



DECLARATION 496*

TAKING NATO DETERRENCE AND DEFENCE TO THE NEXT LEVEL AT THE HAGUE SUMMIT

The Assembly,

1. **Stressing** that NATO remains the indispensable cornerstone of all Allies' security and that, for 76 years, it has guaranteed the security of both Europe and North America;
2. **Underlining** that NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept outlines a security environment marked by strategic competition, pervasive instability and recurrent shocks, and identifies Russia as the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and terrorism as the most direct asymmetric threat;
3. **Reiterating** its firm condemnation of Russia's unprovoked, full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine which poses a direct threat to Euro-Atlantic and global security;
4. **Reaffirming** its unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, right to self-defence and self-determination, including its irreversible path towards full NATO membership;
5. **Convinced** that a strong, independent Ukraine is vital for the stability of the Euro-Atlantic area and **welcoming** efforts to bring about a fair and lasting peace that provides for Ukraine's long-term security;
6. **Clear-eyed** about the multiple and systemic challenges the People's Republic of China (PRC) poses to Euro-Atlantic security, interests and values as well as to the rules-based international order;
7. **Deploring** the growing and destabilising collusion between autocratic regimes in Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and Belarus;
8. **Deploring** the growing presence of destabilising actors under Russian, Chinese, and Iranian influence in the Southern Neighbourhood, including the Middle East, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa;
9. **Welcoming** the important decisions taken to address the entire set of threats and challenges to Euro-Atlantic security at the 2022, 2023 and 2024 Summits, which mark a step change and a new baseline for a radically enhanced NATO deterrence and defence posture;
10. **Underlining** the ironclad commitments to the unique transatlantic bond and collective defence enshrined in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty;
11. **Stressing** that the NATO defence spending target of 2% of GDP — and any future agreed-upon increases — is not an optional requirement, but an obligation to the citizens of the Alliance;

* Adopted by the Plenary Assembly at its Spring Session in Dayton, Ohio, United States on Monday 26 May 2025.

12. **Highlighting** the significant progress achieved in defence spending, including an increase of more than USD 700 billion in European and Canadian defence spending since 2014 and a 20% increase in 2024, as well as the ongoing outstanding contribution of the United States;
13. **Welcoming** several Allies' announcement to increase defence spending significantly;
14. **Stressing** that, in line with Article 3 of the NATO Treaty, to respond to an unprecedented set of threats and challenges, Allies must ensure defence plans are fully resourced and deliver significant new capabilities, which requires substantial and across-the-board increases in defence spending;
15. **Acknowledging** that all NATO Allies understand the importance of increasing their respective share of responsibility for transatlantic security;
16. **Welcoming** recent European efforts, including within the framework of the European Union, to accelerate the mobilisation of the necessary instruments and financing in order to bolster transatlantic security;
17. **Stressing** the need for Allies, in line with the Preamble and Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty, to constrain, counter and contest authoritarian powers' attacks against democracy and the rules-based international order, and to prevent the Alliance's strength from being undermined by trade barriers among Allies;
18. **Welcoming** Allies' and NATO's strengthened response to these authoritarian powers' campaign of hybrid operations targeting Allies, saluting, in particular, the prompt launch of Baltic Sentry and establishment of NATO Task Force X to strengthen the protection of critical infrastructure in the Baltic Sea, including against the Russian shadow fleet;
19. **Stressing** that The Hague Summit must now take NATO's deterrence and defence to the next level, rebalance the United States', Canada's and Europe's respective roles in support of Euro-Atlantic security and enhance the Alliance's collective and Allies' national resilience;
20. **Recognising** that NATO's partnerships remain vital to enhance stability, contribute to international peace and security, and uphold the rules-based international order; **reaffirming** their essential role in supporting NATO's three core tasks and the Alliance's 360-degree approach to security; and **underlining** in particular the strategic importance of NATO's Southern Neighbourhood in light of the persistent and interconnected challenges emanating from the region, including terrorism, hybrid threats, irregular migration, and state fragility, as well as the opportunities for enhanced cooperation with Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and African partners;
21. **Noting** that Georgia, a candidate country for Euro-Atlantic integration, is currently undergoing an accelerated process of democratic decline;
22. **Reiterating** the importance of stability and peace in the Western Balkans and **expressing** its serious concern about the latest legislation and initiatives in the Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina that undermine and threaten the country's constitutional order, sovereignty and territorial and functional integrity, as well as the Dayton Peace Agreement signed 30 years ago;
23. **Convinced** that NATO's strength and credibility lies in the unity, cohesion and resolve of Allies and **affirming** its determination to continue to support a strong Alliance through parliamentary dialogue, as it has done for the past 70 years;
24. **Recognising** both civil and military dimensions of defence planning as mutually necessary and beneficial when building resilient societies;

