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Promoting a more transparent and accountable NATO

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Welcome to NATO Watch's quarterly *Observatory*: the only online publication dedicated entirely to news and independent commentary on NATO policy-making and operational activities. The clips are drawn from a wide range of subscriptions, feeds and alerts covering a substantial part of the major English language newspapers and other periodicals worldwide.

NATO Watch conducts independent monitoring and analysis of NATO and aims to increase transparency, stimulate parliamentary engagement and broaden public awareness and participation in a progressive reform agenda within NATO.

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Opinion:

The Return of NATO Watch

Dr Ian Davis, Director, NATO Watch

After a pause of nearly three years, NATO Watch is back with a revamped [website](#) and renewed purpose. This has been made possible by the generous support of the [Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation](#).

The original rationale for founding NATO Watch in 2009 remains valid today. In addition to being tasked with the collective security of over 600 million people, NATO is more engaged globally than ever before, with current operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo and the Mediterranean, as well as supporting African Union peacekeeping missions. These wide-ranging activities on the international stage also mean that the amount of sensitive information held within NATO and the national security apparatus of member states is immensely larger than it was a generation ago.

As NATO's security apparatus continues to grow, it ought to be subjected to closer scrutiny. But existing oversight mechanisms such as freedom of information laws, declassification policies and parliamentary committees are inadequate in relation to NATO and need to be strengthened.

Despite our modest means, NATO Watch is committed once again to being a crucial carrier of information and opinion on the organization's activities and to

helping raise the level of debate on NATO in member states.

We will continue to collect, collate and interpret information on NATO for NGOs, civil society and the media, as well as government officials who are looking for independent and reliable analysis.

NATO and the Nuclear Ban Treaty: what a realistic constructive response could look like

Paul Ingram, Director of the British American Security Information Council ([BASIC](#))

There is a diversity of well-intentioned and honourable positions on the efficacy of the treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, and it would be expected that NATO states would be sceptical about the approach and direction of the initiative. But the joint NATO [statement](#) issued on the day (20 September) it was open for signature was unnecessarily dismissive and alarmist. Stating that the ban treaty 'is at odds with the existing non-proliferation and disarmament architecture' and 'risks undermining the NPT' talks up the risk and inadvertently raises the risk of such an outcome. It also fails to acknowledge that the principal threat and driver of proliferation is the continued attachment to nuclear deterrence by nuclear armed states, including NATO.

The situation demands that NATO use its influence to breathe new life into arms control and disarmament initiatives with other nuclear armed states and alliances, not to point the

finger of blame on states that have forsworn nuclear weapons within the NPT as threatening it. Such a position is crass and damaging.



(The second round of UN nuclear ban treaty negotiations, 15 June 2017 – photo credit: ICAN/flickr)

It is indeed important that international security considerations play a central role in efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament, and true that some of the states involved in negotiating the ban could have considered more seriously the important steps needed to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. But the approach frequently expressed by NATO appears to relegate disarmament efforts, even the step-by-step approach it appears to support, to wishful thinking. The 20 September statement restates NATO's position that 'as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance'.

Such an inflexible approach could be a brittle error. What happens if a domestic debate in any NATO state were to lead to a government deciding or being forced by its parliament to sign the Treaty? This would surely force a rethink of nuclear arrangements in NATO. Would the state be forced to leave NATO, or just the Nuclear Planning Group? Could there be flexible arrangements around the nuclear mission? Political planners would do

well to prepare for such eventualities.

Perhaps more importantly, what could NATO—clearly committed to maintaining a nuclear deterrent—do practically to

'show some leg' and demonstrate the concrete commitment to the disarmament agenda it claims to have without making the leap of faith it believes would be necessary? The lowest hanging fruit here is in NATO's declaratory policy, and the German government, active participants in the UN Open Ended Working Group on Disarmament but not in the negotiations for the Ban, could have the answer. They are proposing that the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) consider again the so-called Negative Security Assurances (NSAs): a promise by NWS to states without nuclear weapons that they will never to threaten nuclear use against them. These NSAs exist already, but with several conditions and exceptions, and are not legally binding unless attached to a particular nuclear weapon free zone.

This could be a first practical step towards a norm of sole purpose (for nuclear weapons being only to deter others' nuclear use) and then to 'no first use'. In other words, it is a good example of the step-by-step approach favoured by the NWS and their allies.

NATO itself could play a stronger role in promoting stronger NSAs without exceptions, by starting with

its own position. The fact that NATO's nuclear armed members refuse to offer unconditional guarantees to states without nuclear weapons is deeply damaging to the culture of nuclear non-proliferation, and sends the message that nuclear threats are legitimate in certain circumstances even when other means are available.

A unilateral declaration by NATO that it would never support nuclear threats against any state that did not possess nuclear weapons may sound weak, but as part of an active global diplomatic push to establish a global norm it could have important implications for restraining other actors who more obviously make such threats. Telling North Korea that it should

not have nuclear weapons to defend itself when it is far more exposed in its security environment than NATO states appears hypocritical and weak. Declaring a principled restraint on nuclear threats that would apply to all nuclear armed states offers the possibility of greater legitimacy and a practical response to nuclear threats against Japan and South Korea.

There is no conceivable scenario in which NATO could be threatened by a state without nuclear weapons and conceive of responding with a nuclear threat. Maintaining the option simply exposes NATO to accusations that it is not serious about its vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, nor considerate of other states' security.

News, Commentary and Reports:

Arctic Security

The Arctic region, or High North, strategically important during the Cold War became less significant after the end of the confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. However, due to both the warming climate in the Arctic and the re-emergence of geopolitical competition in the region, the Arctic is once again of growing strategic importance. Climate change is reportedly occurring at a faster rate than previously thought, which will have a significant impact on the Arctic and on the security of Arctic littoral states.

