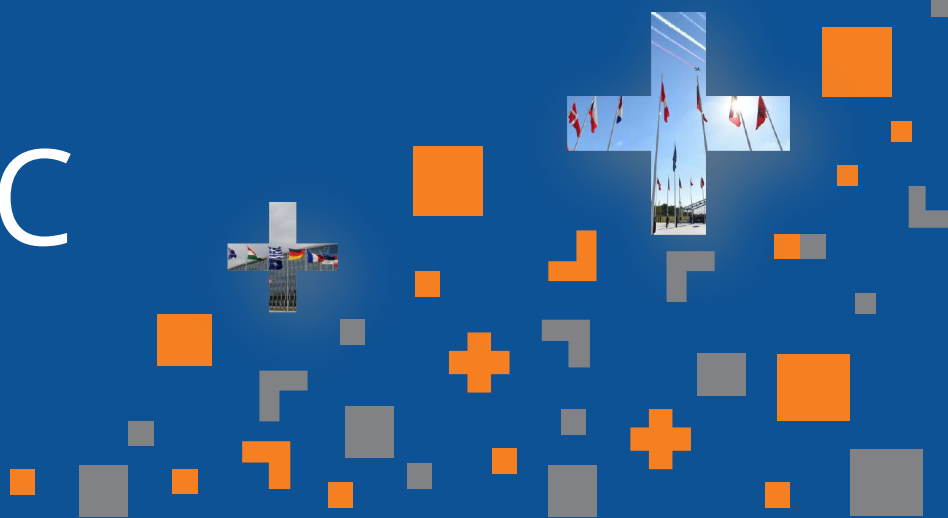




NATO ALMANAC 2018



**BEYOND
THE HORIZON**

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Foreword

“North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is the bedrock of Euro-Atlantic security. The Alliance of 29 nations share a common set of goals and its primary aim is to protect its citizens, and to preserve peace and freedom which did not realise for granted.

On the 4th of April, 2019, NATO will mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Washington Treaty. Although there is much to commemorate, this anniversary also provides a unique opportunity to foster awareness and understanding of NATO, its values, policies, and activities as well as to increase the level of debate on peace, security, and defence related issues.

Beyond the Horizon International Strategic Studies Group (ISSG), a non-partisan, independent and non-profit think & do tank, prepared this Almanac with a specific focus on the organisation's history and its future.

This Almanac is subdivided into four chapters; political developments, military developments, women, peace & security and exercises. Each chapter provides a list of prominent developments in the form of infographics to enable a visual, thus more durable and holistic view. In this context, 2018 has witnessed among others;

- The beginning of formal accession procedure with Northern Macedonia,
- Trident Juncture as NATO's most significant exercise in recent years,
- The various meetings/summits in new NATO HQ including NATO-Russia Council (NRC) to keep up coordination and refrain conflict,
- NATO's incessant endeavours for bilateral cooperation with third states as well as regional/international organisations.

Beyond the Horizon ISSG wishes that Almanac 2018 would be a handy reference for you.”

Woman, Peace and Security Developments of 2018

March



28 March 2018

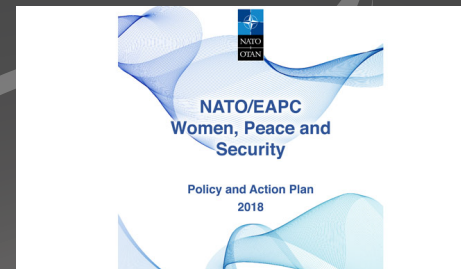
NATO organises second workshop on military guidelines on the prevention of, and response to, conflict-related sexual and gender based violence.



29 March 2018

NATO's Science for Peace and Security Programme celebrates its 60th Anniversary.

July



11 July 2018

A new NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan was endorsed by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit.

October



25 October 2018

The NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security participated in a UN Security Council debate on women's empowerment.

January



08 January 2018

Clare Hutchinson took office as the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security (WPS).



31 January 2018

UN Special Envoy Angelina Jolie visits NATO Headquarters.

May



29 May 2018

The annual conference of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) took place from 29 May to 1 June 2018, in Brussels, Belgium.

September



20 September 2018

NATO Deputy Secretary General visits Azerbaijan for major Women, Peace and Security Conference.

November



07 November 2018

Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security visits NATO's KFOR Mission.

Political Developments in 2018

January



16 January 2018
Qatar signed a security agreement with NATO.



24 January 2018
Canada assumes the chair of NATO's Military Intelligence Committee from Belgium.

March



14 March 2018
The UK briefs the NAC on the use of a nerve agent in Salisbury on 4 March.

May



24 May 2018
The NAC agrees to accept Japan's request to designate its Embassy to Belgium as its Mission to NATO.



31 May 2018
Secretary General welcomes President of Colombia to NATO.

July



10 July 2018
NATO and EU leaders sign joint declaration on EU-NATO cooperation.



11 July 2018
NATO Summit Brussels 2018

September



21 September 2018
NATO Deputy Secretary General visits Georgia.



25 September 2018
NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg attends the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

November



26 November 2018
Kuwait inaugurates diplomatic mission to NATO.



26 November 2018
NATO-Ukraine Commission addresses situation in the Azov Sea.



09 February 2018
NSPA signs Cooperation Agreement with Israel.



15 February 2018
NATO Defence Ministerial gathers in Brussels focusing on the NATO Command Structure, fair burden-sharing and the Alliance's efforts to project stability.



19 February 2018
NATO launched defence capacity building project for Jordan.

February



14 April 2018
The NAC reacts to the actions against the Syrian regime's chemical weapons facilities and capabilities.



18 April 2018
NATO Military Committee visit to Ukraine sends strong message of enduring commitment and support.



27 April 2018
NATO Foreign Ministerial

April



06 June 2018
NATO hosts the African Union for military to military Staff Talks.



07 June 2018
NATO Defence Ministerial.



28 June 2018
NATO Secretary General meets European leaders at European Council in Brussels.

June



30 August 2018
Deputy Secretary General attended Informal Meeting of EU Defence Ministers to discuss cooperation.



03 October 2018
NATO Defence Ministerial



18 October 2018
Formal Accession Talks with Skopje begin at NATO Headquarters.



31 October 2018
NATO-Russia Council meets in Brussels

October



03 December 2018
NATO Foreign Ministerial.



10 December 2018
NATO and the EU sign agreement to support good governance.

December

Military Developments of 2018

January



10 January 2018
NRDC Italy takes over responsibility as the NRF18 Land Component Command.



16 January 2018
The Allied Chiefs of Defence gathered for their first meeting of 2018 in the 178th Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session (MCCS) at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

March



13 March 2018
NATO Allies host Russian arms control inspectors at Tapa military base, where NATO's multinational battle-group is based.



22 March 2018
NATO Multinational Division South-east achieved its full operational capability.

May



10 May 2018
SACEUR was honoured by Atlantic Council for Distinguished Military Leadership.



16 May 2018
NATO Chiefs of Defence met in new NATO Headquarters.

July



02 July 2018
Allied Air Force Chiefs from 27 NATO nations and four partner nations convened at AIRCOM for the NATO Air Chiefs' Symposium.

September



11 September 2018
LANDCOM signs letter of cooperation with Ukraine Land Forces.



28 September 2018
The NATO Military Committee met on 28-30 September 2018 in Warsaw, Poland in Chiefs of Defence format.



28 September 2018
Lt.Gen. Hans-Werner Wiermann to become next Director General of the NATO IMS.

November



26 November 2018
NATO and the EU Director Generals of Military Staff discuss enhanced military cooperation.



05 February 2018
First anniversary of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in Lithuania.



14 February 2018
Belgium joined multinational effort to acquire a European multinational fleet of Airbus multirole tank-er-transport (MRTT) aircraft.



19 April 2018
SACEUR Europe meets with Russian Chief of General Staff.



05 June 2018
Italy and Greece begins NATO air patrols over Montenegro.



07 June 2018
Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands establish Composite Special Forces Component Command.



26 June 2018
NATO unveils new joint air power strategy.



28 August 2018
Latvia hosts arms control experts from Belarus, demonstrating transparency.



03 October 2018
Defence Ministers from thirteen NATO Allies signed a declaration of intent to cooperate on the introduction of Maritime Unmanned Systems.



04 October 2018
Defence Ministers from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create a Multinational Special Aviation Program.



12 December 2018
SACEUR meets with Russian Chief of General Staff, General Gerasimov.

February

April

June

August

October

December

Exercises of 2018



Dynamic Manta, 5-16 March 2018
Annual NATO exercise to train submarine warfare, antisubmarine warfare (ASW) for submarines, ASW surface units and maritime patrol aircraft.



SIIL 18 (HEDGEHOG), 3-14 May 2018
Estonian national land exercise, with participation from 10 Allies and 5 partners with upwards of 10,000 troops involved.



Steadfast Flow, 14-20 May 2018
NATO exercise for military movement operators.



Ramstein Alternate, 3-14 May 2018
Up to 200 personnel from the Combined Operation Air Centre (CAOC) in Torrejon trains NATO Air Policing daily operations, procedures and C2.



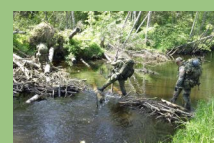
Unified Vision 18, 4-29 June 2018
NATO exercise that aims to test and improve the interoperability of Joint ISR assets and involves fast jets, UAVs, frigates, under-water gliders, etc.



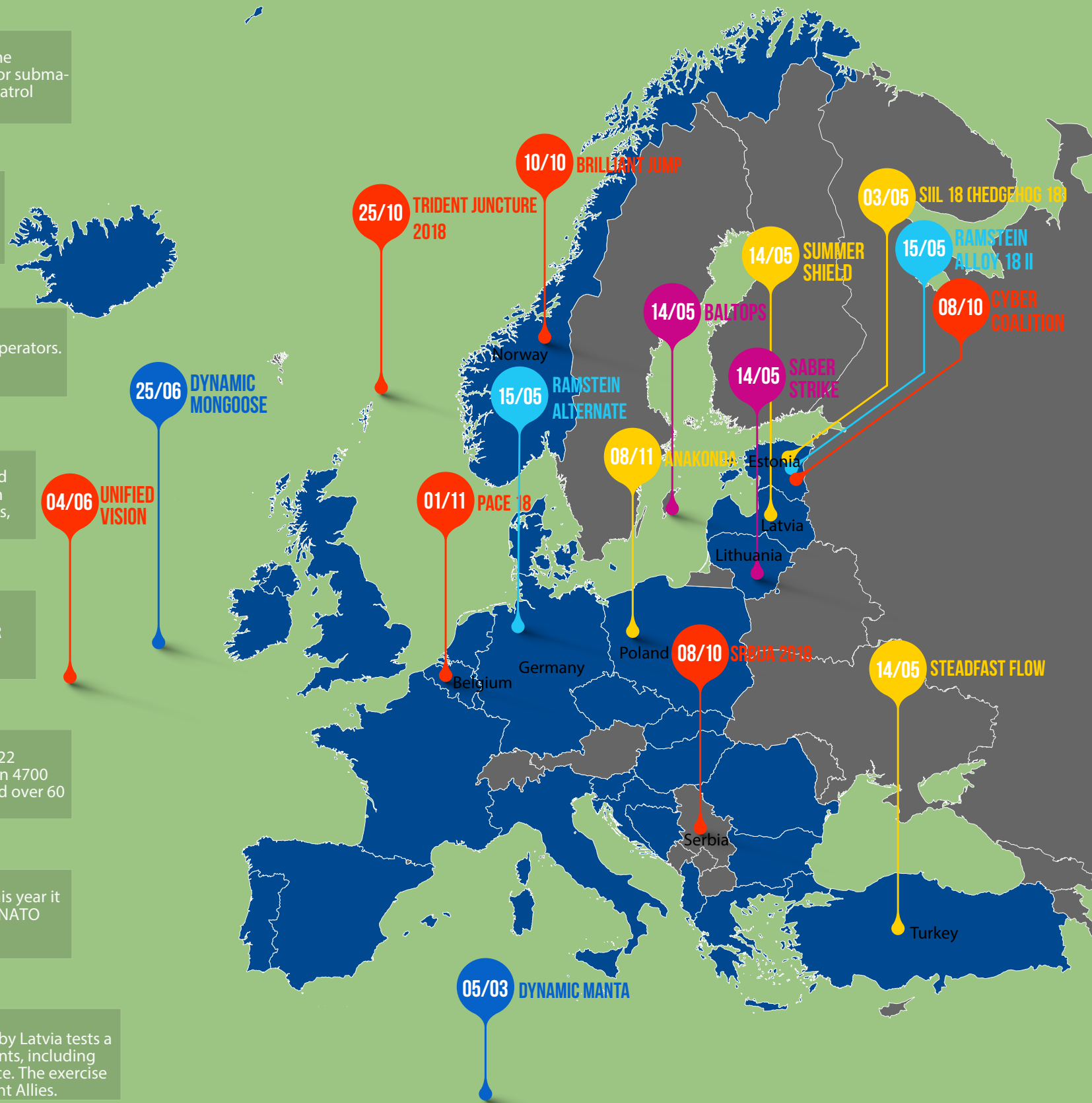
BALTOPS, 3-15 June 2018
U.S. annual maritime-led exercise, with 22 Nations. The exercise involves more than 4700 personnel, 44 ships and submarines, and over 60 air assets.



Saber Strike, 6-23 June 2018
Annual US-led field training exercise. This year it includes around 18,000 troops from 19 NATO nations.



Summer Shield, 7-16 June 2018
This annual multinational exercise led by Latvia tests a broad range of combat support elements, including artillery, air defence and reconnaissance. The exercise involves around 2,500 troops from eight Allies.



Ramstein Alloy 18 II, 25-27 June 2018

The focus of this NATO air exercise is on enhancing the interoperability of NATO and partner countries. Close Air Support and Search and Rescue training is part of the exercise.



Dynamic Mongoose, 25 June 2018

Annual NATO exercise to train submarine warfare, antisubmarine warfare (ASW), ASW surface units and maritime patrol aircraft.



Brilliant Jump, 10-20 October 2018

This NATO exercise involves some 4,000 – 5,000 troops and test the deployment functions of the VJTF, the “spearhead force” within the NATO Response Force (NRF).



Trident Juncture 2018, 25 Oct. 2018

NATO's biggest exercise in recent years, with participation from more than 30 countries. The exercise trains the VJTF and the NATO Response Force 2019 (NRF 2019).



SRBIJA 2018, 8-11 October 2018

The EADRCC exercise takes place in Serbia and includes NATO Allies and partners. The exercise includes water rescue and CBRN detection.



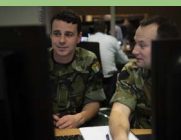
Anakonda, 8-17 November 2018

A Polish exercise which involves approximately 10,000 troops from around ten Allied nations.



Cyber Coalition, November 2018

One of the biggest cyber defence exercises in the world, this NATO exercise trains and tests cyber defenders from across the Alliance.



PACE 18, November 2018

NATO and the European Union will interact at staff level in this exercise, based on a hybrid attack scenario.



WOMAN, PEACE & SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS IN 2018

08 January 2018

NATO Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security takes office

Clare Hutchinson took office as the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security (WPS) on Monday (8 January 2018). A Canadian national, Ms Hutchinson's past experience includes more than ten years as a Gender Adviser with the United Nations, including in Kosovo and Lebanon.

Ms Hutchinson said: "Having worked many years in the United Nations as a partner to NATO, I have testified to the Alliance's growing



commitment and dedication to this agenda. I am eager to build on the successes achieved so far on the WPS mandate."

Announcing Ms Hutchinson's appointment in November, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said: "Empowering women is not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do: it makes countries safer and more stable. NATO is determined to make a difference, including through our training and operations". He added: "We still need to do more, but for NATO, peace and security are not just a man's world."

NATO has long recognised the importance of women in the armed forces: the Committee on Women in NATO Forces was formed in 1976. Today, the Alliance focuses on gender issues in training and operations; works with international organisations like the Red Cross to protect civilians; and aims to promote women at all levels in the organisation, starting with

Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller.

Clare Hutchinson succeeds Ambassador Marriët Schuurman of the Netherlands, who served as Special Representative from 2014 to 2017. The post's inaugural holder was Mari Skåre of Norway, who served from 2012 to 2014.

For more information.

31 January 2018

UN Special Envoy Angelina Jolie visits NATO Headquarters

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Special Envoy Angelina Jolie visited NATO Headquarters in Brussels on Wednesday (31 January 2018). Welcoming Ms. Jolie, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg praised her "strong voice" and "great leadership for empowering women and the fight against sexual violence". Noting that NATO is based on democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and the UN Charter, Mr. Stoltenberg pointed to the Alliance's long record of fighting extremist groups which oppress women, like the Taliban and ISIS. "NATO has the responsibility to be a leading protector of women's rights," he said.

