

**MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL  
IN DEFENCE MINISTERS SESSION**

**Final Communiqué**

1. The North Atlantic Council met in Defence Ministers' session on 14-15 June 2007 to review NATO's current operations and missions, and defence aspects of the Alliance's transformation and partnerships.

Operations

2. We pay tribute to all the men and women who take part in NATO-led operations and offer our sympathy to the families and loved ones of those who have died and to those who have been wounded in the course of their service. We are grateful for the valuable contributions our Partners and other non-NATO nations are making to Alliance operations.
3. As our Heads of State and Government affirmed at Riga, contributing to peace and stability in Afghanistan is NATO's key priority. We remain committed to supporting the creation of a stable, democratic and prosperous society, free from terrorism, narcotics and fear, providing for its own security and at peace with its neighbours. We welcome the success of the UN-mandated NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), in coordination with other international actors, in supporting the Afghan authorities in meeting their responsibilities to provide security, stability and reconstruction across Afghanistan. In the last 12 months, ISAF has extended its mission throughout Afghanistan. It has expanded from 10,000 personnel to 40,000, and the number of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) has increased from 9 to 25 and further PRTs remain under consideration. We reaffirm the strong solidarity of our Alliance efforts and undertake to ensure that ISAF has the forces, resources and flexibility needed to ensure the mission's continued success. We endorse the need for effective, modern and proactive public information efforts – coupled with improved coordination and information flow among the Government of Afghanistan, ISAF, and NATO Headquarters - in order to communicate clearly and efficiently our objectives and achievements.
4. Long-term success in Afghanistan depends on strengthening and enabling the Afghan National Security Forces. We are determined to enhance substantially ISAF's capability to mentor and support the Afghan National Army and to enable the Afghan National Security Forces to take the lead in ensuring security throughout the country. Our continued provision of support to initiatives for training and equipping the Afghan National Army, including through the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams, will play a crucial role to these ends. In this regard, we welcome the pledges from Allies for additional Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams and encourage future contributions. We also welcome progress in implementing the provisions of the NATO-Afghanistan Cooperation Programme. Allies continue to make national contributions to Afghan National Police training and equipment. To date, about 40,000 members of the Afghan National Army and more than 60,000 members of the Afghan National Police have been trained, equipped and entered service. We welcome the EU's decision to launch an ESDP police mission.
5. NATO and partners from the international community are also working together

to implement a comprehensive approach in Afghanistan to improve the effectiveness of our common efforts, leading to a mutually reinforcing link between security and development. The UN has been given a wider remit in the latest Security Council Resolution, and we support UNAMA's efforts to maximize its impact and expand its presence in the provinces.

6. We welcome the establishment of closer cooperation and coordination among NATO/ISAF, Afghanistan and Pakistan, including through the Tri-partite Commission and its subordinate bodies, all of which have proved valuable. We encourage Afghanistan and Pakistan to maintain and expand a constructive dialogue and cooperation on issues of common concern, and welcome the Summit meetings in Washington and Ankara as well as the recent G8 Foreign Ministers' initiative in this respect. We also call upon all other neighbours of Afghanistan to support the efforts of the Afghan Government to build a stable and democratic country.
7. We encourage the Government of Afghanistan to continue to implement its national drugs control strategy throughout the country, with the support of all international partners. In the region, but specifically in southern Afghanistan, terrorism, the narcotics industry and organised crime are closely connected. NATO is committed, in close coordination with the international community and within ISAF's mandate, to continue to play its agreed role to the full in supporting the Government's efforts in the fight against drugs by implementing the counter narcotics provisions laid down in its operational plan.
8. We strongly condemn the insurgents' practice of deliberately endangering the civilian population, as well as the disregard for human life shown by suicide bombings and the use of improvised explosive devices. NATO remains committed to ensuring that every measure is taken to avoid civilian casualties.
9. Euro-Atlantic integration is key for long-term stability in the Western Balkans. Lasting peace and stability in Kosovo and the region remain of the utmost importance for the Alliance. NATO will not tolerate any threats to a safe and secure environment in Kosovo and will react swiftly and resolutely to any provocations. We continue to support the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement presented by President Ahtisaari. We further support the timely adoption of a corresponding United Nations Security Council Resolution that supports its provisions and calls for its full implementation. We believe that this Proposal will provide for Kosovo's sustainable economic and political development and for strengthening stability and security for the entire region. KFOR will continue to contribute towards a safe and secure environment. We call on all actors to behave in a moderate and responsible manner. We emphasise the responsibilities of the authorities in Kosovo for standards implementation especially, as stated by our Heads of State and Government in their Riga Declaration, regarding the safeguarding of minority and community rights and the protection of historical and religious sites, and combating crime and corruption.
10. NATO will continue its preparations in order to be ready to play its full part in fulfilling the mandate established in the eventual UN Security Council Resolution on final status during both the transitional and implementation phases. We welcome the prospective deployment of an ESDP mission in Kosovo. We also welcome the close co-operation and stress the unity of purpose between NATO

and the EU in our endeavours to contribute towards the establishment of a democratic, multi-ethnic, peaceful and stable society in Kosovo.