A [draft report](#) by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly concludes that "While NATO Allies among the Arctic littoral states hold different views on

whether or not there should be a role for NATO in the security of the region, this report finds that the security, environmental, and economic imperatives in the region require that NATO, at the very least, have the capacity and resources to monitor and consider developments in the Arctic". The report also recommends, among other things, that NATO should create an 'Arctic working group' to "identify the security implications of climate change", "review Allied infrastructure needs in the region", "identify NATO territory in the Arctic vulnerable to territorial infringement by non-NATO states", "evaluate NATO's deterrence, defence, and maritime posture in the High North"; and analyse Russia and China's strategy in the region. The report also recommends that NATO increase the number of military exercises in the region.

[Russia is building up its Arctic military presence and Nato should be worried, says](#)

[new report](#), Independent, 7 September 2017

NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Political Committee, [NATO and Security in the Arctic](#), Draft Report, Gerald E. Connolly (United States) Rapporteur Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations, 172 PCTR 17 E, 24 August 2017

Arms Control and Disarmament

In September, the United States announced it was restricting Russian military flights over US territory after Moscow prohibited US observation flights over Kaliningrad. Both the United States and Russia have questioned the other's compliance with the Open Skies Treaty.

(Open Spirit: NATO minesweeping in the Baltic Sea – photo credit: NATO)



Operation Open Spirit, an annual multinational operation to clear Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) in the Baltic Sea took place in August. Expert teams from Latvia, Estonia, Norway and Canada and the UK identified 38 objects and destroyed two mines.

The Baltic Sea was heavily bombarded during the First and Second World Wars, both via air and submarine warfare. As a result, unexploded ordnance remains in some areas.

[Russia to retaliate against U.S. in military observation flights row: agencies](#), Reuters, 27 September 2017

[US to curb Russian military flights over American territory](#), Fox News, 26 September 2017

Must Read: Claudia Major and Christian Mölling, '[How Germany Should Change Its Approach to Arms Control](#)', Carnegie Europe, 7 September 2017—The old habits of Cold War arms control no longer suit today's security environment. It is time for Berlin to devise a new strategy

[Operation Open Spirit: How NATO is minesweeping the Baltic Sea](#), Forces Network, 1 September 2017

[NATO ships sweep seafloor for old ordnance](#), DVIDS, 17 August 2017

Collective Defence

In August, NATO [announced](#) that its four multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland are now fully operational.

At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO leaders had decided to enhance NATO's military presence in the eastern part of the alliance. Since then, four multinational battlegroups totalling approximately 4,500 troops have deployed to the Baltic nations and Poland. Canada leads the battlegroup in Latvia, with contributions by Albania, Italy, Poland, Slovenia and Spain. Germany leads the battlegroup in Lithuania, with contributions by Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway. The United Kingdom leads the battlegroup in Estonia, with contributions by France. The United States leads the battlegroup in Poland, with contributions by Romania and the UK.

According to NATO, the four battlegroups "are one part of the Alliance's response to Russia's use of force against its neighbours and its military build-up in the Baltic region and beyond".

NATO is also strengthening its multinational presence in the Black Sea region, based around a Romanian-led multinational framework brigade. The Alliance has also tripled the size of the NATO Response Force to 40,000 - with



(Enhance Forward Presence Map (June 2017) – credit: NATO)

a high-readiness Spearhead Force at its core - and set up eight small headquarters (NATO Force Integration Units) to facilitate training and reinforcements.

Harlan Ullman, [NATO Should Pivot to the Black Sea, End Russia's Free Ride](#), Observer, 29 September 2017

[Nato chief: world is at its most dangerous point in a generation](#), *The Guardian*, 8 September 2017

Uwe Hartmann, [The Evolution of the Hybrid Threat, and Resilience as a Countermeasure](#), NATO Defense College Research Paper No. 139, September 2017—Written by a Colonel in the Germany Army, this paper argues that hybrid warfare is an attack against NATO's strategy making. Since hybrid threats will likely become even more complex and, therefore, unpredictable, the author argues that NATO and its member states should strengthen their efforts to enhance resilience.

Artur Kacprzyk and Karsten Friis, [Adapting NATO's Conventional Force Posture in the Nordic-Baltic Region](#), Policy Paper No.3, The Polish Institute of International Affairs, August 2017

[NATO battlegroups in Baltic nations and Poland fully operational](#), NATO News Release, 28 August 2017

Stewart Patrick and Alex Davidson, [Europe's Insecurity Dilemma](#), Council on Foreign Relations, 28 August 2017

[Defending the east of the Alliance - NATO's enhanced Forward Presence](#), NATO TV, 23 August 2017

Mihai Chihai, [The perils of hybrid threats in Central Europe](#), New Eastern Europe, 23 August 2017

Claire Craanen, [Putting the North Atlantic Back on NATO's Agenda](#), Carnegie Europe, 21 July 2017

[Nato sends 'alive and strong' message from Estonia](#), BBC News, 10 July 2017

Counter Terrorism

NATO training missions have focused on counter terrorism capabilities in in the Middle East and North Africa, including in Egypt, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. NATO surveillance planes support the anti-ISIS coalition, and at the NATO summit in May 2017, the alliance announced it would become a full member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

[Secretary General meets US commanders for talks on NATO's role in fighting terrorism](#), NATO News Release, 20 September 2017

["Unprecedented" security challenges put resilience center-stage for NATO](#), Reuters, 20 September 2017

[Soldiers on Europe's streets dent NATO's defense edge](#), WHTC, 14 September 2017

[NATO Strategic Direction South Hub inaugurated](#), NATO News Release, 13 September 2017

[NATO's new southern hub seeks to counter threats early](#), Stars and Stripes, 6 September 2017

[US and allies must 'beef up' activities against terrorism and North Korea, ambassador to NATO says](#), CNBC, 31 August 2017

Matthew Levitt, [NATO's role in fighting post-caliphate ISIS looms large](#), The Hill, 2 August 2017

[NATO helps Iraq boost civil-military cooperation in dealing with terrorist challenges](#), NATO News, 31 July 2017

Alastair Reed and Johanna Pohl, [Tackling the surge of returning foreign fighters](#), NATO Review, 14 July 2017

Margherita Bianchi, Guillaume Lasconjarias and Alessandro Marrone, [Projecting Stability in NATO's Southern Neighbourhood](#), NDC Conference Report, NATO Defense College No. 03/17 - July 2017

Cyber Security and Information Warfare

NATO now considers cyberspace to be a conflict domain alongside that of air, sea and land. According to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, NATO had seen [a 60% increase](#) in cyber attacks on its networks over the last year. NATO is in the process of building its own integrated cyber command structure, which it [says](#) is for defensive purposes, although offensive capabilities will still reside with member states.

