooperation Initiative

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) was launched during the Istanbul Summit in 2004, as a means of engaging in practical security cooperation activities with countries throughout the broader Middle East region. The ICI offers both cooperation with interested countries in training and education activities and participation in NATO exercises, as well as in other areas. To date, four countries have joined the initiative: Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

- African Union

NATO continues to support the African Union (AU) in its peacekeeping missions on the African continent. Since June 2007, NATO has assisted the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) by providing capacity-building support, as well as expert training support to the African Standby Forces (ASF), all at the AU's request.

Tailor-made defence education

The Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) is a vehicle for reform, providing tailored, practical support to individual countries in developing and reforming their professional military education institutions. Through faculty development, teaching curricula development and peer-to-peer consultations, DEEP provides a platform to foster defence capacity-building, cooperative capability development and standardization, and promotes interoperability of processes and methodologies to enhance democratic institutions.

A vast network of institutions and individuals support these projects on a voluntary basis, for instance the NATO Defense College, the NATO School Oberammergau, the US Army War College, the Canadian Defence Academy, the National Defence University of Poland, the National Defence University of Romania, the Czech University of Defence, the Slovak Armed Forces Academy, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, the George C. Marshall Center in Garmisch-Partenkirchen (Germany) and the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes.

Advice and expertise

NATO shares its expertise in the field of defence capabilities with partners. It does this through the Planning and Review Process (PARP), a voluntary mechanism that helps identify partner forces and capabilities and assesses the implementation of defence-related objectives, established on a case-by-case basis under different cooperation packages.

Countries with special relationships with NATO can have additional mechanisms for exchanging advice and expertise. For instance, the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform provides a forum through which consultation can take place on initiatives as diverse as civil-military relations, defence planning, policy, strategy and national security concepts. Moreover, NATO-led multinational teams of experts can visit partner countries to address the education and training requirements listed in the Individual Partnership Action Plans of the countries concerned.

Additionally, understanding the wide range of terrorist challenges posing a direct threat to international stability and the security of Alliance populations, NATO formally joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in May 2017. Building on its experience in working together and with partners in NATO-led operations, training and exercises, the Allies are enhancing the level of cooperation with regard to preventing, mitigating and responding effectively to terrorist attacks, including through efforts to project stability.

Courses, seminars and workshops

NATO partners are able to participate in an array of NATO education activities – courses, roundtables, seminars and workshops.

An initiative for the Mediterranean and the Middle East

A dedicated Middle East Faculty has been established at the NATO Defense College in Rome. The Faculty has a unique nature, being focused on curriculum development, academic programme delivery and outreach activities. Furthermore, it conducts research on the international security environment and on contemporary strategic issues of interest, with the emphasis on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

With the aim of increasing outreach and shared understanding of regional security issues, the Middle East faculty organises both the NATO Regional Cooperation Course and the Senior Executive Regional Conference, with the attendance of Allies, partners and NATO personnel.

Education and training: a key activity since 1949

Collective education and training has been ongoing since the inception of the Alliance in 1949. Over time, it has expanded to become an integral part of NATO's ability to provide security. It has expanded geographically, with NATO working with a larger number of countries, and institutionally, with the creation of ACT, a strategic command entirely dedicated to leading transformation throughout the Alliance.

Interoperability

In the early years of the Alliance, NATO forces conducted joint training to strengthen their ability to practise collective defence. In other words, education and training was conducted to ensure that forces were prepared in the case of an attack.

An integrated force under centralised command

An integrated force under centralised command was called for as early as September 1950, following the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. The first Supreme Allied Commander Europe, US General Dwight D. Eisenhower, was appointed in December 1950. Following this appointment, national forces were put under centralised command.

The Alliance's first exercises

The Alliance's first exercises were held in the autumn of 1951. During 1953, there were approximately 100 exercises of various kinds conducted by NATO. From this point on, NATO forces began to gain cohesion.

Education for individuals

Individual education soon followed. The need for a specialised setting to explore issues unique to the Alliance was first recognised by General Eisenhower in April 1951. The NATO Defense College was inaugurated later that year, on 19 November, and was transferred from Paris, France to Rome, Italy in 1966, where it is still located.

The NATO Communications and Information Systems School was established in 1959, when a civil contractor began to train a small number of NATO personnel on what would become NATO's "ACE HIGH Communications System". On 2 May of the same year, the NATO Undersea Research Centre in La Spezia, Italy was commissioned. During the 2002 reform process, this centre was moved to the agency structure of the Alliance as an organisational element linked to research. In 1971, the Military Committee established the NATO Training Group. The NATO Training Group met for many years in joint session with the Euro-training sub-group, which was set up to improve multinational training arrangements between European countries (its responsibilities were passed on to NATO in 1993). The NATO Training Group was formally transferred from the Military Committee to ACT in 2004. Its principal aim is to improve interoperability among Allies and, additionally, between the forces of partner countries.

In 1975, the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany received its charter and present name. For almost 25 years, its principal focus was on issues relating to collective defence.

More recently in 2003, the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre was established in Souda Bay, Greece to conduct training for NATO forces in surface, sub-surface, aerial surveillance and special operations activities.

NATO training opens to partners

Partnership for Peace countries

When NATO invited former Warsaw Pact countries, former Soviet Republics and non-member western European countries to join the PfP programme in 1994, participating countries committed themselves to increasing interoperability with NATO forces. This opened the way for joint training and marked the beginning of NATO's support for defence reform.

NATO training institutions soon followed suit. The first officers' course for partner countries was conducted in October 1994 at the NATO Communications and Information Systems School. Similarly, the NATO Defense College integrated PfP issues into its Senior Course.

Mediterranean Dialogue countries

The Mediterranean Dialogue was likewise created in 1994, initially as a forum for political dialogue. In 1997, at a meeting in Sintra, Portugal, the Alliance decided to open selected military training activities to countries participating in this initiative (currently seven countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia).

Increasing cooperation with all partners

In 1998, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council approved the creation of the Partnership for Peace Consortium and at the 1999 Washington Summit NATO leaders approved plans for an "Enhanced and More Operational Partnership". In addition, with the revision of the NATO Strategic Concept in 1999, the role of the NATO School was fundamentally altered to include cooperation and dialogue with civilian personnel from non-NATO countries.

In May 2002, the Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre in Monsanto (Lisbon), Portugal was established. This facility's mission is to perform joint analysis and experimentation of operations, training and exercises – also with partners.

In February 2005, the North Atlantic Council started developing the Education and Training for Defence Reform (EfR) initiative. EfR helps educators incorporate principles linked to defence institution building into their curricula. Since the courses are aimed at civil servants and other persons participating in defence institution building, they contribute indirectly to improving defence reform.

Education and training as transformation tools

With the creation of the two new strategic commands in 2002 and the introduction of global programming, the coordination and coherence of NATO education and training activities has been greatly increased. From 2002, ACT was able to look holistically at education and training.

New training centres

A Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway was inaugurated on 23 October 2003. The Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz, Poland, inaugurated on 31 March 2004, supports training for both NATO and partner forces to improve joint and combined tactical interoperability.

Stepping up training and partnerships

At the 2004 Istanbul Summit, Alliance leaders elevated the Mediterranean Dialogue initiative to a genuine partnership to include increased participation in exercises and individual training at NATO institutions. At the same time, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) was introduced, which paved the way for

cooperation between NATO and countries from the broader Middle East (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates) in areas such as education and training.

This Summit also made provision for partners to engage in joint training to combat terrorism and to train jointly with the NATO Response Force, NATO's rapid-reaction force.

The Connected Forces Initiative

At the Chicago Summit in 2012, NATO leaders stressed the importance of expanding education and training, especially within the context of the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI). CFI seeks to make greater use of education, training and exercises to reinforce links between the forces of NATO member countries and maintain the level of interoperability needed for future operations. At the most basic level, this implies individuals understanding each other and, at a higher level, the use of common doctrines, concepts and procedures, as well as interoperable equipment. Forces also need to increasingly practise working together through joint and combined training and exercising, after which they need to standardize skills and make better use of technology[2].

Enhancing capabilities

Shortly after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, at the NATO Summit in Wales, Allies committed to enhancing capabilities and agreed to a Defence Planning Package that included, *inter alia*, reinforcing training and exercises. Training was also identified as a key area of activity in the cyber defence domain and in NATO's relations with other international organisations such as the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union.

At the Warsaw Summit two years later in 2016, Allies took stock of the eight multinational NATO Force Integration Units established on Allied territory in the eastern part of the Alliance to assist in training forces and in the reception of reinforcements when needed. They also agreed to develop a tailored forward presence in the southeast part of Alliance territory, which will include an initiative to help improve integrated training of Allied units in the Black Sea region as part of NATO's strengthened deterrence and defence posture.

Other training initiatives comprise the Transatlantic Capability Enhancement and Training (TACET) Initiative, which will promote capability development, interoperability and training, and will enhance NATO resilience in response to the challenges in the Baltic region. Additionally, the Combined Joint Enhanced Training (CJET) Initiative will provide similar engagement with Bulgaria and Romania.

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[2] Joint training means forces from two or more military departments working under a single command and combined forces are forces from different countries working under a single command.

Military organisation and structures

NATO's military organisation and structures comprise all military actors and formations that are involved in and used to implement political decisions that have military implications.

The key elements of NATO's military organisation are the Military Committee, composed of the Chiefs of Defence of NATO member countries, its executive body – the International Military Staff – and the military Command Structure (distinct from the Force Structure).

The NATO Command Structure is composed of Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation, headed respectively by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and the Supreme Allied Commander, Transformation (SACT).

The Force Structure consists of organisational arrangements that bring together the forces placed at the Alliance's disposal by the member countries, along with their associated command and control structures. These forces are available for NATO operations in accordance with predetermined readiness criteria and with rules of deployment and transfer of authority to NATO command that can vary from country to country.

Working mechanisms

In practice, the Chairman of the Military Committee presides over the Military Committee, where each member country has a military representative (or Milrep) for his/her Chief of Defence. This committee - NATO's most senior military authority - provides the North Atlantic Council and the Nuclear Planning Group with consensus-based military advice – that is, advice agreed to by all of NATO's Chiefs of Defence.

The Military Committee works closely with NATO's two Strategic Commanders – SACEUR, responsible for operations and SACT, responsible for transformation. They are both responsible to the Military Committee for the overall conduct of all Alliance military matters within their areas of responsibility.

On the one side, the Military Committee provides the Strategic Commanders with guidance on military matters; and on the other side, it works closely with them to bring forward for political consideration by the North Atlantic Council, military assessments, plans, issues and recommendations, together with an analysis that puts this information into a wider context and takes into account the concerns of each member country. The Military Committee is supported in this role by the International Military Staff.

In sum, the Military Committee serves, inter alia, as a link between the political leaders of NATO Headquarters and the two Strategic Commanders.

The capacity to adapt

Over and above these working mechanisms, there are two phenomena that have a direct impact on the military structure, the way it functions and the way it evolves: first and foremost, international developments and events; and secondly, the constant interaction between the political and military bodies.

Evidently, political events with far-reaching consequences such as the end of the Cold War and military operations such as the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), NATO's former operation in Afghanistan – do trigger extensive reforms, especially within NATO's military Command Structure. To keep pace with all these changes and future challenges, the Command Structure and way of doing business are constantly evolving. Additionally, the permanent exchange of information and specialised knowledge as well as experience between military experts and the political actors at NATO Headquarters are a constant and continual means of mutual education. This ability of the military and the civilian to work closely together makes NATO a unique organisation.

Allied Command Transformation

Warfare development requires expert evaluation of trends and future threats, capability development, education, exercises, and the implementation of lessons learned. Allied Command Transformation (ACT) plays a central role in these unique missions, which aim to improve the readiness and credibility of NATO's posture; they also contribute to allowing the NATO Command Structure (NCS) to efficiently command, control, and support current and future operations and provide a secure and stable transition to crisis and conflict, if need be.

Highlights

- ACT is one of two Strategic Commands at the head of NATO's military command structure. The other is Allied Command Operations (ACO), which is responsible for the planning and execution of all NATO military operations.

- ACT is headed by the Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT), who exercises his responsibilities from headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia, the United States. It is the only NATO command in North America.

- SACT is responsible to the Military Committee for the transformation and development of the Alliance to ensure it is capable of meeting the challenges of today and tomorrow. The Military Committee is the senior military authority in NATO and is under the overall political authority of the North Atlantic Council (NAC).

- ACT directs various subordinate Joint Commands and has strong links with education and training facilities, as well as with ministries of defence.

- It also has links with the NATO Force Structure (NFS) in general, which consists of forces placed at the Alliance's disposal by the member countries, along with their associated command and control structures.[1]

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[1] Forces from the NATO Force Structure are available for NATO operations in accordance with predetermined readiness criteria and with rules of deployment and transfer of authority to NATO command that can vary from country to country.

ACT's role and structure

ACT together with ACO form what is called the NATO Command Structure (NCS), whose prime function is first and foremost to provide the command and control needed to address threats and, should deterrence fail, an armed attack against the territory of any of the European Allies.[2] Ultimately, the NCS plays an essential role in preserving cohesion and solidarity within the Alliance, maintaining and strengthening the vital link between Europe and North America, and promoting the principle of equitable sharing among Allies of the roles, risks and responsibilities, as well as the benefits of collective defence.

ACT's role as warfare development command is two-fold: first, to enable ACO to efficiently conduct current operations; second, to prepare NATO's future operations. In this context, ACT ensures that NATO's warfare capabilities maintain future relevance, provides an indispensable understanding of the current and future security environment, contributes to the development of NATO doctrine, concepts and interoperability standards.

Achievement of a NATO Command Structure that is fit for purpose and fulfils NATO's three core tasks – collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security – can only be done with the strategic military expertise and interoperability provided by ACT with leverage of its network of nations, Joint Commands, and Centres of Excellence.

ACT is organised around four principal functions:

- strategic thinking;

- development of capabilities;

- education, training and exercises; and

- cooperation and engagement.

These functions are reflected in the composition of ACT, which is comprised of the Norfolk Headquarters and three subordinate entities: one in Norway (Joint Warfare Centre), one in Poland (Joint Force Training Centre) and one in Portugal (Joint Analysis & Lessons Learned Centre). ACT also includes a SACT representative at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and at the Pentagon outside Washington D.C., an ACT Staff Element at the ACO Headquarters – Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe or SHAPE – and a shared Military Partnership Directorate (MPD) with ACO, also located at SHAPE.

Additionally, NATO's other education and training facilities and nationally-run entities, which are not part of the NCS, also coordinate with ACT. This includes the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy, the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre, Greece, and the nationally-run Centres of Excellence. NATO Agencies also interact with ACT on matters of common concern.

Strategic Plans and Policy

The main responsibility of Strategic Plans and Policy is three-fold: to develop and promote issues of strategic importance to transformation; articulate policies to direct Alliance transformation efforts; and support the development of NATO strategic-level concepts which clarify how transformation may be achieved.

Capability Development

This is a broad area which covers the entire capability development process, i.e., from the moment a need is identified to the production phase when a new capability is actually developed for the Alliance.

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[2]   It is considered that whereas Article 5 applies to the entire NATO Treaty Area, the NATO Command Structure's operational area of responsibility does not include the territory of the United States or Canada. This is not meant to imply that the NATO Command Structure should not be able to support the United States and Canada, should the territory of these two Allies be subject to an armed attack, but rather to acknowledge that defensive operations on the territory of these two Allies will be conducted, commanded and controlled in accordance with bilateral arrangements and not under the auspices of the NATO Command Structure.

Moreover, Capability Development provides a major contribution to the NATO Defence Planning Process improving interoperability, deployability and sustainability of Allied forces.

Joint Force Training

Joint Force Training directs and coordinates all ACT activities that are related to the conduct of individual and collective training and exercises. The aim is to continually provide the Alliance with improved capabilities and enable Allied forces to undertake the full spectrum of Alliance missions.

SACT Representative in Europe

The SACT Representative in Europe (SACTREPEUR) is located at NATO Headquarters in Brussels acting as SACT's representative to the Military Committee and attending all relevant activities. SACTREPEUR has the coordinating authority for all ACT engagements with NATO Headquarters and maintains strong links with the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) through his counterpart – the SACEUR Representative (SACEUREP) – also based at NATO Headquarters.

ACT Staff Element Europe

The ACT Staff Element Europe (SEE) is co-located with ACO in Mons. It deals primarily with defence and resource planning issues, as well as implementation.