25. **Recalling** that, building on the Defence Production Action Plan agreed at the Vilnius Summit in 2023, at the NATO Summit 2024 Allies committed to doing more together as Allies, including to strengthen defence industry across the Alliance, and agreed the NATO Industrial Capacity Expansion Pledge (NICE);

26. **URGES** Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Alliance at their Summit meeting in The Hague:

- a. to agree on a Transatlantic Deterrence Initiative through which Allies will commit to stepping up efforts to rebalance Allied contributions to transatlantic security, with individual Allies reconsidering their share of responsibility and adjusting it to match the reality of a contested threat environment;
- b. to commit to the implementation of ambitious capability targets which will ensure NATO is fit for purpose today and for the long term in order to be prepared for high-intensity and multi-domain collective defence;
- c. to reinforce NATO's posture in the Baltic Sea region, including by strengthening the Air Policing and Baltic Sentry missions, towards a credible forward defence posture aligned with NATO's New Force Model;
- d. to agree on a Hague Defence Investment Pledge including an ambitious new defence spending target well beyond 2% of GDP, in order to ensure that Allies deliver the capabilities needed to remedy existing shortfalls, to deny any potential adversary any possible opportunities for aggression against Allies' sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to commit to urgently develop national plans to meet this new target;
- e. to commit to provide the necessary forces, capabilities, resources, and infrastructure for existing Allied defence plans;
- f. to continue to ensure NATO retains a modern, credible, effective, safe and secure nuclear deterrent mission which is the cornerstone of Alliance security;
- g. to further modernise and increase the capabilities, readiness, scalability and integration of NATO's Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) to eliminate, either through individual investment or cooperative initiatives, all single points of failure and ensure full coverage and protection for all NATO European populations, territory, and forces against the proliferation of ballistic missiles through the full development of NATO Ballistic Missile Defence;
- h. to continue to bolster Allied space capabilities, plans and procedures;
- i. to recognise and treat space-based infrastructure, as well as corresponding supply chains, as critical infrastructure, and apply lessons learned from other sectors to enhance its safety, protection, and resilience;
- j. to continue implementing cyberspace as an operational domain throughout peacetime, crisis and conflict by strengthening cyber deterrence, defence and cooperation across the Alliance, including by speeding up plans to operationalise the NATO Integrated Cyber Defence Centre (NICC);
- k. to continue to foster and strengthen cooperation in countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, which constitutes the most asymmetric threat to the security of our citizens and to international peace and prosperity;