In September, EU defence ministers together with NATO

held a [meeting](#) on the first common strategic cybersecurity exercise, EU CYBRID 2017. Also that month, Sweden announced that it would increase cooperation with NATO member Denmark on countering Russian cyber threats and disinformation campaigns. The defence ministers of Sweden, Peter Hultqvist, and of Denmark, Claus Hjort Frederiksen, announced the move in a [joint article entitled "Russian fake news - a danger to our countries"](#).

Seventy percent of Russian-language tweets targeting NATO military activities in Eastern Europe are generated by automated Russian trolls, according to a survey done by the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence. The report—the first of a regular publication called "[Robotrolling](#)" on social media published quarterly by the centre in Latvia—said: "The automatically created content consists of a mix of benign content, (e.g. by media outlets), spam, and politically motivated material".

"Additionally, numerous imaginary or 'fake' media outlets plagiarize or algorithmically re-write content from other media outlets and post these under their own name", the report said. The use of Russian bots to transmit media is a concern because "the Russian-language social media environment is increasingly becoming an extension of traditional offline and online media".

"Most Russian media outlets are either directly or indirectly controlled by the



state", the report said. "By implication, even automatically generated Russian news-spam echoes state-sanctioned content".

The NATO report warned that Russian trolling was undermining the potential for advancing democracy through social media: "The implications are stark: the democratizing possibilities of social media appear—at least in the case of Twitter in Russia—to have been greatly undermined". the report said.

[NATO Secretary General meets EU Defence Ministers, attends cyber exercise](#), NATO News Release, 7 September 2017

[NATO will rely on members to independently field cyber weapons but is building cyber command](#), IHS Jane's, 7 September 2017

[Cyber alert: EU ministers test responses in first computer war game](#), Reuters, 7 September 2017

[EU defence ministers put to test in mock cyberattack](#), AFP, 7 September 2017

[EU defense ministers hold first exercises with NATO on cyber security](#), Front News, 7 September 2017

Łukasz Wenerski, [The Visegrad Countries and "Post-Truth" Who is Responsible for Delivering the Kremlin's Narrative to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland?](#) Bertelsmann Stiftung Policy Brief 06.2017

Toomas Hendrik Ilves, [Merkel must stand up to Putin over the hacking of democracy](#), *Financial Times*, 3 September 2017

[Russian "bots" dominate Twitter discourse on Nato presence in Eastern Europe](#), bne IntelliNews, 4 September 2017

[Zapad exercise: Russian cyber attacks on the West 'could lead to fatalities'](#), *Brisbane Times*, 4 September 2017

[Russian Twitter Bots Troll NATO](#), The Washington Free Beacon, 1 September 2017

[Merle Maigre takes command as director of NATO CCDCOE in Tallinn](#), SC Magazine, 31 August 2017

[NATO, the Med, Iran: study details extent of cyber attacks on Italy](#), The Local, 14 August 2017

Barbara Roggeveen, [NATO Needs an Offensive Cybersecurity Policy](#), Atlantic Council, 8 August 2017

[Denmark to train NATO soldiers to combat Russian misinformation](#), VOA, 17 July 2017

[NATO looks to modernize IT](#), Fifth Domain, 10 July 2017

[Former NATO Commander: Alliance needs to take cyber fight to Russia's door](#), Defense One, 6 July 2017