ACT Liaison Office to the Pentagon

To help enhance NATO transformation, this office promotes effective links and direct coordination between ACT and the US Joint Staff and other departments in the US military headquarters (Pentagon), located outside Washington D.C.

Military Partnership Directorate

The Military Partnership Directorate (MPD) provides direction, control, coordination, support and assessment of military cooperation activities across the Alliance. It directs and oversees all non-NATO country involvement in military partnership programmes, events and activities, and coordinates and implements NATO plans and programmes in the area of partnership. The MPD is shared with ACO and is located at SHAPE in Mons with a Staff Element at the ACT headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia.

Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway

The Joint Warfare Centre's (JWC) main task is to train Allied forces at the operational level to ensure they remain interoperable and fully integrated. Its principal mission is the training of the NATO Response Force (NRF) Headquarters' elements and NRF Component Headquarters' elements. In addition, it performs collective staff training for partner countries and new NATO members.

The JWC also seeks to improve NATO's capabilities and interoperability by promoting and conducting NATO's joint and combined experimentation, analysis and doctrine development processes.[3]

Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz, Poland

The Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC) focuses on joint and combined training of Allied and partner forces at the tactical level. It focuses, in particular, on the conduct of tactical training to achieve joint interoperability at key interfaces – a critically important area identified during military combat in Afghanistan.

As a priority, the JFTC provides expertise to help NATO Response Force (NRF) joint and component commanders ensure that each NRF rotation achieves a high level of interoperability, flexibility and extensive training so as to be combat-ready at the beginning of a cycle of duty.

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[3]   Joint forces are forces from two or more military departments working under a single command and combined forces are forces from different countries working under a single command.

The Centre cooperates with national training centres, including Partnership for Peace (PfP) Training Centres and Centres of Excellence to ensure the application of NATO standards and doctrine in combined and joint fields.

Joint Analysis & Lessons Learned Centre in Monsanto, Portugal

The main role of the Joint Analysis & Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) is to reinforce the process of continuous improvement of concepts, doctrine and capabilities within NATO through the transformation process, based on lessons learned from operations, training, exercises and experimentation.

As such, the JALLC conducts the analysis of real-world military operations, training, exercises and NATO Concept Development and Experimentation collective experiments, and is responsible for establishing and maintaining a lessons learned database.

ACT and other entities

There are direct linkages between ACT and entities which are not part of the NATO Command Structure, such as NATO educational and training facilities and Centres of Excelence.

NATO's educational and training facilities (NETFs)

NATO Defense College

At the political-strategic level, the NATO Defense College (NDC) in Rome, Italy is NATO's foremost academic institution. The mission of the NDC is to contribute to the effectiveness and cohesion of the Alliance by developing its role as a major centre of education, outreach and research on transatlantic security issues. Since being founded in 1951 several thousand senior officers, diplomats, and other officials have passed through its doors.

NATO School

The NATO School Oberammergau (NSO) in Germany is NATO's premier individual training and education facility at the operational level. The NSO conducts education and individual training in support of current and developing NATO operations, strategy, policy, doctrine and procedures. The NSO works closely with ACT to offer a broad curriculum geared to meet the challenges of a dynamic security environment.

NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre

The NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Greece is a multi-nationally manned facility. It conducts combined training for NATO forces to execute surface, sub-surface and aerial surveillance, and special operations activities in support of maritime interdiction operations.

Centres of Excellence

Centres of Excellence (COEs) are nationally or multi-nationally funded institutions that train and educate leaders and specialists from NATO member and partner countries, assist in doctrine development, identify lessons learned, improve interoperability and capabilities, and test and validate concepts through experimentation.

Coordinated by ACT, COEs are considered to be international military organisations. Although not part of the NATO Command Structure, they are part of a wider framework supporting NATO Command Arrangements. Designed to complement the Alliance's current resources, COEs cover a wide variety of areas, with each one focusing on a specific field of expertise to enhance NATO capabilities.

Evolution

Before 2002, the two Strategic Commands were Allied Command Europe (ACE), established in 1951, and Allied Command Atlantic (ACLANT), created a year later in 1952.

ACE, together with ACLANT, were streamlined at the end of the Cold War reducing the NATO Command Structure from 78 headquarters to 20. However, the two overarching Strategic Commanders (SC) were maintained, one for the Atlantic area and one for Europe.

During the 2002 Prague Summit, a decision was made to reorganise the NATO Command Structure and make it leaner and more efficient. Additionally, Alliance thinking fundamentally shifted: the NATO Command Structure was to be based on functionality rather than geography. The former Allied Command Europe (ACE) became the Allied Command Operations (ACO), responsible for all Alliance operations, including the maritime operations previously undertaken by Allied Command Atlantic (ACLANT). As such, one strategic command was focused on NATO's operations – Allied Command Operations with its headquarters in SHAPE – and the other on transforming NATO – Allied Command Transformation with its Headquarters SACT.

The NATO Command Structure was reviewed once more in June 2011 as part of a wider process of reform, not only to optimise the structure but to include new tasks derived from the 2010 Strategic Concept. The two strategic commands were maintained, as well as the Alliance's levels of ambition, which is the ability of the Alliance to manage two major joint operations and six small joint operations, if required.

Allied Command Operations (ACO)

Allied Command Operations (ACO) is responsible for the planning and execution of all Alliance operations. It consists of a small number of permanently established headquarters, each with a specific role. Supreme Allied Commander Europe – or SACEUR – assumes the overall command of operations at the strategic level and exercises his responsibilities from the headquarters in Mons, Belgium: Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, more commonly known as SHAPE.

Highlights

- ACO, with its headquarters at SHAPE near Mons, Belgium, is responsible for the planning and execution of all NATO military operations and is headed by SACEUR.

- It has the ability to operate at three overlapping levels: strategic, operational and tactical.

- The command's overall aim is to maintain the integrity of Alliance territory, safeguard freedom of the seas and economic lifelines and preserve or restore the security of its members.

- Allied Command Operations is one of two Strategic Commands at the head of NATO's military command structure. The other is Allied Command Transformation, which is responsible for NATO's overall transformation.

- ACO consists of a number of permanently established headquarters operating at the strategic, operational and tactical levels.

- NATO Allies have agreed to adapt the command structure to meet current needs; this will be on the 2018 Summit agenda.

## The structure of Allied Command Operations

ACO is one of two Strategic Commands within NATO's military command structure; the other is Allied Command Transformation (ACT), which as its name indicates, leads the transformation of NATO's military structure, forces, capabilities and doctrine. Together they form the bulk of what is called the NATO

Command Structure (NCS), whose function is first and foremost to be able to address threats and should deterrence fail, an armed attack against the territory of any of the European[1] Allies.

Ultimately, the NCS plays an essential role in preserving cohesion and solidarity within the Alliance, maintaining and strengthening the vital transatlantic link and promoting the principle of equitable sharing among Allies of the roles, risks and responsibilities, as well as the benefits of collective defence.

ACO is a three-tier command with headquarters and supporting elements at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. It exercises command and control of static and deployable headquarters, as well as joint and combined forces across the full range of the Alliance's military operations, missions, operations and tasks. Joint forces are forces from two or more military departments working under a single command and combined forces are forces from different countries working under a single command.

SHAPE, at the strategic level, is at the head of six operational commands, two of which are supported by tactical (or component) level entities.
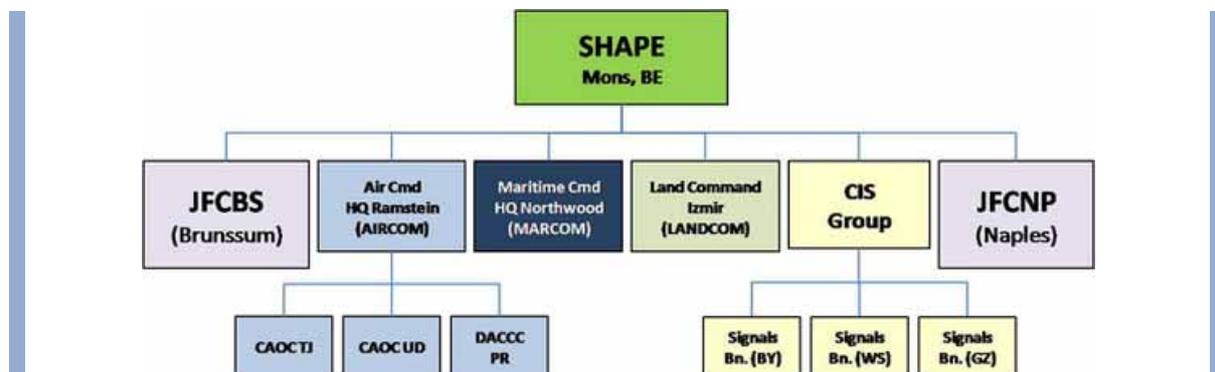
- ● **Strategic-level command: SHAPE**

SHAPE is a strategic headquarters. Its role is to prepare, plan, conduct and execute NATO military operations, missions and tasks in order to achieve the strategic objectives of the Alliance. As such, it contributes to the deterrence of aggression and the preservation of peace, security and the territorial integrity of Alliance.

ACO is headed by SACEUR, who exercises his responsibilities from SHAPE. Traditionally, he is a United States Flag or General officer. SACEUR is dual-hatted as he is also the commander of the US European Command, which shares many of the same geographical responsibilities as ACO. SACEUR is responsible to the Military Committee, which is the senior military authority in NATO under the overall political authority of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). The Military Committee is the primary source of military advice to the NAC and NPG.

Operational-level commands: Brunssum and Naples

The operational level consists of two standing Joint Force Commands (JFCs): one in Brunssum, the Netherlands, and one in Naples, Italy. Both have to be prepared to plan, conduct and sustain NATO operations of different size and scope. Effectively, they need to be able to manage a major joint operation either from their static location in Brunssum or Naples, or from a deployed headquarters when operating directly in a theatre of operation. In the latter case, the deployed headquarters is referred to as a Joint Task Force HQ or JTFHQ and should be able to operate for a period of up to one year.

[1] It is considered that whereas Article 5 applies to the entire NATO Treaty Area, the NATO Command Structure's operational area of responsibility does not include the territory of the United States or Canada. This is not meant to imply that the NATO Command Structure should not be able to support the United States and Canada should the territory of these two Allies be subject to an armed attack, but rather to acknowledge that defensive operations on the territory of these two Allies will be conducted, commanded and controlled in accordance with bilateral arrangements and not under the auspices of the NATO Command Structure.

When deployed, a Joint Force Command is only charged to command one operation at a time. However, the elements of the Joint Force Command which have not deployed, can provide support to other operations and missions. When a Joint Force Command is not deployed, it can assist ACO in dealing with other headquarters which are deployed in theatre for day-to-day matters and assist, for instance, with the training and preparation for future rotations.

The two commands at this level are also responsible for engaging with key partners and regional organisations in order to support regional NATO HQ tasks and responsibilities, as directed by SACEUR. Additionally, they support the reinforcement of cooperation with partners participating in NATO operations and help to prepare partner countries for NATO membership.

Tactical-level commands: Izmir (land), Northwood (maritime) and Ramstein (air)

The tactical (or component) level consists of what is called Single Service Commands (SSCs): land, maritime and air commands. These service-specific commands provide expertise and support to the Joint Force Commands at the operational level in Brunssum or Naples. They report directly to SHAPE and come under the command of SACEUR.

- Land Command, Headquarters Allied Land Command (HQ LANDCOM), Izmir, Turkey: this command's role is to provide a deployable land command and control capability in support of a Joint Force Command running an operation larger than a major joint operation. It can also provide the core land capability for a joint operation (major or not) or a deployable command and control capability for a land operation. Izmir is also the principal land advisor for the Alliance and contributes to development and transformation, engagement and outreach within its area of expertise.

- Maritime Command, Headquarters Allied Maritime Command (HQ MARCOM), Northwood, the United Kingdom: this command's role is to provide command and control for the full spectrum of joint maritime operations and tasks. From its location in Northwood, it plans, conducts and supports joint maritime operations. It is also the Alliance's principal maritime advisor and contributes to development and transformation, engagement and outreach within its area of expertise. Northwood is able to command a small maritime joint operation or act as the maritime component in support of an operation larger than a major joint operation.

- Air Command, Headquarters Allied Air Command (HQ AIRCOM), Ramstein, Germany: this command's role is to plan and direct the air component of Alliance operations and missions, and the execution of Alliance air and missile defence operations and missions. Ramstein is also the Alliance's principal air advisor and contributes to development and transformation, engagement and outreach within its area of expertise. Ramstein, with adequate support from within and outside the NATO Command Structure can provide command and control for a small joint air operation from its static location, i.e., from Ramstein or can act as Air Component Command to support an operation which is as big or bigger than a major joint operation. To reinforce its capability, Ramstein has additional air command and control elements available: two Combined Air Operations Centres (CAOC) and a Deployable Air Command and Control Centre (DACCC). The air elements are also structured in a more flexible way to take account of the experience gained in NATO-led operations.

Tactical Air Command and Control

To carry out its missions and tasks, HQ AIRCOM (Ramstein) is supported by Combined Air Operations Centres (CAOC) in Torrejon, Spain and in Uedem, Germany, as well as one Deployable Air Command and Control Centre (DACCC) in Poggio Renatico, Italy.

- CAOCs: both the CAOC in Spain and in Germany are composed of two parts. One part is a Static Air Defence Centre (SADC) responsible for air policing and the other, a Deployable Air Operations Centre (D-AOC), which supports operations. The D-AOC is an element focused on the production of combat plans and the conduct of combat operations. It has no territorial responsibilities assigned during peacetime, but supplements the HQ AIRCOM when required.

■ DACCC: this entity based in Italy consists of three elements. Firstly, a DARS or Deployable Air Control Centre + Recognized Air Picture Production Centre + Sensor Fusion Post. The DARS is responsible for the control of air missions including surface-to-air missiles, air traffic management and control, area air surveillance and production of a recognised air picture and other tactical control functions; secondly, a D-AOC, which has the same role as a CAOC; and thirdly, a Deployable Sensors Section, which provides both air defence radar and passive electronic support measures tracker capabilities that are deployable.

Communication and information systems

Communication and information systems (CIS) consists of two entities: deployable CIS capabilities and static CIS capabilities.

The NATO CIS Group based in Mons, Belgium provides deployable communications and information systems support for ACO. The NATO CIS Group is responsible for provision of all deployable CIS capabilities, as well as CIS operations and exercises planning and control. It acts as the coordinating authority for command and control services support to operations. Provision of the static and central CIS capabilities is the responsibility of the NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA), which is not part of the NATO Command Structure.

The NATO Communication and Information Systems (CIS) Group is supported by three NATO Signals Battalions located at Wesel, Germany, Grazzanise, Italy, and Bydgoszcz, Poland. These three are complemented by various smaller elements (Deployable CIS modules) elsewhere.

Associated assets: STRIKFORNATO, AWACS and AGS

Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO), NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force (NAEW&CF) and Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) are part of the NATO Immediate Response Capability. They are multinational structures that are not part of the Command Structure, but are assets available for the Alliance and organised under Memorandums of Understanding and Technical Agreements (MOU/TA) signed by the respective contributing countries.

STRIKFORNATO is a rapidly deployable maritime headquarters that provides scalable command and control across the full spectrum of the Alliance's fundamental security tasks. It focuses on maritime operations and, as part of NATO reforms, has moved from Italy to Portugal. It comprises 11 participating countries and serves as a link for integrating US maritime forces into NATO operations.

The NAEW&C Force comprises three elements: a multinational HQ (Mons) and two operational components, the multinational E-3A and the E-3D. NATO Air Base (NAB) Geilenkirchen, Germany, is home to 17 Boeing E-3A 'Sentry' AWACS aircraft. NATO operates this fleet, which provides the Alliance with an immediately available airborne command and control (C2), air and maritime surveillance and battle-space management capability. The fleet of six Boeing E-3D aircraft based in Waddington, Lincolnshire, United Kingdom, is manned by Royal Air Force personnel only. The United Kingdom exercises limited participation, but its fleet of E-3D aircraft is an integral part of the NAEW&C Force.

With regard to the NAEW&C Force, the Force Commander conducted a comprehensive Force Review that determined the size and shape of the Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS) capability for the future, adapting it to match the new manpower ceilings decided in the context of the new Command Structure. On this basis, Allies committed to the modernisation of NATO AWACS, extending the fleet's life until 2035, after which additional lifetime extensions are no longer practical.