In a joint meeting of the North Atlantic Council and the Military Committee, Ms. Jolie and Allied representatives focused on NATO's efforts to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, and discussed what more the Alliance will do. Following the meeting, Secretary General Stoltenberg announced that "Special Envoy Jolie and I have decided to work together, focusing on three points: training, monitoring and reporting, and awareness".

NATO has extensive pre-deployment training for soldiers and civilians in the field, and deploys gender advisers to operations. NATO will work to strengthen existing training on combatting sexual violence. Monitoring and reporting is a core task for NATO commanders, and the Alliance will work to be faster and more systematic in ways so that perpetrators can be brought to justice. Increased awareness will help put gender violence higher on the agenda and contribute to



changing behaviour. Mr. Stoltenberg stressed: "we must shine a bright light on these darkest of crimes".

At NATO, Special Envoy Jolie is also meeting with Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller, as well as the Alliance's new Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, Clare Hutchinson. Ms. Jolie will also meet with the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, and receive briefings from NATO's gender advisers in Afghanistan and Kosovo.

In December, Secretary General Stoltenberg and Special Envoy Jolie published a joint op-ed entitled "Why NATO must defend women's rights".

For more information.

28 March 2018

NATO organises second workshop on military guidelines on the prevention of, and response to, conflict-related sexual and gender based violence

On 28 March 2018, the Belgium Royal Military Academy in Brussels hosted the second workshop on military guidelines on the prevention of, and response to, Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.

The workshop allowed NATO personnel, international and field subject matter experts, current gender advisors, representatives of UN, EU, ICRC and civil society to come together, discuss and evaluate the progress made by NATO in regards to the implementation of the NATO Military Guidelines on the prevention of, and response to, Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and the work that still lies ahead.

During the Opening Session, Commodore Darren Bone, Secretary to the NATO Military Committee and Executive Coordinator to the NATO International Military Staff (IMS), welcomed participants and recognised that Conflict-Related SGBV is part of the wide continuum of violence. He also highlighted that "NATO's aim is to reduce the risk of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and improve the responsive measures that take protection needs into consideration".

NATO and its partners are taking actions to promote the role of women in peace and security. This demonstrates their commitment to support the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and related Resolutions (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2422) that call upon all parties of armed conflicts to take special measures to protect women, men, boys and girls from such violence. On the 1st of June 2015, NATO adopted the Military Guidelines as the recognition of the need to prevent and respond to Conflict-Related SGBV.

These Military Guidelines are being implemented in all of NATO's operations, missions and activities. "From a military perspective, the main message is that gender perspective is an important element of operational planning. It is not only



about the ethical imperative but also about the operational efficiency of NATO. Conflict-Related SGBV affects NATO mission's success so it is more important than ever to implement these military guidelines. Empowering and protecting women is not just the right thing to do but the smart thing to do", stressed Brigadier General Gianmarco Badialetti, Deputy Director of the Operations and Planning Divisions of the NATO International Military Staff.

Ambassador Clare Hutchinson, NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, concluded the panel discussion by reminding the audience that "Conflict-Related SGBV is not just an evitable consequence of conflict but that it can also be one of the root causes of it. We have to translate these guidelines into operational effective practices that will enhance the protection of women and girls because if we don't address this head on, this violation of the human rights will continue to torment whole populations".

For more information.

29 March 2018

Science for Peace and Security Programme

The Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme promotes dialogue and practical cooperation between NATO member states and partner nations based on scientific research, technological innovation and knowledge exchange. The SPS Programme offers funding, expert advice and support to tailor-made, security-relevant activities that respond to NATO's strategic objectives.

The SPS Programme promotes security-related practical cooperation based on scientific research, innovation and knowledge exchange within NATO's wide network of partner countries.

It connects scientists, experts and officials from Allied and partner countries to address security challenges, such as cyber defence, counter-terrorism or defence against CBRN agents; to support NATO-led missions and operations; to foster the development of security-related advanced technologies such as sensors and detectors, nanotechnologies,

unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs); and to address human and social aspects of security such as the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325).



In this regard, the SPS Programme greatly benefits from the expertise of other NATO agencies, divisions and delegations, and bodies such as centres of excellence.

The Programme provides the Alliance with a unique channel for non-military communication, including in situations or regions where other forms of dialogue are difficult to establish. It enables NATO to become actively involved in such regions, often serving as the first concrete link between NATO and a new partner.

The SPS Programme has evolved continuously since its foundation in 1958. To this end, a comprehensive reorientation of the Programme took place in 2013, which gave SPS a renewed focus on larger-scale strategic activities beyond purely scientific cooperation.

For more information.

29 May 2018

The annual conference of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives

The annual conference of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) took place from 29 May to 1 June 2018, in Brussels, Belgium. This year's theme was "A 360 degree approach to gender". The conference aimed to raise awareness of gender initiatives across the political, military and social domains in NATO, the United Nations (UN), the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and their respective nations and partners.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg opened the event, which brought together more than 140 participants from 43 NATO member and partner nations. Discussions focussed on progress, challenges and the way forward in the integration of gender perspectives in NATO's framework, armed forces and military operations.

Secretary General Stoltenberg stressed the importance of gender perspectives for NATO and Allies, saying that the topic would also be discussed in the margins of the Summit in July. He also stated that NATO's pre-deployment training, the deployment of gender advisors and the recruitment of women in the armed forces were essential to strengthen national armed forces. Referring to his meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Special Envoy Angelina Jolie earlier this year, he emphasised the need to raise awareness regarding conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and its monitoring and reporting.

Deputy Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Lieutenant General Steven M. Shepro stressed the relevance of the conference. "Meetings like this one, with national representatives, NATO and other international organisations' subject matters experts, academia, and civil society, provide a necessary forum to gauge the progress made in integrating gender perspectives into daily work," he said. "Protecting and empowering women needs to be a common endeavour and should not be neglected because diversity of



qualifications and resources are primordial to ensure that peace and security are achieved and maintained,” he continued.

The Committee welcomed for the first time special representatives of international organisations, including NATO Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security Claire Hutchinson, OSCE Senior Advisor on Gender Issues Amarsanaa Darisuren, Head of the UN Liaison Office for Peace and Security in Brussels Rory Keane, and European External Action Service Principal Advisor on Gender and UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security Ambassador Mara Marinaki.

A second panel discussion focused on the conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence with the representatives on NATO, UN Women, NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security and UN Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Other small working groups concentrated on specific gender-related topics.

For more information

11 July 2018

NATO/EAPC Women, Peace and Security Policy and Action Plan 2018

At NATO, we have taken up the challenge of advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda. From the first NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan (2007) to this current iteration (2018), we have reaffirmed our commitment to the principles of Women, Peace and Security by putting those principles into practice. A new NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan was endorsed by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in July 2018. The Office of the NATO Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security is pleased to present this revised NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan. Thank you to everyone involved who worked with the Office to make this possible.

For more information.

20 September 2018

NATO Deputy Secretary General visits Azerbaijan for major Women, Peace and Security Conference

NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller is in Baku, Azerbaijan today (20 September 2018) to meet with senior government officials and to address a major international conference on Women, Peace and Security.



The conference, jointly organised by NATO and Azerbaijan is the first since NATO leaders agreed a revised Women, Peace and Security Policy and Action Plan at the Brussels Summit in July 2018.

“Integration, inclusiveness and integrity. These will be the watch-words as we move forward with our agenda to make gender equality an everyday reality for women and girls everywhere,” said the Deputy Secretary General in her speech.

While in Azerbaijan, the Deputy Secretary General met with President Aliyev, Vice President Mrs Aliyeva, Speaker of Parliament Mr. Asadov, Defence Minister Hasanov and other senior officials.

She also participated in the closing ceremony of the Jeyranchol NATO/PfP Trust Fund project and awarded certificates to Afghan officials and academics for a course devoted to the civilian oversight of the armed forces in the Afghan context. This course took place in the framework of DEEP Afghanistan.

For more information.

25 October 2018

NATO highlights importance of Women, Peace and Security in UN Security Council debate

Clare Hutchinson, the NATO Secretary General’s Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, participated in a UN Security Council debate on women’s empowerment in New York on Thursday (25 October 2018). Ms. Hutchinson stressed NATO’s strong commitment to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, noting the adoption of a new Policy and Action Plan by Allied leaders in July. She said: “the Women, Peace and Security agenda needs collective action to ensure tangible progress. We must be courageous in our work together to achieve sustainable and lasting peace, not only for women, but for everyone.”



For more information.

07 November 2018

Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security visits NATO's KFOR Mission



Clare Hutchinson, Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, visited NATO's peace-keeping mission in Kosovo (KFOR) on Wednesday (7 November 2018). Ms. Hutchinson discussed the promotion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda with the commander of KFOR, Major General Salvatore Cuoci. The commander briefed the Special Representative on the many initiatives to ensure a gender perspective is incorporated across all KFOR operations and training.

Clare Hutchinson, Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, visited NATO's peace-keeping mission in Kosovo (KFOR) on

Wednesday (7 November 2018). Ms. Hutchinson discussed the promotion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda with the commander of KFOR, Major General Salvatore Cuoci. The commander briefed the Special Representative on the many initiatives to ensure a gender perspective is incorporated across all KFOR operations and training.

KFOR supports the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and is committed to show the leadership required to further this mandate. Progress has been made in integrating gender perspectives into military planning and decision making processes, and through the deployment of a Gender Adviser to the Commander. KFOR has also strengthened its engagement with women in civil society organizations, to enhance its operational effectiveness

During her visit to Kosovo, Ms. Hutchinson also addressed a meeting of the Kosovo Women's Network on "NATO's Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 - Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda." Ms. Hutchinson also met senior officials with the United Nations Mission in Kosovo.

For more information.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN 2018

16 January 2018

Qatar signs security agreement with NATO

The State of Qatar signed a security agreement with NATO at the Alliance's Headquarters in Brussels on Tuesday (16 January 2018).



At a signing ceremony, Brigadier General Tariq Khalid M. F. Alobaidli, Head of the International Military Cooperation Department, Armed Forces of the State of Qatar, and NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller, stressed the importance of NATO's cooperation with Qatar in the framework of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI).

This security agreement provides the framework for the protection of exchange of classified information, as defined by all 29 member countries. These agreements are signed by NATO partner countries that wish to engage in cooperation with NATO. All four ICI partner countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and U.A.E.) have now signed individual security agreements with NATO. This enables the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programmes (IPCP) of the ICI countries with NATO to be implemented as effectively as possible.

For more information.

24 January 2018

Canada assumes chair of Military Intelligence Committee

Canada assumed the chair of NATO's Military

Intelligence Committee from Belgium on Wednesday 24 January 2018. A handover ceremony took place in the premises of the Joint Delegation of Canada to NATO in Brussels.

Rear-Admiral Scott Bishop (CAN NA), Incoming Chairman of the MIC; Mr. Arndt Freytag von Loringhoven, Assistant Secretary General for Intelligence and Security, Co-Chair of the MIC; Lieutenant-General Eddy Testelmans (BEL AR), 2017 Chairman of the MIC

Read-Admiral Scott Bishop, Canadian Navy, will serve as Chairman. He said: "Canada is truly honoured to chair the NATO Military Intelligence Committee together with the Joint Intelligence and Security Division (JISD), and our team is dedicated to the successful attainment of Alliance objectives. I want to thank Lieutenant-General Testelmans for his personal commitment to NATO Intelligence and the outstanding efforts that Belgium exerted in supporting NATO through 2017."

"There is no doubt that NATO Intelligence has positively transformed following the creation of the JISD and through the leadership of General Testelmans and Assistant Secretary General Freytag von Loringhoven. As the new MIC Chair, we intend to build on the great work accomplished by Belgium, and our team at Canadian Forces Intelligence Command is prepared to build on their accomplishments and to continue the successful attainment of NATO objectives with our Co-Chair, ASG Freytag von Loringhoven, and his staff," he concluded.



For more information.

09 February 2018

NSPA signs Cooperation Agreement with Israel

The NATO Support and Procurement Agency General Manager Mr. Peter Dohmen, together with the Israeli Ambassador to NATO and EU, H.E. Mr. Roni Leshno-Yaar, signed the 'Agreement between the Government of the State of Israel and the NATO Support and Procurement Organisation on Support Cooperation' in Brussels this week. The agreement establishes the legal framework and the basic principles for the support co-operation between Israel and the NATO Support and Procurement Organization.



Ambassador Leshno-Yaar: "Today's event is the result of great and lengthy efforts on both sides to enable us to increase the cooperation between Israel and NATO, and specifically with the NSPA. We see the signing of this agreement as a major and important development in our practical cooperation with NATO that will open the door for closer engagement between Israel and NATO allies."

With this agreement in place Israel can explore more formally the capabilities, products and services offered by NSPA. "This Cooperation Agreement will enable the further discussions between our Agency's logistics experts and will not only benefit Israel but can also offer potential economies of scale to other NSPO nations," said Mr. Dohmen.

The ceremony was also attended by the Defence Attache of Israel to NATO, Colonel Arik Hen, and Regional Director, SIBAT, Mrs. Merav Dar. From NSPA, the General Manager was accompanied by the Programme Manager of the Communications, Air and Missile Defence Programme Mr. Manfred Eggers, NSPA's Legal Advisor Mrs. Beate Loesch, and the NSPA Representative to NATO HQ Mr. Guy Hoffmann.

For more information.

15 Februrary 2018

NATO Defence Ministers take decisions to strengthen the Alliance

NATO Defence Ministers wrapped up two days of talks in Brussels on Thursday (15 February 2018), focused on the NATO Command Structure, fair burden-sharing and the Alliance's efforts to project stability beyond its borders.

On Wednesday, ministers took decisions to modernise the NATO Command Structure, in response to a changed security environment. The adapted Command Structure will place a greater focus on maritime security, logistics and military mobility, and cyber defence. Ministers agreed to establish a new Joint Force Command for the Atlantic, to help protect sea lines of communication between North America and Europe, as well as a new support Command for logistics, reinforcement and military mobility. In June, Defence Ministers will decide on the required timelines, locations and increased staff levels.

Burden-sharing was also a key topic of discussion. Ministers took stock of progress in implementing NATO's Defence Investment Pledge. By 2024, 15 Allies are expected to spend 2% of their GDP or more on defence. "We are



moving in the right direction, and I look forward to even more progress in the years ahead," said Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

Later, Ministers were joined by EU High Representative Federica Mogherini and representatives from Finland and Sweden for a discussion on NATO-EU cooperation. "We are committed to stepping up our cooperation on military mobility, cyber defence and in countering terrorist threats," said Mr. Stoltenberg. Allies also addressed recent EU decisions on defence and how to ensure their complementary with NATO's efforts.

On Thursday, Ministers discussed NATO's role in projecting stability and fighting terrorism. Allies agreed to start planning for a NATO training mission in Iraq, at the request of the Iraqi government and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. A mission will make current training efforts more sustainable, with better resourcing and a well-established process for Allies to contribute forces. "We will also plan to help the Iraqi forces become increasingly professional by establishing specialist military academies and schools," said Mr. Stoltenberg. As part of their discussions, Allies also considered NATO's other priorities in the South. "We agreed that we need to improve our ability to react to future crises in the region, including with enhanced planning and exercises," said the Secretary General.

For more information,

19 February 2018

NATO launches defence capacity building project for Jordan

NATO launched a Defence Capacity Building Project on “Enhancing Jordan’s capacity for Crisis Management, Continuity of Government and Exercises” on Monday (19 February 2018). The three-year project will assist the Jordanian National Centre for Security and Crisis Management in achieving full operational capability, and will enhance Jordan’s capacity in national resilience, continuity of government and crisis management.

At the project initiation signing ceremony, Brigadier General Adnan Al-Abbadi, Vice Chairman of the Jordanian National Center for Security and Crisis Management, and NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General Dr. John Manza, stressed the importance of NATO's cooperation with Jordan in its efforts towards institutionalizing national crisis management capabilities.

Contributions by four Allies – the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, and Turkey – to the NATO Defence Capacity Building Trust Fund made this flagship project possible.

Initiation of this project represents an important milestone for the NATO-Jordan Defence Capacity Building Package and in the strategic partnership between NATO and Jordan.

For more information.

14 March 2018

Statement by the North Atlantic Council on the use of a nerve agent in Salisbury

The UK briefed the North Atlantic Council today on the use of a nerve agent in Salisbury on 4 March.

The UK confirmed the use of a military-grade nerve agent of a type developed by Russia and briefed Allies that it was highly likely that Russia was responsible. The UK also confirmed that this was an indiscriminate and reckless attack against the United Kingdom, putting the lives of innocent civilians at risk.

Allies expressed deep concern at the first offensive use of a nerve agent on Alliance territory since NATO's foundation. Allies expressed solidarity with the UK, offered their support in the conduct of the ongoing investigation, and called on Russia to address the UK's questions including providing full and complete disclosure of the Novichok programme to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Allies agreed that the attack was a clear breach of international norms and agreements.

