

**NATO UNCLASSIFIED**

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To : Permanent Representatives (Council)

From : Secretary General

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT PAPER:**

**NATO 2030 - A TRANSATLANTIC AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE**

1. Attached please find a food-for-thought paper to inform the discussion among Defence Ministers on NATO 2030. This discussion will be important to provide guidance and prepare decisions for the 2021 NATO Summit. I envisage that the NATO 2030 proposals will form the core of the Summit agenda.
2. In the attached paper, I have set out a limited number of strategic level proposals. They draw from the report by the independent group appointed to support NATO 2030. Some proposals build on the group's work, while others are grounded in its analysis. I have also drawn on consultations in Council, on my bilateral discussions with Allies, as well as on input from the NATO 2030 Young Leaders.
3. While the proposals in the attached paper cover much of the ground set out in the report by the independent group, they do not subsume all of its detailed proposals. The International Staff is examining all of the 138 recommendations made by the group in order to facilitate appropriate follow-up through ongoing strands of work and in relevant committees.

(Signed) Jens Stoltenberg

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NATO 2030 - A TRANSATLANTIC AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE**

**Background**

1. At their December 2019 meeting in London, Allied Heads of State and Government asked me to lead a forward-looking reflection to further strengthen NATO's political dimension, including consultations. Based on this and on the Council's mandate,<sup>1</sup> I am developing a small number of strategic level proposals, under the framework of NATO 2030, to be presented to NATO Leaders in time for the 2021 Summit.
2. We have an historic opportunity to open a new chapter in the transatlantic relationship. The NATO 2030 proposals aim to seize this opportunity by offering Allies an ambitious program for the continued adaptation of the Alliance. The proposals seek to ensure NATO remains strong militarily, becomes stronger politically, and takes a more global approach. I foresee that the NATO 2030 proposals will form the core of the Summit agenda and be the basis for concrete decisions by Allied Leaders.

**Building on Strong Foundations: The Transatlantic Alliance today**

3. NATO is the most successful Alliance in history. For over 70 years, NATO has secured peace in the Euro-Atlantic area, facilitated the spread of freedom and democracy across Europe, and been instrumental in protecting and furthering Allies' security interests. Through changing political winds and at times severe internal disagreements, the transatlantic relationship has not only persevered, but flourished. This is a testament to the values and interests we share, but also to the importance of the institutionalisation of our relationship through NATO.
4. Over the last few years, NATO has taken significant steps to adapt to a changing security environment. We have strengthened our collective defence, invested more in our military capabilities, increased our contributions to the fight against international terrorism and taken important strides in countering emerging challenges like hybrid and cyber threats. We have also continued to consult and act on a truly wide set of issues, ranging from traditional defence and arms control, to societal security and the security implications posed by the rise of China. As a result, NATO is a strong Alliance and continues to be the bedrock for the security and defence of the Euro-Atlantic area.

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<sup>1</sup> PO(2020)0008-REV2(INV) Mandate for the Reflection Process (25 February 2020).

5. At the same time, it is no secret that in recent years we have had our differences. On both sides of the Atlantic, questions have been asked about the strength of the transatlantic bond, our ability to work together and whether we can trust each other. We should address those questions head-on and in doing so build an even stronger transatlantic relationship. This is essential because the need for a robust and institutionalised transatlantic relationship is as strong as ever.
6. The rise of China is shifting the global balance of power, challenging the rules-based international order and increasing geopolitical competition. China is not our adversary, but China's rise presents risks to our security, our democracies and our way of life. This challenge is simply too big for any country to tackle alone. China will be a defining issue for the transatlantic relationship going forward. More sophisticated cyber and hybrid threats, emerging and disruptive technologies and the security implications of climate change also demand adaptation. These issues, too, require even greater transatlantic cooperation.
7. At the same time, existing threats have not gone away. Russia's behaviour remains assertive, with destabilising policies, provocative military activities near NATO's borders, and conventional and hybrid operations to our east and south. Terrorism continues to represent a pervasive challenge to our security and that of our neighbourhood.
8. Looking to 2030, we face significant challenges to our security and our values that we can only successfully address together. This is why I do not believe in Europe alone, just as I do not believe in America alone.

**NATO 2030: Priorities for the Alliance**

**1) Reinforce Unity, Cohesion and Solidarity: Increased Funding for Deterrence and Defence Activities**

9. I propose a substantial expansion of common funding in support of Allies' contributions to NATO deterrence and defence activities. This would include funding for forward presence, air policing, maritime deployments and exercises. It would also allow us to use common funds to ensure the full and timely implementation of the Concept for the Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area and NATO's strengthened deterrence and defence posture.