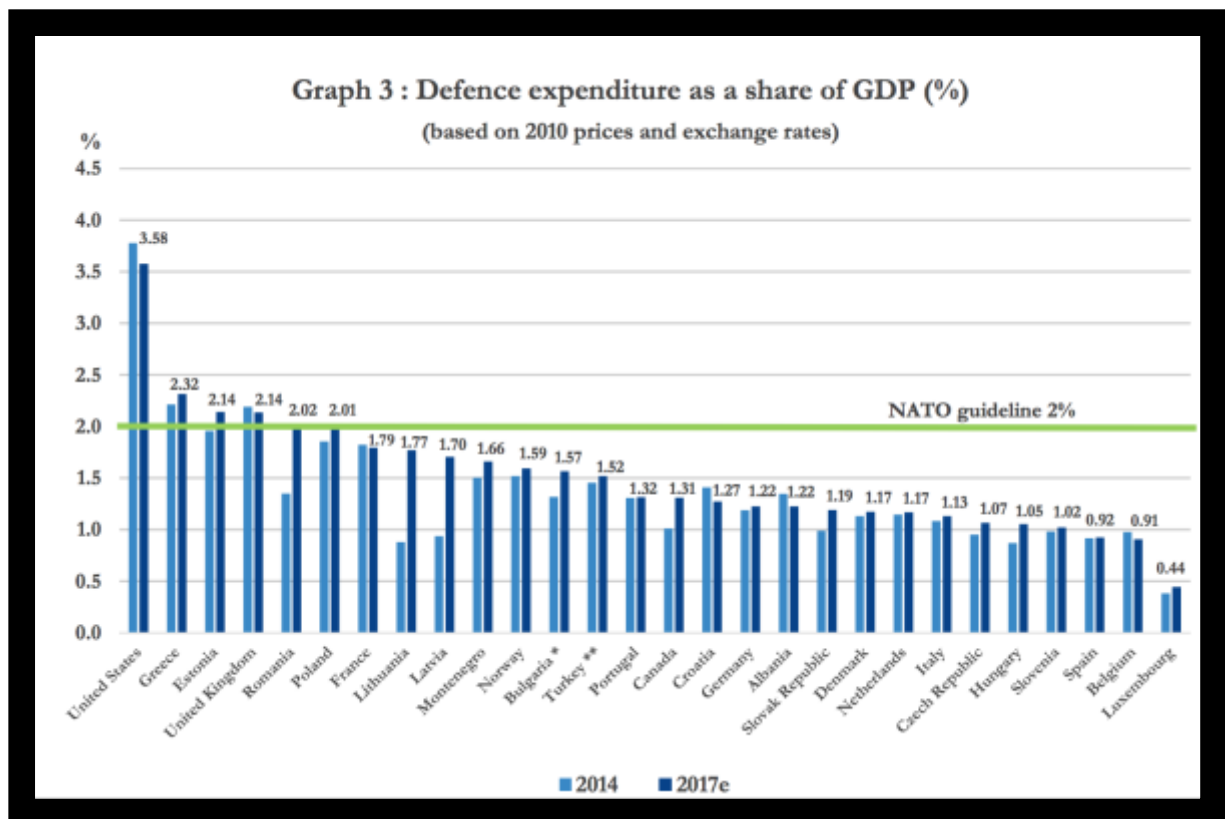
Defence Budgets and Procurement

Each NATO member state was meant to be following a 2% of GDP defence spending guideline agreed in 2006, but not all states were doing so. At the 2014 NATO summit in Wales, members pledged to stop cutting their defence expenditure and "move toward" that 2% guideline within 10 years. Since the 2014 meeting, defence expenditures from members has increased steadily. The cumulative spending increase from 2015 to 2017 above the 2014 level is an additional \$45.8 billion, according to [NATO's June 2017 communique](#).

Germany and Norway have placed an order for five Airbus A330 Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) aircraft to be fielded under the auspices of the European/NATO Multinational Multi Role Tanker Transport Fleet (MMF). The two nations formally joined the MMF programme three months ago, alongside Luxembourg and the Netherlands, which had already signed up for two aircraft to be handed over between 2020 and 2022. In addition to the seven MRTTs now contracted, there are options for a further four aircraft should other nations join the programme.

[Multi-Role Tanker Transport Fleet expands significantly](#) - Germany and Norway to join the MMF, NATO News Release, 26 September 2017

Germany, Norway sign for five NATO-owned MRTT tanker-transports, IHS Jane's Defence Weekly, 25 September 2017



Michael Mandelbaum, [Pay Up, Europe: What Trump Gets Right About NATO](#), Foreign Affairs, September/October 2017

Mark Galeotti, [Trump was right: NATO is obsolete](#), Foreign Policy, 20 July 2017 - To fight the wars to come, the transatlantic alliance is going to need to start spending more — but not on tanks and fighter jets

Must Read: [President Trump's claim 'billions and billions' are 'pouring into NATO' because of his administration](#), *Washington Post*, 12 July 2017 - the Washington Post fact checks President Trump's claim that new money is pouring into NATO because of his administration

Enlargement and Partnerships

Azerbaijan

Senior NATO generals met their Azerbaijani counterparts in September. The generals exchanged views on Azerbaijan's Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO, which was recently signed and sets out agreed objectives for cooperation in the defence and security sector, civil emergency planning, scientific cooperation and public diplomacy.

[Azerbaijan threatens to cut off military cooperation with US and NATO](#), EurasiaNet, 11 September 2017

Joshua Kucera, [With Russia-NATO Meeting, is Baku the New Caucasian Geneva?](#), The Bug Pit, EurasiaNet, 8 September 2017

[Chairman of the NATO Military Committee visits Azerbaijan](#), NATO News Release, 7 September 2017

[Azerbaijan, NATO mull military cooperation](#), News.Az, 7 September 2017

[Azerbaijan, without explanation, drops out of NATO exercises](#), EurasiaNet, 27 July 2017

Bosnia Herzegovina

In September, Milorad Dodik, president of the Republic of Srpska, one of the two constitutional and legal entities of Bosnia-Herzegovina, called for a referendum on NATO membership and blocked funding of a new helicopter.

[Bosnian Serb president opposes NATO membership, blocks new helicopters](#), HS Jane's Defence Weekly, 5 September 2017

EU-NATO Relations

Following the signature of the Joint Declaration on NATO-EU cooperation in Warsaw in July 2016, NATO and the EU have been discussing how to expand their joint work, including by bringing more coherence in their respective defence capability development priorities and output.

EUROPEAN SECURITY, 2017 VOL. 26, NO. 3, Special Edition:

EU-NATO Relations: Running on the Fumes of Informed Deconfliction

This special issue brings together nine articles that either aim to develop existing theoretical and conceptual perspectives on the study of EU-NATO relations or assess an aspect of the practical and operational level.

EU-NATO relations: running on the fumes of informed deconfliction, Simon J. Smith and Carmen Gebhard

Theorising inter-organisational relations: the “EU-NATO relationship” as a catalytic case study, Joachim A. Koops

Grasping the everyday and extraordinary in EU-NATO relations: the added value of practice approaches, Nina Græger

The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost: a Grounded Theory approach to the comparative study of decision-making in the NAC and PSC, Simon J. Smith, Nikola Tomic & Carmen Gebhard

The EU and NATO’s dilemmas with Russia and the prospects for deconfliction, Simon Duke & Carmen Gebhard

The EU, NATO and the European defence market: do institutional responses to defence globalisation matter? Daniel Fiott

The Single European Sky: a window of opportunity for EU-NATO relations, Chantal Lavallée

The EU and NATO in Georgia: complementary and overlapping security strategies in a precarious environment, Sebastian Mayer

EU-NATO cooperation: the key to Europe’s security future, Jolyon Howorth

[EU, NATO officials propose ‘military Schengen’](#), IHS Jane’s Defence Weekly, 27 September 2017

[NATO Ambassadors and EU Commissioner discuss cooperation toward stronger European defence](#), NATO News Release, 4 July 2017

Finland—European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats

When the EU and NATO agreed to enhance their cooperation at the Warsaw Summit in 2016, countering hybrid threats was identified as one of the most prominent fields of cooperation. In September, the [European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats \(Hybrid CoE\)](#) was opened in Finland. It is intended to serve as a hub of expertise supporting the participating countries’ individual and collective efforts to enhance their civil-military capabilities, resilience, and preparedness to counter hybrid threats with a special focus on European security.