Since its entry into force in 1997, the Chemical Weapons Convention has become one of the pillars of the global non-proliferation regime. The Convention prohibits the development, transfer and use of chemical weapons. States Parties to the Convention take on a duty to uphold and enforce its fundamental tenets. States Parties commit not to develop, produce or otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons, nor to transfer, directly or indirectly, chemical weapons to anyone. States Parties also undertake not to engage in any military preparations to use chemical weapons, nor to commit to assist, encourage or induce anyone to engage in prohibited activity.

NATO has repeatedly condemned the use of chemical weapons in Syria and called on those responsible to be held to account. NATO regards any use of chemical weapons as a threat to international peace and security.

For more information.

04 April 2018

69th anniversary of NATO



Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg marked the 69th anniversary of NATO's founding with an official visit to Ottawa on Wednesday (4 April 2018). Speaking alongside Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Mr. Stoltenberg called the Alliance "a guarantor of peace, providing security and preventing conflict." He welcomed Canada's role as a founding member of NATO, and that Canada continues to make essential contributions to the transatlantic bond and to international security.

The Secretary General thanked Canada for leading NATO's multinational battlegroup in Latvia. He further thanked Canada for providing air and maritime capabilities to the Alliance; for supporting partners including Ukraine, Afghanistan and Iraq; and for working to keep gender issues high on NATO's agenda. Mr. Stoltenberg also welcomed the Canadian government's increased defence spending, and its commitment to make further increases.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Stoltenberg participated in a Town Hall event at the University of Ottawa, where he delivered remarks and engaged with students. He also met with parliamentarians and civil society representatives at an event hosted by the NATO Association of Canada and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, marking the 69th anniversary of the Alliance.

While in Ottawa, the Secretary General also met with Governor General Julie Payette; General Jonathan Vance, Chief of the Defence Staff, and other senior officials.

For more information.

14 April 2018

Statement by the North Atlantic Council on Actions taken against the use of chemical weapons in Syria

In the North Atlantic Council today the United States, France and United Kingdom briefed Allies on their joint military action on 14 April. They briefed that a significant body of information indicated that the Syrian regime was responsible for the attack against civilians in Douma on 7 April, and that their military action was limited to the Syrian regime's facilities enabling the production and employment of chemical weapons. The three Allies emphasized that there was no practicable alternative to the use of force.



Allies expressed their full support for this action intended to degrade the Syrian regime's chemical weapons capability and deter further chemical weapon attacks against the people of Syria. Chemical weapons cannot be used with impunity or become normalized. They are an immediate danger to the Syrian people and to our collective security. Allies regret that the

mandate of the Joint Investigative Mechanism, established by UNSC Resolution 2235 (2015), to identify perpetrators of chemical attacks, was not renewed in November 2017. Allies support international mechanisms to establish responsibility and prevent impunity for the use of chemical weapons.

Allies strongly condemned the repeated use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, and called for those responsible to be held to account. Allies also called on the Syrian regime and its backers to allow rapid, sustained and unhindered humanitarian access.

Despite sustained diplomatic efforts, the Syrian regime's repeated use of chemical weapons against civilians has contributed to appalling human suffering since the start of the conflict in 2011. The use of such weapons is in flagrant violation of international standards and non-proliferation norms, multiple UN Security Council Resolutions, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, which Syria ratified in 2013. NATO considers any use of chemical weapons by State or non-State actors to be a threat to international peace and security.

Allies reiterate their support for UN-led efforts to achieve a lasting political resolution to the conflict that is consistent with UNSCR 2254 (2015) and the Geneva Communiqué (2012) and call on all members of the UN Security Council to uphold their responsibilities. In this regard, the Allies call on all supporters of the Syrian regime, notably Russia, to exercise responsibility to ensure that the Syrian regime participates constructively in the UN-led Geneva process.

Allies took this opportunity to restate our commitment to the Coalition to Defeat ISIS/Da'esh, as defeating terrorism in all its forms remains a key objective for our countries and a key challenge for the stability of the region.

For more information.

18 April 2018

NATO Military Committee visit to Ukraine sends strong message of enduring commitment and support

On 18 & 19 April, the NATO Military Committee visited Lviv in Ukraine. During the two day trip, NATO's Military Representatives met with General Viktor Muzhenko, Chief of Defence and with Mr Alexander Hug, Deputy Head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. The Military Committee also visited



the National Lviv Land Forces Academy and the Yavoriv International Peacekeeping and Security Centre in Starychi where they received briefings from representatives of the Multinational Joint Commission and the Joint Multinational Training Group Ukraine. The 29 Allies concluded their visit with a joint NATO Military Committee meeting with Ukraine.

The NATO Military Committee first visited the National Lviv Land Forces Academy where they were greeted by the Commandant, Lieutenant General Tkachuk during a welcome ceremony with an Honour Guard. Following Welcome Remarks by the Commandant, the Governor of Lviv, Mr Oleh Synutka and the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, General Petr Pavel, the 29 Military Representatives were briefed by Mr Alexander Hug, Deputy Head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine on the security situation in Eastern Ukraine. General Pavel acknowledged that the situation is of great concern to NATO, "civilians and military personnel are suffering and dying. This cannot

continue. There is no military solution to this conflict. Peace can only be achieved through dialogue and full respect of Ukraine's national sovereignty and territorial integrity".

At the wreath-laying ceremony, General Pavel paid tribute to the fallen soldiers, stressing that "It was a special honour for me to pay tribute to the men and women who gave their lives to preserve freedom and peace". General Pavel then proceeded to plant a tree on the grounds of the Academy as a symbol of peace. Later that day, the Military Committee was joined by General Viktor Muzhenko, Ukrainian Chief of Defence and host of the visit.

The second day of the visit started at the Yavoriv International Peacekeeping and Security Centre (IPSC) in Starychi. The NATO Military Committee received a presentation on the Centre's activities from its chief, Colonel Igor Slisarchuk. General Pavel commended the IPSC for its work highlighting how "this Centre embodies the spirit of military cooperation. The training done here prepares Ukrainian troops for all military cooperation activities, international, multinational and NATO exercises as well as peacekeeping missions". The NATO Military Representatives then received a tour of the facilities and where able to witness some of the training provided to the Ukrainian forces.

The day concluded with a joint NATO Military Committee meeting with Ukraine where the NATO Allies received briefings on the ongoing implementation of the Ukrainian Defence reform process and were able to interact in engage in a dialogue with General Mushenko and his staff. In his remarks, the Military Committee Chairman recognised "Ukraine's efforts to implement major reforms. These are not easy tasks, but we are seeing progress. The work done here to meet NATO standards will allow Ukraine to be better able to defend itself and to increase the ability of Ukrainian and NATO forces to work together".

Before bidding their farewells, General Pavel and General Muzhenko held a press conference to share the discussions and outcomes of the meetings.

For more information.

25 April 2018

Director General of the NATO International Military Staff visits Georgia

Lieutenant General Jan Broeks, Director General of the NATO International Military Staff visited Georgia on 25 April 2018. During his visit, Lieutenant General Broeks met with Mr. Levan Izoria, Minister of Defence and Colonel Nikoloz Janjgava, First Deputy Chief of Defence, and other high-ranking Georgian officials. The Director General also visited the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre (JTEC).



While in Tbilisi, Lieutenant General Broeks, Director General of the NATO International Military Staff, met with Mr. Levan Izoria, Minister of Defence. Discussions focussed on progress

of ongoing defence reforms, especially with regard to the implementation of the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP). The package aims to strengthen Georgia's capabilities by offering concrete support, advice and assistance in defence capacity building. General Broeks also thanked Georgia "for its strong commitment to NATO. Georgia has been actively contributing to KFOR and Resolute Support Mission and we are grateful to have such a valued partner".

In his meeting with Colonel Nikoloz Janjgava, First Deputy Chief of Defence, Lieutenant General Broeks was briefed on Georgia's Total Defence Approach. He underlined how impressed he is by this top-to-bottom approach to defence, "this is the way to ensure a whole-of-nation approach & the effective use of all national resources to defend your country".

The visit to the Georgian Ministry of Defence was also an opportunity for Lieutenant General Broeks to sit down with Captain Temur Kvantaliani, Commander of the Georgian Coastguard who provided an update on the security situation in the Black Sea and Georgian maritime security. Later, Lieutenant General Broeks addressed the General Staff on "NATO's continued adaptation".

In the afternoon, Lieutenant General visited the Joint NATO-Georgia Training and Evaluation Centre (JTEC) which is a key component of the SNGP. The Centre provides combat training and conducts activities to enhance interoperability between Georgian Forces and Armed Forces from NATO countries and partners. The General also had an opportunity meet with the SNGP Core Team and receive a comprehensive briefing on ongoing progress and projects.

For more information.

Good evening.

We have just finished two productive sessions of the meeting of Foreign Ministers of NATO this afternoon. We had a strategic discussion on Afghanistan. Including the Afghan peace process. Progress on the country's reform agenda. And the regional context. Last weekend's horrendous attack at a voter registration centre in Kabul was a stark reminder of the security challenges that Afghanistan still faces. At the same time, there has been progress. Thanks to our efforts over the years, the Afghans are fully in charge of their security and lead military operations.

Just a few years ago, NATO had over 100,000 combat troops in the country. We now have around 16,000 in a training role. NATO's continued presence creates the conditions for peace and reconciliation. We have welcomed President Ghani's unprecedented offer of peace talks to the Taliban. A step he took on the confidence provided by NATO's support. Despite the fact that they have not yet taken up

the President's offer, we urge the Taliban to take part in an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process.

Pakistan's role will be essential. We encourage Pakistan to take additional steps. To close all terrorist sanctuaries and prevent terrorist financial flows and cross-border attacks. We also encourage Iran and Russia to contribute to regional stability. Fair, inclusive and timely elections are also essential for Afghanistan's progress. We welcome the announcement that parliamentary elections will take place in October. And we encourage Afghanistan to continue on the path to reform. Including the promotion of human rights, good governance, and fighting corruption.

Today, we also held a discussion on our Open Door policy. We discussed the progress of Bosnia Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ and Georgia.

Ukraine has also expressed its aspiration to join NATO, and ministers also addressed that. Our Open Door policy is a historic success. It has brought stability, peace and prosperity to millions across the Euro-Atlantic region. And built greater cooperation. As demonstrated by the accession of Montenegro to NATO last year, NATO's door remains open. For a country to join NATO it takes one country to apply. And 29 Allies to agree. Nobody else has a say, or a veto.



We have just held our last Council meeting in this headquarters. After more than half-a-century in this building, we are moving into our new headquarters across the street. The new headquarters embodies NATO's transformation for the 21st century. As one chapter in NATO's history comes to a close, another one opens. I want to express our gratitude to the government and the people of Belgium. For their continued hospitality to our Alliance.

For more information.

24 May 2018

The North Atlantic Council agreed to accept Japan's request to designate its Embassy to Belgium as its Mission to NATO.

The North Atlantic Council agreed on Thursday (24 May 2018) to accept Japan's request to designate its Embassy to Belgium as its Mission to NATO. The Ambassador of Japan to Belgium will be the Head of the Mission of Japan to NATO.

In 2011, Allies decided to invite all partner nations to establish Missions to NATO. Since then more than two dozen partners have done so, in order to further deepen ties with the Alliance.



Japan is NATO's longest-standing partner outside Europe, with deepening cooperation since the early 1990s. Over the years, the Alliance and Japan have worked together to stabilize Afghanistan, to counter piracy off the coast of Somalia, and to strengthen partners like Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, and Jordan. Today, Japan has liaison officers at NATO, including at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Belgium, and Maritime Command in the United Kingdom. Japan also contributes a staff officer in support of the Alliance's work on Women, Peace and Security.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg visited Tokyo in October 2017, where he met with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Foreign Minister Taro Kono and Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera. During the visit, both sides agreed to deepen cooperation in areas of common concern, including maritime security, cyber defence, nuclear non-proliferation, and gender mainstreaming in peace missions.

For more information,

31 May 2018

Secretary General welcomes President of Colombia to NATO

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomed President Iván Duque Márquez of Colombia to NATO headquarters on Tuesday (23 October 2018) for talks on strengthening the cooperation between Colombia and the Alliance. Colombia is NATO's first partner in Latin America. "Our cooperation is good for Colombia and it is good for NATO," said the Secretary General.

For more information,

31 May 2018

NATO-Russia Council meets in Brussels

The NATO-Russia Council, which brings together all 29 NATO Allies and Russia, met in Brussels on Friday (25 January 2019). NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who chaired the meeting, noted that Allies and Russia discussed two important



topics: Ukraine and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. "On both of these issues, Allies and Russia fundamentally disagree, but that is exactly why it is important to talk – to address concerns, increase predictability and reduce risks," he said.

For more information.

06 June 2018

NATO hosts the African Union for Military to Military Staff Talks

On 6 June 2018, the Cooperative Security Division of the NATO International Military Staff (IMS) hosted the annual NATO – African Union (AU) Military to Military staff talks with a delegation from the AU and 30 representatives from other NATO bodies.

The staff to staff talks were co-chaired by Major General Jan Kazimierz Toft, Director of the NATO IMS Cooperative Security Division and Major General Trust Mugoba, Chief of Staff of the African Standby Force and the Chief Military Adviser to the Commissioner for Peace and Security. During his opening address, Major General Toft took the opportunity to stress "the importance of a mutually beneficial approach for the future of NATO-AU cooperation as well as the importance of trust in this partnership". For his part, Major General Mugoba thanked NATO for hosting the 5th edition of the Mil-to-Mil talks and pledged to lead the effort to strengthen and enhance the cooperation between the AU and NATO.

The discussions focused on the significant progress made in the last year and reflections on possible areas for future improvements. Particular emphasis was placed on identifying common challenges and threats to both NATO and the AU, and the consequent continued need for complementary strategies and expertise between both parties. "To achieve this complementarity, it is indispensable to continue engaging in extensive political dialogue and practical military cooperation to maintain the current momentum of an improving relationship", concluded Major General Toft.

By the end of the proceedings, the participants had formed a common list of actions to be carried out in the coming year and beyond. Both co-chairs agreed to declare the Mil-to-Mil talks a successful exercise in fruitful dialogue and mutual understanding, and recognized the need for concerted planning and action to solve present and future issues of common concern. In his closing remarks, Major General Mugoba

invited Major General Toft to a follow-on event in 2019 at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa.



Representatives from the NATO International Staff as well as from NATO Allied Command Transformation, the NATO Strategic Direction South Hub Naples, Allied Joint Force Command Naples and SHAPE's (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre were also present and took an active part in the discussions.

For more information.

07 June 2018

NATO Defence Ministerial.

Press conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg following the meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in Defence Ministers' session

Good morning.

We just finished a productive meeting on NATO-EU cooperation. We were joined by High Representative Federica Mogherini and by our colleagues from Finland and Sweden.

Over the past two years, NATO and the European Union have achieved an unprecedented level of cooperation. This is natural. We have many shared members. We have shared interests and challenges and more than 90% of EU citizens live in a NATO country. So we have been working together on 74 concrete areas of cooperation. Including hybrid and cyber, maritime operations, fighting terrorism, exercises and military

mobility and women, peace and security. The progress has been substantial. For example, our organisations now exchange real-time warnings about cyber-attacks and malware. We have stepped up our cooperation to enhance training, exercises and strategic communications to counter hybrid threats. And NATO and the EU are cooperating on maritime operations.

In the central Mediterranean, our Operation Sea Guardian is supporting the EU's Operation Sophia. And in the Aegean, NATO and the EU are cooperating to counter people smuggling. We discussed how NATO and the European Union could cooperate even more closely going forward. In July, I plan to sign a new joint declaration with President Tusk and President Juncker. To set out a shared vision for how we will continue to address our most pressing security challenges. Military mobility is one area that will become a flagship in our cooperation. Both NATO and the EU have an interest in making it happen and both of us can make tangible contributions. We need to deal with a wide range of issues – from legislation to infrastructure. So I have recently shared with my EU counterparts and all NATO Allies our infrastructure requirements for transportation, including for bridges, roads and runways. And ultimately it is for our nations to make the decisions that will enable us to move across Europe as quickly as we need to, in an unpredictable security environment.

We also discussed what more we can do to complement each other's efforts in the south.

For example, both NATO and the EU are increasing our presence in Iraq. The EU is rightly focusing on the civilian security sector.



While NATO's focus is on capability building of the Iraqi defence and security structures.

The professionalization of the military education system, and training the trainers for the military. Robust coordination and consultation between NATO and the EU will help ensure that complementarity continues. With our teams working closely together. Which will help us meet the needs of our Iraqi partners and support them to ensure that ISIS does not return.

We also heard from Vice President Mogherini about the EU's broader efforts on defence. This will include more investment, better capabilities, and fairer burden-sharing. I welcome these steps. Taken forward in the right way, NATO-EU cooperation and EU defence efforts can enhance security for all of us.

For more information.