11. We strongly condemn terrorism, whatever its motivations or manifestations, and will fight it together as long as necessary, in accordance with international law and UN principles. Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR, our maritime operation in the Mediterranean, continues to make a valuable contribution to the fight against terrorism, and we welcome the support of partner countries, which has further enhanced its effectiveness.
12. The Alliance's Mission in Iraq, consistent with UNSC Resolution 1546, continues to provide support to the Iraqi security forces through training both in and out of country and equipment donations, including in both cases through financial contributions to trust funds. We have agreed to a request by the Iraqi government for gendarmerie-type training. Meanwhile, the mission continues its transition towards a mentoring role as the capability of the Iraqi Security Forces increases.
13. We are deeply concerned by the continued atrocities and fighting in Darfur and call on all parties to abide by the ceasefire and enhance their efforts towards peace through dialogue. NATO continues to support the African Union Mission in Sudan as requested and is ready, following consultation with and the agreement of the African Union, to broaden that support. We welcome the decision of the Government of Sudan to agree to the deployment of a UN-AU hybrid mission into Darfur. In all its efforts, the Alliance is committed to continued coordination with all actors involved, in particular the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union, including with respect to possible support for this mission with airlift and training. We have recently agreed in principle to support African Union requests for airlift support to the African Union mission in Somalia for an initial period.

14. As demonstrated by experience in Afghanistan and the Balkans, today's challenges require a comprehensive approach by the international community involving a wide spectrum of civil and military instruments, while fully respecting mandates and autonomy of decisions of all actors. As our Heads of State and Government directed at the Riga Summit, work is underway to develop pragmatic proposals to improve coherent application of NATO's own crisis management instruments as well as practical cooperation at all levels with partners, the UN and other relevant international organisations, non-governmental organisations and local actors in the planning and conduct of ongoing and future operations wherever appropriate. These proposals will take into account emerging lessons learned and consider flexible options for the adjustment of NATO military and political planning procedures with a view to enhancing civil-military interface. These proposals should be completed and implemented as a matter of priority. We will review the implementation of this work at our informal meeting this autumn.
15. Communicating our objectives and achievements is of growing importance, especially in NATO operations. We direct the Council in Permanent Session to further enhance our public diplomacy to ensure that we continue to meet these challenges. We expect an initial report on these efforts in advance of our meeting in autumn.

#### Transformation

16. Progress in the transformation of our forces is being made in a number of important respects. We remain committed to the full implementation of the Comprehensive Political Guidance and its management mechanism, which will help ensure that the Alliance can perform the full range of its missions.
17. With regard to NATO's transformation efforts:
  - We agreed to intensify our efforts to improve the implementation of the agreed NATO Response Force (NRF) concept, including the importance of sustained national contributions, to maintain the NRF's full operational capability and its function as a catalyst for the transformation of our forces.
  - We have created the opportunity for the involvement of Partners in the NRF.
  - There has been welcome progress in achieving the goals set at the Istanbul Summit to make our forces more usable. We will continue to emphasise in our defence plans the 40% and 8% goals for the deployability and sustainability of our land forces.
  - Much has been accomplished through the Prague Capabilities Commitment in remedying specific shortfalls in our forces. We remain committed to making further improvements.
  - Specifically, a number of initiatives are underway to improve strategic airlift. These include the already operational Strategic Airlift Interim Solution; the initiative of a consortium of nations to acquire and pool C-17s; and the planned delivery of A-400M aircraft beginning in 2009. However, support jamming and air-to-air refuelling remain serious problems which need to be addressed.
  - We reaffirm the importance of delivering the Alliance Ground

Surveillance system in support of Alliance forces as soon as possible.

- Work is advancing on the development of a NATO Network Enabled Capability to share information, data and intelligence reliably, securely and without delay in Alliance operations.
  - The Prague CBRN Defence Initiatives have delivered valuable results, including the Multinational CBRN Defence Battalion and an interim Disease Surveillance System capability.
  - We are committed to ensuring that the military command structure is effective, efficient, and fit for its purpose.
  - Progress is being made to improve the effectiveness of our special operations forces as a result of the initiative launched at Riga.
  - In light of recent cyber attacks on one Ally's electronic infrastructure, urgent work is needed to enhance the ability to protect information systems of critical importance to the Alliance against cyber attacks.
  - We welcome the initial reform in NATO Headquarters, including the formation of the NATO Office of Resources, and direct the Council in Permanent Session to pursue the transformation of NATO Headquarters to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.
18. The continuing transformation of our forces and working practices will help to deliver the vision as set out in the Comprehensive Political Guidance. We direct the Council in Permanent Session to identify for our consideration at our autumn meeting, those aspects of defence transformation which should be given special emphasis at next year's Summit in Bucharest.
19. We will continue our consultations on the issue of energy security to help define those areas where NATO may add value, as set out in the Riga Declaration.
20. We are committed to give more substance, where there is potential and within the existing framework, to NATO-EU cooperation on the capability requirements common to the two organisations; a number of proposals have been identified for this purpose.
21. We reviewed ongoing work on the political and military implications of missile defence for the Alliance, which includes an update on missile threat developments, as tasked by Heads of State and Government at Riga, and tasked to include in this work a timely assessment of the implications for NATO of the planned United States missile defence system elements in Europe. We reaffirm our readiness to continue consultations with the Russian Federation in the framework of the NATO-Russia Council as a way of ensuring transparency and of exploring possibilities for cooperation on wider missile defence issues while continuing to pursue our ongoing interoperability work in the area of theatre missile defence.