The Centre serves as a platform for cooperation between the EU and NATO in evaluating societies’ vulnerabilities and enhancing resilience,” says Director Matti Saarelainen. Currently, the 12 participating countries to the Centre are Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

[Finland to participate in NATO crisis management drills in October](#), YLE, 28 September 2017

[European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats starts operating in Helsinki](#), Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, News Release, 1 September 2017

[How pragmatic Finland deals with its Russian neighbour](#), BBC News, 27 July 2017

Georgia

Georgian special operations forces took part in an US Army Europe-led military exercise [Noble Partner](#) in

Georgia in late July-early August. The exercise, designed to support Georgia's integration into the NATO Response Force, involved about 2,800 troops from Armenia, Georgia, Germany, Slovenia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States, participating in multiple locations across Georgia.

NATO allies and partners helped Georgia contain a major forest fire in the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of Georgia in late August. Assistance was coordinated by NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) and Turkey provided one firefighting aircraft and two helicopters; Azerbaijan provided a firefighting helicopter; and Ukraine provided a firefighting aircraft.

[NATO Allies and partners help Georgia fight major forest fire](#), NATO News Release, 29 August 2017

[Georgia to host exercise with NATO troops in early September](#), Kyiv Post, 29 August 2017

[Noble Partner Supports Georgia's NATO Response Force Integration](#), US Department of Defense, 16 August 2017

[Charles Kupchan: No consensus on NATO membership for Georgia](#), Civil.ge, 16 August 2017

[NATO criticizes Putin visit to disputed Georgia territory](#), Politico, 8 August 2017

[Georgian Defence Minister, NATO Core Team leader discuss Substantial Package](#), Agenda.ge, 7 August 2017

[Georgian President says Pence reassured Tbilisi over NATO bid](#), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2 August 2017

Eduard Abrahamyan, [Georgia after Montenegro's NATO Accession](#), Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI), 11 July 2017—Following Montenegro's recent accession to NATO, the author looks at the

recent evolution of Georgia's relations with NATO. While concluding that membership remains a distant prospect for Tbilisi, he also contends that the US and other NATO members need to provide tangible support to enhance the country's security.

Iraq

Between 31 July and 3 August 2017, over fifty representatives from eight Iraqi ministries participated in a NATO workshop on civil-military relations in Baghdad—the third in a series of workshops focusing on civil-military cooperation. NATO also provides advice and assistance to Iraq in multiple areas, including counter-improvised explosive devices, civil preparedness, and reform of the security institutions.

[NATO helps Iraq boost civil-military cooperation in dealing with terrorist challenges](#), NATO News Release, 4 August 2017

(The Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe visits NATO and meets with NATO

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg – photo credit: NATO)

Japan

Japan is the longest-standing of NATO's 'partners across the globe'. Building on initial contacts in the early 1990s, dialogue on common security interests has become more regular and structured. NATO and Japan signalled their commitment to strengthen cooperation in a joint political declaration signed in April 2013.

Paul Bacon and Joe Burton, [NATO-Japan Relations: Projecting Strategic Narratives of "Natural Partnership" and Cooperative Security](#), Asian Security, 2017, published online 14 September 2017



[Secretary General welcomes Japanese Prime Minister to NATO Headquarters](#), NATO News Release, 6 July 2017

Jordan

NATO supports Jordan in the areas of cyber defence, border security and counter improvised explosive devices (C-IED). In July, NATO and the Jordanian Armed Forces inaugurated the newly established Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) in Amman.

[NATO, Jordan mark establishment of new cybersecurity team](#), UPI, 20 July 2017

[NATO supports Jordan's national cyber defence strategy](#), NATO News, 19 July 2017

(NATO Week at the NATO-Kuwait ICI Regional Center – photo credit: NATO)



Kuwait

NATO's cooperation with Kuwait takes place under the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), launched in June 2004. The ICI aims to contribute to long-term global and regional security by offering countries of the broader Middle East region practical bilateral security cooperation with NATO.

[Activities at NATO-Kuwait ICI Regional Center start](#), NATO News Release, 22 September 2017

Macedonia

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace in 1995 and agreed a

Membership Action Plan in 1999. Beyond the need to make progress on reforms, the country must find a mutually acceptable solution with Greece to the issue over its name before it can be invited to join NATO.

[Top Macedonian officials pledge efforts toward NATO membership](#), Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty, 27 September 2017

[FYROM's Defence Minister: The country must become a NATO member as soon as possible](#), IBNA, 18 August 2017

[Macedonia's battered army eyes future with more hope](#), Balkan Insight, 16 August 2017

[Republic of Macedonia Eyes NATO to Ward Off Russian Interference](#), Bloomberg, 8 August 2017

[With an eye on NATO membership, Macedonia raises defence spending](#), IHS Jane's, 3 August 2017

Moldova

In September, the Moldovan Government adopted an Individual Partnership Plan with NATO for 2017-19, which includes a NATO communications centre that will be in Chisinau.

[Moldovan President Says NATO Liaison Office 'Will Not Bring Peace'](#), Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty, 26 September 2017

[Moldova approved three-year Individual Partnership Plan with NATO](#), Front News, 14 September 2017

Mongolia

Mongolia is one of a range of NATO partner countries, which are referred to as 'partners across the globe'. Building on cooperation in peace-support operations that has developed since 2005, NATO and Mongolia agreed to further develop relations by launching an Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme.