10. This would demonstrate Allied commitment to Article 5, and as such, reinforce unity, cohesion and solidarity. It would put any questions about the viability of Article 5 to rest, enhance our ability to deter any potential adversary and underpin NATO as the organising framework for deterrence and defence activities.
11. Such an initiative would also contribute to filling existing shortfalls related to our collective defence by incentivising Allied contributions. NATO has persistent and worrisome shortfalls, for instance when it comes to high readiness forces and maritime capabilities. It is essential to create incentives for Allies to participate in the most demanding high-end operations.
12. Enhancing common funding for deterrence and defence activities would also contribute to a more equitable sharing of the responsibility for our security by ensuring that all Allies carry a portion of the financial burden related to common deterrence and defence activities and highlighting the importance of contributions as part of fairer burden sharing.

**2) Ensure a Common Level of Allied Resilience: Enhanced Focus on Resilience**

13. I propose to adopt clearer and more measurable national resilience targets to ensure a minimum standard of shared resilience among Allies.
14. Our potential adversaries use all the tools at their disposal - military, political, economic - to challenge our institutions, economies and societies and undermine our security. To meet this challenge, we need a broader, more integrated and better coordinated approach to resilience as our first line of deterrence and defence. Given the economic and technological interconnectedness and interdependence between North American and European Allies, this issue should be tackled in a transatlantic framework, through NATO.
15. Allies should anchor in NATO's defence planning concrete national resilience targets based on individual assessments of national resilience and minimum capability requirements. Allies should designate a responsible Minister to oversee national efforts to implement these targets. The Ministers should regularly convene at NATO to review progress and agree any necessary policies. New civil-military structures in the NATO Command Structure should be established to support national target setting and ensure the continuous and active monitoring of our civilian and military preparedness. I also propose to establish an annual review and joint assessment of vulnerabilities in Alliance critical infrastructure, assets and technologies, including stemming from foreign ownership, investment and influence.

16. In pursuing this enhanced and expanded resilience agenda, we should seek greater cooperation and connectivity with the European Union.

**3) Preserve our Technological Edge: Greater Support for Transatlantic Defence Innovation and Interoperability**

17. I propose to establish a NATO defence innovation initiative to promote interoperability and serve as a catalyst for transatlantic cooperation on defence innovation.

18. NATO's ability to deter and defend has always relied upon maintaining a technological edge over our adversaries. In a more competitive world, our technological dominance will continue to be aggressively challenged. Our ability to collectively adapt and adopt emerging and disruptive technologies will be essential to our strength and political unity. A gap between Allies when it comes to technological innovation would undermine our ability to operate together, weaken our cohesion and undermine our posture.

19. A NATO defence innovation initiative could help to identify and work with Allied start-ups addressing cutting-edge dual-use emerging and disruptive technologies. This would contribute to strengthening and protecting our defence industrial base and encourage the development of solutions to our defence innovation needs and problems. The initiative could also focus on boosting research and development projects and bringing together the private sector, academia and the scientific community. It could also examine how to better provide information, training and strategic advice to assist Allies as they seek to both adopt and protect innovative emerging and disruptive technologies.

**4) Increase Political Consultation and Coordination between Allies in NATO: Renewed Political Commitment**

20. I propose that we make a renewed commitment to consult on all matters relevant to our individual and collective security. This would entail strengthening the role of NATO as the platform for transatlantic consultations on security and defence by broadening our agenda and engaging more with Allied capitals.

21. The mechanisms to ensure effective consultations at NATO are already in place. We do not lack the tools and procedures to consult, coordinate and act together. But at times we lack the political will to do so. We need to consult more broadly and more often. I therefore propose to hold annual Summit-level meetings and increase the frequency of NATO foreign ministerial meetings. I also propose to hold periodic

consultations of Ministers of Interior and National Security Advisors as well as more frequent consultations between political directors.

22. We should also continue to broaden the NATO agenda to address all issues relevant to our security, including by re-establishing NATO's role as a forum for transatlantic consultation on economic matters related to security, such as export controls and technology transfers.
23. These steps will allow us to use NATO more deliberately to address how to better use non-military tools to proactively shape our security environment and respond to threats to our security. This includes joint attribution and agreement on non-military options to prevent and respond to cyber and hybrid attacks.
24. Our decision-making process based on consensus should not be changed. At the same time, I believe we should explore how to strengthen pre-agreed authorities to the NATO civilian and military leadership, and how to equip NATO as an organisation with the resources it needs to effectively carry out Allied decisions and deliver on political priorities. This means boosting NATO's civil budget.

