

# NATO Foreign Ministers discuss the security situation in Europe and pledge close unity

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On 7 January 2022, the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Edgars Rinkēvičs, took part in an extraordinary meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in a video-conferencing format, which addressed the increasing deterioration of the security situation near the Ukrainian border and the upcoming NATO talks with Russia.

At the meeting, the member states expressed their unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as their strong commitment to continued support for the Euro-Atlantic course of development chosen by Ukraine. It was underlined that each country has the right, based on the principle of self-determination, to choose its own line of action in their security and defence policy.

The Allies were unanimous that the build-up of Russian forces at the border with Ukraine was a cause for alarm and was destabilising security situation across Europe. The member states of the Alliance reaffirmed that NATO's values and fundamental principles of collective defence are steadfast and the Alliance's joint action builds firmly upon collective defence and close unity.

Edgars Rinkēvičs also underlined at the meeting that it was vital for NATO to safeguard security and defence for all the member states of the Alliance. The provisions of the Washington Treaty are not for third parties to be considered, he noted. The Foreign Minister clearly indicated that the Alliance must further intensify its efforts of defence and deterrence. In a discussion on security-related matters urgent for Europe, Edgars Rinkēvičs noted that it was essential to engage in close cooperation with Finland, Sweden, and the European Union.

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