

NATO Summits

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NATO is continuously adapting to deliver on its core tasks – most importantly, collective defence - and to address the evolving security challenges. Although this work continues on daily basis, the NATO Summits serve as important milestones, which help setting goals for the Alliance at the highest political level and provide an opportunity to review progress regarding implementation of agreed policies. The decisions taken by NATO Heads of State and Government at the recent NATO Summits have played particularly important role for the security of Latvia and the Alliance as a whole, as they have set basis for NATO's response in light of the changed security environment.

NATO leaders' meeting in London (3-4 December 2019). NATO leaders gathered in London to celebrate NATO's 70th anniversary. The meeting reaffirmed a common understanding by all Allies of the indispensable importance of transatlantic relations in protecting common values and interests. The Allies demonstrated unity and trust in the Alliance as the security guarantor for the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO leaders agreed to collectively continue the process of NATO's adaptation to ensure the necessary capabilities to effectively respond to a full spectrum of challenges, which include the shift of balance in global power, and military threats, including the consolidation of Russia's military capabilities, and the risks and opportunities presented by new technologies. Allies marked the progress on the issue of regional defence planning, which is highly important to Latvia. Political approval of NATO's revised defence plan for the Baltic States and Poland is a vital step that reinforces our security. The Allies confirmed their understanding of threats posed by Russia's aggressive actions to Euro-Atlantic security, while also making a commitment to continued efforts of countering the threat of international terrorism and other challenges. The Allies have agreed to include in NATO's agenda the topic of the increasing international role of China and related opportunities and challenges.

NATO Brussels Summit (11-12 July 2018). NATO leaders reaffirmed the commitment to continue work to strengthen Alliances deterrence and defence. Important decisions were made to increase the readiness of NATO force (NATO Readiness Initiative) and to enhance Alliance's command structure. At the Summit, Allies agreed on the establishment of Multinational Division Headquarters North in Latvia and Denmark. This was essential further step towards stronger Allied presence and deeper integration of the Baltic region in NATO's command mechanisms. The Brussels summit also highlighted once again the need to continue efforts towards fairer burden-sharing among NATO Allies. Currently, nine Allies, including Latvia, are investing 2% of GDP in defence. Several other important decisions were taken at the Summit, including on setting up counter-hybrid support teams, launching a new training mission in Iraq and inviting the Republic of North Macedonia for accession talks to become the Alliance's 30th member.

NATO Warsaw Summit (8-9 July 2016). The main theme of the Summit was continuation of NATO's adaptation, strengthening collective deterrence and defence in Europe in response to evolving security environment and challenges following Russia's aggression against Ukraine. For Latvia, the most important decision at the Summit pertained to the establishment of NATO enhanced forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. It was announced that Canada would assume the role of the framework nation in NATO's multinational battle group in Latvia. At the Summit, the Alliance confirmed its readiness to defend any Ally against all types of security challenges from both the east and the south, and against both conventional and asymmetric threats. The Heads of State and Government agreed to strengthen the Alliance's resilience against hybrid threats and reaffirmed NATO's readiness to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty in response to hybrid threats. Alongside the reinforcement of the collective defence, the leaders reaffirmed that NATO remains open to a political dialogue with Russia. By endorsing a Comprehensive Assistance Package, NATO expressed its strong support to Ukraine. NATO leaders also discussed the security challenges in the south of the Alliance. NATO leaders agreed, inter alia, to strengthen NATO's role in addressing the risks posed by irregular migration in the Mediterranean, extend Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan beyond 2016, as well as to provide practical support in countering ISIL/Da'esh. At the summit, NATO and the EU leaders signed a declaration expressing determination to strengthen political and practical cooperation between both organizations.

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