Sung-Won Yoon, Adiyasuren Jamiyandagva, Vlad Vernygora, Joe Burton, Byambakhand Luguusharv and Munkhtur Dorjraa, [Views on NATO from Mongolia and the Republic of Korea: Hedging Strategy, and](#)

[“Perfunctory Partnership”?](#), Asian Security, 2017, published online 15 September 2017

[NATO supports Mongolia in transforming its defence education system](#), NATO News Release, 13 September 2017

Policy

Must Read: Michael O’Hanlon, [NATO’s Limits: A New Security Architecture for Eastern Europe](#), Survival, 59:5, 7-24, 2017, published online 17 September 2017 - Whatever its merits and motivations, the process of NATO enlargement has run its course. It is time for Western nations to work out, and seek to negotiate, a new security architecture for the neutral countries of Eastern Europe

Natalia Chaban, Paul Bacon, Joe Burton and Vlad Vernygora, [NATO Global Perceptions – Views from the Asia-Pacific Region](#), Asian Security, online 5 September 2017

[Among friends and acquaintance: Challenges in the development of NATO’s partnership policy](#), Centre for Military Studies, University of Copenhagen, July 2017 - this report examines the state of NATO’s partnership policy considering the changed European security environment and to derive recommendations for how NATO and Denmark can reform the partnership policy to increase the utility of partners. The report is only available in Danish, but includes an English abstract.

Science for Peace and Security Programme

In August, NATO launched a new [interactive map](#) offering an at-a-glance guide to activities run by NATO’s Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme. The SPS Programme provides opportunities for practical cooperation between NATO countries and partner nations in matters of security-related civil science and technology. It provides funding for various grant mechanisms such as workshops, training courses and multi-year research projects and involves expert advice.

[Algae derived biofuel in the works for Serbia thanks to NATO funding](#), Biofuels Digest, 20 August 2017

[NATO-funded Serbian researchers develop biofuel from algae](#), NATO News Release, 18 August 2017

Serbia

Unlike other Western Balkan partners, Serbia does not aspire to join NATO. However, the country is deepening its political dialogue and cooperation with the alliance on issues of common interest, such as defence reforms.

[Serbians participate in NATO’s exercise in Bosnia](#), b92, 25 September 2017

Vuk Jeremić, [NATO three years away from Serbia](#), Demostat, 23 August 2017

Sweden

NATO and Sweden actively cooperate in peace and security operations, and the country has been a major contributor to NATO-led operations and missions in the Balkans and Afghanistan. Sweden joined NATO’s Partnership for Peace in 1994 and became a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997. Sweden is one of five countries that has enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with NATO. In September, Sweden carried out its largest military exercise in two decades: [Aurora 2017](#).

Emil Dall, [Sweden’s Choice: NATO or the Nuclear Ban?](#) RUSI Commentary, 22 September 2017

[As Russia threatens, Sweden ponders joining NATO](#), The Economist, 21 September 2017

[Sweden hosts huge war games exercise with NATO](#), EuroNews, 14 September 2017

[Sweden starts largest military drill in over 20 years](#), Defense News, 11 September 2017

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Ukraine

In July, the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership marked its 20th anniversary, and talks began with NATO for a membership action plan (MAP) as a step towards eventual membership in the alliance. Ukraine is working on reforms to meet membership standards by 2020.

Also in July, NATO [announced](#) that it was providing Ukraine with new security hardware to help protect government networks after a series of cyber attacks hit companies and utilities in the country. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said the new equipment will help defend "key government institutions". In addition, the Ukrainian Navy plans to [establish](#) a NATO doctrines and tactic centre before the end of 2017.

Meanwhile, in August US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis said that the United States was considering providing defensive weapons to Ukraine. In a joint press conference with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, Mattis said, "Defensive weapons are not provocative unless you are an aggressor, and clearly Ukraine is not an aggressor since it is their territory where the fighting is happening". Officials at the US Departments of State and Defense have recommended that the US provide anti-tank missiles and other defensive weapons, but President Trump has yet to reach a decision.

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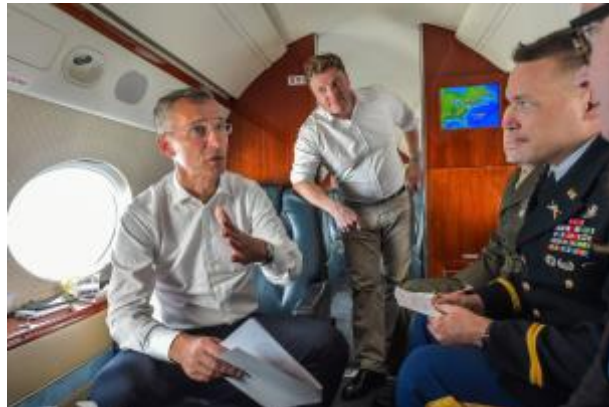
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UN-NATO Relations

NATO and the UN have been cooperating since the early 1990s on peace-support and crisis-management operations. At the 2015 Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping, the NATO Secretary General pledged to enhance support to the UN, in particular in the areas of countering improvised explosive devices, training and preparedness, supporting the UN's efforts to deploy more rapidly and working more closely on capacity building in countries at risk.

[AP Interview: NATO chief welcomes Trump's new approach](#), *Los Angeles Times*, 20 September 2017

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(NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg underway to visit US Central Command (CENTCOM) and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) in Tampa, Florida) – photo credit: NATO)

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Institutional Reform

Thomas-Durell Young, [Nato's Blind Spot: Getting To "Honest Defense"](#), *War on the Rocks*, 17 July 2017

Intelligence

On 21 October 2016, NATO appointed its first Assistant Secretary General for Intelligence and Security (ASG-I&S) and earlier this year opened its new Joint Intelligence and Security Division (JISD). In response to the challenging threat environment posed by an assertive Russia and the rise of terrorism and instability in the south, the member states are fundamentally adapting how NATO organises and analyses intelligence.