- l. to expand NATO-led efforts and funding under the NATO Security Investment Programme to develop critical military infrastructure across Central and Eastern Europe, including support for the Eastern Shield initiative and the Baltic Defence Line, enhancing defensive capabilities and interoperability along NATO's Eastern Flank, thus improving the Alliance's overall readiness and capacity for rapid deployment and sustained defence operations;
- m. to deliver on NATO's recent defence innovation initiatives and agree on an ambitious Rapid Adoption Action Plan to advance NATO's technological edge by speeding up the adoption of innovative technologies;
- n. to step up work with industry to accelerate the development and delivery of critical capabilities, including through large scale, multinational procurement;
- o. to adopt a plan to increase and strengthen the implementation of NATO standards to enhance interoperability and interchangeability;
- p. to further strengthen NATO's partnerships, in line with the 2024 Washington Summit Declaration, by adopting a more strategic and result-oriented approach to engagement with partners, particularly in NATO's Southern Neighbourhood where the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Southern Neighbourhood should be strengthened to enhance trust, visibility and cooperation;
- q. to further leverage cooperation with the European Union, in particular to support increased European defence spending and capability development as well as to closely cooperate on military mobility and logistics, including secure and resilient energy supplies to the military;
- r. to increase cooperation with like-minded partners to enhance the security of supply chains, support the development of key capabilities and adoption of innovative technologies;
- s. to further leverage cooperation with Ukraine to identify and apply lessons from Russia's war of aggression, primarily through the Joint Analysis, Training, and Education Centre (JATEC), to enhance NATO's ability to adapt its deterrence and defence posture and increase Ukraine's interoperability with NATO;
- t. to sustain and increase diplomatic, military, financial, and humanitarian support for Ukraine, to both address its immediate needs and strengthen its position at the negotiating table;
- u. to recommit to the Pledge of Long-Term Security Assistance for Ukraine and to make full use of the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine (NSATU), the NATO-Ukraine Council, the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP), JATEC, the NATO Representation in Ukraine, and other instruments to support Ukraine now and for the long term;
- v. to agree a revised strategy for countering hybrid warfare, which further increases the Alliance's and Allies' resilience to Russia's and other authoritarian powers' destabilisation campaigns while imposing costs to deter and defend against further attacks;
- w. to continue to constrain and contest Russia's aggressive actions and to counter its ability to conduct destabilising activities against NATO and Allies;

- x. to reinforce and communicate an accurate and credible narrative of NATO's steadfast commitment to freedom, security, and democracy, stepping up efforts to counter information manipulation and interference by foreign actors, as well as the spread of disinformation through traditional and social media – activities aimed at creating confusion, deepening societal divisions, destabilising democratic institutions, and ultimately weakening the Alliance;
- y. to continue boosting Allied resilience to China's systemic challenge to Euro-Atlantic security, including by reducing strategic dependencies, investing in cyber defences and working with partners of the Alliance, particularly the EU and like-minded Indo-Pacific partners, while continuing to seek opportunities for constructive dialogue with Beijing;
- z. to continue to strengthen the protection of critical undersea infrastructure (CUI), and enhance Allied ability to deter, detect and respond to threats, including through NATO's Centre for Security of CUI, NATO's Critical Undersea Infrastructure Network and NATO Task Force X;
- aa. to operationalise NATO's commitment to defending shared democratic values by directing the establishment of a Centre for Democratic Resilience at NATO Headquarters;
- bb. to reiterate the strategic importance of the Black Sea Region for transatlantic security, continued support to Allied regional efforts aimed at upholding security, safety, stability and freedom of navigation in the Black Sea region including, as appropriate, through the 1936 Montreux Convention, as well as strengthen NATO's posture and regional readiness along the Eastern Flank, from the Black Sea to the Baltic area;
- cc. to reduce and eliminate, as appropriate, obstacles to defence trade and investment among Allies;
- dd. to continue their commitment to security and stability in the Western Balkans, support reconciliation across the region, and enhance assistance to regional partners in countering malign influences;
- ee. to keep up pressure on Russia by backing the ramping up and effective enforcement of sanctions against it and its accomplices, particularly in the oil and gas sector – including the Russian shadow fleet – as well as metallurgy and the banking and financial sectors;
- ff. to encourage Allies to develop and adapt policies that enable a greater flow of investment and technology among Allies, thereby facilitating the rapid enhancement of defence and deterrence capabilities and capacities across the Alliance.