**5) Take a more global approach: Defending the Rules-based International Order and Cooperating with Like-Minded Partners**

25. I propose to enhance our political dialogue and practical cooperation with like-minded partners to tackle geopolitical competition and defend the rules-based international order.
26. China and Russia are at the forefront of an authoritarian pushback against the rules-based international order. NATO must play a greater role in defending and shaping it. To do so, NATO should be used more to agree and defend common positions, principles and standards on issues of key relevance to Allied security, from freedom of navigation, to defence applications of emerging and disruptive technologies. With this objective, we should institute regular Allied consultations to agree common positions on relevant security issues ahead of the UN General Assembly, the G-20 and other relevant international fora and technical agencies. We should also make greater use of joint political statements to speak up in defence of our shared values, including by condemning hybrid and cyber-attacks or violations of international humanitarian law. To strengthen NATO's role in the multilateral system I also propose that we pursue observer status for the Alliance at the UN General Assembly.

27. We need to better leverage our partnerships with like-minded partners across the globe to address shared security challenges, in particular those stemming from the rise of China. I propose holding a NATO-Asia Pacific Summit in 2022 to discuss shared global security challenges and explore how to further develop our cooperation. I also believe we should seek to launch a security dialogue with democracies in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Looking to 2030, NATO should aim to become a forum where Allies and like-minded democracies convene to consult on shared challenges to their security.

**6) Contribute to the Security and Stability of our Neighbourhood: Strengthened Commitment to Training and Capacity Building**

28. I propose to establish a NATO Training and Cooperation Command to improve our ability to plan and execute training and capacity building for NATO partners.

29. Conflict, instability and terrorism in NATO's neighbourhood affect Allied security and create significant vulnerabilities in an era of great power competition. The Alliance must always remain prepared to deploy its troops for counter-terrorism or crisis-management operations. At the same time, training local forces is a more sustainable and cost-effective means to contribute to stability in our neighbourhood. Prevention is better than intervention.

30. NATO should strengthen and consolidate its education, training, capacity building and exercising architecture both at the Headquarters and in its Command Structure. It should develop a Training and Cooperation Command with civil and military personnel, subject-matter expertise and adequate resources to train local forces, build defence capacity and offer advice on defence and security reform and institution building. The new Command would have a strong focus on countering terrorism and stabilization-like tasks.

**7) Combat and Adapt to Climate Change: Enhanced Global Climate and Security Agenda**

31. I propose that NATO should become the leading international organization when it comes to understanding, adapting and mitigating the impact of climate change on security.

32. To reach this goal, NATO should increase its situational awareness, including through an Alliance-wide assessment of how climate change might impact NATO installations and critical infrastructure and affect our operations and activities. NATO

can serve as a key platform for Allies to identify, monitor and discuss the security impact of climate change.

33. NATO should lead when it comes to adaptation. We should reduce climate vulnerabilities and adapt longstanding NATO functions, including defence planning and capability development.
34. We should also map emissions from military activities with the objective of reducing them and improving our operational effectiveness. Our Alliance should set the gold-standard on how to reduce emissions from the military sector and contribute to the goal of zero carbon emissions by 2050.
35. I also propose to hold, starting in 2022, a regular high-level global climate and security dialogue where Allies, partners and other countries can come together to tackle the security impact of climate change.

#### **8. Cement the transatlantic bond: the 2022 Strategic Concept**

36. At the 2021 Summit, Leaders should agree to update the Strategic Concept. They should adopt a tasking for me to lead the process, with the aim for Allies to agree a new Strategic Concept in time for the next Summit in 2022.
37. A new Strategic Concept is an opportunity for Allies to recommit to the Alliance's founding values and reaffirm the validity of NATO's core tasks. It would allow Allies to jointly assess the changing strategic environment, agree on how to prioritise and tackle existing and emerging challenges and consolidate a common political position on key issues, including NATO's approach to Russia and the implications of the rise of China. A new Strategic Concept would also allow Allies to solidify and clarify NATO's relationship with the EU in order to maximise synergies and avoid competing transatlantic agendas on security and defence.

#### **NATO 2030: Way Forward**

38. In the upcoming weeks, I will continue to consult with Allies to develop and refine these proposals in preparation for the Summit later this year.