NATO is acquiring an Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) system that will provide SACEUR the capabilities for near real-time, continuous information and situational awareness concerning friendly, neutral, and opposing ground and surface entities. The AGS system will consist of five Global Hawk Unmanned Airborne Vehicles, associated command and control base stations, and support facilities provided by the AGS' main operating base at Sigonella, Italy. Using advanced radar sensors, these systems will continuously detect and track moving objects and will provide radar imagery of areas of interest and stationary objects. The system will be fully trained and equipped to participate in

NATO-approved operations worldwide, and available at graduated levels of readiness. It is expected to be available to the Alliance in the 2017-2018 timeframe.

Evolution

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) was activated on 2 April 1951, in Rocquencourt, France, as part of an effort to establish an integrated and effective NATO military force. Allied Command Atlantic, headed by Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT), was activated a year later, on 10 April 1952.

In 1967, after France's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military structure, SHAPE was relocated to Mons, Belgium.

The London Declaration of July 1990 was a decisive turning point in the history of the Alliance and led to the adoption of the new Alliance Strategic Concept in November 1991, reflecting a broader approach to security. This in turn led to NATO's Long Term Study to examine the Integrated Military Structure and put forward proposals for change to the Alliance's force structures, command structures and common infrastructure.

In essence, the Cold War command structure was reduced from 78 headquarters to 20 with two overarching Strategic Commanders (SC), one for the Atlantic, and one for Europe; there were three Regional Commanders under Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) and two under Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).

During the 2002 Prague Summit, NATO's military command structure was again reorganised with a focus on becoming leaner and more efficient. The former Allied Command Europe (ACE) became Allied Command Operations (ACO). Supreme Allied Commander Europe and his staff at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) situated in Mons, Belgium, were henceforth responsible for all Alliance operations, including those previously undertaken by SACLANT. At the same time, the former Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT) became Allied Command Transformation (ACT), with different functions. The reform resulted in a significant reduction in headquarters and Combined Air Operations Centres – from 32 command centres down to nine – and reflected a fundamental shift in Alliance thinking.

In 2010, the decision was taken to conduct a far-reaching reform of the NATO Command Structure as part of an overall reform of NATO. The reform was conducted with the development of the Strategic Concept 2010 firmly in mind and has focused on ensuring that the Alliance can confront the security challenges of the 21st century effectively and efficiently. The new command structure is forward-looking and flexible, as well as leaner and more affordable. In comparison to the previous structures, it provides a real deployable, multinational, command and control capability at the operational level. It also offers a more coherent structure that will be understood by other international organisations and partners.

The current command structure was approved by NATO defence ministers in June 2011 and transitioned to its current format (Transition Day) on 1 December 2012. Building on these achievements, more reforms were initiated in June 2011 to further increase the flexibility of ACO and provide a deployable Command and Control (C2) capability at the operational level, offering choices and options for rapid intervention that were not previously available to the Alliance. Moreover, as a consequence, a Communication and Information Systems (CIS) Group was formed as part of the military command structure to provide additional deployable communication and information systems support. The reform has led to an estimated reduction in personnel of approximately 30 per cent (from 13,000 to 8,800). The military command structure has been downsized from 11 entities to seven[2].

In 2017, NATO defence ministers agreed on an outline for future work to adapt the NATO Command Structure to new challenges and in June 2018, they agreed to:

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[2]   These figures cover Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation.

- a new command for the Atlantic, based in Norfolk, Virginia, in the United States, to ensure that sea lines of communication between Europe and North America remain free and secure;

- a new command to improve the movement of troops and equipment across Europe, based in Ulm, Germany; and

- a new cyber operations centre to strengthen cyber defences and integrate cyber capabilities into NATO planning and operations.

These initiatives will be on the agenda at the upcoming summit in Brussels, in July 2018.

Women, Peace and Security

NATO demonstrates its commitment to gender equality through the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). These Resolutions (1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2422) recognise the disproportionate impact that conflict has on women and girls, and call for full and equal participation of women at all levels of conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, and protection of women and girls from sexual violence in conflict.

Highlights

- At the 2014 Wales Summit, Allied leaders acknowledged that the integration of gender perspectives throughout NATO's three essential core tasks (i.e. collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security) will contribute to a more modern, ready and responsive NATO.

- NATO and its partners recognise the importance of ensuring women's active and meaningful participation in decision-making and security institutions.

- NATO promotes the inclusion of gender perspectives in its tasks and functions.

- In the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), NATO Allies and partners launched work in this area in 2007 with the adoption of a specific policy to support implementation of the UNSCRs on WPS.

- Over the years, the policy has been updated to reflect the changing international priorities, related action plans have strengthened implementation and more partner countries from around the globe have become associated with these efforts.

- Gender is an important focus of NATO's cooperation with other international organisations – in particular the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations (UN) – as well as civil society.

- NATO's Civil Society Advisory Panel provides space for women to engage with NATO on security and defence.

- The NATO Secretary General's Special Representative serves as the high-level focal point for NATO's contributions to the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

More background information

▬▬ Responding to the call for action

The WPS mandate is fundamental to NATO's common values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. In line with the UNSCRs on WPS, NATO aims to address gender inequality and integrate WPS priorities through the Alliance's three core tasks of collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

NATO is actively seeking to incorporate gender perspectives within the analysis, planning, execution and evaluation of its operations and missions. This is also an important focus in NATO's cooperation with partner countries, both in the preparation of troops that will deploy in NATO-led operations and missions, as well as in wider cooperation on defence capacity building. NATO is also seeking to promote greater gender equality and increase the participation of women in defence and security institutions within the Organization and its member countries.

NATO cooperates with other international organisations to advance the overall agenda on WPS. The Regional Acceleration of Resolution 1325 (RAR) framework serves as a joint platform for NATO, the EU, OSCE, UN and AU for sharing best practices on WPS. NATO also recognises the important role civil society organisations continue to play in overseeing the promotion of women's and girls' empowerment and the protection of their rights. To better support NATO's implementation of the UNSCRs on WPS, the Civil Society Advisory Panel (CSAP) was established. The CSAP provides overarching recommendations on the integration of a gender perspective into NATO's core tasks and liaises with women's organisations in national settings.

A number of gender-related projects under the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme involve civil networks of experts from Allied and partner countries, providing a forum for sharing knowledge and solving issues of common interest.

▬▬ Overarching policy and action plan

NATO and its partners' active commitment to the UNSCRs on WPS resulted in a formal NATO/EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security to support the implementation of these Resolutions, first issued in December 2007.

A first Action Plan to support the implementation of this Policy was endorsed at the Lisbon Summit in 2010 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325. The Action Plan has been revised on a biannual basis since 2014 to reflect its implementation. The Policy and the Action Plan were both revised in 2018, ahead of endorsement by Heads of State and Government at the Brussels Summit in July 2018. The Allies, together with their EAPC partners, as well as Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, Jordan, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates have signed up for their implementation. Other interested partners will be invited to also adhere to the revised Policy and Action Plan following the Brussels Summit.

In the NATO/EAPC Policy on WPS, NATO and its partners recognise the adoption of the WPS agenda and support the advancement of gender equality through the guiding principles of:

Integration: gender equality must be considered as an integral part of NATO policies, programmes and projects guided by effective gender mainstreaming practices. To achieve gender equality, it must be acknowledged that each policy, programme, and project affects both women and men.

Inclusiveness: representation of women across NATO and in national forces is necessary to enhance operational effectiveness and success. NATO will seek to increase the participation of women in all tasks throughout the International Military Staff and International Staff at all levels.

Integrity: systemic inequalities are addressed to ensure fair and equal treatment of women and men Alliance-wide. Accountability on all efforts to increase awareness and implementation of the WPS agenda will be made a priority in accordance with international frameworks.

NATO and its partners aim to contribute to the implementation of the UNSCRs on WPS by making this Policy an integral part of their everyday business in both civilian and military structures.

Working with partner countries

Through their cooperation programmes with NATO, partners are encouraged to adopt specific goals that reflect the principles and support implementation of the UNSCRs on WPS. They are also invited to make use of the training and education activities developed by Allied Command Transformation, which has ensured that a gender perspective is included in the curriculum of NATO Training Centres and Centres of Excellence as well as in pre-deployment training.

Though the Alliance has no influence on measures or policies taken at national levels, all personnel – whether from Allied or partner countries – deployed in NATO-led operations and missions or serving within NATO structures must be appropriately trained and meet required standards of behaviour. Several countries have initiated gender-related training for subject matter experts and raised general awareness on the UNSCRs on WPS ahead of national force deployments.

Work among Allies and partner countries is not only about developing gender awareness in crisis-management or peace-support operations. An increasingly important focus is on strengthening gender perspectives, including promoting gender equality and the participation of women in defence and security institutions, as well as in the armed forces.

Gender perspective in operations

WPS Resolutions are also being implemented in crisis management and in NATO-led operations and missions. The Alliance has nominated gender advisers at both Strategic Commands – Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation – as well as in subordinate commands and in NATO-led operations and missions. Gender advisers support commanders to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated in all aspects of an operation.

In 2015, NATO and its partners adopted the Military Guidelines on the Protection of, and Response to, Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. Gender perspectives are also increasingly being incorporated in exercises. For example, NATO's 2015 crisis management exercise included, for the first time, a gender perspective as one of its objectives. These annual exercises are designed to practise the Alliance's crisis management procedures at the strategic-political level, involving civilian and military staff in Allied capitals, at NATO Headquarters and in both Strategic Commands.

Implementing the WPS agenda at NATO

The implementation of WPS Resolutions cuts across various divisions and governing bodies within NATO Headquarters as well as in the Strategic Commands. Together, these entities are responsible for monitoring and reporting the progress made by the Alliance. For this purpose, a Women, Peace and Security Task Force was established under the guidance and responsibility of the Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security.

In sum, the mechanisms at NATO's disposal to implement the UNSC Resolutions are:

- The Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security serves as the high-level focal point on all aspects of NATO's gender/WPS-related work. This position was created in 2012 and made permanent from September 2014. It is currently held by Clare Hutchinson;

- A task force bringing together civilian and military staff across NATO Headquarters;

- A gender adviser in the International Military Staff and an advisory committee of experts (NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives) on the military side, tasked with promoting gender mainstreaming in the design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes and military operations;

- A working group led by Allied Command Operations to assess means to further incorporate the UNSCRs on WPS into operational planning and execution;

- Gender advisers deployed at different levels of NATO's military command structure, including operational headquarters;

- A number of relevant committees that develop and review specific and overall policy;

- The NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme promotes concrete, practical cooperation on gender-related issues among NATO member and partner countries, through collaborative multi-year projects, training courses, study institutes and workshops.

- The CSAP, to support and guide the work of WPS within NATO and advise on the integration of gender perspectives into NATO's core tasks.

Protection of civilians

NATO and its partners are contributing to the protection of civilians by integrating related measures in the planning and conduct of NATO-led operations and missions. The protection of civilians includes all efforts taken to avoid, minimise and mitigate the negative effects that might arise from NATO and NATO-led military operations. It also includes efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

Highlights

- At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, NATO leaders endorsed the NATO Policy for the Protection of Civilians.

- NATO will identify and implement lessons learned on the protection of civilians, including through a gender-sensitive approach, in all relevant areas of operations and missions, as well as in training and education.

- A NATO Military Concept on the Protection of Civilians was developed for future NATO operations and missions, in close cooperation with other international organisations and civil society.

More background information

NATO Policy for the Protection of Civilians

Over the past decade, NATO and its partners have been developing specific policies and guidelines for the protection of civilians in the planning and conduct of NATO-led operations and missions. NATO has drawn lessons from its experience in Afghanistan, where it took measures to mitigate civilian casualties when leading the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

At the Warsaw Summit, NATO leaders adopted a NATO Policy for the Protection of Civilians. The aim of this overarching policy is to set out a coherent, consistent and integrated approach to the protection of civilians in NATO and NATO-led operations, missions and other mandated activities. The policy has been developed with NATO partners and in consultation with the United Nations (UN) and relevant international organisations. It complements NATO's existing efforts in areas such as Children and Armed Conflict, Women Peace and Security, and Conflict-related Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

The protection of civilians encompasses many different areas of activity such as the defence of Alliance borders, implementing tailored partnership programmes, or engaging in crisis management operations.

Conceptual framework

The protection of civilians (persons, objects and services) includes all efforts taken to avoid, minimise and mitigate the negative effects that might arise from NATO and NATO-led military operations on the civilian population. When applicable, it also includes efforts to protect civilians from conflict-related physical violence or threats of physical violence by other actors. These efforts consist of a range of activities including the use of force to prevent, deter, pre-empt and respond to situations in which civilians suffer or are under the threat of physical violence.

Promoting long-term, self-sustained peace, security and stability is best achieved in cooperation with the local authorities, population and civil society (i.e., organisations working for human rights, including gender equality). To be effective, NATO also needs to take into account the roles and activities of other international actors.

Integrating the protection of civilians from the outset

NATO and its partners have committed to integrating the protection of civilians from the outset of NATO and NATO-led operations, missions and other mandated activities through a variety of means and measures:

Civilian harm mitigation from own actions: NATO will take measures to reduce the risks posed to civilians when the Alliance conducts operations and missions. It will ensure planning and preparations are made to avoid placing civilians in harm's way. This planning would be based on past successes.

Protection of civilians from the action of others: NATO planners might be tasked, as appropriate, to recommend military response options, including a gender-sensitive approach, after having identified threats, type of perpetrators, their motivation, strategies and tactics, capabilities, and the expected outcome for civilians.

Support to humanitarian action: A NATO or NATO-led force can play an important role by contributing to the provision of a safe and secure environment. In exceptional circumstances, and based on humanitarian considerations, NATO may also respond to requests for assistance by humanitarian actors.

Lessons learned on protection of civilians: NATO will identify and implement lessons learned on protection of civilians, including through a gender-sensitive approach, in all relevant areas of operations and missions, as well as in training and education.

Communications aspects: NATO will continue to communicate measures it is taking to protect civilians. It will also continue to make every effort to communicate known civilian casualties to the host nation authorities, local population and media.

NATO Headquarters-level and joint exercises: During exercises, Allies and NATO Military Authorities are encouraged to continue including the protection of civilians within exercise scenarios.

Training of forces participating in NATO and NATO-led operations and missions: NATO education and training facilities will continue to develop specific modules in strategic- and operational-level curricula that will take into account the impact of conflict on women, men, girls and boys.

Training of local forces: When training local security forces is part of the agreed mandate, NATO should continue to share best practices and experiences on the protection of civilians**,** particularly civilian harm mitigation, as well as on the implementation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Defence and related security capacity building: defence and related security capacity building packages may comprise elements on the protection of civilians, in line with the needs of requesting nations.

Partnership tools and programmes: partner countries with an interest in developing interoperability with NATO on the protection of civilians are encouraged to make use of partner programmes, tools and mechanisms and include the subject as part of their partnership goals and objectives. Contributors to the Partnership Cooperation Menu should consider widening their training offer in the field of protection of civilians, including on such issues as civilian harm mitigation and casualty tracking.

Concept on the Protection of Civilians

To effectively protect civilians, NATO forces must understand the threats that exist and match capabilities to counter them. In 2018, a NATO Military Concept on the Protection of Civilians was endorsed. It operationalises the NATO Policy for the Protection of Civilians and includes four objectives: understand the human environment, such as the culture, history, demographics, strengths and vulnerabilities; safeguard civilians from harm by belligerents;, facilitate access to basic needs and services to the population; and contribute to a safe and secure environment through support to local government and its institutions.

Prevention of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence

In 2015, NATO and its partners adopted, for the first time**,** military guidelines on the protection of, and response to, conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

Gender-related issues are also increasingly being incorporated into NATO exercises, as appropriate.

See Women, Peace and Security for more information.

Information on defence expenditures

NATO publishes an annual compendium of financial, personnel and economic data for all member countries. Since 1963, this report has formed a consistent basis of comparison of the defence effort of Alliance members based on a common definition of defence expenditure. Through the links below, you can find data covering the years from 1949 to the present.

- ## Working mechanism

The figures represent payments actually made or to be made during the course of the fiscal year. They are based on the NATO definition of defence expenditure. In view of the differences between this and national definitions, the figures shown may diverge considerably from those which are quoted by national authorities or given in national budgets.