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Military Exercises

In July-September, tens of thousands of troops were on the move from the Baltic to the Black Sea, as NATO and Russia opened a series of massive military exercises the size of which Europe has not witnessed since the Cold War. Both sides claimed that the exercises, which involved aircraft, warships, tanks and artillery, were purely defensive in nature. The exercises [included](#) the dispatch by China of a warship to the Baltic Sea to conduct the first-ever

China-Russia joint naval exercises in European waters.

US Army Europe [released pictures](#) of Russian military observers invited to observe the NATO exercises in Eastern Europe. Similarly, NATO [sent three observers](#) to watch Russia's Zapad ("West") exercises in Belarus and Kaliningrad for a "Visitor's Day," but would have liked to send more. Russia [said](#) that around 13,000 personnel would take part, but NATO sources [estimated](#) (prior to the event) that there would be around 100,000 troops on NATO's eastern border. Some NATO member states were concerned about the possibility that Zapad could conceal Russian military mobilization and probe NATO's resilience to 'hybrid' warfare, including propaganda and cyber attacks, and asked Moscow for greater transparency about the exercises.

NATO partners have also been hosting military exercises. For example, 'Noble Partner' in Georgia (see above) and Sweden's Aurora 17 exercise. The latter in September was Stockholm's largest in 25 years, and included troops from six NATO member states. Aurora 17 incorporated Swedish sea, land and air units, with about 20,000 troops taking part, including some 1,500 soldiers from the US, 270 from Finland, 120 from France and between 40 to 60 from Denmark, Norway, Lithuania and Estonia each. The total cost of the exercise has been estimated at \$73 million.

[Moldova's small contribution to a NATO exercise](#) exacerbated divisions in the country between forces supporting President Dodon and

those backing the government, which is pushing for closer ties with the EU and the United States.

Finally, the bureaucratic hurdles associated with moving troops across European borders for NATO military exercises led to calls for a "[military Schengen Zone](#)". As the commander of US forces in Europe, General Ben Hodges, [put it](#), NATO needs "something that would allow a military convoy to move across Europe as fast as a migrant is able to move across Europe".

Zapad 2017

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[NATO and U.S. Baltic Sea Exercises Highlight Ongoing Tensions with Russian Forces](#), USNI News, 7 July 2017

Missile Defence

Since 2002, the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system has reportedly achieved 36 successful missile intercepts out of 44 attempts. Under the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) for European BMD operations, BMD-capable Aegis ships are operating in European waters to defend Europe from potential ballistic missile attacks, supposedly from countries such as Iran and North Korea. Two Aegis Ashore sites in Poland and Romania are also part of the EPAA.

Japan has indicated that it will also purchase and deploy an Aegis Ashore system to bolster its own defence against North Korean missiles. However, some analysts suggest that the NATO system in its current configuration lacks the reach and early warning radars to shoot down North Korean ballistic missiles. Nonetheless, a major NATO air and missile defence exercise [took place in Scotland](#) in late September with possible missile threats from North Korea in mind.

(The UK's Type 45 Destroyer HMS Dragon taking part in US-led Exercise Formidable Shield off the West Coast of Scotland – photo credit: UK MoD)



Likewise, on the other side of the Atlantic, the Pentagon is seeking to [transfer \\$416 million](#) from other military accounts to fund extra spending on missile defence. If approved, \$136

million would help build 20 new silos and 20 new missiles for the Ground-Based Midcourse Defence (GBMD) system based in Fort Greely, Alaska. The rest of the money would fund upgrades to four US Navy Aegis BMD ships and work on radar systems in Hawaii and Alaska.

With a flight intercept test record of less than 50%, the GBMD system has a mixed record at best, and experts question the [technical viability](#) of this system

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NATO Military Committee

The Military Committee (MC) is the senior military authority in NATO and the oldest permanent body in NATO after the North Atlantic Council. It is the primary source of military advice to NATO's civilian decision-making bodies—the North Atlantic Council and the Nuclear Planning Group. It meets at the level of Military Representatives

shortly after meetings of the NAC to follow up on Council decisions, and at the level of Chiefs of Defence Staff (CDS) three times a year.

In September, the MC met for the first time in Albania. According to a NATO News Release—the MC meets in private and there is no formal public record or minutes of the discussion—the meeting appraised “NATO’s efforts in Projecting Stability”, provided “guidance to the International Military Staff and the Strategic Commands on the conceptual work done so far on the NATO Command Structure Review” and assessed NATO’s operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo.

The MC Conference concluded by electing the next Chairman of the NATO MC, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, the Chief of the British Defence Staff. He will take office in the summer of 2018.



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Nuclear Weapons

North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons capabilities, including a sixth underground test and a long-range ballistic missile launch over Japan, has been almost universally condemned as posing a severe threat to international peace and security. NATO is not directly involved in the nuclear crisis, but has

repeatedly called on North Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. NATO's Secretary General [said](#) on 9 September that North Korea's nuclear programme requires a global response but refused to say whether an attack on Guam would trigger the alliance's collective defence provision.

However, NATO itself relies on nuclear deterrence and [all but one of its member states failed to participate in UN discussions](#) in July that led to the adoption of a global [treaty](#) to ban nuclear weapons. The US [pressed](#) other NATO member states and partners to boycott the discussions, and after the treaty was adopted continued to lean on partners, like [Sweden](#).

The US [tested](#) the "non-nuclear functions" of its newest nuclear weapon, the B61-12 gravity bomb, from an F-15E Strike Eagle fighter aircraft on 8 August. The modified bombs are due to replace the US-owned nuclear B61 nuclear weapons stationed in Europe. Later the same month, the US Air Force [announced](#) major new contracts for an overhaul of the US nuclear weapon force: \$1.8 billion for initial development of a highly stealthy nuclear cruise missile, and nearly \$700 million to begin replacing the 40-year-old Minuteman missiles in silos across the United States.