#### Partnership

22. The NATO-Russia partnership remains a strategic element in fostering security in the Euro-Atlantic area. We call on Russia to work with us in a spirit of cooperation in strengthening our partnership and delivering its full potential. The NATO-Russia Council plays an important role in promoting practical cooperation on issues where there is agreement and in developing mutual understanding where there is disagreement. We welcome Russia's recent ratification and look forward

to the final approval of the Partnership for Peace Status of Forces Agreement, which will significantly enhance the potential for Russia and the Allies to pursue concrete forms of defence cooperation, such as joint military training and exercises and the development of the interoperability of our armed forces. We value Russia's contributions to Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR and our ongoing cooperation in counter-narcotics training of Afghan and Central Asian personnel. We look forward to the events later this month to mark the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Founding Act and the fifth anniversary of the NATO-Russia Council.

23. We continue to attach great importance to the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership, which will mark its tenth anniversary this year. We welcome the progress achieved by Ukraine over the past year in implementing defence reform including efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Defence to improve interoperability between Allied and Ukrainian units. We also appreciate Ukraine's continued contributions to our common security, including through participation in and support for NATO-led operations, and welcome its recent contribution to ISAF and Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR. We encourage Ukraine to continue to implement reforms aimed at transforming its entire security sector. We reaffirm our determination to make full use of our Intensified Dialogue and the NATO-Ukraine Commission to enhance our practical assistance to Ukraine.
24. We continue to support Georgia as it pursues its Euro-Atlantic aspirations, without prejudice to any eventual Alliance decision. We encourage Georgia to implement fully its wide-ranging reform plans, including the completion of its Strategic Defence Review, and look forward to continuing the use of the Intensified Dialogue and the Individual Partnership Action Plan to assist these initiatives. We urge Georgia to maintain its commitment to the peaceful resolution of outstanding conflicts on its territory.
25. In the Western Balkans, Euro-Atlantic integration requires cooperation in the region, good neighbourly relations, and working towards mutually acceptable solutions to outstanding issues. At the Bucharest Summit, the Alliance intends to extend further invitations to those countries who meet NATO's performance-based standards, share our values, and are able to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security and stability. We welcome the reform efforts undertaken by Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as well as their contribution to NATO-led operations and encourage them to make further progress as outlined in our most recent assessment of MAP. The Alliance will keep progress made by these countries under close and intensive scrutiny. We are pleased that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia have joined the Partnership for Peace. It is, however, important that the full range of PfP tools are exploited to assist their defence reform efforts, which Allies will support strongly. We welcome the formation of a new government in Belgrade which we expect will consolidate democratic values and work to bring Serbia closer to Euro-Atlantic structures. We will also continue to closely monitor efforts, notably by Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to cooperate fully with the ICTY.
26. The Alliance's policy of partnerships, dialogue, and cooperation is essential to

NATO's purpose and its tasks. The relationships it has fostered with the countries of the EAPC, Mediterranean Dialogue, and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative are being developed in accordance with the decisions taken at the Riga Summit. We welcome the progress that has been made in the initial phase of the NATO Training Cooperation Initiative and the proposal to establish a Faculty at the NATO Defense College in Rome aimed at responding to the needs expressed by the Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative nations which are still being analysed. We will keep progress under review. We are also committed to increasing the operational relevance of our relations with interested Contact Countries in order in particular to strengthen our ability to work together in NATO-led operations.

27. We reaffirm the Alliance's commitment to the CFE regime as expressed by our Heads of State and Government at the Riga Summit. Concerning the ongoing CFE Extraordinary Conference in Vienna which the Russian Federation has requested, our delegations are considering the Russian Federation's stated security concerns and have suggested a positive and constructive way forward. We urge the Russian Federation to engage in continuing dialogue which would lead to a positive conference outcome.
28. The Alliance is adapting to the 21st century security environment, through its operations, defence transformation and partnerships. We remain committed to providing the full range of capabilities necessary for collective defence and for contributions to the international community's efforts to promote security and stability, building on Allied solidarity, the indivisibility of Allied security and the transatlantic link.

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