- ## Evolution

Each year, updated tables with nations' defence expenditures are published on the NATO website in PDF and Excel format. The latest version of the compendium provides tables covering key indicators on the financial and economic aspects of NATO defence, including:

- Total defence expenditures
- Defence expenditure and GDP growth rates
- Defence expenditures as a percentage of GDP
- Defence expenditures and GDP per capita
- Defence expenditures by category
- Armed forces personnel strength

- ## Archive of tables

2018									
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	March 2017	June 2017	2017
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
1970	1971			1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
			1963	1964	1965		1967		1969

Funding NATO

Member countries make direct and indirect contributions to the costs of running NATO and implementing its policies and activities.

Highlights

- Indirect – or national – contributions are the largest and come, for instance, when a member volunteers equipment or troops to a military operation and bears the costs of the decision to do so.

- Direct contributions are made to finance requirements of the Alliance that serve the interests of all 29 members - and are not the responsibility of any single member - such as NATO-wide air defence or command and control systems. Costs are borne collectively, often using the principle of common funding.

- Within the principle of common funding, all 29 members contribute according to an agreed cost-share formula, based on Gross National Income, which represents a small percentage of each member's defence budget.

- Common funding arrangements are used to finance NATO's principal budgets: the civil budget (NATO HQ running costs), the military budget (costs of the integrated Command Structure) and the NATO Security Investment Programme (military capabilities).

- Projects can also be jointly funded, which means that the participating countries can identify the requirements, the priorities and the funding arrangements, but NATO provides political and financial oversight. The funding process is overseen by the North Atlantic Council, managed by the Resource Policy and Planning Board, and implemented by the Budget Committee and the Investment Committee.

Indirect funding of NATO

When the North Atlantic Council (NAC) unanimously decides to engage in an operation, there is no obligation for each and every country to contribute to the operation unless it is an Article 5 collective defence operation, in which case expectations are different. In all cases, contributions are voluntary and vary in form and scale, from for instance a few soldiers to thousands of troops, and from armoured vehicles, naval vessels or helicopters to all forms of equipment or support, medical or other. These voluntary contributions are offered by individual Allies and are taken from their overall defence capability to form a combined Alliance capability.

The 2% defence investment guideline

In 2006, NATO Defence Ministers agreed to commit a minimum of two per cent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to spending on defence. This guideline principally serves as an indicator of a country's political will to contribute to the Alliance's common defence efforts. Some Allies may need to spend more than this to develop the capabilities that the Alliance asks of them. Additionally, the defence capacity of each member country has an important impact on the overall perception of the Alliance's credibility as a politico-military organisation.

The combined wealth of the non-US Allies, measured in GDP, exceeds that of the United States. However, non-US Allies together spend less than half of what the United States spends on defence. This imbalance has been a constant, with variations, throughout the history of the Alliance and more so since the tragic events of 11 September 2001, after which the United States significantly increased its defence spending. The gap between defence spending in the United States compared to Canada and European members combined has therefore increased.

Today, the volume of the US defence expenditure effectively represents some 67 per cent of the defence spending of the Alliance as a whole in real terms[1]. This does not mean that the United States covers 67 per cent of the costs involved in the operational running of NATO as an organisation, including its headquarters in Brussels and its subordinate military commands, but it does mean that there is an over-reliance by the Alliance as a whole on the United States for the provision of essential capabilities, including for instance, in regard to intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; air-to-air refuelling; ballistic missile defence; and airborne electronic warfare.

The effects of the financial crisis and the declining share of resources devoted to defence in many Allied countries, up to 2014, have exacerbated this imbalance and also revealed growing asymmetries in capability among European Allies. France, Germany and the United Kingdom together represent more than 50 per cent of the non-US Allies defence spending, which creates another kind of over-reliance within Europe on a few capable European Allies. Furthermore, their defence spending is under increasing pressure, as is that of the United States, to meet deficit and indebtedness reduction targets. At the Wales Summit in 2014, NATO leaders agreed to reverse the trend of declining defence budgets and decided:

- Allies currently meeting the 2% guideline on defence spending will aim to continue to do so;

- Allies whose current proportion of GDP spent on defence is below this level will: halt any decline; aim to increase defence expenditure in real terms as GDP grows; and aim to move towards the 2% guideline within a decade with a view to meeting their NATO Capability Targets and filling NATO's capability shortfalls.

While the 2% of GDP guideline alone is no guarantee that money will be spent in the most effective and efficient way to acquire and deploy modern capabilities, it remains, nonetheless, an important indicator of the political resolve of individual Allies to devote to defence a relatively small, but still significant, level of resources at a time of considerable international uncertainty and economic adversity.. In 2014, three Allies spent 2 per cent of GDP or more on defence; in 2018 eight are expected to meet or exceed this target and by 2024, a majority of Allies are expected to do so.

The major equipment spending guideline

National defence budgets cover essentially three categories of expenditures: personnel expenses and pensions; research, development and procurement of defence equipment; and, lastly, operations, exercises and maintenance. Budget allocation is a national, sovereign decision, but NATO Allies have agreed that at least 20 per cent of defence expenditures should be devoted to major equipment spending, including the associated research and development, perceived as a crucial indicator for the scale and pace of modernisation.

Where expenditures fail to meet the 20 % guideline, there is an increasing risk of obsolescence of equipment, growing capability and interoperability gaps among Allies, and a weakening of Europe's defence industrial and technological base.

In September 2014, at the Wales Summit, NATO leaders agreed that Allies who are spending less than 20 per cent of their annual defence spending on major equipment will aim, within a decade, to increase their annual investments to 20 per cent or more of total defence expenditures. All Allies will ensure that their land, air and maritime forces meet NATO-agreed guidelines for deployability and sustainability and other agreed output metrics; and they will ensure that their armed forces can operate together effectively, including through the implementation of agreed NATO standards and doctrines.

Even though all Allies may not contribute forces to an operation, Allies have agreed that the funding for the deployment of the NATO part of a NATO-led operation would be commonly funded.

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[1]   Using 2010 prices and exchange rates.

Direct funding of NATO

Direct financial contributions to NATO come principally in two different forms: common funding and joint funding. They can also come in the form of trust funds, contributions in kind, *ad hoc* sharing arrangements and donations.

Several factors influence the choice of funding source to address a given priority. These include the required level of integration or interoperability, affordability at the national level, the complexity of the system involved, and the potential for economies of scale. Often, a combination of funding sources is used.

The principle of common funding

When a need for expenditure has been identified, countries in the Resource Policy and Planning Board discuss whether the principle of common funding should be applied – in other words whether the requirement serves the interests of all the contributing countries and should therefore be borne collectively.

The criteria for common funding are held under constant review and changes may be introduced as a result of changing circumstances, for instance, the need to support critical requirements in support of Alliance operations and missions.

Common-funding arrangements principally include the NATO civil and military budgets, as well as the NATO Security Investment Programme (NSIP). These are the only funds where NATO authorities identify the requirements and set the priorities in line with overarching Alliance objectives and priorities.

Where military common funding is concerned – the military budget and the NSIP – the guiding principle for eligibility is the "over and above" rule:

"Common funding will focus on the provision of requirements which are over and above those which could reasonably be expected to be made available from national resources."

Member countries contribute to NATO in accordance with an agreed cost-sharing formula based on Gross National Income.

NATO COMMON-FUNDED BUDGETS & PROGRAMMES

COST SHARE ARRANGEMENTS VALID FROM 01/01/2018 TO 31/12/2019

Nation	Civil Budget Military Budget NSIP (at 29)
Albania	0.0841
Belgium	1.9506
Bulgaria	0.3390
Canada	6.3763
Croatia	0.2776
Czech Rep.	0.9788
Denmark	1.2157
Estonia	0.1157
France	10.4986
Germany	14.7638
Greece	0.9801
Hungary	0.7041
Iceland	0.0597
Italy	8.1400
Latvia	0.1478
Lithuania	0.2379
Luxembourg	0.1569
Montenegro	0.0270
Netherlands	3.1985
Norway	1.6472
Poland	2.7683
Portugal	0.9725
Romania	1.1384
Slovakia	0.4784
Slovenia	0.2109
Spain	5.5534
Turkey	4.3819
United Kingdom	10.4581
United States	22.1387
TOTAL	100.0000

The civil budget

The civil budget provides funds for personnel expenses, operating costs, and capital and programme expenditure of the International Staff at NATO Headquarters. It is financed from national foreign ministry budgets (in most countries), supervised by the Budget Committee and implemented by the International Staff. The civil budget for 2018 is €245.8 million.

The civil budget is formulated on an objective-based framework, which establishes clear links between NATO's strategic objectives and the resources required to achieve them. There are four frontline objectives and four support objectives. The frontline objectives comprise support for: active operations; Alliance capabilities; consultation and cooperation with partners; and public relations. The four support objectives consist in: providing support to the consultation process with Allies; maintaining the facilities and site of NATO Headquarters (Headquarters operational environment); governance and regulation through the monitoring of business policies, processes and procedures; and Headquarters security.

The military budget

This budget covers the operating and maintenance costs of the NATO Command Structure. It is composed of over 35 separate sub-budgets, which are financed with contributions from Allies' national defence budgets (in most countries) according to agreed cost-shares. It is supervised by the Budget Committee (with representatives from all NATO member countries) and implemented by the individual budget holders. In all cases, the provision of military staff remains a nationally-funded responsibility. The military budget for 2018 is €1.325 billion.

The military budget effectively provides funds for the International Military Staff, the Strategic Commanders, the NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control (NAEW&C) Force, the common-funded portions of the Alliance's operations and missions, and more specifically for:

■ the Military Committee, the International Military Staff and military agencies;

■ the two Strategic Commands and associated command, control and information systems;

■ theatre headquarters for deployed operations;

■ the NATO static and deployable Combined Air Operations Centres, deployable ARS and radar systems, and deployable HQ communication systems;

■ the Joint Warfare Centre (Norway), the Joint Force Training Centre (Poland), the Joint Analysis & Lessons Learned Centre (Portugal), the NATO Defense College (Italy) and the Communications and Information Systems School;

■ the NATO Standardization Office, the NATO Communications and Information (NCI) Agency (Belgium) via its customers, Allied Command Transformation experimentation funds, the NATO Science and Technology Organization (Belgium) and the Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (Italy);

■ limited partnership support activities and part of the Military Liaison Offices in Moscow and Kyiv.

During a crisis-management operation, when an operational decision with financial implications is taken by the North Atlantic Council, the Resource Policy and Planning Board (RPPB) is immediately consulted for the availability of funds. Effectively, this means that in the throes of a crisis, the RPPB can at times be in quasi-permanent session, as was sometimes the case for instance during the Libya operation (March-October 2011).

The NATO Security Investment Programme

The NATO Security Investment Programme (NSIP) covers major construction and command and control system investments, which are beyond the national defence requirements of individual member countries. It supports the roles of the NATO Strategic Commands by providing installations and facilities such as air defence communication and information systems, military headquarters for the integrated structure and for deployed operations, and critical airfield, fuel systems and harbour facilities needed in support of deployed forces.

The NSIP is financed by the ministries of defence of each member country and is supervised by the Investment Committee. Projects are implemented either by individual host countries or by different NATO agencies and Strategic Commands, according to their area of expertise. The 2018 ceiling for the NSIP is €700 million.

Joint funding

Joint funding arrangements are structured forms of multinational funding within the terms of an agreed NATO charter. The participating countries still identify the requirements, the priorities and the funding arrangements, but NATO has visibility and provides political and financial oversight.

Joint funding arrangements typically lead to the setting-up of a management organisation within a NATO agency. NATO agency activities range from the development and production of fighter aircraft or helicopters to the provision of logistics support or air defence communication and information systems. NATO agencies also coordinate research and development activities or are active in the fields of standardization and intelligence-sharing.

Jointly funded programmes vary in the number of participating countries, cost-share arrangements and management structures.

Other forms of funding

In addition to common funding and joint funding, some projects can take the form of trust fund arrangements, contributions in kind, *ad hoc* sharing arrangements and donations.

Management and control

Financial management within NATO is structured to ensure that the ultimate control of expenditure rests with the member countries supporting the cost of a defined activity, and is subject to consensus among them. Under the overall authority of the NAC, various bodies exercise managerial control over all four of the principal elements of the Organization's financial structure:

- the International Staff, financed by the civil budget;

- the international military structure, financed by the military budget;

- the NSIP; and

- NATO agencies.

When cooperative activities do not involve all member countries, they are, for the most part, managed by NATO production and logistics programmes within NATO agencies. They have their own supervisory boards and boards of directors, as well as finance committees and distinct sources of financing within national treasuries.

Financial regulations applied at NATO provide basic unifying principles around which the overall financial structure is articulated. They are approved by the NAC and are complemented by rules and procedures adapting them to specific NATO bodies and programmes. In September 2014, NATO leaders decided to, *inter alia*, reform governance, transparency and accountability, especially in the management of NATO's financial resources. This new drive for transparency and accountability aims to improve insight into how NATO manages, spends and reports on the use of taxpayer funds.

Financial management of the civil and military budgets

The civil and military budgets are annual, coinciding with the calendar year. Each budget is prepared under the authority of the head of the respective NATO body and is reviewed by the Budget Committee composed of representatives of contributing member countries, and approved for execution by the NAC.

Failure to achieve consensus before the start of the financial year entails non-approval of the budget and the financing of operations, under the supervision of the Budget Committee, through provisional

allocations limited to the level of the budget approved for the preceding year. This regime may last for six months, after which the NAC is required to decide either to approve the budget or to authorise continuation of interim financing.

When the budget has been approved, the head of the NATO body has discretion to execute it through the commitment and expenditure of funds for the purposes authorised. This discretion is limited by different levels of constraint prescribed by the Organization's financial regulations regarding such matters as recourse to competitive bidding for contracts for the supply of goods and services, or transfers of credits to correct over- or under-estimates of the funding required.

Financial management of the NATO Security Investment Programme

Implementation of the NSIP starts from capability packages. These packages identify the assets available to and required by NATO military commanders to fulfil specified tasks. They assess common-funded supplements (in terms of capital investment and recurrent operating and maintenance costs) as well as the civilian and military manpower required to accomplish the task. They are reviewed by the RPPB and then approved by the NAC.

Once they are approved, authorisation for individual projects can move forward under the responsibility of the Investment Committee. The "host nation" (a term which refers to either the country on whose territory the project is to be implemented, or a NATO agency or Strategic Command responsible for implementing a project) prepares an authorisation request. Once the Committee has agreed to the project, the host nation can proceed with its final design, contract award and implementation. Unless otherwise agreed by the Investment Committee, the bidding process is conducted among firms from those countries contributing to the project.

The financial management system which applies to the NSIP is based on an international financial clearing process. Host nations report on the expenditure foreseen on authorised projects within their responsibility. Following agreement of the forecasts by the Investment Committee, the International Staff calculates the amounts to be paid by each country and to be received by each host nation. Further calculations determine the payment amounts, currencies and which country or NATO agency will receive the funds.

Once a project has been completed, it is subject to a joint final acceptance inspection to ensure that the work undertaken is in accordance with the scope of work authorised. As soon as this report is accepted by the Investment Committee, it is added to the NATO inventory.

Financial control

With respect to the military and civil budgets, the head of the NATO body is ultimately responsible for the correct preparation and execution of the budget. The administrative support for this task is largely entrusted to the Financial Controller of the agency or NATO body.

Each Financial Controller has final recourse to the Budget Committee in the case of persistent disagreement with the head of the respective NATO body regarding an intended transaction. The Financial Controller is charged with ensuring that all aspects of execution of the budget conform to expenditure authorisations, to any special controls imposed by the Budget Committee, and to the financial regulations and their associated implementing rules and procedures. He may also, in response to internal auditing, institute such additional controls and procedures as he deems necessary for maintaining accountability.

The International Board of Auditors

The independent International Board of Auditors for NATO (IBAN) is responsible for auditing the accounts of the different NATO bodies. Its principal task is to provide the NAC and member governments with the assurance that joint and common funds are properly used for the settlement of authorised expenditure and that expenditure is within the physical and financial authorisations granted.

The Board's mandate includes not only financial but also performance audits, which extend its role beyond safeguarding accountability to the review of management practices in general. IBAN is composed of officials normally drawn from the national audit bodies of member countries. These officials are appointed by and responsible to the NAC.

Bodies involved

The NAC approves NATO budgets and investments, and exercises oversight over NATO financial management. It takes into account resource considerations in its decision-making. The RPPB advises the NAC on resource policy and allocation. For example, when the NAC decided to undertake the Libya operation, it did so with the benefit of a full evaluation of the costs from Allied Command Operations and the RPPB. The Budget Committee and the Investment Committee, which report to the RPPB, also review and approve planned expenditures.