25 June 2018

Secretary General welcomes stronger NATO-EU cooperation

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomed strengthened cooperation between the EU and NATO ahead of a meeting with EU Defence Ministers on Monday (25 June 2018). The Secretary General noted that he will sign a new Joint Declaration with the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission at the NATO Summit, setting out a shared vision for further cooperation.

He added that military mobility is a key area of NATO-EU cooperation. "We need to be able to



move forces quickly throughout Europe, when needed," he said, noting that NATO has invested two billion euros in projects supporting military mobility over the last four years. Addressing the issue of enlargement, the Secretary General said he expected that an invitation to start accession talks would be extended to the government in Skopje at the NATO Summit.

For more information.

28 June 2018

NATO Secretary General meets European leaders at EU Council in Brussels

Arriving at the European Council on Thursday (28 June 2018) the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said he will be discussing NATO-EU cooperation with European leaders. He highlighted that NATO-EU cooperation is making a lot of progress and that both organisations are working together on migration, tackling the root causes and helping to stabilise the neighbourhood, including by training local forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.

He said that both organisations are also cooperating in the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean, and that NATO is providing help to the EU Operation Sophia in the Mediterranean, with ten ships and maritime surveillance aircraft currently in the region.

The Secretary General stressed that NATO and the EU are also cooperating on "military mobility, infrastructure, legal hurdles, to make sure that we are able to move forces quickly through Europe if needed".

Speaking about NATO-EU cooperation in the Western Balkans, the Secretary General said "We have been working together there for many, many years. And it is really encouraging to see that there is progress, there is some hope". He announced he would meet Prime Minister Tsipras later on Thursday and Prime Minister Zaeu on Friday.

"And I will commend them both for their courage, for their leadership, agreeing on the agreement on the name issue. And I'm confident that when the NATO leaders meet at the Summit

next month in Brussels they will decide to open accession talks with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

Mr. Stoltenberg said that he would also discuss transatlantic issues and the importance of the transatlantic relationship with European leaders.

"We should have no illusions, Europe and North America need each other especially now when we see security threats, challenges we haven't seen for many decades. We have to stand together, Europe and North America", he said. "And NATO-EU cooperation is part of this transatlantic relationship, and therefore I also look very much forward to signing a joint declaration between President Juncker, President Tusk and me before the NATO Summit".

For more information.

10 July 2018

NATO and EU leaders sign joint declaration

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker met in Brussels today (10 July 2018) to sign a new Joint Declaration on cooperation between NATO and the European Union. "Facing a complex and uncertain security environment, we must work together to keep our nations and citizens safe. And that is exactly what we are doing," said Mr. Stoltenberg.

The Declaration, which comes two years after an initial agreement made in Warsaw, states that NATO and the European Union are strengthening cooperation in a range of areas, including military mobility, counter-terrorism, resilience to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear-related risks, and promoting the women, peace and security agenda. The two organisations have already stepped up cooperation in recent years, including on maritime security, countering hybrid threats and fighting terrorism. NATO and the EU now exchange real-time warnings on cyber-attacks, participate in each other's exercises, and work together in responding to the refugee and migrant crisis.



The Declaration welcomes the EU's efforts on security and defence, which are complementary and not an alternative to NATO. "We... need to ensure the fullest possible involvement of non-EU Allies in our cooperation and avoid creating new barriers," said Secretary General Stoltenberg, recalling that after Brexit, 80% of defence spending in NATO will come from non-EU Allies.

President Tusk and President Juncker will attend two meetings at the NATO Summit, which starts in Brussels 11 July.

For more information.

11 July 2018

Brussels Summit

Press conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg following the meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of Heads of State and Government (NATO Summit Brussels)

Good evening.

We have just finished a substantive meeting of NATO's 29 Heads of State and Government.

We have had discussions. We do have disagreements. But most importantly we have decisions that are pushing this Alliance forward and making us stronger.

In the history of NATO, we have had many disagreements. And we have been able to overcome them, again and again.

Because at the end of the day, we all agree that North America and Europe are safer together.

NATO is good for Europe.



And NATO is good for North America.

So today, we agreed to strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence. Step up our role in the fight against terrorism. And share the burden of our security more fairly.

I really welcome that many leaders have made announcements about new contributions to a whole range of NATO missions and initiatives.

We agreed a Readiness Initiative – the “Four Thirties”.

By 2020, we will have:

- 30 mechanised battalions;
- 30 air squadrons; and
- 30 combat vessels
- Ready to use within 30 days or less.
- We agreed a major update of the NATO Command Structure.
- With more than 1,200 new personnel.
- And new commands for the Atlantic – in Norfolk, Virginia;
- And for support and logistics – in Ulm, in Germany.

These decisions will ensure we can have the right forces in the right place at the right time. With higher readiness. And a greater ability to reinforce.

But many of the challenges we face blur the line between peace, crisis and conflict.

So today, we set up new counter-hybrid support teams.

NATO experts will stand ready to

Support Allies in areas like cyber defence, counter-propaganda, and energy security.

We also agreed to set up a new Cyber Operations Centre as part of our strengthened Command Structure.

And we agreed that we can draw on national cyber capabilities in missions and operations.

Instability in the Middle East and North Africa affects NATO Allies.

We are determined to preserve our gains in the fight against ISIS. And prevent them from coming back.

So today, as requested by the Iraqi government, we launched a new training mission in Iraq.

And I welcome that Canada has agreed to lead the mission in Iraq.

It will be a non-combat mission of several hundred trainers.

We will also establish professional military schools and academies for the Iraqi forces.

Today we also decided to increase our support for Jordan and Tunisia.

To further develop their capacities to tackle terrorism.

And we declared our Hub for the South fully operational.

It will help us respond more effectively to regional challenges.

In order to be prepared for the challenges we face, we need to invest more and better in defence.

We all agree that we do not have fair burden-sharing in our Alliance today.

We all agree that we need more cash in national defence budgets;

More modern capabilities;

And more contributions to missions and operations.

The good news is that we are making progress.

For a quarter of a century, many of our countries have been cutting billions from their defence budgets.

Now, they are adding billions.

All Allies are increasing defence spending.

This year, 8 of our nations have committed to devote at least 2% of GDP on defence.

And a majority of Allies have plans to do so by 2024.

Last year saw the biggest increase in defence spending since the end of the Cold War.

Last year we also agreed to develop national plans on burden-sharing. And based on the national plans of European Allies and Canada,

we expect 266 billion US dollars in extra money for defence between now and 2024.

This is significant. Including billions for modern, high-end capabilities.

We are also stepping up contributions to NATO deployments.

So we have turned the tide. But we need to do more.

This is about fairness. This is about credibility. And above all, this is about our security in a more unpredictable world.

NATO's door is and will remain open.

We warmly welcomed last month's historic agreement between Athens and Skopje.

And today, we agreed to invite the government of Skopje to start accession talks.

Once all national procedures have been completed to finalise the name agreement, the country will join NATO as our thirtieth member.

The decisions we have made today show that Europe and North America are working together.

NATO is delivering.

And we are determined to keep our almost one billion citizens safe and secure.

than ever; we will take all necessary steps to ensure our collective defence.

For more information.

30 August 2018

Deputy Secretary General discusses cooperation with EU Ministers and OSCE Ambassadors

Visiting Vienna (29-30 August), NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller reaffirmed the importance that NATO places on close relations with key partner organisations, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU).



Ms. Gottemoeller will participate in a roundtable at the Defence Institution Building School (DIB) and will deliver a lecture at the Tbilisi State University.

She has also been invited to deliver remarks at a ceremony marking the International day of Peace.

For more information.

NATO's growing cooperation with the European Union was the main theme of Gottemoeller's participation in the informal meeting of EU Ministers of Defence. Organised by the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU, the meeting was an opportunity to discuss complementarity between NATO and the EU, as well as the work of both organisations in the Western Balkans, a region that is essential for European security.

At the headquarters of another important partner – the OSCE, Gottemoeller met with OSCE ambassadors from NATO countries and the organisation's Secretary General Thomas Greminger, to discuss arms control, transparency and the situation in Ukraine. She expressed NATO's appreciation for the OSCE's role in fostering dialogue, building trust, and upholding the rules-based international order.

For more information.

21 September 2018

NATO Deputy Secretary General visit to Georgia

The NATO Deputy Secretary General, the Honourable Ms. Rose Gottemoeller will travel to Tbilisi on Friday, 21 September 2018.

She will have meetings with the President of Georgia, H.E. Mr. Giorgi Margvelashvili, the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Giorgi Gakharia, the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. David Dondua and the First Deputy Minister of Defence, Mrs. Lela Chikovani.

25 September 2018

NATO Secretary General joins world leaders for UN General Assembly

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg joined world leaders in New York on Tuesday (25 September 2018) to attend the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

On Tuesday, the Secretary General met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. The Secretary General said after the meeting, "NATO and Russia have serious disagreements on a number of issues, which make our dialogue even more important. Today, we discussed military posture and exercises, including Russia's recent exercise Vostok as well as NATO's upcoming exercise Trident Juncture. I also raised NATO's concerns about Russia's ongoing aggressive actions in Ukraine, and expressed NATO's strong solidarity with the United Kingdom following the attack in Salisbury. Minister Lavrov and I agreed to continue our contacts."

Later on Tuesday, Mr. Stoltenberg met with UN Secretary-General António Guterres. The two leaders welcomed the ongoing cooperation between NATO and the UN. They also exchanged views on the Western Balkans and the security situation in Afghanistan.

NATO and the United Nations reinforce one another, as organisations committed to tackling security challenges and upholding the international rules-based order. Over the past decade, the two organisations have stepped up cooperation, working closely to support



Afghanistan and Iraq. NATO has also pledged support for UN peacekeeping operations, including to counter improvised explosive devices.

The Secretary General also met the African Union (AU) Chairperson, President Paul Kagame. NATO has cooperated with the AU since 2005, including by providing air and sealift, as well as planning support for the AU's mission in Somalia. The two leaders agreed to look into deepening cooperation in the future.

On Wednesday, the Secretary General will deliver a speech on NATO's role in the fight against terrorism at the National September 11 Memorial and Museum. Following 9/11, NATO invoked its collective defence clause – Article 5 of the Washington Treaty – for the first time, in support of the United States. This led to the Alliance's operation in Afghanistan, its biggest ever. In 2015, NATO received a piece of twisted steel from the Twin Towers, which is displayed at the Alliance's new headquarters in Brussels as the 9/11 and Article 5 Memorial.

For more information.

03 October 2018

NATO Defence Ministerial

Press conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg following the meetings of NATO Defence Ministers

Good afternoon.

We have just finished a meeting of NATO Defence Ministers.

And in an unpredictable world, we are strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence. Fairer burden-sharing underpins this. There is a renewed sense of urgency for all Allies to invest more in defence. To move forward on all aspects of burden-sharing: cash, capabilities and contributions to NATO missions and operations.

This was the focus of our discussions last night. It is clear we are making progress. This will be the fourth consecutive year of rising defence spending. But we still have a long way to go. Allies have committed to have credible national plans. I would expect these to show real increases in defence spending year on year. And a realistic path to 2% of GDP on defence. Allies will report on the national plans before the end of this year, and we intend to discuss them at our meeting of defence ministers in February. Allies should also invest in new capabilities.

And make contributions to our missions and operations. This is about fairness. But more importantly, it's about our security in a more unpredictable world.

Our deterrence and defence includes conventional capabilities, cyber defence, missile defence, and the nuclear dimension.

So today we held a meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group. This is part of our work to ensure we have the right tools and procedures in place. So NATO nuclear forces remain safe, secure and effective.

We also addressed concerns about the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

A landmark agreement that abolishes a whole category of weapons. We believe this treaty is in danger because of Russia's actions. After years of denials, Russia recently acknowledged the existence of a new missile system, called 9M729. This system is destabilising. It is a serious risk to our security. Allies agree that Russia has not been transparent. And refuses to provide any credible answers. The most plausible assessment is that Russia is in violation of the INF Treaty.

We call on Russia to address our serious concerns.

What is more concerning is that this is part



of a pattern of behaviour of many years. Today's announcements by the Dutch and British governments have exposed Russia's indiscriminate campaign of cyber attacks around the world. The Netherlands briefed the NATO Defence Ministers on the targeting of the offices of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague by a hostile cyber operation. This operation was carried out by the GRU, the Russian military intelligence services. But it was disrupted by the Dutch intelligence services in partnership with the UK. Moreover, the UK has identified the GRU as being behind a number of other cyber-attacks around the world. These have affected citizens in many countries, including Russia. And caused enormous economic costs.

NATO Allies expressed their solidarity with the decision by the Dutch and the British governments to call out Russia on its blatant attempt to undermine international law and international institutions.

Russia must stop this reckless pattern of behaviour. Including the use of force against its

neighbours, attempted interference in election processes, and widespread disinformation and campaigns. In response, NATO will continue to strengthen its defence and deterrence in the cyber domain. We are making significant progress. Setting up a new Cyber Operations Centre. Bolstering our cyber resilience. And integrating national cyber capabilities into NATO missions and operations. Some Allies have successfully used their cyber capabilities against ISIS in Iraq and Syria: to suppress terrorist propaganda, hinder their ability to coordinate attacks, and to protect forces on the battlefield.

Today, several more Allies have offered their cyber capabilities to NATO. I thank them. This is a big step forward. These cyber capabilities will make us as strong in cyberspace as we are on land, at sea and in the air. Of course, we remain a defensive alliance. Acting proportionately. And in line with international law. We are also making progress in setting up new Counter Hybrid Support Teams. These teams will provide tailored assistance to our nations. To prepare for, and to respond to hybrid attacks. This too is about Alliance solidarity.

At the same time, NATO is responding to the instability on our southern borders.

Our new training mission in Iraq will help local forces to secure their country. And we continue to support other partners – Jordan and Tunisia – to improve their defence and security capabilities. Our Hub for the South in Naples is also working to monitor and understand regional threats, like terrorism and failing states.

Today, we were joined by EU High Representative Federica Mogherini and our partners Finland and Sweden. We are stepping up our cooperation with the EU on cyber defence, military mobility, and in countering hybrid threats. We also heard about the EU's efforts on defence, and how they can complement NATO's work.

This has the potential to contribute to the enhanced security of Europe and North America.

For more information.

18 October 2018

Formal Accession Talks with Skopje begin at NATO Headquarters

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia marked an important step on its road towards NATO membership on Thursday (18 October 2018), beginning two days of formal Accession Talks at the NATO headquarters in Brussels.

The formal Accession Talks cover detailed aspects of membership, including political, military and legal questions. The Talks are chaired by NATO's Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy Alejandro Alvargonzález, who welcomed Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Radmila Šekerinska-Jankovska and the delegation from Skopje to NATO headquarters. The Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller also met with Minister Šekerinska-Jankovska to discuss the ongoing accession process.

Work on the accession process began in July, following the invitation from Allies at the Brussels Summit. At the recent meeting of the NATO Defence Ministers, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stressed that "once all the constitutional changes on the new name are



completed we can sign the accession protocol." He underlined that this is a "historic opportunity," and urged "all political leaders and parties to work together constructively and responsibly to seize this opportunity."

The country has worked closely with NATO, joining the Partnership for Peace (PfP) in 1995 and the Membership Action Plan (MAP) in 1999. For many years, the country has provided valuable support to NATO-led operations and missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo.

For more information.

30 October 2018

NATO and UN conclude updated Joint Declaration on cooperation

Following the meeting of Secretaries General Jens Stoltenberg and António Guterres on the margins of the 73rd UN General Assembly in September, the Secretariats of NATO and the United Nations concluded an updated Joint Declaration on Friday 26 October 2018, setting out plans for future cooperation between the two organizations. The document builds on the

original Joint Declaration between NATO and the UN, which was signed in September 2008. The updated Declaration sets out priority areas for future cooperation, including, support to UN peace operations, countering terrorism; the protection of civilians; and Women, Peace and Security.



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomed the Joint Declaration, saying: "As organizations committed to upholding peace and security, NATO and the UN reinforce one another. While our mandates differ, we already cooperate across a range of issues, and there is a lot more that NATO and the UN can do together. So I welcome the conclusion of the updated Joint Declaration, and look forward to putting our ideas into action."

Over the past decade, cooperation between the Alliance and UN has grown significantly. The two organizations work closely together on Afghanistan and Iraq. NATO has also pledged support for UN peacekeeping operations, including to counter improvised explosive devices. Cooperation has expanded on protection issues as well. For example, NATO and the UN have worked closely on developing training materials concerning Children and Armed Conflict and the Protection of Civilians.

For more information.

31 October 2018

NATO-Russia Council meets in Brussels

The NATO-Russia Council, which brings together the 29 Allies and Russia, met in Brussels on Wednesday (31 October 2018). Ambassadors had an open exchange on several topics,



including the situation in and around Ukraine; issues related to military activities, reciprocal transparency and risk reduction; Afghanistan; and hybrid challenges.

