

DOORSTEP STATEMENT
BY NATO SECRETARY GENERAL JENS STOLTENBERG AHEAD OF
THE MEETINGS OF NATO DEFENCE MINISTERS IN BRUSSELS

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Good afternoon.

Today and tomorrow, NATO's Defence Ministers will take forward decisions from the NATO Summit here in Brussels in July.

First, we will discuss our efforts to achieve fairer burden-sharing within the Alliance.

The Summit showed a new sense of urgency among Allies to invest 2 % of GDP on defence. And to have credible national plans to do so. We have made significant progress. Over the past two years, European Allies and Canada have spent a cumulative 41 billion dollars more on defence. And I expect Allies to make good on their commitments.

Second, we will focus on strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence. Tomorrow morning, we will hold a meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group. This is part of Allies' regular consultations to keep NATO's nuclear deterrent safe, secure and effective.

We will also address concerns about Russia's violations of the INF Treaty.

We will review the adaptation of the NATO Command Structure, which was another key decision at the July Summit. This will include over 1,200 additional personnel.

And two new commands to improve the movement of troops across the Atlantic, and Europe.

We are also setting up our new Cyber Operations Centre, which will help us strengthen our defences against a real and present threat. Our top military commanders will brief us on the progress made.

And third, we will address our work with partner countries. Which play an essential role in our efforts to project stability in our neighbourhood. Georgia is one of our closest partners. And a country aspiring to NATO membership. So we will start the ministerial with a meeting of the NATO-Georgia Commission.

One of the main issues we will discuss is Black Sea security. We are working closer together on this. Because the Black Sea is of strategic importance to all of us.

We will also review NATO's response to instability on our southern borders. Preparations are underway for our new training mission in Iraq. It will include more than 500 troops, and help the country preserve the gains made by the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

Finally, we will meet with the EU High Representative / Vice President Federica Mogherini. And our colleagues from Finland and Sweden. We will discuss our cooperation in areas including military mobility and managing hybrid threats. And we will hear about the EU's defence initiatives. Done in the right way, these efforts can contribute to fairer burden-sharing between Europe and North America.

And with that, I'm ready to take your questions.

Q (Reuters): Secretary General, yesterday the United States made its offensive and defensive cyber weapons available to NATO. Which other countries do you expect to come forward to offer their capabilities to NATO? And what kind of guidelines will you use at NATO to determine whether a cyber or a more traditional kinetic attack would be more appropriate in a conflict situation? Thank you.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: We have seen an increasing number of cyber attacks. They are more frequent, they are more sophisticated, and they are more coercive. So that's the reason why NATO has done a lot to strengthen our cyber defences, improve our cyber capabilities, both to protect cyber networks within NATO, but also to help Allies protecting their networks. We see cyber being used to meddle in domestic political processes, attacks against critical infrastructure, and cyber will be an integral part of any future military conflict. So cyber is important. And that's the reason why we have decided that a cyber attack can trigger Article 5 – our collective defence clause. That's the reason why we are now in the process of establishing cyber as a military domain, alongside air, sea, land. And that's also the reason why we, as part of new Command Structure, have decided to establish a new Cyber Operations Centre to better coordinate and lead our cyber activities. On top of that, we also do more exercises and we are stepping up our efforts in the cyber domain in many different ways.

Part of that is to establish a framework, which we have already done, to enable us to include national cyber capabilities into NATO missions and operations. And I welcome any announcement from any Ally to provide this kind of national cyber contributions. Some Allies have already done that, for instance the UK and Denmark. I expect other Allies to follow, but I'll let the ministers announce the announcements themselves. And this is important, I think we have seen that not least in fight against terrorism, in the fight against ISIS/Daesh. It was extremely important to have cyber capabilities to disrupt their cyber networks of ISIS, to reduce their capabilities when it comes to recruiting, financing and communicating. So the inclusion of national cyber – often called offensive cyber – in NATO missions and operations, is just one of many elements in how we're strengthening NATO cyber defence.

Q (Nezavisen Vesnik): Mr. Stoltenberg, as the debate in Macedonia is open now, what do you think – what is better for the country, to have constitutional changes in the parliament or to have early elections?

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: I will leave that to be decided the people of the country and the parliament in Skopje and the government in Skopje. It's not for me to go into how you do, the country does national decision-making. What I can say is that membership in NATO is only possible if the name agreement with Greece is implemented. There is no alternative way into NATO or the international community without a mutually accepted, agreed name agreement with Greece. And therefore I welcomed the name agreement, therefore I have supported the full implementation of the name agreement, because I think that will be a great advantage for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, for the region and for NATO. But

at the end of the day, this is for the parliament, the politicians, the people of the country to decide. We will welcome them, we are ready to welcome them as our 30th member, but they have to then make sure that the name agreement is implemented, because there is no alternative way into NATO.

Q (ZDF): Secretary General, you were just mentioning the possible violation of the INF Treaty by the Russian side. What exactly is it what you expect from the Russian side, and what would happen if the Russian side does not fulfil your expectations regarding what Ambassador Hutchison said yesterday – that the US side would be ready to take them out?

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: The Ambassador clarified that what she meant was that it is important that Russia complies with the INF Treaty. And all Allies fully agree that it is extremely important that Russia, in a transparent way, comply with the INF Treaty. Because the INF Treaty is a cornerstone of European security. I remember when Russia deployed intermediate-range nuclear weapons back in the '70s and '80s. NATO responded with what we call the dual-track decision in '79, and started to deploy Pershing and cruise missiles. And we had really an arms race in Europe, with intermediate-range nuclear forces, until we reached the INF Treaty in '87 which didn't only reduce but actually abolished all intermediate-range weapons.