The NATO Office of Resources brings together all members of the NATO International Staff working on resource issues. The office provides integrated policy and technical advice to the NAC and the Secretary General, NATO resource committees, and other NATO bodies. The office facilitates agreements on resource matters among member countries.

Resource Policy and Planning Board

The Resource Policy and Planning Board (RPPB) is the senior advisory body to the NAC on the management of all NATO resources. It has responsibility for the overall management of NATO's civil and military budgets, as well as the NSIP and manpower. Both the Budget Committee and the Investment Committee report to the RPPB.

Budget Committee

The Budget Committee is responsible to the RPPB for NATO's civil and military budgets. The civil budget covers all costs related to NATO's International Staff at NATO Headquarters in Brussels; the military budget covers all costs related to the International Military Staff at NATO Headquarters, the strategic commands and the NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control (NAEW&C) Force.

Investment Committee

The Investment Committee is responsible to the RPPB for the implementation of the NSIP.

The NSIP finances the provision of the installations and facilities needed to support the roles of the two Strategic Commands – Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation – recognised as exceeding the national defence requirements of individual member countries.

Transparency and accountability

NATO is an intergovernmental organisation that is funded by its member countries. NATO is therefore accountable to its member governments and their taxpayers for the financial resources provided to make the Organization function.
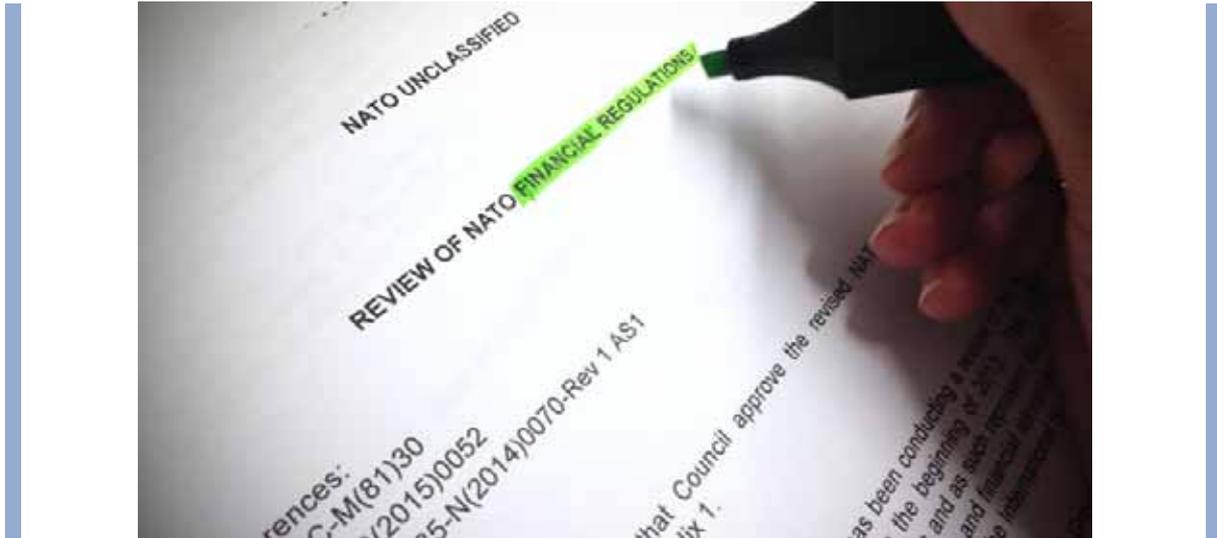
Publication of NATO budgets

In the spirit of transparency, each year NATO publishes the civilian and military budget totals, as well as the NATO Security Investment Programme (NSIP) budget. It also publishes an annual compendium of financial, personnel and economic data for all member countries. Since 1963, the latter has formed a consistent basis of comparison of the defence effort of Alliance members based on a common definition of defence expenditure.

NATO's civilian budget (running costs for NATO Headquarters), military budget (costs of the integrated Command Structure) and NSIP (military capabilities) are commonly funded, i.e., they cover requirements which are not the responsibility of any single member, such as NATO-wide air defence or the command structure. All 29 members contribute according to an agreed cost-share formula, based on Gross National Income, which represents a small percentage of each country's defence budget. This cost-share formula is published every year. Projects can also be jointly funded, which means that the participating countries can identify the requirements, the priorities and the funding arrangements, but NATO provides political and financial oversight.

Auditing of NATO accounts

Another measure of transparency was the establishment, in 1953, of the independent International Board of Auditors for NATO (IBAN), just four years after the creation of NATO. IBAN is responsible for auditing the accounts of the different NATO bodies. Its main task is to provide the North Atlantic Council - NATO's principal political decision-making body - and member governments with the assurance that joint and common funds are used properly. The Board, composed of officials normally drawn from the national audit bodies of member countries, not only performs financial audits but also performance audits which review management practices in general.

Ongoing reforms

In September 2014 at the Wales Summit, NATO leaders agreed to task "*further work in the areas of delivery of common funded capabilities, reform governance and transparency and accountability, especially in the management of NATO's financial resources*". With this renewed drive for transparency and accountability, a number of key reference documents are being made public:

- the NATO Financial Regulations, which govern financial administration;

- the Guidelines on Corporate Governance, which establish the principles to be followed to strengthen transparency and accountability; and

- the NATO Accounting Framework, which provides the minimum requirements for financial reporting in NATO.

This initiative builds on measures taken by Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen (2009-2014), who introduced a NATO-wide reform process not only reflecting austerity measures taken in member countries, but seeking to make the Alliance more modern, efficient and effective. Each and every one of NATO's political and military structures was streamlined and the acquisition of critical capabilities reassessed to ensure the Allies can provide greater security with more value for money. There ensued a reform of the military command structure, NATO agencies and committees, and of the working practices of staff at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, including financial procedures.

Secretary General Fogh Rasmussen reported, *inter alia*, on this NATO-wide reform in an Annual Report published every year of his tenure. He was the first secretary general to make this report public. Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has continued the practice. Although the obligation to report to the North Atlantic Council is inherent to the Secretary General's mandate (C9-D/4(Final) 1952), the report itself was always classified until its drafting was discontinued in 1984. However, in the same vein as Mr Fogh Rasmussen and Mr Stoltenberg, NATO's first Secretary General, Lord Ismay (1952-1957), decided to make public a running account of the progress made by the Alliance during its first five years of existence (with only a cover note of confidential nature for the Council). "NATO - The first five years, 1949-1954" was released in booklet form in 1957.

Internal reform efforts continue to help improve governance, transparency and accountability. In 2016, NATO leaders at the Warsaw Summit made a pledge to develop a stronger and more consistent approach to prioritisation. The aim was to improve the link between political and military priorities and resource requirements. More recent initiatives therefore include, for instance, measures to accelerate the delivery of commonly funded capabilities across NATO and to reinforce the Organization's risk assessment measures.

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Founding treaty

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The foundations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were officially laid down on 4 April 1949 with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, more popularly known as the Washington Treaty.

Highlights

- The Washington Treaty – or North Atlantic Treaty – forms the basis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization – or NATO.
- The Treaty was signed in Washington D.C. on 4 April 1949 by 12 founding members.
- The Treaty derives its authority from Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which reaffirms the inherent right of independent states to individual or collective defence.
- Collective defence is at the heart of the Treaty and is enshrined in Article 5. It commits members to protect each other and sets a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance.
- The Treaty is short – containing only 14 articles – and provides for in-built flexibility on all fronts.
- Despite the changing security environment, the original Treaty has never had to be modified and each Ally has the possibility to implement the text in accordance with its capabilities and circumstances.

More background information

The Treaty and its fundamental values and principles

Only 14 articles long, the Treaty is one of the shortest documents of its kind. The carefully crafted articles were the subject of several months of discussion and negotiations before the Treaty could actually be signed.

However, once Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States had discussed these issues, they agreed on a document that would establish the North Atlantic Alliance.

On 4 April 1949, the 12 countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty at the Departmental Auditorium in Washington D.C., the city which lends its name to the Treaty

The Treaty committed each member to share the risk, responsibilities and benefits of collective defence – a concept at the very heart of the Alliance. In 1949, the primary aim of the Treaty was to create a pact of mutual assistance to counter the risk that the Soviet Union would seek to extend its control of Eastern Europe to other parts of the continent. The Treaty also required members not to enter into any international commitments that conflicted with the Treaty and committed them to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (UN). Moreover, it stated that NATO members formed a unique community of values committed to the principles of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

In addition to collective defence and key values, the principle of consensus decision-making and the importance of consultation define the spirit of the Organization, together with its defensive nature and its flexibility.

The signing of the Treaty led to the creation of the Alliance and, only later, did a fully-fledged organisation develop. Strictly speaking, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) provides the structure which enables the goals of the Alliance to be implemented. To date, those goals have not fundamentally changed nor the Treaty been rewritten. The only so-called "amendments" made so far stem from the series of accession protocols which have been added as new members join, illustrating the foresight of its drafters and their ability to marry international concerns and objectives with national interests.

Political context of the Alliance's birth

The hostilities that had characterised relations between Soviet and Western powers since 1917 gradually re-emerged at the end of the Second World War. This "East-West" divide was fuelled by conflicting interests and political ideologies. There were clashes over peace agreements and reparations, and tensions were exacerbated by events such as the Berlin blockade in April 1948, the June 1948 coup in Czechoslovakia and direct threats to the sovereignty of Norway, Greece and Turkey.

As the power of the Soviet Union spread to several Eastern European countries, there was concern among Western European countries that Moscow would impose its ideology and authority across Europe. From the end of the Second World War in 1945, Western governments started reducing their defence establishments and demobilising their forces. In January 1948, however, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin spoke of the need for a "treaty of alliance and mutual assistance", a defensive alliance and a regional grouping within the framework of the UN Charter.

The United States would only agree to provide military support for Europe if it were united. In response, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom signed the Brussels Treaty in March 1948, creating the Western Union. Designed to strengthen ties between the signatories while providing for a common defence system, the Brussels Treaty ultimately became the basis for the Washington Treaty.

In the meantime, the US Senate adopted the Vandenberg Resolution – a resolution that would change the course of American foreign policy since it allowed the United States to constitutionally participate in a mutual defence system in times of peace.

The ground was set for negotiations to start on a transatlantic treaty.

Negotiating and drafting the Treaty

The talks on what would become the Washington Treaty took place between the powers of the Brussels Treaty (except Luxembourg, which was represented by Belgium) plus the United States and Canada.

Representatives from Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States constituted the core drafting team, but participants from other countries also contributed to the initial discussions, with the assistance of a working group. What has been coined as the "six-power talks" gave birth to the Washington Paper, issued on 9 September 1948, which contained an outline of possible future articles for the Treaty.

Formal public treaty negotiations began on 10 December 1948 with the Ambassadors Committee in Washington, D.C. For these talks, Luxembourg sent its own representative. Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Portugal were later invited to the final sessions of negotiations, which began on 8 March 1949. Although the participating countries agreed that collective defence would be at the heart of the new Alliance, several other issues were still not resolved and needed to be worked out before the formation of the Alliance could become a reality.

Collective defence

Views on the implementation of Article 5 differed. The United States had previously taken a stance of officially avoiding foreign entanglements. Because of this, it was concerned that Article 5 would draw the country into a conflict through treaty obligations. Something had to be put in place to allow for the US to send aid to attacked countries without having to declare war.

The European countries, on the other hand, wanted to ensure that the United States would come to their aid if one of the signatories came under attack. The United States refused to make this pledge and believed US public opinion would not follow so they proposed an option that would allow each country to assist other signatories "as it deems necessary". In other words, there would be no automatic declaration of war or obligation to commit militarily on the part of member countries; the action to be taken would be up to each individual member country. Ultimately, the American viewpoint on collective defence won out.

Political and military cooperation

Some drafters wanted more than just military cooperation between signatories. They wanted to expand cooperation to social and economic cooperation, but there were differing views on how to treat non-military issues. Ultimately, Article 2 went through, and now forms the basis of the Alliance's political and non-military work.

Article 2 is reinforced by Article 4, which encourages the Allies to "consult together" whenever they consider it necessary, therefore facilitating consensus-building. The practice of regularly exchanging information and consulting together strengthens the links between governments and knowledge of their respective preoccupations so that they can agree on common policies or take action more easily.

Geographical scope of the Alliance

The geographical scope of the Alliance in terms of area of responsibility was yet another topic on which the negotiators had a difference of opinion. The United States and the United Kingdom saw NATO as a regional organisation while other countries, such as France, felt it should take on a more global role.

Article 6 of the Washington Treaty details what is understood by the North Atlantic area, along with the caveat that in certain conditions the Alliance's responsibility could be extended as far south as the Tropic of Cancer to encompass any islands, vessels or aircraft attacked in that area.[1]

However, according to one of the original drafters, Theodore C. Achilles, there was no doubt in anybody's minds that NATO operations could also be conducted south of the Tropic of Cancer and basically, worldwide. This interpretation of the Treaty was reaffirmed by NATO foreign ministers in Reykjavik in May 2002 in the context of the fight against terrorism: "*To carry out the full range of its missions, NATO must be able to field forces that can move quickly to wherever they are needed, sustain operations over distance and time, and achieve their objectives.*"

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[1]   Article 6, as drafted at the signing of the Treaty in 1949, was modified by Article II of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the Accession of Greece and Turkey in 1952.

Membership of the Alliance

In terms of whom to invite to join the Alliance, again the drafters held diverging views. The United Kingdom wanted to keep the Alliance small and strong, avoiding commitments to peripheral countries, while the United States advocated inviting weaker countries or countries that were more likely to fall to Soviet aggression. France, on the other hand, was mainly concerned with protecting its colonial territories. Of concern to all three countries was Germany, whose membership was not immediately considered due to the complexity of its situation.

The drafters also discussed inviting Italy, Greece, Turkey, Portugal, Iceland and the Scandinavian countries, essentially for their strategic value. Italy, Portugal and Iceland were among the founding members and ultimately Greece and Turkey joined the Alliance in 1952. Iceland linked its membership to that of Denmark and Norway, which were also among the founding members in 1949; Sweden, on the other hand, categorically refused to have any links with NATO because of its strong commitment to neutrality.

Consideration was also given to offering membership to Ireland, Iran, Austria and Spain, but the idea was dropped largely due to internal conditions in each country.

Colonial territories

The status of colonial territories was one of the biggest bones of contention in the drafting of the Washington Treaty. France insisted on including Algeria, while Belgium requested the Congo's inclusion. However, the United States and Canada wanted to exclude all colonial territory, the main concern being that NATO would end up having to resolve problems stemming from the native population of overseas territories.

Ultimately, the drafters granted France's request to include Algeria[2], which had been fully integrated into the French political and administrative organisation as a French department, but rejected Belgium's request regarding the Congo.

Duration of the Treaty

The negotiating countries disagreed on how long the Treaty should last. Some countries favoured a long-term agreement that would set the initial duration at 20 years, while others feared that anything beyond 10 years would be seen as an unnecessary extension of the war effort. Finally, at the insistence of Portugal, the Treaty was made valid for a 10-year period, after which the Treaty could be reviewed (Article 12); and only after the Treaty had been in force for 20 years could a member withdraw from the Organization (Article 13). To date, these two provisions have never been used, i.e., the Treaty has never been reviewed nor a member withdrawn from the Organization.

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[2]   The Article dealing with French Algeria no longer became applicable from 3 July 1962, following the independence of Algeria.

NATO's purpose

NATO's essential and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. Collective defence is at the heart of the Alliance and creates a spirit of solidarity and cohesion among its members.

NATO strives to secure a lasting peace in Europe, based on common values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Since the outbreak of crises and conflicts beyond the borders of NATO member countries can jeopardize this objective, the Alliance also contributes to peace and stability through crisis management operations and partnerships. Essentially, NATO not only helps to defend the territory of its members, but engages where possible and when necessary to project its values further afield, prevent crises, manage crises, stabilize post-conflict situations and support reconstruction.