In the spirit of transparency, NATO and Russia provided briefings on major exercises. NATO briefed on the ongoing exercise Trident Juncture 2018, and Russia provided a briefing on exercise Vostok 2018. To inform the discussion on Afghanistan, the NATO Senior Civilian Representative, Ambassador Cornelius Zimmerman, provided a briefing on Afghanistan.

Allies and Russia also shared views on the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. NATO Secretary General said: "We all agree that the INF Treaty has been crucial to Euro-Atlantic security. For over five years, the United States has pursued diplomatic and technical avenues with Russia aimed at preserving the INF Treaty. The United States is in compliance with its obligations under the INF Treaty and continues to provide substantial transparency on its programmes." The Secretary General stressed that "no arms control arrangement can be effective if it is only respected by one side. Allies have repeatedly expressed serious concerns about the new Russian missile system, known as the 9M729 or SSC-8. NATO has urged Russia repeatedly to address these concerns in a substantial and transparent way, and to actively engage in a constructive dialogue with the United States."

He concluded, "we regret that Russia has not heeded our calls. This reinforces our assessment that the missile system 9M729 poses a serious risk to the strategic stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. Allies urge Russia again to address these substantial concerns in a transparent manner and to ensure full compliance with the INF Treaty without delay. While we stand ready to continue dialogue on this issue with Russia, as an Alliance we are also committed to take effective measures to continue to ensure the safety and security of all Allies."

NATO suspended practical cooperation with Moscow in 2014 due to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, and its ongoing destabilisation of eastern Ukraine. At the same time, channels for political dialogue have remained open, and the NATO-Russia Council is an important forum. NATO and Russia also maintain open military-to-military lines of communication, including exchanges between the Supreme Allied Commander Europe or Chairman of the Military Committee, and the Russian Chief of the General Staff.

Dialogue between NATO and Russia contributes to more predictable relations and enhanced mutual security.

For more information.

26 November 2018

Kuwait inaugurates diplomatic mission to NATO

On Monday (26 November 2018), Kuwait inaugurated the offices of its first ever diplomatic mission to NATO. The ribbon-cutting inauguration ceremony was attended by Kuwait Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Khaled Aljarallah and NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, Ambassador Alejandro Alvargonzález.

Kuwait is a very active member of NATO's Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. Kuwait hosts the NATO-ICI Regional Center, which was inaugurated in Kuwait City on 24 January 2017. The NATO-ICI Regional Center's objective is to improve common understanding of security challenges by creating



a level of interoperability and standardisation that enables closer cooperation between NATO and its partners in the region. During its first year, 14 courses and activities were carried out at the Centre, 478 officers from ICI and GCC countries participated and were trained and 149 instructors and experts travelled to the Centre to deliver the courses.

For more information.

26 November 2018

NATO-Ukraine Commission addresses situation in the Azov Sea

[Press conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg following the meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission](#)

We have just finished an extraordinary meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission.

NATO Allies and Ukraine discussed the serious situation in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait. Ukraine provided Allies with detailed information on the incident yesterday.

This morning, I had a phone call with President Poroshenko who requested the NATO - Ukraine Commission meeting. Because under the NATO - Ukraine Charter, Ukraine can request such a meeting if it perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence, or security.

And at this meeting all allies expressed their full support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.



So we call on Russia to ensure unhindered access to Ukrainian ports and allow freedom of navigation for Ukraine in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait.

There is no justification for the use of military force against Ukrainian ships and naval personnel. So we call on Russia to release immediately the Ukrainian sailors and ships it seized yesterday.

And we call for calm and restraint.

This incident is a reminder that there is a war going on in Ukraine. It has been going on for more than 4 years. The Allied position has been consistent. Since 2014, all Allies have condemned Russia's aggressive actions in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine.

Russia must end its support to militant groups and withdraw all its forces from Ukraine.

Allies will not recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea.

Russia's ongoing militarization of Crimea, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, poses further threats to Ukraine's independence. And undermines the stability of the broader region.

NATO continues to provide political and practical support to Ukraine and the people of Ukraine.

NATO Allies have imposed wide-ranging sanctions on Russia. NATO has undertaken the largest reinforcement of our collective defence in a generation. So Russia has to understand that it is consequences of its actions.

We will remain in contact with the Ukrainian government to underline our support.

For more information.

03 December 2018

NATO Foreign Ministers conclude two-day meeting in Brussels

NATO Foreign Ministers concluded two days of meetings in Brussels on Wednesday (5 December 2018), focused on issues including the INF Treaty, the Sea of Azov, the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, and the Alliance's new training mission in Iraq. At the conclusion of the meeting, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg noted that Foreign Ministers will next meet in Washington in April 2019, marking 70 years since the Alliance's founding. He added that Allied leaders will also meet later next year.

On Tuesday, NATO Foreign Ministers agreed that Russia has developed and fielded a new ground-launched cruise missile system – the SSC-8, or 9M729 – which violates the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Allies expressed firm commitment to preserving effective international arms control, and agreed to keep the fielding of the Russian missiles under close review. Secretary General Stoltenberg said: "Russia now has a last chance to come back into compliance with the INF Treaty, but we must also start to prepare for a world without the Treaty."

Foreign Ministers also met with their colleagues from Georgia and Ukraine. They stressed the Alliance's strong political and practical support for both countries, especially in the face of continuing aggressive actions from Russia. They expressed particular concern about Russia's actions near the Sea of Azov, and called on Moscow to release the Ukrainian sailors and ships seized in late November. Allies agreed to keep working to prepare Georgia for NATO membership, and welcomed the country's significant progress on reforms. They also recognized Ukraine's aspirations to join the Alliance, and encouraged Kyiv to continue on the path of reform.

Later on Tuesday, ministers met to address NATO's response to challenges from the Middle East and North Africa. They welcomed that NATO's new training mission in Iraq has now begun work. The mission will help local forces stabilize the country, and tackle terrorism at its root.



On Wednesday, Allies discussed the situation in the Western Balkans, including Skopje's progress towards NATO membership. Foreign Ministers also agreed to continue supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina. Should the country choose to take the step, NATO is now ready to accept Sarajevo's first Annual National Programme: a cooperation tool covering political, economic and defence reform. Ministers also discussed the situation in Kosovo. Following the meeting, the Secretary General expressed concerns about plans to transform the Kosovo Security Force into an army, calling the step "ill-timed" and a complicating factor in the EU-mediated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

The ministerial concluded with a meeting of all nations contributing to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Nations reaffirmed their commitment to Afghanistan's long-term security and stability, and to an Afghan-led and owned peace process. Following the meeting, Secretary General Stoltenberg called on the Taliban to lay down arms and come to the negotiating table. He further called on the Afghan authorities to address shortcomings in their election process ahead of next year's presidential vote.

For more information.

10 December 2018

NATO and the EU sign agreement to support good governance

NATO and the European Union signed an agreement on Monday 10 December to cooperate in promoting good governance in the defence and security sector. As part of this agreement, the European Union will contribute 2 million EUR to the NATO Building Integrity (BI) Trust Fund for 2019-2022.

The agreement was signed by the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, Ambassador Alejandro Alvargonzález, and the European Commission's Deputy Director-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Mr. Maciej Popowski. In signing the agreement, Ambassador Alvargonzález highlighted the importance of NATO-EU cooperation and underlined the commitment of both organisations to strengthening good governance. "Building Integrity has proven to be an effective partnership tool to support nations to embed the principles of transparency, accountability and integrity in the defence and related security sector", he said. With this contribution to the NATO Building Integrity Programme, Mr. Maciej



Popowski said “the European Union is delivering on the EU-NATO Warsaw Declaration of 2016 commitments by continuing our support to partner countries in the European eastern and southern Neighbourhood on good governance and security matters.”

The resources of the Building Integrity Trust Fund will support capacity building activities to strengthen transparency, accountability and integrity in Ministries of Defence and related security sector. NATO’s Building Integrity programme provides peer-to-peer consultations, education and training and access to a pool of subject matter experts drawn from international organisations, national administrations, private sector as well as civil society.

The Building Integrity programme of activities, originally launched in 2007, is open to NATO member and partner states.

Contributions by the European Union to the NATO Building Integrity Trust Fund will be used to scale up the ongoing programme of activities made available to 71 nations world-wide. Tailored packages are currently being implemented in 20 nations.

Through the NATO Building Integrity programme, nations are able to take part in education and training for civilian and military personnel and share lessons learned and promote good practices. In 2018, 2552 civilian and military

personnel took part in Building Integrity capacity building activities conducted in Europe, Africa, Middle East, Latin America and Asia.

For more information.

MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN 2018

10 January 2018

NRDC ITALY takes over Responsibility as the NRF18 Land Component Command

Brunssum, the Netherlands – On January 10th 2018 Commander JFC Brunssum, General Salvatore Farina, attended the Hand Over-Take Over ceremony between the British-led Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) and the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Italy (NRDC-ITA) in Solbiate Olona (Italy), also attended by Commander Allied Land Command, Lieutenant General Darryl A. Williams, and the Chief of the Italian Army, Lieutenant General Danilo Errico.



NRDC-ITA, under the command of Lieutenant General Roberto Perretti, takes over responsibility from the ARRC as Land Component Command of the 2018 NATO Response Force (NRF), led by JFC Brunssum. NRDC-ITA was certified for NRF duties during exercise Brilliant Ledger 2017, one of the certification exercises conducted by JFC Brunssum as the designated stand-by command element for this year’s NRF starting on January 1st.

The NRF18 Land Component Command is based in Solbiate Olona and led by Italy, which provides about 75% of the staff. The remaining 25% are military personnel from other 12 countries for a total of about 400 men and women. The other components of the NATO Response Force 18 – air, maritime and special operations – are commanded respectively by the German Joint

Force Air Command based in Kalkar, the French Aero-Naval Rapid Reaction Force based in Toulon and the Spanish Special Operations Command based in Menorca.

For more information.

16 January 2018

178th Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session

The Military Committee, NATO’s highest Military Authority, will meet in Chiefs of Defence (CHODs) Session on 16 and 17 January 2018, at the NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium. General Petr Pavel, Chairman of the Military Committee, will preside over the sessions. The Chiefs of Defence will discuss the challenging security environment on NATO’s southern flank and the Alliance’s contribution to its stabilisation. The CHODs with their Resolute Support counterparts will review the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and discuss the wider region. The Chiefs of Defence also will discuss the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and NATO’s role in Iraq during 2018. Meetings with partners Ukraine and Georgia will focus on the security situations on the ground, defence reform progress and the way ahead. The Chiefs of Defence will also be informed and debate the proposed recommendations for the NATO Command Structure Adaptation as well as exchange views on Allied coherence, specific to military priorities.

The first session will focus on Europe’s southern neighbourhood. It will include a situational awareness briefing on the Middle East and North Africa region taking into consideration the wider global context. This session will pave the way for further discussions on Projecting Stability Initiatives, Fight against Terrorism, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the ongoing NATO Training and Capacity Building in Iraq.

In Resolute Support format, the Chiefs of Defence will receive political, strategic and operational situation briefs from Commander of the



Resolute Support Mission, General Nicholson, and the NATO Senior Civilian Representative Ambassador Zimmermann respectively, and provide further recommendations for 2018 and beyond.

In their afternoon session, the Allied Chiefs of Defence will receive briefings from General Scaparrotti, SACEUR and General Mercier, SACT on the recommended options for the NATO Command Structure Adaptation and possible implementation process.

The following morning's sessions with partners will begin with Ukraine. The session will provide an opportunity for an update on the security situation in and around Ukraine and assess the progress of the security and defence sector reforms. The session with Georgia will focus on continued defence reform progress and the way ahead for the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package.

The final session will focus on Allied coherence. The discussions are expected to reflect upon the Alliance's adaptation - politically, militarily and institutionally, and review the way forward with a special emphasis on military priorities.

The Chiefs of Defence's advice and guidance will

assist and further frame discussions ahead the February Defence Ministerial in 2018.

General Petr Pavel will be supported in each session by General Curtis Scaparrotti (Supreme Allied Commander Europe, SACEUR) and General Denis Mercier (Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, SACT).

The Military Committee meets twice a year at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, at the level of Chiefs of Defence to discuss NATO operations and missions and provide the North Atlantic Council with consensus-based military advice on how the Alliance can best meet global security challenges. Once a year, they meet in an Allied member country. On a day-to-day basis, their work is carried out by Permanent Military Representatives at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

For more information.

05 February 2018

Deputy Secretary General marks first anniversary of NATO's enhanced forward presence in Lithuania

NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller marked the first anniversary of NATO's enhanced forward presence in Lithuania during a ceremony on Monday (5 February 2018). Alongside Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė and Allied representatives, Gottemoeller paid tribute to Allied forces in Rukla.



The Deputy Secretary General stressed that NATO's enhanced forward presence sends a powerful message that the Alliance is strong, united and will treat an "attack on one, as an attack on us all."

In Lithuania, Germany currently leads forces from Croatia, France, the Netherlands and Norway. The battlegroup, which first deployed in January 2017, serves alongside Lithuanian troops to defend the Alliance and deter any possible aggression. Together with the three other battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia and Poland, these forces form part of the biggest reinforcement to NATO's collective deterrence and defence in a generation.

Earlier in the day, the Deputy Secretary General met with President Grybauskaitė for talks on NATO's enhanced forward presence, and preparations for the Brussels Summit in July.

For more information.

14 February 2018

Belgium joins Allied effort to deliver air-to-air refueling capacity

On Wednesday (14 February 2018), Belgium joined a multinational effort to acquire a European multinational fleet of Airbus multirole tanker-transport (MRTT) aircraft. At a signing ceremony at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Defence Ministers from Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway celebrated Belgium's official accession to this effort.

The initiative has been supported by NATO and the European Union. It is an example of effective cooperation between the two organizations when delivering critical capabilities for its members.

Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller said: "Increasing our ability to keep our planes flying - for longer periods and farther distances - has a direct bearing on our ability to defend our citizens and our territories."

The project was launched in July 2016 through an order of two Airbus A330 MRTT aircraft by the Netherlands and Luxembourg, and has expanded steadily. With Belgium joining, the multinational fleet will now grow to eight aircraft, which are scheduled for delivery between 2020 and 2024. The aircraft can be configured for air-to-air refuelling, the transport of passengers and cargo, as well as medical evacuation missions. The multinational fleet will be operated from a Main Operating Base in Eindhoven (Netherlands) and a Forward Operating Base in Cologne (Germany).

This multinational fleet arrangement will substantially increase European capacity in air-to-air refueling and reduce the over-reliance on the United States in this area. It remains open to other participants.

For more information.

13 March 2018

NATO Allies host Russian arms control inspectors

Today (13 March 2018), Estonia hosted Russian arms control inspectors, demonstrating Allies' ongoing commitment to transparency. The inspectors visited the Estonian Defence Forces 1st Infantry Brigade at Tapa military base, where NATO's multinational battlegroup is based.



Together with the three other battlegroups in Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, these forces form part of the biggest reinforcement to NATO's collective deterrence and defence in a generation.

Last week, Russian inspectors also visited the Latvian Mechanised Infantry Brigade in Camp Ādaži, where NATO troops are also based.

All of these visits are being carried out within the framework of the Vienna Document, an agreement on military transparency reached among the 57 member nations of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2011. Designed to promote mutual trust and transparency, the Vienna Document commits OSCE members to accept a number of inspection visits by other members each year, in order to verify there are no undeclared military capabilities or activities of concern.

NATO strongly supports efforts to build confidence and transparency on military activities. Allies respect the letter and spirit of the Vienna Document, and NATO regularly updates its schedule of military exercises online.

For more information.

16 March 2018

First anniversary of NATO's enhanced forward presence in Poland.

NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller began a trip to Poland with a visit to the NATO multinational battlegroup in Orzysz on Friday (16 March 2018). Led by the US, the battlegroup is one of four that are operational in the eastern part of the Alliance.

Hosted by the Deputy Defence minister and the Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Secretary General thanked the troops for their service and professionalism. The US-led battlegroup includes troops and equipment from Croatia, Poland, Romania and the UK. The Deputy Secretary General was joined by senior diplomats from these countries.

Rose Gottemoeller stressed that the NATO battlegroups symbolise the spirit of the Alliance: all for one and one for all. "That commitment – that promise – to defend each other – has been at the heart of NATO's success over the past seven decades," she said.



The Deputy Secretary General went on to meet the Minister of National Defence Mariusz Blaszczak in Warsaw, whom she thanked for Poland's strong commitment to Alliance solidarity and adaptation.

For more information.

22 March 2018

NATO's Bucharest, Romania-based Multinational Division Southeast achieved its full operational capability.

NATO's Bucharest, Romania-based Multinational Division Southeast achieved its full operational capability designation during a ceremony in Cincu, Romania, March 22, 2018.

Activated in December of 2015, MNDSE is a regional multinational divisional headquarters establishing tailored forward presence in the strategic Black Sea region, and its forces are prepared to conduct collective defence operations in the event of an Article 5 declaration. MNDSE is under the operational control of Allied Joint Force Command Naples in southern Italy.