This has been extremely important for security, stability in Europe. It is a very important agreement, and any violation of this agreement is something NATO Allies take very seriously. Therefore we are very serious about our concerns, and therefore very serious when we call on Russia to comply with the INF Treaty in a transparent and verifiable way. They don't do that now, because they're not transparent on what they do when they develop a new missile. A missile they for a long time denied existed, now they have admitted that the missile exists, and therefore we have called on them to answer our questions. And as long as they don't answer our questions, the most plausible conclusion is that this is a violation of the INF Treaty. I expect that this issue will be raised at the Defence Ministerial. It was discussed at the Summit in July, and now we are following up with a clear message to Russia that they have to come into full, transparent and verifiable compliance of the INF Treaty. That's our focus now, and we'll continue to push for that.

Q (ARD): I've got one question on the Trident Juncture exercise, which is planned to be the biggest exercise. Why is this coming now, and is this in relation to the worsening relations with Russia?

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: The Trident Juncture exercise in Norway was announced back in 2013. And it's a long time planned exercise. We had the last Trident Juncture exercise in Italy, Spain and Portugal back in 2015 and now we have the exercise in Norway. It is a big exercise, but that reflects that NATO has implemented the biggest adaptation of our collective defence since the end of the Cold War. Because we live in a more dangerous world, and a more unpredictable world, with new threats and new challenges. We see a more assertive Russia, which has implemented a big reinforcement of its military capabilities, modernised its military capabilities; which is exercising with many big exercises and which has modernised its nuclear capabilities. And most importantly, which has been willing to use force against neighbours as we've seen in Georgia and in Ukraine.

So what NATO does is defensive, it is proportionate, and it is something we do in response to what we have seen surrounding us with a more demanding security environment. So I welcome

the fact that this will be the biggest exercise in many years. All NATO Allies will participate, many partners will be there. And we'll exercise how we defend an Ally against armed attack. And we will do that with air, naval, land forces, but also of course using cyber capabilities, and all of this working together.

Q (24 TV Ukraine): Since illegal construction of Crimean bridge, Russia has intensified its aggressive activity in Azov Sea. Will this issue be on the table today? And another questions, is there any talks between NATO and Ukraine on this issue, and NATO can help Ukraine to tackle this problem? Thank you.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: All NATO Allies stand in solidarity with Ukraine. We express our strong support for Ukraine, its sovereignty, its territorial integrity. We will not and have not recognized the illegal annexation of Crimea, and we will continue to provide political and practical support to Ukraine. President Poroshenko, he was at the Summit in July, I met with him; I also saw him in New York just a few days ago. And the situation in Ukraine, around Ukraine, in the Azov Sea, in Crimea is something we always discuss. And NATO Allies express their strong support – practical and political support. We are of course concerned about the situation in the Azov Sea. We have seen that commercial vessels have been impeded by the Russian presence there. And also the Russian presence in Crimea and the activities connected to the new bridge. So all of this is part of what we see as an ongoing campaign to undermine the stability of Ukraine. And since we so strongly support the stability, the sovereignty, and the territorial integrity, of course this issue we'll continue to address together with the Ukrainians.

Q (Vijesti): You talked about the referendum in Macedonia. So in your opinion, how will the results of the referendum affect the security situation in the Western Balkans? Especially in the context of the Russian influence, like the one we saw in Macedonia and previously in Montenegro? Thank you.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: When it comes to the way forward in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, it's up to the people, the politicians, the government, the National Assembly of the country to decide. I know that they're now looking into the possibility of having the necessary constitutional changes, and the government has also mentioned the possibility of a new election. But again, that's not for me, it's for them to assess and decide. I think what we have seen is that NATO enlargement in general, but also of course in the Western Balkans, has contributed to stability, to security and also to prosperity in the region. The fact that Montenegro became a member has been good for Montenegro, it has been good for the stability of the region. But it has also helped to create the basis, the framework for more investments, for economic prosperity. After Montenegro joined, the Alliance, investments from NATO Allies have doubled. So I hope that we can see the same development with the name agreement between Skopje and Athens. But again, it's for the country itself to decide now on the way forward.

Q (VG): There are reports from the US indicating that the intelligence community, American intelligence community, should refocus more on Russia and China, and less on terrorism. So I wonder, from your perspective, is it necessary to gather more information about what's going on in Russia than it kind of used to be in the Cold War 2.0 setting, so to speak?

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg NATO and NATO Allies have to be able to do both. Both to do collective defence in Europe, to respond to a more assertive Russia and at the

same time, manage crises and threats stemming from our southern neighbourhood, fighting terrorism. We cannot choose between either doing collective defence in Europe or doing crisis management, fighting terrorism beyond our borders. And that that's exactly why we've implemented the biggest adaptation of NATO since the end of the Cold War. Where we have significantly strengthened our collective defence in Europe, but at the same time stepped up the fight against terrorism with more training of local forces, enabling them to fight terrorism, for instance as we now do in Iraq with a new training mission there.

This is also reflected in the way we do intelligence. We have strengthened our intelligence work, partly by establishing a new Intelligence Division, which enables us to understand, collect, analyse intelligence in a better way. And also of course work with the different national intelligence services which provide information to NATO and NATO Allies. And I think just the discussion we have about the INF and the violations of the INF Treaty highlights the importance of intelligence, to make sure that we have effective, verifiable arms control. Of course, intelligence is part of that, and therefore intelligence is something we need to address a more challenging security environment.

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

Source: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_158686.htm?selectedLocale=en