NATO also embodies the transatlantic link by which the security of North America is tied to the security of Europe. It is an intergovernmental organization which provides a forum where members can consult together on any issues they may choose to raise and take decisions on political and military matters affecting their security. No single member country is forced to rely solely on its national capabilities to meet its essential national security objectives. The resulting sense of shared security among members contributes to stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

NATO's fundamental security tasks are laid down in the Washington Treaty. They are sufficiently general to withstand the test of time and are translated into more detail in strategic concepts. Strategic concepts are the authoritative statement of the Alliance's objectives and provide the highest level of guidance on the political and military means to be used in achieving these goals; they remain the basis for the implementation of Alliance policy as a whole.

During the Cold War, NATO focused on collective defence and the protection of its members from potential threats emanating from the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, along with the rise of non-state actors affecting international security, many new security threats emerged. NATO now focuses on countering these threats by utilizing collective defence, managing crisis situations and encouraging cooperative security, as outlined in the 2010 Strategic Concept.

Collective defence - Article 5

The principle of collective defence is at the very heart of NATO's founding treaty. It remains a unique and enduring principle that binds its members together, committing them to protect each other and setting a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance.

Highlights

- Collective defence means that an attack against one Ally is considered as an attack against all Allies.

- The principle of collective defence is enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

- NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time in its history after the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States.

- NATO has taken collective defence measures on several occasions, for instance in response to the situation in Syria and in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

- NATO has standing forces on active duty that contribute to the Alliance's collective defence efforts on a permanent basis.

More background information

A cornerstone of the Alliance

Article 5

In 1949, the primary aim of the North Atlantic Treaty – NATO's founding treaty – was to create a pact of mutual assistance to counter the risk that the Soviet Union would seek to extend its control of Eastern Europe to other parts of the continent.

Every participating country agreed that this form of solidarity was at the heart of the Treaty, effectively making Article 5 on collective defence a key component of the Alliance.

Article 5 provides that if a NATO Ally is the victim of an armed attack, each and every other member of the Alliance will consider this act of violence as an armed attack against all members and will take the actions it deems necessary to assist the Ally attacked.

Article 5

"The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security."

● The "out-of-area" debate

This article is complemented by Article 6, which stipulates:

Article 6[1]

"For the purpose of Article 5, an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack:

■ *on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France[2], on the territory of Turkey or on the Islands under the jurisdiction of any of the Parties in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer;*

■ *on the forces, vessels, or aircraft of any of the Parties, when in or over these territories or any other area in Europe in which occupation forces of any of the Parties were stationed on the date when the Treaty entered into force or the Mediterranean Sea or the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer."*

According to one of the drafters of the Treaty, Theodore C. Achilles, there was no doubt in anybody's mind that NATO operations could also be conducted south of the Tropic of Cancer[3]. This was confirmed by NATO foreign ministers in Reykjavik in May 2002 in the context of the fight against terrorism: "To carry out the full range of its missions, NATO must be able to field forces that can move quickly to wherever they are needed, sustain operations over distance and time, and achieve their objectives". (Extract from the Reykjavik communiqué).

● The principle of providing assistance

With the invocation of Article 5, Allies can provide any form of assistance they deem necessary to respond to a situation. This is an individual obligation on each Ally and each Ally is responsible for determining what it deems necessary in the particular circumstances.

This assistance is taken forward in concert with other Allies. It is not necessarily military and depends on the material resources of each country. It is therefore left to the judgment of each individual member country to determine how it will contribute. Each country will consult with the other members, bearing in mind that the ultimate aim is to "to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area".

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[1] Article 6 has been modified by Article 2 of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the Accession of Greece and Turkey.

[2] On January 16, 1963, the North Atlantic Council modified this Treaty in its decision C-R(63)2, point V, on the independence of the Algerian departments of France.

[3] Documents on Canadian External Relations, Vol. 15, Ch. IV.

At the drafting of Article 5 in the late 1940s, there was consensus on the principle of mutual assistance, but fundamental disagreement on the modalities of implementing this commitment. The European participants wanted to ensure that the United States would automatically come to their assistance should one of the signatories come under attack; the United States did not want to make such a pledge and obtained that this be reflected in the wording of Article 5.

Invocation of Article 5

● The 9/11 terrorist attacks

The United States was the object of brutal terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. The Alliance's 1999 Strategic Concept had already identified terrorism as one of the risks affecting NATO's security. The Alliance's response to 9/11, however, saw NATO engage actively in the fight against terrorism, launch its first operations outside the Euro-Atlantic area and begin a far-reaching transformation of its capabilities. Moreover, it led NATO to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty for the very first time in its history.

● An act of solidarity

On the evening of 12 September 2001, less than 24 hours after the attacks, the Allies invoked the principle of Article 5. Then NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson subsequently informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the Alliance's decision.

The North Atlantic Council – NATO's principal political decision-making body – agreed that if it determined that the attack was directed from abroad against the United States, it would be regarded as an action covered by Article 5. On 2 October, once the Council had been briefed on the results of investigations into the 9/11 attacks, it determined that they were regarded as an action covered by Article 5.

By invoking Article 5, NATO members showed their solidarity toward the United States and condemned, in the strongest possible way, the terrorist attacks against the United States.

● Taking action

After 9/11, there were consultations among the Allies and collective action was decided by the Council. The United States could also carry out independent actions, consistent with its rights and obligations under the United Nations Charter.

On 4 October, once it had been determined that the attacks came from abroad, NATO agreed on a package of eight measures to support the United States. On the request of the United States, it launched its first ever anti-terror operation – Eagle Assist – from mid-October 2001 to mid-May 2002. It consisted in seven NATO AWACS radar aircraft that helped patrol the skies over the United States; in total 830 crew members from 13 NATO countries flew over 360 sorties. This was the first time that NATO military assets were deployed in support of an Article 5 operation.

On 26 October, the Alliance launched its second counter-terrorism operation in response to the attacks on the United States, Active Endeavour. Elements of NATO's Standing Naval Forces were sent to patrol the Eastern Mediterranean and monitor shipping to detect and deter terrorist activity, including illegal trafficking. In March 2004, the operation was expanded to include the entire Mediterranean.

The eight measures to support the United States, as agreed by NATO were:

- to enhance intelligence-sharing and cooperation, both bilaterally and in appropriate NATO bodies, relating to the threats posed by terrorism and the actions to be taken against it;

- to provide, individually or collectively, as appropriate and according to their capabilities, assistance to Allies and other countries which are or may be subject to increased terrorist threats as a result of their support for the campaign against terrorism;

- to take necessary measures to provide increased security for facilities of the United States and other Allies on their territory;

- to backfill selected Allied assets in NATO's area of responsibility that are required to directly support operations against terrorism;

- to provide blanket overflight clearances for the United States and other Allies' aircraft, in accordance with the necessary air traffic arrangements and national procedures, for military flights related to operations against terrorism;

- to provide access for the United States and other Allies to ports and airfields on the territory of NATO member countries for operations against terrorism, including for refuelling, in accordance with national procedures;

- that the Alliance is ready to deploy elements of its Standing Naval Forces to the Eastern Mediterranean in order to provide a NATO presence and demonstrate resolve;

- that the Alliance is similarly ready to deploy elements of its NATO Airborne Early Warning Force to support operations against terrorism.

Enhanced collective defence measures

On the request of Turkey, on three occasions, NATO has put collective defence measures in place: in 1991 with the deployment of Patriot missiles during the Gulf War, in 2003 with the agreement on a package of defensive measures and conduct of Operation Display Deterrence during the crisis in Iraq, and in 2012 in response to the situation in Syria with the deployment of Patriot missiles.

Since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the rise of security challenges from the south, including brutal attacks by ISIL and other terrorist groups across several continents, NATO has implemented the biggest increase in collective defence since the Cold War. For instance, it has tripled the size of the NATO Response Force, established a 5,000-strong Spearhead Force and is deploying multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. NATO is also increasing its presence in the southeast of the Alliance, centred on a multinational brigade in Romania. The Alliance has further stepped up air policing over the Baltic and Black Sea areas and continues to develop key military capabilities, such as Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance. At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, Allies also recognised cyber defence as a new operational domain, to enable better protection of networks, missions and operations.

Standing forces

Collective defence measures are not solely event-driven. NATO has a number of standing forces on active duty that contribute to the Alliance's collective defence efforts on a permanent basis. These include NATO's standing maritime forces, which are ready to act when called upon. They perform different tasks ranging from exercises to operational missions, in peacetime and in periods of crisis and conflict.

Additionally, NATO has an integrated air defence system to protect against air attacks, which also comprises the Alliance's ballistic missile defence system. NATO also conducts several air policing missions, which are collective peacetime missions that enable NATO to detect, track and identify all violations and infringements of its airspace and to take appropriate action. As part of such missions, Allied fighter jets patrol the airspace of Allies who do not have fighter jets of their own. They run on a 24/7 basis, 365 days a year.

Strategic Concepts

The Strategic Concept is an official document that outlines NATO's enduring purpose and nature, and its fundamental security tasks. It also identifies the central features of the new security environment, specifies the elements of the Alliance's approach to security and provides guidelines for the adaptation of its military forces.
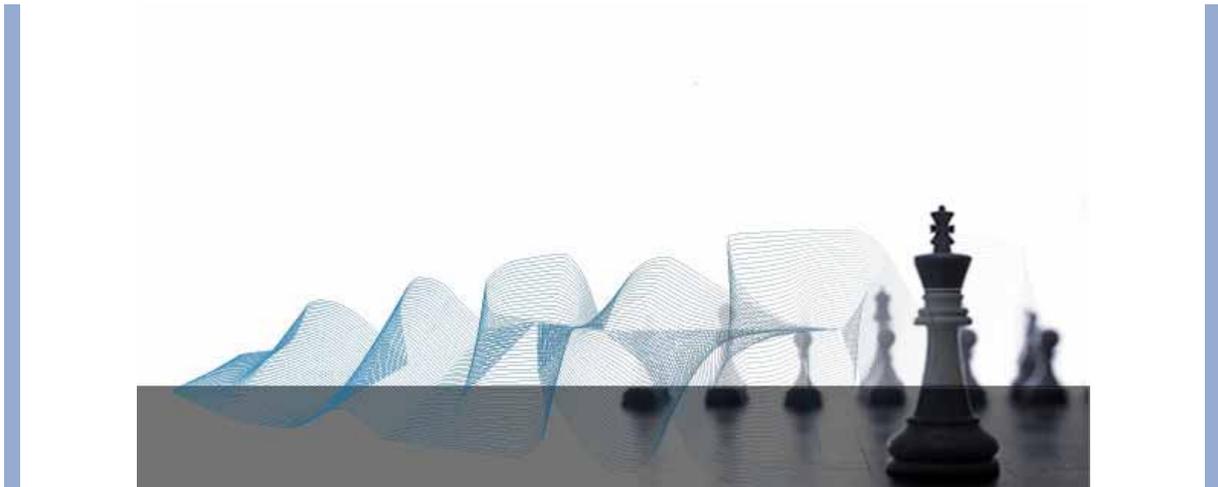
Highlights

- Strategic Concepts equip the Alliance for security challenges and guide its future political and military development.

- They reiterate NATO's enduring purpose and nature, and its fundamental security tasks.

- They are reviewed to take account of changes to the global security environment to ensure the Alliance is properly prepared to execute its core tasks, making transformation in the broad sense of the term, a permanent feature of the Organization.

- The current Strategic Concept "Active Engagement, Modern Defence" (2010) outlines three essential core tasks – collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

- Over time, the Alliance and the wider world have developed in ways that NATO's founders could not have envisaged, and these changes have been reflected in each and every strategic document that NATO has ever produced.

The current Strategic Concept

New and emerging security threats, especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, NATO's crisis management experience in the Balkans and Afghanistan, and the value and importance of working with partners from across the globe all drove NATO to reassess and review its strategic posture.

The 2010 Strategic Concept "Active Engagement, Modern Defence" is a very clear and resolute statement on NATO's core tasks and principles, its values, the evolving security environment and the Alliance's strategic objectives for the next decade.

After having described NATO as "*a unique community of values committed to the principles of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law*", it presents NATO's three essential core tasks - collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. It also emphasises Alliance solidarity, the importance of transatlantic consultation and the need to engage in a continuous process of reform.

The document then describes the current security environment and identifies the capabilities and policies it will put into place to ensure that NATO's defence and deterrence, as well as crisis management abilities, are sufficiently well equipped to face today's threats. These threats include, for instance, the proliferation of ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons, terrorism, cyber attacks and fundamental environmental problems. The Strategic Concept also affirms how NATO aims to promote international security through cooperation. It will do this by reinforcing arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, emphasising NATO's open door policy for all European countries, and significantly enhancing its partnerships in the broad sense of the term. Additionally, it affirms that NATO will continue its reform and transformation process.

NATO's essential core tasks and principles

After having reiterated NATO's enduring purpose and key values and principles, the Strategic Concept highlights the Organization's core tasks.

"The modern security environment contains a broad and evolving set of challenges to the security of NATO's territory and populations. In order to assure their security, the Alliance must and will continue fulfilling effectively three essential core tasks, all of which contribute to safeguarding Alliance members, and always in accordance with international law:

- *Collective defence*. NATO members will always assist each other against attack, in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. That commitment remains firm and binding. NATO will deter and defend against any threat of aggression, and against emerging security challenges where they threaten the fundamental security of individual Allies or the Alliance as a whole.

- *Crisis management*. NATO has a unique and robust set of political and military capabilities to address the full spectrum of crises – before, during and after conflicts. NATO will actively employ an appropriate mix of those political and military tools to help manage developing crises that have the potential to affect Alliance security, before they escalate into conflicts; to stop ongoing conflicts where they affect Alliance security; and to help consolidate stability in post-conflict situations where that contributes to Euro-Atlantic security.

- *Cooperative security*. The Alliance is affected by, and can affect, political and security developments beyond its borders. The Alliance will engage actively to enhance international security, through partnership with relevant countries and other international organisations; by contributing actively to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament; and by keeping the door of membership in the Alliance open to all European democracies that meet NATO's standards."

Deterrence and defence

The 2010 Strategic Concept states that collective defence is the Alliance's greatest responsibility and "*deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element*" of NATO's overall strategy. While stressing that the Alliance does not consider any country to be its adversary, it provides a comprehensive list of capabilities the Alliance aims to maintain and develop to counter existing and emerging threats. These threats include the proliferation of nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; terrorism, cyber attacks and key environmental and resource constraints.

Crisis management

NATO is adopting a holistic approach to crisis management, envisaging NATO involvement at all stages of a crisis: "*NATO will therefore engage, where possible and when necessary, to prevent crises, manage crises, stabilize post-conflict situations and support reconstruction.*" It is encouraging a greater number of actors to participate and coordinate their efforts and is considering a broader range of tools to be more effective across the crisis management spectrum. This comprehensive, all-encompassing approach to crises, together with greater emphasis on training and developing local forces goes hand-in-hand with efforts to enhance civil-military planning and interaction.

Cooperative security

The final part of the 2010 Strategic Concept focuses on promoting international security through cooperation. At the root of this cooperation is the principle of seeking security "*at the lowest possible level of forces" by* supporting arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. NATO states that it will continue to help reinforce efforts in these areas and cites a number of related initiatives. It then recommits to NATO enlargement as the best way of achieving "*our goal of a Europe whole and free, and sharing common values*".

A fundamental component of its cooperative approach to security is partnership, understood between NATO and non-NATO countries, as well as with other international organisations and actors. The Strategic Concept depicts a more inclusive, flexible and open relationship with the Alliance's partners across the globe and stresses its desire to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations and the European Union. It also reiterates its commitment to developing relations with countries of the Mediterranean and the Gulf region.

Finally, the Strategic Concept describes the means NATO will use to maximise efficiency, improve working methods and spend its resources more wisely in view of the priorities identified in this concept.

▬▬ The drafters and decision-makers behind the strategies

Over time and since 1949, the decision-making process with regard to the Strategic Concept has evolved, but ultimately it is the North Atlantic Council (NAC) that adopts the Alliance's strategic documents. Of the seven Strategic Concepts issued by NATO since 1949, all were approved by the NAC, with the exception of MC 14/3.

Issued in 1968, MC 14/3 was adopted by the then Defence Planning Committee (DPC), which had the same authority as the NAC in its area of responsibility. After the withdrawal of France from the integrated military structure in 1966, it was decided that responsibility for all defence matters in which France did not participate was given to the DPC, of which France was not a member. However, shortly after France

decided to fully participate in NATO's military structures (April 2009), the DPC was dissolved during a major overhaul of NATO committees, June 2010, which aimed to introduce more flexibility and efficiency into working procedures.