MNDSE's new status means it has the proper manning, necessary equipment and personnel trained to NATO standards in accordance with its mission.

"Now at full capability, MND Southeast is ready to do its part to deter and, if necessary, to defend the people and territory of the Alliance 24/7 and around the compass 360 degrees," said U.S. Navy Admiral James Foggo, commander of JFC Naples.

The ceremony came on the heels of Exercise Dacian Lancer 2018. Almost 900 Romanian and international servicemembers took part in the exercise, which concluded this week.



"It has been an amazing experience through [which] we had the occasion to prove that we are prepared to work together as a team," said Romanian Army 1st Lieutenant Toader Doinita, an artillery staff officer. "As a junior officer, this exercise was a great opportunity of understanding how an Article 5 Operation should be planned, conducted and executed and how important is to take every detail into consideration in order to have the expected results."

Exercise organizers pointed to the success of the exercise and touted the milestone of NATO's current adaptation process to react with flexibility to new challenges at its southeastern borders.

Since its activation, MNDSE has proven its proficiency in adapting to challenges, such as the case during an exercise conducted last year.

"During Exercise Noble Jump 2017, this headquarters coordinated the first short-notice, operational deployment of the NATO spearhead force," said Foggo. "By land, air, sea, and rail... 2,000 troops from seven nations arrived here in Cincu - trained, prepared, and sustained ...fit to fight."

The significance of going from activation to full capability in less than three years isn't lost on the MNDSE formations.

"As an NCO, being here from the very beginning of this great project, I have seen and really

appreciated all the work that was put towards developing and refining all the processes and procedures involved in achieving full capability," said Romanian Army Sergeant 1st Class Iacob Gheorghe Sorin, an operations specialist. "I am proud to be a part of this professional team...I have learned a lot, both here and abroad, and I am grateful for all the knowledge and experience that I have gained working in a growing multinational environment."

Foggo highlighted that the NATO presence, exemplified by MNDSE, is foundational to collective security and that exercises such as the one recently completed prove the defensive Alliance is "fit to fight".

"Exercise Dacien Lancer. Mission accomplished. MND Southeast full operational capability. Mission accomplished," said Foggo. "Now on to the next challenge!"

For more information.

19 April 2018

Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Scaparrotti meets with Russian Chief of General Staff, General Gerasimov

General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and First Deputy Minister of Defence met today, 19 April 2018, in Baku, Azerbaijan.



The two military leaders used the SACEUR - Russian CHOD channel to foster predictability and transparency. The conversation focused on issues related to military posture and exercises. This face-to-face meeting demonstrates a clear mutual interest to maintain the military lines of communication, to align with NATO's policy of dialogue and transparency.

This meeting follows General Petr Pavel, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee and General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and First Deputy Minister of Defence meeting on 7 September 2017, in Baku, Azerbaijan.

General Scaparrotti and General Gerasimov agreed to continue using the military lines of communication in the future.

Story by SHAPE Public Affairs Office

For more information.

10 May 2018

NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Scaparrotti honoured by Atlantic Council for Distinguished Military Leadership

General Curtis M. Scaparrotti was honoured by the Atlantic Council on Thursday, 10 May 2018 with a Distinguished Military Leadership Award in recognition of his remarkable military career, during which he facilitated cooperation and development of common approaches to shared global security challenges and fostered ties among leaders across the NATO alliance and beyond.

General Scaparrotti accepted the Award on behalf of the inspiring men and women of NATO and of United States European Command.

"As we gather this evening, tens of thousands of NATO forces from all 29 Allied Nations are deployed around the world contributing to operations, missions, and training exercises, in the Arctic and the High North; in Afghanistan; along the Eastern Alliance border; in multi-national battlegroups from Estonia to Romania; in naval task forces in the North Atlantic, Baltic, and Black

Seas and in the Mediterranean; and over the skies of Europe providing air surveillance," said General Scaparrotti. "These men and women of NATO are demonstrating the Alliance's ability to change and remain relevant as they secure peace and demonstrate NATO's resolve."



General Scaparrotti congratulated the other honorees tonight, former President George W. Bush, Grammy Award winner Gloria Estefan and Executive Chairman of Starbucks Corporation Howard Schultz, stating that he was deeply humbled to be recognized amongst the group — "a two-term President of the United States; a visionary servant-leader who built a famous, global company; a Grammy Award Winner and philanthropist...and then me, a Soldier from Logan, Ohio."

"General Scaparrotti stressed the importance of NATO's mission in Europe, stating the US and NATO face this complex and dynamic security environment. Together, the Alliance must keep its resolve to obtain the defense posture we need, preserve the unity of the Alliance, and to strengthen the international order."

"This is why now, more than ever, we must articulate our principles with clarity, consistency, and conviction. We must communicate our narrative of freedom, democracy, and rule of law. We must affirm the importance of our alliances and partnerships, which remain the backbone of global security."

General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., the United States Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, presented the award to General Scaparrotti.

Every year, the Atlantic Council hosts a distinguished international leadership award ceremony to honour leaders who serve as pillars of the transatlantic community. This award is the highest honour granted by the Atlantic Council. Previous recipients include NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, General Phil Breedlove, Admiral Michelle Howard, and General Joseph Votel.

For more information.

16 May 2018

180th Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session

The Military Committee, NATO's highest Military Authority, will meet in Chiefs of Defence (CHODs) Session on 15-16 January 2019, at the NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium.

The first day of meetings will see the Chiefs of Defence discuss NATO's current and future strategic challenges as well as NATO's Military Strategy, its Deterrence and Defence Posture and the Alliance's Readiness Initiative. They will then meet with their Operational Partners and exchange views on the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission to train, assist and advise Afghan Institutions and National Defence and Security Forces as well as the regional security situation.

The second day will focus on Warfare Development, improving Common Funded Capability Delivery, the NATO-Georgia partnership with a particular focus on the progress of the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package, concluding with a broad discussion on the Western Balkans and the Kosovo Force



Mission.

The Military Committee is led by Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee. He will be supported in each session by General Curtis M. Scaparrotti (Supreme Allied Commander Europe or SACEUR) and General André Lanata (Supreme Allied Commander Transformation or SACT).

The Military Committee meets twice a year at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, at the level of Chiefs of Defence to discuss NATO operations and missions and provide the North Atlantic Council with consensus-based military advice on how the Alliance can best meet global security challenges, and once a year they meet in an Allied member country. On a day-to-day basis, their work is carried out by permanent Military Representatives at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

For more information.

05 June 2018

NATO starts Montenegro air patrols

NATO Allies Italy and Greece will begin NATO air patrols over Montenegro on 5 June 2018. Montenegro joined NATO in June last year. As the country does not have its own fighter planes, it has asked Allies to help secure its airspace. NATO air policing missions protect the skies of those Allies that do not have their own air force. There are currently several of these air policing missions across Europe.

Montenegro contributes to the Alliance's shared

security by providing troops to NATO's training mission in Afghanistan and financial support to the Afghan security forces. In a sign of Allied solidarity, Italy and Greece will now help protect Montenegrin airspace. Italian and Greek fighter aircraft will continue to be based in their home countries, taking to the skies as necessary.

NATO air policing is a long-running, routine mission to safeguard the integrity of the Alliance's airspace, a core task for NATO's collective defence. Air policing is not a response to any specific threat, but an essential component of how NATO provides security for its members. Under NATO regulations, Allied air forces must have at least two fighter aircraft on 24/7 readiness, and at any given moment dozens of fighter aircraft are at high readiness all across Europe. Alternatively, Allies with no air force can seek multinational solutions to guard their airspace. Spain, Portugal and France are currently part of the Baltic Air Policing over Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Hungary and Italy also routinely help protect Slovenian airspace, while Greece and Italy support air patrols over Albania.



NATO air policing jets take to the skies in response to military or civilian aircraft in distress, or that do not follow international flight regulations and approach the airspace of NATO Allies. Often, these aircraft fail to properly identify themselves, communicate with air traffic control or file flight plans.

For more information.

05 June 2018

NATO and China resume military staff to staff talks

After a three year pause NATO and China have reconvened military to military staff talks. The 5th iteration of the staff talks were held on 5th of June, in the New NATO HQ in Brussels.

NATO and China's military dialogue has been constant since 2010, with yearly meetings. This dialogue was interrupted in 2016, due to several circumstances, amongst them the reforms in the Chinese armed forces and the terror attacks in Brussels in March, which led to the cancellation of the planned talks that month. After a three hiatus, staff to staff talks resumed this month with a series of meetings between NATO and Chinese military officials.

Although NATO does not seek a role in Asia, the security situation in the Asia Pacific region cannot be separated from that of the Euro-Atlantic and NATO has an interest in understanding how these linkages work. China is an essential part of this 360° engagement as are our other established partners in the region. China is not part of NATO's official network of partners but both parties value the dialogue set up.

NATO's military interaction with China in the form of staff talks, follows a clear political guidance that has developed over the last 10-15 years. As recent as last weekend (2 June) NATO's Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller and Deputy Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Lieutenant General Steven Shepro met with a Chinese delegation in the margins of the Shangri-La Dialog in Singapore. Additionally, both NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg and Deputy Secretary General Gottemoeller have met, on separate occasions, with the Chinese Ambassador to EU, earlier this spring.

Dialogue is one of NATO's most effective tools



During a breakaway meeting, Lieutenant General Broeks, Director General of the NATO International Military Staff, met with Major General Ci Guowei, Deputy Chief of the Office for International Military Cooperation. Lieutenant General Broeks highlighted the importance of such meetings, "it is clear

that in today's interconnected world, dialogue is one of the founding blocks of cooperation. Global challenges demand global solutions and global cooperation".

One of the concrete outcomes from the staff talks is an "action list" of possible areas for practical cooperation to be developed jointly between NATO's and Chinese Military Staffs, and which will set the pace for further engagements. Areas under consideration could include participation in conferences, like the Xingshan Conference in Beijing, participation in courses at NATO Defense College and the NATO School in Oberammergau, NATO participation in courses at China's Defense University, better and quicker information exchange related to possible interaction between navy forces (the Navy call them Passing Exercises, PASSEX), etc.

As with all good dialogues, the military staff talk acted as a vehicle for both parties to talk and explain their security challenges and views, which in turn increases transparency and helps minimize uncertainty. This 5th edition of the talks was a resounding success, allowing NATO to restart its a dialogue with a key global player and setting up a methodology for further, deeper and more meaningful engagement, in line with individual political guidance.

The talks concluded with an agreement to hold follow-on meetings to keep the “action plan” active and alive. The 6th edition of the staff talks should be held in Beijing next year (2019).

For more information.

07 June 2018

Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands establish Composite Special Forces Component Command.



In the margins of the NATO Defence Ministers meeting on Thursday (7 June 2018), the Defence Ministers of Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the creation of a Composite Special Operations Component Command (C-SOCC). Once operational, this tri-national Special Forces Command will participate in the NATO Response Force and could support NATO operations, as well as other multinational missions.

The three Ministers launched the preparatory work for forming the C-SOCC by signing a

Letter of Intent in February 2017. The C-SOCC is scheduled to reach initial operational capability in 2019, and will be fully operational in 2021.

NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller praised this initiative as “extremely timely,” explaining that “NATO recognised the need for this expertise when establishing our Special Operations Headquarters in Mons, Belgium.” She added that “this tri-national initiative serves as an important reminder that Special Operations Forces today increasingly operate in a multinational context.”

NATO’s Special Operations Headquarters in Mons is providing advice and support for the development of C-SOCC, ensuring that it is developed in line with NATO doctrine and standards.

For more information.

11 June 2018

Lithuania hosts arms control inspectors from Russia and Belarus

As NATO forces trained across the Baltic states and Poland in exercise Saber Strike 2018, Lithuania hosted arms control inspectors from Russia and Belarus. From 11-14 June, five inspectors visited various units of the Lithuanian Armed Forces. They also met with Croatian troops participating in exercise Saber Strike, as part of NATO’s multinational battlegroup in Lithuania.

The visit was carried out within the framework of the Vienna Document, an agreement on military transparency reached among the 57 member



nations of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2011. Designed to promote mutual trust and transparency, the Vienna Document commits OSCE members to accept a number of inspection visits by other members each year, in order to verify there are no undeclared military capabilities or activities of concern.

NATO strongly supports efforts to build confidence and transparency on military activities. Allies respect the letter and spirit of the Vienna Document, and NATO regularly updates its schedule of military exercises online.

For more information.

26 June 2018

NATO unveils new joint air power strategy

NATO air forces must be able to defend against peer competitors and anticipate the growing role of cyber and space-based assets, according to a new NATO joint airpower strategy released on Tuesday (26 June 2018). While air power has played a central role in NATO’s collective defence and crisis management for decades, the strategy is the first of its kind since NATO was founded in 1949.

“For almost 70 years, airpower has been a core part of NATO’s military capabilities. From deterring the Soviet Union during the Cold

War, to operations in the Balkans in the 1990s and the fight against international terrorism in the deserts of Afghanistan, air power has helped to protect our people and achieve our political objectives,” said NATO spokesperson Oana Lungescu. She added: “As we take steps to increase the readiness of armed forces across the Alliance, the new strategy will help ensure that allied air forces remain world class, flexible and ready for any possible contingencies.”

The new strategy lays out the current and future security environment in which allied air forces are likely to operate in. Acknowledging that decades of uncontested air operations may be coming to a close, the strategy cautions that modern air defence systems, cyber and electronic warfare could impact NATO air operations. The document also makes the case for special forces, maritime and cyber units to better support of air power with intelligence, targeting support and post-strike assessments.

NATO’s strategy holds that allied air forces must be able to fight in all terrains and environments, including heavily defended and congested airspace. While current NATO air operations will continue, the document provides a blueprint for the development of airpower doctrines and new capabilities. The last comparable document, the Alliance’s maritime strategy, was released in 2011.

For more information.



29 June 2018

NATO Secretary General meets European leaders at EU Council in Brussels

Arriving at the European Council on Thursday (28 June 2018) the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said he will be discussing NATO-EU cooperation with European leaders. He highlighted that NATO-EU cooperation is making a lot of progress and that both organisations are working together on migration, tackling the root causes and helping to stabilise the neighbourhood, including by training local forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.



He said that both organisations are also cooperating in the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean, and that NATO is providing help to the EU Operation Sophia in the Mediterranean, with ten ships and maritime surveillance aircraft currently in the region.

The Secretary General stressed that NATO and the EU are also cooperating on “military mobility, infrastructure, legal hurdles, to make sure that we are able to move forces quickly through Europe if needed”.

Speaking about NATO-EU cooperation in the Western Balkans, the Secretary General said “We have been working together there for many, many years. And it is really encouraging to see that there is progress, there is some hope”. He announced he would meet Prime Minister Tsipras later on Thursday and Prime Minister Zaev on Friday.

“And I will commend them both for their courage, for their leadership, agreeing on the agreement on the name issue. And I’m confident that when the NATO leaders meet at the Summit

next month in Brussels they will decide to open accession talks with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.”

Mr. Stoltenberg said that he would also discuss transatlantic issues and the importance of the transatlantic relationship with European leaders.

“We should have no illusions, Europe and North America need each other especially now when we see security threats, challenges we haven’t seen for many decades. We have to stand together, Europe and North America”, he said. “And NATO-EU cooperation is part of this transatlantic relationship, and therefore I also look very much forward to signing a joint declaration between President Juncker, President Tusk and me before the NATO Summit”.

For more information.

02 July 2018

Leaders of NATO Air Forces meet to discuss Alliance Air Capabilities

RAMSTEIN, Germany – Allied Air Force Chiefs and Senior Enlisted Leaders from 27 NATO nations and four Partnership nations convened at Headquarters Allied Air Command, Ramstein Airbase, Germany on July 2 and 3 for the 2018-1 NATO Air Chiefs’ Symposium.

The Commander of Allied Air Command, General Tod D. Wolters welcomed the Air Chiefs and Senior Enlisted Leaders and presented his perspectives on the current security environment and NATO’s strategic shift from assurance to deterrence. “The support of Air Power from across the Alliance provides a credible and responsive deterrence and defence posture. Air Power is critical in meeting NATO’s desired objectives while providing key enablers in the defence of joint forces,” said General Wolters. “We stand ready to provide multi domain command and control of Air and Space assets as we deter our competition.

Our centralized control and decentralized execution posture gives us great flexibility across our area of responsibility.

The continuous improvements in our command



and control tools and the experience gathered in our exercises have shown we are well prepared to meet the upcoming challenges.”

To provide context to the discussions, the Air Chiefs attended informational multi-media presentations, an Allied Air Command mission brief, and a tour of the Operations and Situation Centres. The event also brought together several distinguished visitors, to include the new Chairman of NATO’s Military Committee, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, Deputy Undersecretary of the United States Air Force for International Affairs, Ms. Heidi Grant, Commander of the NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force, Major General Dawn Dunlop, and Vice Admiral Mathias Winter, Executive Officer of the F-35 Lightning II Joint Programme.

