

Joint statement of the NATO-Ukraine Commission

marking the 20th anniversary of the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine

10 Jul. 2017

1. The NATO-Ukraine Commission met today in Kyiv in the presence of President Petro Poroshenko and members of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to mark the 20th Anniversary of the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine. We also discussed the security situation in Ukraine and reviewed the significant progress in our partnership, NATO's assistance and our future work. NATO reiterated its strong support for Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, and its inherent right to decide its own future and foreign policy course free from outside interference, as set out in the Helsinki Final Act.
2. The Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, signed at the Madrid Summit in 1997, has contributed to building a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe. For twenty years, the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC), which was established by the Charter, has played a key role in fostering dialogue and cooperation between NATO and Ukraine on a broad range of issues. In the context of Russia's continuing aggressive actions against Ukraine since 2014, the NUC has also proven to be an essential platform for discussing pressing security issues and generating support for Ukraine.
3. Today, we discussed the security situation in eastern Ukraine, which continues to be of major concern. We reaffirmed our support for the settlement of the conflict by diplomatic means in accordance with the Minsk Agreements, which need to be fully implemented by all parties; Russia as a signatory to the Minsk agreements bears significant responsibility in this regard. We stressed the need to ensure a safe and conducive environment for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM), to fulfil its mandate; the OSCE monitors must have full, safe, and unhindered access throughout Ukraine, including to the Russia-Ukraine state border. Russia continues to provide weapons, equipment and personnel, as well as financial and other assistance to militant groups, and to intervene militarily in the conflict. These developments have serious implications for the stability and security of the entire Euro-Atlantic area. We call on Russia to desist from aggressive actions and to use its considerable influence over the militants to meet their commitments in full.

4. We continue to call on Russia to reverse its illegal and illegitimate self-declared “annexation” of the Crimean peninsula, which we do not and will not recognise. We are especially concerned by the harassment and discrimination against the Crimean Tatars and other members of local communities. We condemn Russia’s ongoing and wide-ranging military build-up in Crimea and we are concerned by Russia’s efforts and stated plans for further military build-up in the Black Sea region.

5. The Declaration to Complement the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, along with Ukraine’s Annual National Programme (ANP), launched after the 2008 Bucharest Summit, underpinned Ukraine’s efforts to take forward its political, economic, and defence-related reforms aimed at implementing Euro-Atlantic standards. NATO welcomes Ukraine’s continued efforts to make full use of this key instrument and other tools, including the Planning and Review Process (PARP). Today, we were encouraged by overall progress on the ambitious reforms underway, agreed on the continued importance of their implementation and look forward to further progress. Allies reiterated their commitment to further support Ukraine in its reform agenda.

6. The Distinctive Partnership has allowed Ukraine to benefit from NATO’s experience and assistance in the conduct of ambitious reforms in the defence and security sector. NATO’s level of engagement with Ukraine since 2014, both at the political level and in terms of practical work, has been unprecedented. NATO has strengthened its advisory support in Kyiv. In that regard, we welcome the opening of new premises of the NATO Representation to Ukraine which will provide a new and improved venue for NATO’s work. At the Wales Summit we launched five Trust Funds to address immediate Ukrainian needs. At the Warsaw Summit, the Heads of State and Government endorsed the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP).

7. Today, we reviewed the implementation of the CAP and welcomed progress in the 40 tailored support measures. The CAP has facilitated alignment between NATO’s advisory assistance and Ukraine’s reform goals, spelled out in the Strategic Defence Bulletin (SDB). The SDB represents a roadmap for defence reform reflecting Ukraine’s objective to achieve NATO standards, including efforts aimed at strengthening civilian control over the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces and parliamentary oversight over the security and defence sector. We are encouraged by progress in Ukraine’s reforms in the security and defence sector, including its objective to reform its Armed Forces according to NATO standards and to achieve interoperability with NATO forces by 2020.

8. Today, recognising the importance of learning the lessons from a changed security environment, we launched the work of the NATO-Ukraine Platform on Countering Hybrid Warfare. We also launched an ambitious new project under the Trust Fund on Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Countering Improvised Explosive Devices and the second phase of the Cyber Defence Trust Fund. This work will further contribute to enhancing Ukraine's defence reform, resilience and its ability to defend itself.

9. Allies expressed their appreciation for Ukraine's significant contributions to Allied operations and to the NATO Response Force, and welcomed Ukraine's continued commitment to this engagement, including increasing its contribution to the Resolute Support Mission (RSM). Allies acknowledge Ukraine's interest in the Enhanced Opportunities Programme (EOP). NATO will consider this in view of the decisions taken at the Wales and Warsaw Summits.

10. We will work together to enhance and adapt our distinctive partnership, which will contribute to building a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe. Allies value Ukraine's commitment to its relationship with NATO and note Ukraine's recent decisions in this regard. An independent, sovereign and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security.

Source: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_146087.htm?selectedLocale=en