Before reaching the NAC, there are many stages of discussion, negotiating and drafting that take place. Interestingly, during the Cold War, strategic concepts were principally drawn up by the military for approval by the political authorities of the Alliance. They were classified documents with military references (MC), which are now accessible to the public. Since the end of the Cold War, the drafting has clearly been led by political authorities, who have been advised by the military. This reversal stems from the fact that since 1999, NATO has adopted a far broader definition of security, where dialogue and cooperation are an integral part of NATO's strategic thinking. In addition, the 1991, 1999 and the 2010 Strategic Concepts were conceived and written to be issued as unclassified documents and released to the public.

The added novelty of the 2010 Strategic Concept was the importance given to the process of producing the document. The process of reflection, consultations and drafting of the Strategic Concept was perceived as an opportunity to build understanding and support across numerous constituencies and stakeholders so as to re-engage and re-commit NATO Allies to the renewed core principles, roles and policies of the Alliance. In addition, the debate was broadened to invite the interested public, as well as experts, to contribute.

Furthermore, it was the first time that a NATO Secretary General initiated and steered the debate. He designated a group of high-level experts who were at the core of the reflection and produced a report "NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement" that guided the debate, before eventually consulting with member country representatives and drafting the document. Final negotiations took place before the document was officially adopted by the NAC meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government at the 2010 summit in Portugal.

NATO's strategic documents since 1949

Generally speaking, since the birth of NATO, there have been three distinct periods within which NATO's strategic thinking has evolved:

- the Cold War period;

- the immediate post-Cold War period; and

- the security environment since 9/11.

One could say that from 1949 to 1991, NATO's strategy was principally characterised by defence and deterrence, although with growing attention to dialogue and détente for the last two decades of this period. From 1991 a broader approach was adopted where the notions of cooperation and security complemented the basic concepts of deterrence and defence.

- From 1949 until the end of the Cold War, there were four Strategic Concepts, accompanied by documents that laid out the measures for the military to implement the Strategic Concept (Strategic Guidance; The Most Effective Pattern of NATO Military Strength for the Next Few Years; Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept);

- In the post-Cold War period, three unclassified Strategic Concepts have been issued, complemented by classified military documents (MC Directive for Military Implementation of the Alliance's Strategic Concept; MC Guidance for the Military Implementation of the Alliance Strategy; and MC Guidance for the Military Implementation of NATO's Strategic Concept)

Evolution of NATO Strategy 1949-1999

Source : drawn from «NATO Strategy Documents. 1949-1969», by Dr Gregory Pedlow

1254-09 - NATO GRAPHICS
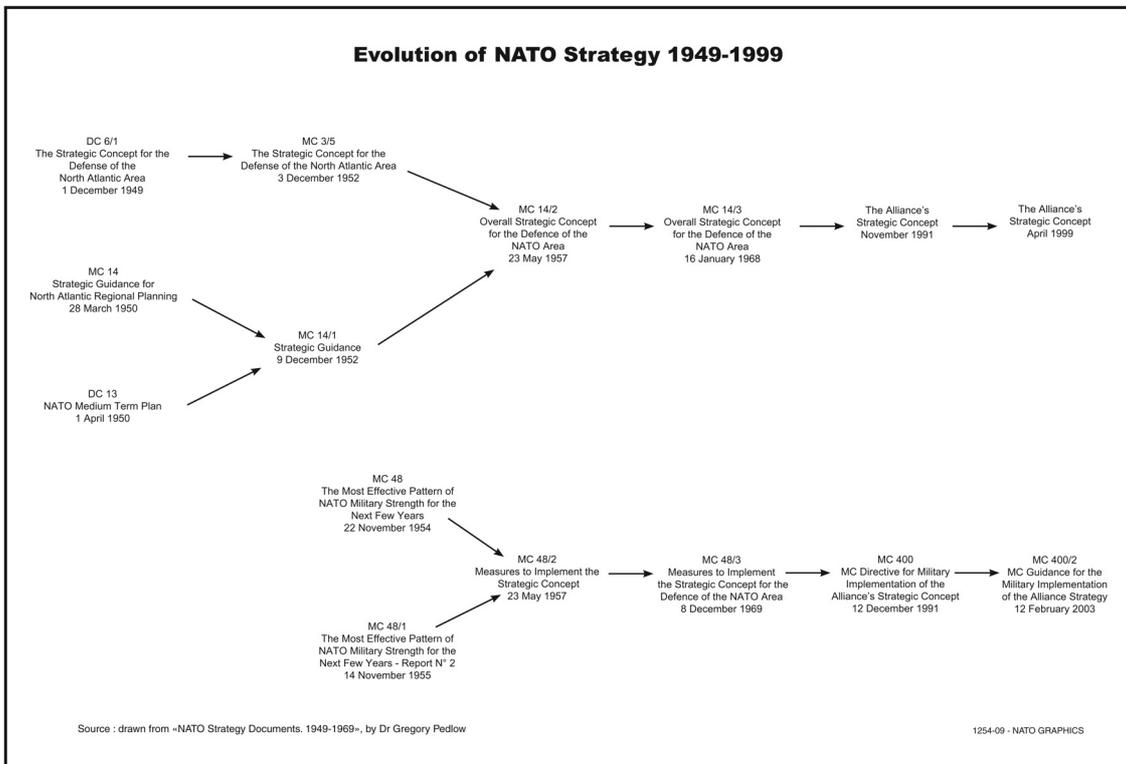
■ Since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, NATO's military thinking, resources and energy had given greater attention to the fight against terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction; NATO had committed troops beyond the Euro-Atlantic area and reached a membership of 28; new threats emerged such as energy security and cyber-attacks. These were among the factors that brought Allied leaders to produce a new Strategic Concept in 2010.

From 1949 until the end of the Cold War

From 1949 to 1991, international relations were dominated by bipolar confrontation between East and West. The emphasis was more on mutual tension and confrontation than it was on dialogue and cooperation. This led to an often dangerous and expensive arms race.

As mentioned above, four Strategic Concepts were issued during this period. In addition, two key reports were also published during those four decades: the Report of the Committee of Three (December 1956) and the Harmel Report (December 1967). Both documents placed the Strategic Concepts in a wider framework by stressing issues that had an impact on the environment within which the Strategic Concepts were interpreted.

NATO's first Strategic Concept

NATO started producing strategic documents as early as October 1949. But the first NATO strategy document to be approved by the NAC was ″The Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic area (DC 6/1), 6 January 1950 - the Alliance's first strategic concept.

DC 6/1 provided an overall strategic concept for the Alliance. The document stated that the primary function of NATO was to deter aggression and that NATO forces would only be engaged if this primary function failed and an attack was launched. Complementarity between members and standardization were also key elements of this draft. Each member's contribution to defence should be in proportion to its capacity – economic, industrial, geographical, military – and cooperative measures were to be put into place by NATO to ensure optimal use of resources. Numerical inferiority in terms of military resources vis-à-vis the USSR was emphasised, as well as the reliance on US nuclear capabilities. DC 6/1 stated that

the Alliance should ″insure the ability to carry out strategic bombing promptly by all means possible with all types of weapons, without exception″.

Although DC 6/1 was quite detailed, more guidance was needed for use by the five Regional Planning Groups that existed at the time. As a consequence, the Strategic Guidance paper (SG 13/16) was sent to the Regional Planning Groups on 6 January 1950. Entitled ″Strategic Guidance for North Atlantic Regional Planning″, SG 13/16 was formally approved by the Military Committee on 28 March 1950 as MC 14.

MC 14 enabled Regional Planning Groups to develop detailed defence plans to meet contingencies up to July 1954, a date by which the Alliance aimed to have a credible defence force in place. Its key objectives were to ″convince the USSR that war does not pay, and should war occur, to ensure a successful defence″ of the NATO area.

In parallel, SG 13/16 was also being used by the Regional Planning Groups as the basis for further, more comprehensive defence plans. These plans were consolidated into ″The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medium Term Plan″ (DC 13), which was approved by the Defence Committee on 1 April 1950, just one year after the signing of the Washington Treaty.

NATO's strategy was effectively contained in three basis documents:

- DC 6/1 which set forth the overall strategic concept;

- MC 14/1 which provided more specific strategic guidance for use in defence planning; and

- DC 13 which included both of these aspects as well as considerable detailed regional planning.

The Korean War and NATO's second Strategic Concept

The invasion of South Korea by North Korean divisions on 25 June 1950 had an immediate impact on NATO and its strategic thinking. It brought home the realisation that NATO needed to urgently address two fundamental issues: the effectiveness of NATO's military structures and the strength of NATO forces.

On 26 September 1950, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) approved the establishment of an integrated military force under centralised command; on 19 December 1950, the NAC requested the nomination of General Dwight D. Eisenhower as NATO's first Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR); in January 1951, from Hotel Astoria in Paris, Allies were already working to get the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Forces, Europe (SHAPE) into place and on 2 April 1951, the new SHAPE HQ was activated. Other structural changes were implemented, including the abolition of the three European Regional Planning Groups, and the replacement in 1952 of the North Atlantic Ocean Regional Planning Group by Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT), leaving only the Canada-US Regional Planning Group in existence.

These structural changes, together with the accession of Greece and Turkey, needed to be reflected in the Strategic Concept. This led to the drafting of NATO's second Strategic Concept: ″The Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area″, which was approved by the NAC on 3 December 1952 (MC 3/5(Final)). The new Strategic Concept respected the core principles outlined in DC 6/1 and, in this sense, did not differ fundamentally from this document.

Consequently, the strategic guidance also needed updating. MC 14 was thoroughly revised and reviewed so as to include the information that had been previously contained in DC 13. MC 14 and DC 13 became one document: ″Strategic Guidance″ (MC 14/1) approved by the NAC at the 15-18 December 1952 Ministerial Meeting in Paris. It was a comprehensive document, which stated that NATO's overall strategic aim was ″to ensure the defense of the NATO area and to destroy the will and capability of the Soviet Union and her satellites to wage war…″. NATO would do this by initially conducting an air offensive and, in parallel, conducting air, ground and sea operations. The Allied air attacks would use ″all types of weapons″.

There was another issue which the Korean invasion raised, but was only addressed years later: the need for NATO to engage in a ″forward strategy″, which meant that NATO wanted to place its defences as far east in Europe as possible, as close to the Iron Curtain as it could. This immediately raised the delicate

issue of Germany's role in such a commitment. This issue was not resolved until 1954 when NATO invited the Federal Republic of Germany to become a member, which it effectively did on 6 May 1955.

The ″New Look″

In the meantime, while structural issues had moved forward, the strength of NATO forces remained a problem. At its meeting in Lisbon, in February 1952, the NAC set very ambitious force goals that proved to be financially and politically unrealistic. As a consequence, the United States, under the leadership of NATO's former SACEUR, Dwight D. Eisenhower, decided to shift the emphasis of their defence policy to greater dependency on the use of nuclear weapons. This ″New Look″ policy offered greater military effectiveness without having to spend more on defence (NSC 162/2, 30 October 1953).

However, although alluded to in the strategic documents, nuclear weapons had not yet been integrated into NATO's strategy. SACEUR Matthew B. Ridgway stated in a report that this integration would imply increases instead of decreases in force levels. His successor, General Alfred Gruenther, established a ″New Approach Group″ at SHAPE in August 1953 to examine this question. In the meantime, the United States, together with a number of European members, called for the complete integration of nuclear policy into NATO strategy.

Massive retaliation and NATO's third Strategic Concept

The work of the ″New Approach Group″, combined with other submissions gave birth to ″The Most Effective Pattern of NATO Military Strength for the Next Five Years″ (MC 48), approved by the Military Committee on 22 November 1954 and by the NAC on 17 December 1954. It provided strategic guidance pending the review of MC 14/1 and contained concepts and assumptions that were later included in NATO's third strategic concept.

MC 48 was the first official NATO document to explicitly discuss the use of nuclear weapons. It introduced the concept of massive retaliation, which is normally associated with MC 14/2 – NATO's third Strategic Concept.

An additional report entitled ″The Most Effective Pattern of NATO Military Strength for the Next Few Years – Report 2″ was issued, 14 November 1955. It did not supersede MC 14/1 but added that NATO was still committed to its ″forward strategy″ even if there were delays in German contributions that would push the implementation of the ″forward strategy″ to 1959 at the earliest.

After considerable discussion, MC 14/2, ″Overall Strategic Concept for the Defence of the NATO Area″ was issued in its final form on 23 May 1957 and was accompanied by MC 48/2, ″Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept″, on the same day.

MC 14/2 was the Alliance's first Strategic Concept which advocated ″massive retaliation″ as a key element of NATO's new strategy.

While some Allies strongly advocated massive retaliation since it had the advantage of helping to reduce force requirements and, therefore, defence expenditures, not all member countries wanted to go so far. A degree of flexibility was introduced in the sense that recourse to conventional weapons was envisaged to deal with certain, smaller forms of aggression, ″without necessarily having recourse to nuclear weapons.″ This was also reflected in the accompanying strategic guidance. Despite this flexibility, it was nonetheless stated that NATO did not accept the concept of limited war with the USSR: ″If the Soviets were involved in a hostile local action and sought to broaden the scope of such an incident or prolong it, the situation would call for the utilisation of all weapons and forces at NATO's disposal, since in no case is there a concept of limited war with the Soviets.″

In addition to including the doctrine of ″massive retaliation″, MC 14/2 and MC 48/2 reflected other concerns including the effects on the Alliance of Soviet political and economic activities outside the NATO area. This was particularly relevant in the context of the Suez crisis and the crushing of the Hungarian uprising by the Soviet Union in 1956. The importance of out-of-area events was reflected in a political directive, CM(56)138, given from the NAC to NATO's Military Authorities, 13 December 1956: ″Although

NATO defence planning is limited to the defence of the Treaty area, it is necessary to take account of the dangers which may arise for NATO because of developments outside that area.″

The Report of the Three Wise Men

While NATO was hardening its military and strategic stance, in parallel, it decided to reinforce the political role of the Alliance. A few months before the adoption of MC 14/2, in December 1956, it published the Report of the Committee of Three or Report on Non-Military Cooperation in NATO.

This report, drafted by three NATO foreign ministers – Lester Pearson (Canada), Gaetano Martino (Italy) and Halvard Lange (Norway) - gave new impetus to political consultation between member countries on all aspects of relations between the East and West.

The Report was adopted in the midst of the Suez Crisis, when internal consultation on security matters affecting the Alliance was particularly low, jeopardising Alliance solidarity. This was the first time since the signing of the Washington Treaty that NATO had officially recognised the need to reinforce its political role. The Report put forward several recommendations, including the peaceful settlement of inter-member disputes, economic cooperation, scientific and technical cooperation, cultural cooperation and cooperation in the information field.

Similarly to the Harmel Report, published in 1967, the Report of the Three Wise Men contributed to broadening the strategic framework within which the Alliance operated. Both reports could be perceived as NATO's first steps toward a more cooperative approach to security issues.

Massive retaliation put into question

As soon as NATO's third Strategic Concept was adopted, a series of international developments occurred that put into question the Alliance's strategy of massive retaliation.

This strategy relied heavily on the United States' nuclear capability and its will to defend European territory in the case of a Soviet nuclear attack. Firstly, Europeans started to doubt whether a US President would sacrifice an American city for a European city; secondly, the USSR had developed intercontinental ballistic missile capabilities and, more generally, its nuclear capability. As the USSR's nuclear potential increased, NATO's competitive advantage in nuclear deterrence diminished. Terms such as ″Mutually Assured Destruction or MAD″ started to be used.

The outbreak of the second Berlin crisis (1958-1962), provoked by the Soviet Union, reinforced these doubts: how should NATO react to threats that were below the level of an all-out attack? NATO's nuclear deterrent had not stopped the Soviets from threatening the position of Western Allies in Berlin. So what should be done?

In 1961, J.F. Kennedy arrived at the White House. He was concerned by the issue of limited warfare and the notion that a nuclear exchange could be started by accident or miscalculation. In the meantime, the Berlin crisis intensified, leading to the construction of the Berlin Wall, and in October 1962, the Cold War peaked with the Cuban missile crisis.

The United States started advocating a stronger non-nuclear posture for NATO and the need for a strategy of ″flexible response″. Initial discussions on a change of strategy were launched among NATO member countries, but there was no consensus.

The Athens Guidelines

NATO Secretary General Dirk Stikker presented a special report on NATO Defence Policy (CM(62)48), 17 April 1962, on the issue of the political control of nuclear weapons. It was basically NATO's first attempt to temper its policy of massive retaliation by submitting the use of nuclear weapons to consultation under varying circumstances.