Air Chief Marshal Peach delivered his political-military perspective to inform the Air Chief’s discussions. The main themes of the symposium covered ‘Airpower’s Unique Contribution to NATO’s Success’, ‘Challenges to the Delivery of Air Capabilities’ and ‘The Way Forward’. Topics for face-to-face conversations of the Air Chiefs during the meeting included Air contributions to NATO’s enhanced Forward Presence missions in Eastern NATO countries, Air-specific outcomes of the NATO Command Structure Adaptation, and an update on modern fighter aircraft integration into existing fleets as well as an outlook on the United States contribution to NATO Ballistic Missile Defence.

The symposium ended with a debriefing held by General Wolters and a tour de table for situational updates on the national air forces contributing to NATO Airpower. Held twice a year at Allied Air Command, the NATO Air Chiefs Symposium provides a forum for Allies and Partners to discuss Joint and Air domain issues.

For more information.

28 August 2018

Latvia hosts arms control experts from Belarus, demonstrating transparency

The Latvian Ministry of Defence hosted arms control experts from Belarus between 25 and 28 August 2018, demonstrating military transparency. The experts observed Exercise “Namejs 2018”, in order to verify that the numbers of personnel and equipment involved were in line with rules set out in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s (OSCE) Vienna Document.

The Vienna Document is an agreement on military transparency reached among the 57 member nations of the OSCE in 2011. Designed to promote mutual trust and transparency, the Vienna Document commits OSCE members to accept a number of visits by other members each year, in order to verify there are no undeclared military capabilities or activities of concern.

NATO strongly supports efforts to build confidence and transparency on military activities. Allies respect the letter and spirit of the Vienna Document, and NATO regularly updates its schedule of military exercises online.

For more information.

11 September 2018

LANDCOM signs letter of cooperation with Ukraine Land Forces Command

YAVORIV, Ukraine – Commander of NATO Allied Land Command (LANDCOM), Lieutenant General John Thomson and Ukrainian Army Colonel General Serhiy Popko, Commander of Ukrainian Land Forces Command, signed a letter of cooperation on Sept. 6, 2018, at the International Peacekeeping and Security Center near Lviv, Ukraine.



“This is a tremendous honour for LANDCOM. I’m impressed with your training facility and how advanced this exercise is,” Thomson said. “Our headquarters and staff are excited about the future of this relationship. When I visited NATO’s Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), they are excited about what LANDCOM is doing with Ukraine.”

Popko agreed. “The document we are about to sign today is strategically important for us in terms of our future cooperation,” he said during the meeting. “We are truly interested in the future cooperation... that is critically essential for us.”

The purpose of the letter is to establish the

framework for future cooperation between NATO’s LANDCOM and the Ukrainian ground forces in the land domain. As Europe continues to respond to the aggressive actions of a potential adversary, this cooperation has deep implications in the NATO deterrence mission and in the efforts of NATO member nations and partner nations in the collective defense of Europe.

The commanders signed the letter during the middle of a large Ukrainian training exercise, known as EXERCISE RAPID TRIDENT 2018, which focuses on the interoperability and readiness of Ukrainian ground forces with a total of 2,270 troops from 14 participating nations including nearby NATO members. The annual exercise runs from Sept. 3 to 15.

During this year’s exercise, LANDCOM’s Military Cooperation Team is evaluating two Ukrainian Army units: an engineer company and a CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear) company. The evaluation is part of the Operational Capability Concept Evaluation and Feedback Program. The program is a practical military tool that serves as a vehicle for a closer operational relationship between the Alliance and potential contributors to NATO-led operations by supporting partner nation efforts to develop forces that are fully interoperable and capable of operating with NATO standards and procedures.

Story by NATO Allied Land Command Public Affairs Office

For more information.

28 September 2018

NATO Military Chiefs met in Warsaw to discuss future military strategy

NATO’s highest military authority, the Military Committee met on 28-30 September 2018 in Warsaw in Chiefs of Defence format. The meeting was hosted by the Chief of the Polish General Staff, Lieutenant General Rajmund Andrzejczak. Discussions focused on Allied operations, missions and activities, the development of NATO’s Military Strategy, Responsiveness,



Reinforcement and the NATO Readiness Initiative, as well as the Alliance’s ongoing modernisation. For Poland, the meeting was one of the highlights of our 100th Anniversary of the Restoration of Independence and the centennial of the re-establishment of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces.

During the opening of their final meeting of 2018, the Allied Chiefs of Defence paid tribute to serving military personnel and remembered the sacrifice of those men and women killed or wounded in the line of duty.

Poland’s President Andrzej Duda welcomed the participants at an official welcome ceremony in the Royal Castle. Lt-Gen. Andrzejczak handed each of the participants a medal commemorating the 100th anniversary of the re-establishment of the General Staff of the Polish General Staff.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee stressed that “Poland is a leading member of the Alliance. The Polish armed forces are an important constituent element of NATO defence capabilities, particularly in the Baltic region. Poland hosts NATO missile defence system, Headquarters of the Multinational Corps North-East in Szczecin, NATO battlegroup as well as HQ Multinational Division North East in Elbląg. All this shows Poland’s continued engagement in NATO.”

Poland’s Minister of National Defence Mariusz Błaszczak told the participants: “We welcome

NATO’s adaptation in deterrence and defence... We need not only stronger defence on the Eastern flank, but also deployment of troops on the ground. This would enhance credibility and effectiveness of NATO’s deterrence and defence mission, forming its integral part. We welcome an examination commenced by our US Ally on the feasibility and a possible type of such a deployment in Poland. We believe that an ultimate solution would serve the security of the entire Alliance, strengthening its political cohesion and military effectiveness. We would like to and our ready to discharge our responsibilities as host nation as best we can.” Minister Błaszczak discussed the issue of the long-term strengthening of the US military presence in Poland during his bilateral meeting with Gen. Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Chiefs of Defence received detailed intelligence and operational briefings noting the changes to the security environment and ongoing challenges. They went on to discuss the need for increased cooperation and coordination, especially in areas where a number of institutions are involved. At the Brussels Summit in July 2018, the Heads of State and Government agreed the ‘Four Thirties’ Readiness Initiative with Allies committing to having 30 mechanised battalions, 30 air squadrons and 30 combat vessels, ready to use within 30 days or less by 2020. The Chiefs of Defence provided further advice and recommendations on the initiative and received

progress reports on NATO-European Union cooperation in the area of military mobility. The Chiefs of Defence reviewed the progress of the Command Structure Adaptation as well as the ongoing Functional Review, which aims to improve how the NATO Headquarters is governed.

“On the NATO Military Strategy, the Chiefs of Defence agreed the need to focus both on current means and capabilities, based on a broad and strengthened deterrence and defence, in order to contribute to projecting stability and strengthening security outside its territory, thereby contributing to Alliance security overall.”

The MC meeting provided an opportunity for bilateral meetings of Polish Chief of General Staff with MC Chairman Sir Stuart Peach, Gen. Curtis M. Scaparotti, Supreme Allied Commander Europe/SACEUR, Sir Nick Carter, Chief of the Defence Staff of the United Kingdom.

Sir Stuart Peach also visited the Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC) in Bydgoszcz as well as the HQ Multinational Corps North-East in Szczecin. He met the JFTC's Deputy Commander, Brigadier General Ladislav Jung, and his staff on 27 September. Sir Peach was interested in challenges JFTC was facing with regard to the ongoing NATO Command Structure Adaptation. The discussions highlighted the Centre's training and exercises development and execution. Talks also focused on integration of experimentation efforts within training events, implementation of lessons learned into exercises scenarios and cooperation with other NATO units, including the centres of excellence.

On 28 September, CMC also met with Defence Minister Błaszczak to discuss the implementation of NATO decisions concerning the presence of NATO troops on the Eastern flank. Minister Błaszczak underlined the importance Poland attaches to strengthening collective defence, including successful reform of the Command Structure Adaptation which will be critical to NATO's future ability to carry out collective defence.

During his joint press conference with Lieutenant General Rajmund Andrzejczak, Sir Stuart Peach concluded by stating, “For nearly 70 years, NATO

has helped to preserve peace and stability in Europe. We continue to stand united in our core collective defense mission. That's why NATO is the most successful – and the most valuable – Alliance in history”.

For more information.

29 September 2018

Lieutenant General Hans-Werner Wiermann to become next Director General of the NATO International Military Staff

The Allied Chiefs of Defence have elected Lieutenant General Hans-W. Wiermann of the German Armed Forces to be the next Director of the NATO International Military Staff (DGIMS). The DGIMS is nominated by the NATO Chiefs of Defence to head the Alliance's International Military Staff for a term of three years. Lieutenant General Wiermann will take up the position in the summer of 2019 when Lieutenant General Jan Broeks' tenure ends.



Lieutenant General Wiermann has been the German Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee since August 2015. Lieutenant General Wiermann is also currently Dean of the Committee.

“I am very appreciative for all the support I received for my nomination as Director General of the International Military Staff (DGIMS). I feel honoured by the credit I got from Allied Chiefs of Defence representing their nations in NATO's Military Committee. I look forward to meet the challenges characterising this prominent position and will work hard to fulfil expectations”, said Lieutenant General Wiermann.

“I am delighted that my good friend Hans Werner

has been elected as the next Director General of the International Military Staff. I am certain that Hans Werner will make an excellent Director General as he has all the attributes, background and skills required for success in the position. There will be challenging times but I am in no doubt that he will achieve his mandate as he will be supported by the outstanding International Military Staff. I congratulate Hans Werner on his election and I wish him every success”, said Lieutenant General Broeks.

Germany is an important Allied member. It makes outstanding contributions to our missions and operations, notably the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, KFOR Mission in Kosovo, as well as participating in our Aegean Sea activity. Germany is leading our enhanced forward presence multinational battlegroup in Lithuania to strengthen our collective defence and deterrence as well as helping to patrol the skies as part of NATO's Air Policing in the Baltic States. Germans' efforts to find a political solution to the Russia-Ukraine crisis are also very much welcomed in support of the respect of sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the rule of law in Europe. Germany is also engaged in building international stability through the EU, the OSCE and the UN.

For more information.

03 October 2018

Thirteen Allies to cooperate on the introduction of Maritime Unmanned Systems

At our Summit in Brussels in July, NATO leaders endorsed the implementation of NATO's reinforced maritime posture. In support of this, on Wednesday (3 October 2018), Defence Ministers from thirteen NATO Allies signed a declaration of intent to cooperate on the introduction of Maritime Unmanned Systems.

This initiative will enable Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States to pool their resources, their talent and ingenuity to create better, more flexible and more interoperable

unmanned, maritime vehicles and systems.



The use of unmanned systems is a potentially game changing leap forward in maritime technology. They will enable us to be significantly more effective in crucial areas such as detecting and clearing mines, and finding and tracking submarines. Working alongside traditional naval assets, these unmanned systems will increase both our situational awareness and our control of the seas.

NATO Allies have learned from the experience of introducing unmanned vehicles in the air domain. This has better equipped us to meet similar challenges that may arise in the maritime domain.

Commenting at the signing ceremony at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller said: “Today's declaration will help Allies to put the latest technologies to work in the name of our safety and our security at sea.”

She added that “modern technology enables us

to control vehicles remotely or for them to be fully autonomous.”

Through this initiative, Allies will also be able to exploit economies of scale to reduce costs, allowing increasing defence budgets to go even further.

For more information.

04 October 2018

Defence Ministers from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create a Multinational Special Aviation Program.

Under the agreement, a new training center will be established in Zadar, Croatia, dedicated exclusively to training air crews, who will conduct the insertion and extraction of Special Operations Forces.

NATO's Deputy Secretary General, Rose Gottemoeller, commented at the signing ceremony: “As the world changes, NATO must continue to adapt to meet evolving security threats. And Special Forces have proven to be a highly valuable and versatile tool for effectively responding to these challenges.”



She added that “this cooperative arrangement is emblematic of the innovative approach NATO Allies and partners are taking as we enhance our collective defence capabilities.”

This new aviation program will be established in a gradual, step-by-step manner, expanding the training opportunities offered over time. In the process, it will create an important and unique

new asset within NATO.

The new aviation training center is expected to open its doors by the end of 2019 and will contribute to NATO's adaptability and readiness.

For more information.

26 November 2018

NATO and the EU Director Generals of Military Staffs discuss enhanced military cooperation



The Director General of NATO's International Military Staff (IMS), Lieutenant General Jan Broeks (DGIMS), and the Director General of the European Union Military Staff (EUMS), Lieutenant General Esa Pulkkinen (DGEUMS) met on 26 November for the second of their bi-annual DG's conferences. The areas of cooperation and discussion centred on the common military related proposals arising from the Joint Declaration (JD) of 2016 (reaffirmed in July of this year) with particular focus on the logistics, CIS, Capability Development and Gender domains. The conference concluded following a Scenario Based Discussion on Hybrid threats.

The discussions centred on the implementation of the common set of proposals as stated in the JD on EU-NATO cooperation, including the enhancement of CIS interoperability, particularly in enabling the exchange of classified information and consolidating EUMS participation in NATO's biggest interoperability exercise, namely CWIX 2019. In the Logistics domain the focus concerned the cooperation and consultation at

the military staff level, on military mobility and medical issues to ensure a coherent approach and the development of synergies between the EU and NATO.

The second part of the conference was dedicated to open discussions and information briefs, including the implementation of Women, Peace and Security and Gender perspective in the military leadership role. The NATO Gender Advisor's office invited the leadership to participate in a seminar in spring 2019 which will focus on the integration of gender perspectives in the strategic, operational and tactical level. Discussions were also held on the informal EUMS and NATO IMS Defence Capabilities Cooperation Plan and the development and operation of the European Union Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC).

Finally, a Scenario Based Discussion on the Hybrid threat was conducted. This is an evolving threat which is of serious concern to both NATO and the EU. The debate raised some pertinent and challenging questions which will help shape the direction of future EU-NATO cooperation.

Both generals complimented the staffs for the hard work in making these meetings a strong pillar of NATO-EU military cooperation on issues of common interest. Lt Gen Broeks stated “Our agenda is ambitious, but we know each other well enough to explore more options for deeper cooperation on issues of mutual interests”.

Since 2013, the DGs' Conference has been held twice a year with the participation of the Directors of all EUMS Directorates and IMS Divisions. It is organised in turn at the premises of the EU or NATO. The next meeting will be hosted by the EUMS in mid-2019.

For more information.



12 December 2018

Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Scaparrotti meets with Russian Chief of General Staff, General Gerasimov

SHAPE, Belgium - General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe met with General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and First Deputy Minister of Defence on Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018, in Baku, Azerbaijan.

NATO's Supreme Allied Commander and the Russian Chief of the General Staff exchanged views on their respective military activities and exercises. The two military leaders use this channel of communication to promote military predictability and transparency.

The meeting reflects the priority NATO accords to transparency and predictability, and demonstrates a commitment to use this important channel of communication between NATO and Russian military authorities for this purpose.

This is the second face to face meeting for General Scaparrotti and General Gerasimov in Baku, Azerbaijan. Their first meeting took place in Apr. 2018 followed by a phone call in Sept. 2018.

General Scaparrotti and General Gerasimov agreed to continue using the military lines of communication in the future.

Story by SHAPE Public Affairs Office

For more information.

EXERCISES IN 2018

5-16 March 2018

Dynamic Manta

NATO's Submarine Warfare Exercise DYNAMIC MANTA 2018 (DYMA 18) began today off the Sicilian coast. Ships, submarines, aircraft and personnel from 10 Allied nations converging on the Central Mediterranean Sea for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and anti-surface warfare (ASUW) training.

Submarines from Canada, Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and the United States, under the control of NATO Submarine Command (COMSUBNATO), will join 9 surface ships from Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey, UK, and USA. Host nation Italy is providing support from the Augusta Naval Base, Catania Harbour and the Sigonella Air Base in Catania.

commitment to maritime training," said Rear Admiral Andrew Lennon, Commander Submarines NATO and Officer Conducting the Exercise OCE of Exercise DYAMIC MANTA 2018. "Our allied Sailors study and work hard to develop their undersea abilities. DYNAMIC MANTA will give our airborne, surface, and submarine teams a valuable chance to test themselves during complex scenarios. I'm very excited to be back in Sicily and so grateful to Italy for hosting us", completed Rear Admiral Lennon.

DYNAMIC MANTA remains to be one of the most challenging exercises for NATO. It provides NATO nations' with an excellent opportunity for their forces to practice together in a pure joint environment and simultaneously provides NATO the ability to evaluate and further develop Allied Anti-Submarine tactics.



Each surface ship will have the opportunity to conduct a variety of submarine warfare operations. The submarines will take turns hunting and being hunted, in coordination with the air and surface participants.

"Exercise DYNAMIC MANTA is a fantastic opportunity for the alliance to practice submarine tactics and improve anti-submarine warfare skills. The long list of ships, submarines, and aircraft participating clearly shows NATO's

"As Anti-Submarine-Warfare includes all three dimensions, special attention needs to be placed upon Anti-Submarine-Warfare from the air. Because of this, it is important for aircrews from various NATO nations' to come and train together in this truly challenging environment" said Commodore Andreas Vettos (Hellenic Navy), Commander Maritime Air NATO. "This year, NATO nations were able to send 10 Maritime Patrol Aircraft, 3 Anti-Submarine Helicopters, and 7

organic helicopters embarked on participating naval units. I am convinced, that the benefit for all participating nations will be immense and will assist in preparing our aircrews for future tasks and operations." Concluded Commodore Andreas Vettos.

To support the simulated multi-threat environment, 10 Maritime Patrol Aircraft and 8 Helicopters from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States will operate from Sigonella Air Base under the control of personnel from NATO Maritime Air Command (MARAIRNATO).

Exercise DYNAMIC MANTA 18 will be supported by an In-Stride Debriefing Team (IDT) who will produce an analysis of the training from submitted highlights signals. The team will analyse anti-submarine warfare events real time and will provide debriefs to ships, submarines and aircrews. It allows crew to accelerate their process, make adjustments, improve the performance and boost the anti-submarine warfare readiness. IDT team is composed of ASW experts and will perform its mission from Sigonella Air Base.

For more information.

3-14 May 2018

SIIL 18 (HEDGEHOG 18)

Estonia conducted the SIIL 18 (HEDGEHOG) exercise which aims testing the readiness of its armed forces in case of an armed aggression between 2-14 May 2018.

The main focus of SIIL 18 is to exercise territorial defence both in conventional and asymmetric warfare. Exercise take place with participation of over 15,000 troops including several thousand soldiers from NATO allies, including the British-led NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Battle Group Estonia (BG EST). Altogether up to 15,500 members of the Estonian Defence Forces and Defence League together with Allies take part in the exercise. Police and Border Guard Board and Rescue Board also participated in the exercise.

HEDGEHOG 2018 also includes an additional OKAS ("QUILL") reserve exercise for defence



readiness for up to 223 reservists from 92nd Air Surveillance Wing that take place on 3-6 May 2018.

HEDGEHOG 2018 is divided into four phases:

- I phase (2-4 May) – increasing readiness of the participating units;
- II phase (4-7 May) – collective training in line with the comprehensive national defence concept;
- III phase (8-12 May) – battle training;
- IV phase (13-14 May) – closure of the exercise.

For more information.

15-19 May 2018

Ramstein Alternate

Ramstein Alternate aims to exercise the back-up Static Air Defence Centre (SADC) procedures to ensure the ability of the Combined Air Operations Centre personnel to conduct daily operations from alternate facilities.

For more information.



4-29 June 2019

Unified Vision 2018

NATO and Allied countries began testing last week resources in Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance with a focus on interoperability and on the ability of forces to work seamlessly together.

The trial United Vision 2018 (UV 18) began on 11 June and is being held for two weeks across NATO territories in Europe and North America. During the trial, participants from 17 NATO nations as well as from the partner countries Finland and Sweden have the opportunity to connect multinational and collective Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capabilities.

Operating a mixture of aerial, ground and maritime Surveillance and Reconnaissance platforms and sensors, the trial gathers around 1250 participants in Europe and North America, putting into practice lessons learned by NATO nations during the last decade of operating together.

“Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) is about how we connect our capabilities together, how we analyse the information that we collect, and how we share that information to maximum effect”, said NATO’s Assistant Secretary General for Defence Investment, Camille Grand, at the start

of the trial. “It is a vital capability that provides NATO decision-makers with a better situational awareness of what is happening on the ground, at sea and in the air.”

In addition to testing how information collected by individual Allies can be processed, analysed by different Allies and shared across the Alliance, UV 18 is testing more advanced technologies that can improve the speed and accuracy in which information is gathered and processed. By embracing evolving technology and adapting to the shifting strategic environment, the trial is a vivid example of a modern and innovative Alliance: “Allies are enhancing their ability to share burdens across the NATO intelligence enterprise, by better coordinating the analysis and distribution of vast amounts of intelligence”, said M. Grand. “NATO nations and partners are now able to use their intelligence capabilities in a far more collaborative and dynamic manner. This is critical in a changing world confronted by conventional as well as asymmetric threats.” The trial will also be used to develop recommendations in support of future NATO operations.

Unified Vision trials take place on a bi-annual basis. The first Unified Vision trial was held in 2012 in Norway at Ørland airbase.

Since then Unified Vision became NATO’s main trial to practice and evaluate new technical and operational concepts for conducting Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance in NATO operations.

UV 18 is taking the trial a step further by operating multiple sites and collection assets working together across various networks in multiple NATO countries.

For more information.



3-15 June 2018

BALTOPS 18

Exercise Baltic Operations (BALTOPS 18), concluded today, 15 June, with ships and forces arriving in Kiel, Germany.



BALTOPS is an annual maritime exercise, designed to improve flexibility and interoperability among the participants. Air, maritime, and amphibious assets from 22 NATO Allies and Partners took part in the live training event that set sail from Klaipeda, Lithuania on 3 June.

For two weeks, ships, aircraft, and marines conducted live-fire training, anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare, mine warfare, air defence, and amphibious operations. The exercise was also marked by the addition of new events.

“Joint personnel recovery has been included for the first time, with a focus on recovery in the maritime domain. The mine countermeasure (MCM) units also participated in several operational and technological experimentation measures, designed to advance our collective efforts in mine warfare” said Vice Admiral Lisa Franchetti, Commander of Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO).

The BALTOPS programme also featured a particular focus on mission command. “We have empowered task group commanders and their subordinates with a challenging ‘free-play’ exercise which has tested tactical cunning, initiative and cooperation with air and

land forces”, said Rear Admiral Guy Robinson, Deputy Commander of STRIKFORNATO. “I have been most impressed with notably improved teamwork, interoperability and warfighting effectiveness that all participants have demonstrated over the last two weeks.”

Over 40 ships, 60 aircraft, and combined force of Marines took part in BALTOPS 18, one of the largest exercises in Northern Europe. For the fourth consecutive year, STRIKFORNATO had overall responsibility on planning and leading the exercise.

For more information.

6-23 June 2018

Saber Strike 2018

Saber Strike 2018, a major US-led multinational exercise, wrapped up in Poland on Friday (15 June 2018), with a live-fire demonstration involving Polish F-16s and MI-24 attack helicopters. The exercise, which began on 3 June, mobilised around 18,000 troops from 19 NATO Allies and partners. It provided an opportunity for forces to enhance their readiness and train across the Baltic states and Poland.

This year, NATO’s four multinational battlegroups participated in the exercise, as did the Alliance’s command and control structures in the region.



“What I’m really excited about is to see, in one year, how far the battlegroups have come, taking their readiness to new heights...they are better prepared because they do exercises like this,” said US Deputy Commanding General Maj. Gen. Timothy McGuire. NATO Force Integration Units in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland

also supported the exercise by planning and coordinating incoming troops.

Key training events of the exercise included an air assault operation in Lithuania, a convoy of the US 2nd Cavalry Regiment from Germany to Latvia, and multiple bridge and river crossings. Participating nations provided appropriate transparency under the OSCE Vienna Document on confidence and security-building measures. For instance, Poland provided a mandatory notification to all OSCE participating states, including Russia, 42 days in advance of the exercise and the US, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia provided voluntary notifications on the exercise. In addition, the US provided a voluntary briefing to the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation.

For more information.

7-16 June 2018

Summer Shield

Summer Shield 2018 takes place with 1,200 troops from Latvia, the U.S., Bulgaria, Canada, Estonia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovakia, the U.K. and Sweden taking part on the ranges around Adazi.

Summer Shield involves participants working combat support skills including artillery support,



air defense, reconnaissance, defense against weapons of mass destruction, combat support by military engineers and anti-tank capabilities, alongside joint fire observers, air support controllers, medics and transportation units.

Though listed on NATO's training calendar, Summer Shield is also open to non-NATO

members. This year that includes Sweden, while Finland is a previous participant.

Consequently there will be increased security in the area to ensure no-one wanders into the line of fire, and increased activity in the air too as ground and air-forces co-ordinate their actions.

<https://eng.lsm.lv/article/society/defense/summer-shield-exercises-under-way.a233039/>

25-27 June 2018

Ramstein Alloy 2018 II

Allies and Partners are scheduled to conduct quick reaction drills in Baltic airspace with a focus on Latvia on April 17 and 18 providing training opportunities for regional air forces.

The two-day exercise Ramstein Alloy 18-1 will see Allies Denmark, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Norway, Poland and the United States as well as



Partners Finland and Sweden operating fighter jets, light fighter aircraft, a helicopter and a tanker aircraft that conduct multinational drills demonstrating NATO and Partner capability and interoperability. Participants will practice loss of communication, search and rescue and

Air-to-Air Refuelling procedures and conduct air combat training. The flying assets will also be used to simulate Close Air Support for Latvian Joint Terminal Attack Controller teams at Adazi Training Range and may conduct so-called practice diversions to alternate airfields in the region.

During the multinational exercise the flying activities will be controlled by Control and Reporting Centre at Karmelava, Lithuania, Control and Reporting Point at Ämari, Estonia, as well as airborne assets such as NATO and Royal Air Force airborne warning and control system (AWACS) planes and an Italian Conformal Airborne Early Warning (CAEW) jet.

On behalf of NATO Allied Air Command, the Combined Air Operations Centre at Uedem, Germany, oversees this training event that has been conducted for more than ten years now. Regularly scheduled three times a year, it is a routine training event aimed at further honing skills of highly capable and flexible aircrews and

controllers in the field of quick reaction tactics, techniques and procedures.

RAMSTEIN ALLOY 18-1 specifically provides a venue for close cooperation and coordination with NATO Partners Finland and Sweden; both Partners' aircraft take part in this exercise. The RAMSTEIN ALLOY series uses scenarios that could happen in any country around the world, when a civilian airliner loses contact with the air traffic control agencies and needs assistance from the QRA aircraft.

For more information.

25 June - 06 July 2018

Dynamic Mongoose 2018

Dynamic Mongoose is the second annual NATO-led maritime Anti-Submarine Warfare interoperability exercise and Norway is the host nation. After Dynamic Manta, conducted in the Mediterranean, Mongoose is conducted off the coast of Norway and is scheduled for June 25 to July 6, 2018.



The aim of this exercise is to provide all participants with complex and challenging warfare training to enhance their interoperability and proficiency in anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare skills.

8 NATO nations are participating in Dynamic Mongoose 2018, with 2 submarines, 7 surface units and 3 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA).

For more information.

10-20 October 2018

Brilliant Jump 2018

Exercise Brilliant Jump 2018, conducted in Norway, drew to a close yesterday with participating forces being designated fully operational. As part of the exercise play a number of units deployed to the exercise area and then adopted a protective stance in accordance with standardized NATO procedures; just as they would in a real military operation in a crisis area.

The exercise, led by NATO's Joint Force Command Brunssum in close coordination with the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy, clearly demonstrated how NATO forces, command

structures and associated military activities provide the best visible example of NATO readiness, the Alliance's ability to swiftly deploy to counter threats to our collective security and, at the same time, assure member nations and their populations of NATO's ability and commitment to protect them.

For more information.



27 October - 07 November 2018

Trident Juncture 2018

NATO Allies are testing their ability to defend our populations and territories, deter potential adversaries and work together with partners in NATO's biggest exercise in recent years.

Around 50,000 participants from NATO and partner countries and 250 aircraft, 65 ships, up to 10,000 vehicles participated in this exercise between 25 October to 7 November 2018.

Parts of Norway, and the surrounding areas of the North Atlantic and the Baltic Sea

NATO forces are trained, able to operate together, and ready to respond to any threat.

While Allies will almost certainly face some weather challenges, Trident Juncture 18 simulates a collective response to a realistic crisis. It is designed to ensure that NATO forces are trained and ready to defend all Allies from any threat.

NATO's ability to plan and conduct a major collective defence operation under an Article 5 scenario tested via Trident Juncture 18.

In addition to NATO member countries, two NATO partner countries – Finland and Sweden – take part in Trident Juncture 18.

For more information.



08-11 October 2018

EADRCC Consequence Management Field Exercise "SRBIJA 2018"

The 18th EADRCC consequence management field exercise, called "SRBIJA 2018" was jointly organized by the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) and the Ministry of the Interior of Serbia. The consequence management field exercise was conducted from 8th to 11th October 2018 in and around Mladenovac, Serbia. The aim of the exercise was to improve interoperability in international disaster response operations.



The choice of an earthquake scenario was linked to the type of geological and environmental challenges faced by Serbia.

The scenario for this year's EADRCC exercise "SRBIJA 2018" provided an opportunity to practice international cooperation and strengthen the ability of teams from different nations to work effectively together across a wide range of relief operations. These included urban search and rescue, emergency medical teams, water rescue, as well as detection, protection and decontamination teams.

Contributions to the exercise consisted of emergency response teams, exercise planners and evaluators. With around 2,000 personnel from 40 countries involved, it was the largest exercise organized by the EADRCC, and the first hosted by Serbia.

The exercise was inaugurated by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg together with the President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic.

For more information

8-17 October 2018

Anakonda 2018

ANAKONDA 2018, a Polish-led multinational exercise, which began on 7 November, today completed its first week. The exercise involves around 12,500 troops in Poland and approximately 5,000 troops in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The exercise demonstrated the interoperability of the Polish Armed Forces with participating troops from 10 NATO Allies: Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey and United States.

"This exercise is an opportunity to present the readiness of the Polish Armed Forces and our Allies to operate within the complex, contemporary, multidomain environment. Conducted in Poland and in the Baltic States, ANAKONDA is the venue for the certification of the Multinational Division North East", said Major General Tomasz Piotrowski, Commander of Polish Armed Forces Operational Command.

The Multinational Division North East coordinates activities of NATO's defensive multinational battlegroups deployed in the Baltic states and Poland. This includes coordinating training and increasing situational awareness in the region.



Key training events of ANAKONDA included river crossings, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) defence, military medicine, and live-firings by Polish and US troops.

For more information.

26-30 November 2018

Cyber Coalition 2018

NATO's flagship cyber defence exercise Cyber Coalition 2018 is currently underway in Estonia from Nov. 26 - Nov. 30, 2018. The exercise, now in its eleventh iteration, sees approximately 700 participants from 28 NATO Allies and four partner nations work together in order to prepare and test our cyber defenders for the ever-evolving cyber threat.

"We're having an excellent exercise this year, with great participation from NATO nations, organisations, and partners," said U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Robert Buckles, the exercise director. "Cyber Coalition 2018, a NATO ACT directed exercise, is able to fully integrate the recently established Cyber Operations

Center (CyOC) at SHAPE. It's a great opportunity for the two strategic commands to test procedures and policies in cyberspace, and we have reached our primary aim of the exercise to improve coordination and collaboration across the Alliance."

The five-day exercise aims to prepare participants via realistic scenario based training in order to: enhance coordination and cooperation between NATO and participating nations, strengthen our ability to protect Alliance cyber space and conduct military operations in the cyber domain, and test NATO and national procedures on information sharing, situational awareness in cyber space and decision making.



"The members of the Nation of Estonia have been the most courteous hosts, especially those of the Estonian Defense Forces and Minister of Defence," said Buckles. "The exercise has been hosted here in Tartu for the last several years. Estonia has established itself as one of the leading Nations in cyberspace and technology, and we are thankful to have had Cyber Coalition here once again."

The exercise will conclude on Nov. 30 after a media day and distinguished visitors day where participants can demonstrate their collective knowledge for various military and industry leaders as well as multinational media outlets.

For more information.



19 November 2018

NATO-EU Parallel and Coordinated Exercise (PACE 18)

On Monday, 19 November 2018, NATO and the EU begin the conduct of a major civil-military crisis management exercise "EU-HEX-ML 18 (PACE)". The aim of the exercise is to improve and enhance the ability to respond to a complex crisis of a hybrid nature with an internal and an external dimension.

The exercise focuses on the link of external and internal security. It will be run across all critical areas that can be affected by hybrid attacks, including energy, cyber, health, maritime, consular, Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and strategic communication.

This exercise conducted in parallel with a NATO staff command post exercise, to further develop interaction between both organisations in situational awareness, cyber, crisis response and strategic communication in crisis situations. The EU and NATO have decided to step up their cooperation in both areas - hybrid and exercises, as outlined in the EU-NATO Joint Declarations of July 2016 and July 2018. As one result, parallel and coordinated exercises were conducted for the first time in 2017, with NATO leading the exercise and the EU conducting a smaller exercise in parallel. This year, the EU will exercise the entire crisis response cycle and all instruments that are at its disposal in case of a hybrid attack.

For more information.



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