Other attempts at introducing greater flexibility followed, but these caused resistance from several member countries. This internal resistance combined with the fact that the US Administration had been

shaken by the assassination of Kennedy and was increasingly concerned by US military involvement in Vietnam, momentarily froze all discussions on a revised Strategic Concept for NATO.

NATO's fourth Strategic Concept and the doctrine of flexible response

NATO's fourth Strategic Concept – Overall Strategic Concept for the Defence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Area (MC 14/3) – was adopted by the Defence Planning Committee (DPC) on 12 December 1967 and the final version issued on 16 January 1968. It was drafted after the withdrawal of France from NATO's integrated military structure in 1966.

There were two key features to the new strategy: flexibility and escalation. "The deterrent concept of the Alliance is based on a flexibility that will prevent the potential aggressor from predicting with confidence NATO's specific response to aggression and which will lead him to conclude that an unacceptable degree of risk would be involved regardless of the nature of his attack". It identified three types of military responses against aggression to NATO:

- Direct defence: the aim was to defeat the aggression on the level at which the enemy chose to fight.
- Deliberate escalation: this added a series of possible steps to defeat aggression by progressively raising the threat of using nuclear power as the crisis escalated.
- General nuclear response, seen as the ultimate deterrent.

The companion document, "Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept for the Defence of the NATO Area (MC 48/3) was approved by the DPC on 4 December 1969 and issued in final form on 8 December 1969.

Both MC 14/3 and MC 48/3 were so inherently flexible, in substance and interpretation, that they remained valid until the end of the Cold War.

The Harmel Report

As NATO was setting its strategic objectives for the next 20 years, it also decided to draw up a report that provided a dual-track approach to security: political and military. In the context of the questioning, by some, of the relevancy of NATO, the "Harmel Report" or the "Report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance" was drawn up.

It provided a broad analysis of the security environment since the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949 and advocated the need to maintain adequate defence while seeking a relaxation of tensions in East-West relations and working towards solutions to the underlying political problems dividing Europe.

It defined two specific tasks: political and military; political, with the formulation of proposals for balanced force reductions in the East and West; military, with the defence of exposed areas, especially the Mediterranean.

The Harmel Report introduced the notion of deterrence and *détente*. In that respect, as already stated in the context of the Report of the Three Wise Men, it set the tone for NATO's first steps toward a more cooperative approach to security issues that would emerge in 1991.

However, between 1967 and 1991, there were still moments of great tension between the two blocs, as there were instances that gave rise to hope of a less turbulent relationship.

Tensions increased with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles to which NATO reacted by initiating its Double-Track Decision, December 1979: it offered the Warsaw Pact a mutual limitation of medium and intermediate-range ballistic missiles and, failing a positive reaction from Moscow, threatened to deploy Pershing and cruise missiles, which it eventually did.

Détente increased with the signing of the US-Soviet agreements on Strategic Arms Limitations (SALT I) and anti-ballistic missile systems, and SALT II (although not ratified), as well as the signing of US-Soviet Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) and the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

By the mid- to late 80s, both blocs moved to confidence-building. However, mutual distrust still characterised East-West relations and it was not until the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the break-up of the Soviet Union that relations could start on a new basis.

The immediate post-Cold War period

In 1991, a new era commenced. The formidable enemy that the Soviet Union had once been was dissolved and Russia, together with other former adversaries, became NATO partners and, in some case, NATO members. For the Alliance, the period was characterised by dialogue and cooperation, as well as other new ways of contributing to peace and stability such as multinational crisis management operations.

During the immediate post-Cold War period, NATO issued two unclassified Strategic Concepts that advocated a broader approach to security than before:

■ The Alliance's Strategic Concept, November 1991;

■ The Alliance's Strategic Concept, April 1999.

Both of these were accompanied by a classified military document: respectively MC 400 and MC 400/2.

NATO's first unclassified Strategic Concept

The 1991 Strategic Concept differed dramatically from preceding strategic documents. Firstly, it was a non-confrontational document that was released to the public; and secondly, while maintaining the security of its members as its fundamental purpose (i.e., collective defence), it sought to improve and expand security for Europe as a whole through partnership and cooperation with former adversaries. It also reduced the use of nuclear forces to a minimum level, sufficient to preserve peace and stability:

″This Strategic Concept reaffirms the defensive nature of the Alliance and the resolve of its members to safeguard their security, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Alliance's security policy is based on dialogue; co-operation; and effective collective defence as mutually reinforcing instruments for preserving the peace. Making full use of the new opportunities available, the Alliance will maintain security at the lowest possible level of forces consistent with the requirements of defence. In this way, the Alliance is making an essential contribution to promoting a lasting peaceful order.″

The 1991's Strategic Concept's accompanying document was - and still is - classified. It is entitled: ″MC Directive for Military Implementation of the Alliance's Strategic Concept (MC 400), 12 December 1991.

NATO's second unclassified Strategic Concept

In 1999, the year of NATO's 50th anniversary, Allied leaders adopted a new Strategic Concept that committed members to common defence and peace and stability of the wider Euro-Atlantic area. It was based on a broad definition of security which recognised the importance of political, economic, social and environmental factors in addition to the defence dimension. It identified the new risks that had emerged since the end of the Cold War, which included terrorism, ethnic conflict, human rights abuses, political instability, economic fragility, and the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and their means of delivery.

The document stated that the Alliance's fundamental tasks were security, consultation, and deterrence and defence, adding that crisis management and partnership were also essential to enhancing security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. It noted that NATO had managed to adapt and play an important role in the post-Cold War environment, and established guidelines for the Alliance's forces, translating the purposes and tasks of the preceding sections into practical instructions for NATO force and operational planners. The strategy called for the continued development of the military capabilities needed for the full range of the Alliance's missions, from collective defence to peace support and other crisis-response operations. It also stipulated that the Alliance would maintain for the foreseeable future an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces.

The 1999 Strategic Concept was complemented by a strategic guidance document that remains classified: ″MC Guidance for the Military Implementation of the Alliance Strategy″ (MC 400/2), 12 February 2003.

The security environment since 9/11

The 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States brought the threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction to the fore. NATO needed to protect its populations both at home and abroad. It therefore underwent major internal reforms to adapt military structures and capabilities to equip members for new tasks, such as leading the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

NATO also proceeded to deepen and extend its partnerships and, essentially, accelerate its transformation to develop new political relationships and stronger operational capabilities to respond to an increasingly global and more challenging world.

These radical changes needed to be reflected in NATO's strategic documents.

A first step in that direction was taken in November 2006 when NATO leaders endorsed the ″Comprehensive Political Guidance″. This is major policy document set out the framework and priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence for the next 10 to 15 years. It analysed the probable future security environment and acknowledged the possibility of unpredictable events. Against that analysis, it set out the kinds of operations the Alliance must be able to perform in light of the Alliance's Strategic Concept and the kinds of capabilities NATO needed.

Later, at the Strasbourg-Kehl Summit in April 2009, NATO leaders endorsed the ″Declaration on Alliance Security″ which, inter alia, called for a new Strategic Concept. This provoked a thorough debate and analysis of NATO issues and, together with the economic context, presented an opportunity for rethinking, reprioritising and reforming NATO. The 2010 Strategic Concept was issued at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010 and is accompanied by the Military Committee Guidance MC 400/3, March 2012.

The consultation process and Article 4

All NATO decisions are made by consensus, after discussion and consultation among member countries. Consultation between member states is therefore at the heart of NATO since Allies are able to exchange views and information, and discuss issues prior to reaching agreement and taking action.

Highlights

- Consultation is a key part of NATO's decision-making process since all decisions are made by consensus.

- It takes place on all subjects of interest to the Alliance, including NATO's day-to-day business, its core objectives and fundamental role.

- Consultation reinforces NATO's political dimension by giving members the opportunity to voice opinions and official positions. It also gives NATO an active role in preventive diplomacy by providing the means to help avoid military conflict.

- In Article 4 of NATO's founding treaty, members can bring any issue of concern, especially related to the security of a member country, to the table for discussion within the North Atlantic Council.

- Since the Alliance's creation in 1949, Article 4 has been invoked several times, for instance by Turkey.

Different forms of consultation

Consultation takes many forms. At its most basic level it involves simply the exchange of information and opinions. At another level it covers the communication of actions or decisions, which governments have already taken or may be about to take. Finally, it can encompass discussion with the aim of reaching a consensus on policies to be adopted or actions to be taken.

In sum, consultation is continuous and takes place both on a formal and informal basis. It can happen quickly due to the fact that all member states have permanent delegations at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Governments can come together at short notice whenever necessary, often with prior knowledge of their respective national preoccupations, in order to agree on common policies or take

action on the basis of consensus. NATO's network of committees facilitates consultation by enabling government officials, experts and administrators to come together on a daily basis to discuss a broad range issues.

The principle of consensus decision-making is applied throughout NATO, which means that all "NATO decisions" are the expression of the collective will of all sovereign states that are members of this inter-governmental organisation. While consensus decision-making can help a member country preserve national sovereignty in the area of defence and security, Article 4 can be an invitation for member countries to concede this right to the group or it can simply lead to a request for NATO support.

Article 4

Under Article 4 of NATO's founding treaty, member countries can bring an issue to the attention of the North Atlantic Council (Council or NAC – NATO's principal political decision-making body) and discuss it with Allies. The article states:

"The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened."

Any member country can formally invoke Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty. As soon as it is invoked, the issue is discussed and can potentially lead to some form of joint decision or action on behalf of the Alliance. Whatever the scenario, fellow members sitting around the Council table are encouraged to react to a situation brought to their attention by a member country.

Since the Alliance's creation in 1949, Article 4 has been invoked several times. On 26 July 2015, Turkey requested that the NAC convene under Article 4 in view of the seriousness of the situation following heinous terrorist attacks, and to inform Allies of the measures it is taking. Poland invoked Article 4 on 3 March 2014 following increasing tensions in neighbouring Ukraine. On two occasions in 2012, Turkey requested a NAC meeting under Article 4: once on 22 June after one of its fighter jets was shot down by Syrian air defence forces and the second time on 3 October when five Turkish civilians were killed by Syrian shells. Following these incidents, on 21 November, Turkey requested the deployment of Patriot missiles. NATO agreed to this defensive measure so as to help Turkey defend its population and territory, and help de-escalate the crisis along the border.

Previously, on 10 February 2003, Turkey formally invoked Article 4, asking for consultations in the NAC on defensive assistance from NATO in the event of a threat to its population or territory resulting from armed conflict in neighbouring Iraq. NATO agreed a package of defensive measures and conducted Operation Display Deterrence from end February to early May 2003.

The political dimension of NATO

Encouraging members of an inter-governmental organisation who have not given up their right of free and independent judgment in international affairs to consult more systematically on an issue is a challenge – be it today or in the 1950s.

In the early 1950s, the NAC recognised NATO's consultative deficiency on international issues and recommended that measures be taken to improve the process. In April 1954, a resolution on political consultation was adopted:

"... all member governments should bear constantly in mind the desirability of bringing to the attention of the Council information on international political developments whenever they are of concern to other members of the Council or to the Organization as a whole; and (...) the Council in permanent session should from time to time consider what specific subject might be suitable for political consultation at one of its subsequent meetings when its members should be in a position to express the views of their governments on the subject." C-M(54)38.

The resolution, which was put forward by Canada and immediately approved, provoked nonetheless a reaction from the American representative:

"Mr. Dulles (United States) supported the Canadian resolution on the understanding that consultation would be limited within the bounds of common sense. Countries like his own with world-wide interests might find it difficult to consult other NATO governments in every case. For a sudden emergency, it was more important to take action than to discuss the emergency. In other words, consultation should be regarded as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself." (C-R(54)18).

The reservations made by the United States, which no doubt were shared by other member countries, could still be voiced today. Building on this resolution, on 8 March 1956, the then Secretary General of NATO, Lord Ismay, made a statement which widened the debate by explaining the consequences of systemising political consultation within the Alliance:

"A direct method of bringing home to public opinion the importance of the habit of political consultation within NATO may be summed up in the proposition "NATO is a political as well as a military alliance". The habitual use of this phraseology would be preferable to the current tendency to refer to NATO as a (purely) military alliance. It is also more accurate. To refer to NATO as a political alliance in no sense denies, depreciates or deprecates the fact that the alliance is also military." (C-M(56)25-1956).

The same year, the "Three Wise Men" produced their report, which *inter alia* sought to improve consultation within the Alliance on issues of common concern ("Report of the Committee of Three on Non-Military Cooperation in NATO"). However, ironically it was published as the Suez crisis emerged. Suez severely divided the leading founding members of the Organization (France, the United Kingdom and the United States). The Suez crisis acted as a catalyst for NATO, leading it to put into practice something it knew was of vital importance for the unity and solidarity of the Alliance – political consultation.

"Animus in consulendo liber"

For its anecdotal value, it is worth noting that when NATO moved to its headquarters at the Porte Dauphine in Paris, in December 1959, the then Secretary General, M. Paul-Henri Spaak, enlisted the help of the Dean of the Council in finding a suitable Latin maxim which would capture the spirit of consultation between Allies to which he attached so much importance. The Dean, Belgian Ambassador André de Staercke, recalled a visit he had made to the Tuscan town of San Gimignano. There, in the Palazzo del Podestà, engraved on the back of the seat reserved for the man who presided over the destinies of the city, he had seen the motto: *Animus in consulendo liber*.

It seems that an entirely satisfactory translation of the phrase cannot be found, although a French version *"l'esprit libre dans la consultation"* comes close. Renderings in English have ranged from the cryptic *"in discussion a free mind"* to the more complex *"Man's mind ranges unrestrained in counsel"*.

The motto adorned the conference area at the Porte de Dauphine for several years and, in 1967, was moved to NATO's new home in Brussels, where it has since graced the wall of the Council room.

Setting up a consultation system

As explained above, consultation and consensus were accepted as the basis for all NATO decisions when the Alliance was created in 1949.

However, it was only gradually that NATO set up a consultation system. In broad terms, this was done in three stages:

- 1949-1952: at the signing of the Treaty, NATO introduced the consultation process as a key principle in its working mechanisms. This was reinforced at the Lisbon Conference (1952) where the contours of today's NATO were put into place: the NAC was made permanent and the position of Secretary General was created, together with an international staff that would support Council decisions on a permanent basis;

- 1952-1956: between 1952 and the publishing of the Committee of Three report on non-military cooperation, attempts had been made to encourage political consultation beyond the geographical limitations defined in the founding treaty, i.e, beyond the defined NATO area.

■ From 1956: the principles of the Report of the Committee of Three were further developed and implemented. The Committee recommended measures in the area of political cooperation with regard to foreign policies, the peaceful settlement of inter-member disputes, economic cooperation, scientific and technical cooperation, cultural cooperation and cooperation in the information field.

The Committee of Three left a lasting legacy by encouraging NATO members to reconcile differences within the Organization through productive consultation on matters of common concern, including issues outside the defined NATO area. The Suez crisis provided a first-hand example of why close political consultation and non-military cooperation are necessary.

The fora for political consultation

The principal forum for political consultation is the North Atlantic Council. The NAC is NATO's principal political decision-making committee. The Secretary General, by virtue of his chairmanship, plays an essential part in this process. Consultation also takes place on a regular basis in other fora, including NATO committees and working groups. All of these bodies derive their authority from the Council.

Consensus decision-making at NATO

All NATO decisions are made by consensus, after discussion and consultation among member countries.

Highlights

- A decision reached by consensus is an agreement reached by common consent.
- When a "NATO decision" is announced, it is therefore the expression of the collective will of all the sovereign states that are members of the Alliance.
- This principle of consensus is applied at every committee level, which implies that all NATO decisions are collective decisions made by its member countries.

More background information

● **Applying the principle of consensus decision-making**

Consensus decision-making is a fundamental principle which has been accepted as the sole basis for decision-making in NATO since the creation of the Alliance in 1949.

Consensus decision-making means that there is no voting at NATO. Consultations take place until a decision that is acceptable to all is reached. Sometimes member countries agree to disagree on an issue. In general, this negotiation process is rapid since members consult each other on a regular basis and therefore often know and understand each other's positions in advance.

Facilitating the process of consultation and consensus decision-making is one of the NATO Secretary General's main tasks.

The principle of consensus decision-making applies throughout NATO.