In addition, the Trump administration's Nuclear Posture Review is [reportedly](#) examining the idea of building smaller yield tactical nuclear weapons. The proposal is likely to face opposition in Congress, with questions about whether a new warhead would require the first US nuclear test since 1992.

Finally a recent [study](#) based on opinion polling found that a majority of US citizens would accept killing 2 million civilian Iranians if it could save the lives of 20,000 US soldiers there – further emphasising that the taboo against using nuclear weapons seems to be waning.

The consensus is that a North Korean attack on Guam would not trigger Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, under which members are obliged to come to each other's defence if attacked. Article 5 applies only to North America, Europe and islands in the North Atlantic which are under the jurisdiction of member states....

This does not mean that NATO allies would not assist the US in the event of an outbreak of hostilities with North Korea. In the event of an act of pre-emptive North Korean aggression, some of them (including the UK) would likely want to respond positively to a US request for assistance.

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Operations and Missions

Afghanistan

On the 21 August, President Donald Trump announced his new Afghanistan strategy, calling for the deployment of more troops and a conditional regional process. However, many details of the strategy remain vague and Afghanistan continues to face an ongoing political-military crisis. According to a recent [study](#), the Taliban controls or contests 45% of Afghanistan.

The average US taxpayer will have paid nearly \$7,500 to fund the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria since the 9/11 attacks, [according to Pentagon budget data](#) sent to Congress in July.

At the end of July, the US watchdog on Afghanistan released its latest report on the stagnating reconstruction of the country. Among the depressing statistics to be found in the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), [Quarterly Report to the United States Congress](#), 30 July 2017: a 21% increase in security incidents from the first quarter of the year; 2,531 Afghan service members killed and 4,238 wounded in the first five months of 2017; more than 12,000 Afghan Ministry of Defence Personnel “unaccounted for”; a 25% decline in the country's domestic revenues in the first six months of the year; and an increase in opiate production from \$1.56 billion to \$3.02 billion between 2015 and 2016.

One Romanian NATO soldier was killed and two others injured after they were attacked by a vehicle packed with explosives in the southern Kandahar region on September 15, while in early August, one Georgian NATO soldier was killed and six others injured in an attack against a convoy in Qarabagh

district in Afghanistan's Kabul Province. In a separate incident, the US Defense Department [announced](#) the death of two American soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division when a suicide vehicle attacked their convoy in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

In late August, the US military command in Afghanistan opened an investigation into an [airstrike](#) that allegedly killed as many as 11 civilians in eastern Logar province, and followed an earlier [incident](#) in Herat Province in western Afghanistan where it was claimed that airstrikes had killed more than a dozen civilians. The Afghan Ministry of Defence said that the latter strike had been carried out by the Afghan Air Force and that 18 Taliban fighters had also been killed.

In late August, the US Defense Department admitted that there are 11,000 US troops in Afghanistan as part of NATO's Resolute Support mission. The tally is far higher than the Pentagon's previously reported count of 8,400 troops—the maximum permitted under a troop level cap introduced by the Obama administration in 2016—and accounts for covert and temporary units. The Pentagon's disclosure of the revised figure reflects Defense Secretary Jim Mattis's effort to increase transparency around the process of measuring US forces stationed in war zones. The announcement came as the Pentagon is [expected to deploy](#) an estimated 3,500 additional troops to the region as part of President Trump's Afghanistan strategy.

[Secretary General wraps up visit to Afghanistan, stresses NATO's enduring](#)



(A Norwegian soldier from the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission looks out of the ramp of a Chinook helicopter – photo credit: NATO)

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[Failure in Afghanistan means strengthening terrorists in West](#), Tolo News, 13 August 2017

[US Military Disputes Claim Airstrike Killed Afghan Civilians](#), VOA, 11 August 2017

[One soldier killed, several wounded in latest attack on NATO troops in Afghanistan](#), *Washington Post*, 3 August 2017

[Head of Isis in Afghanistan killed by US air strike, Pentagon says](#), Independent, 14 July 2017

Must Read: [Estimated Cost to Each U.S. Taxpayer of Each of the Wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria](#), US Department of Defense, July 2017

Kosovo

[NATO general: KFOR will remain in Kosovo "as long as needed"](#), b92, 20 July 2017

Russia-NATO relations

In September, General Petr Pavel, chairman of the NATO Military Committee and General Valery Gerasimov, chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces and first deputy minister of defence, met in Baku, Azerbaijan. It was their first face-to face meeting in more than two years.

Earlier in July, the [NATO-Russia Council met in Brussels](#), where the discussion focused on three key issues: Ukraine, Afghanistan and transparency and risk reduction. Both sides exchanged advance briefings on upcoming exercises: Russia briefed on the upcoming ZAPAD 2017 exercise, and NATO briefed on Exercise Trident Javelin 2017.

Discussions also took place on flight safety, especially in relation to the skies over the Baltic Sea. According to the [Wall Street Journal](#), the Baltic Sea “has become the focal point for this new white-knuckle geopolitical tussle. Rhetoric is rising in the region, where newer NATO members on Russia’s border are nervous and Russia’s military has shown a willingness to use close intercepts as political messages”.

Also in July, Russia reportedly annexed “about 10 hectares” of Georgian territory on behalf of the Republic of South Ossetia, a polity recognized by just four countries (including Russia). Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Margvelashvili [complained](#) of “creeping occupation”.

Russia and NATO had a Twitter spat over different interpretations of events in the 1940s. The incident started when NATO [tweeted](#) a short trailer for a documentary about the "Forest Brothers," a group of Lithuanian guerrillas who fought against Soviet occupation after WWII. Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's deputy prime minister [tweeted](#) in response, that the video "confirms that we are dealing with Nazi remnants in NATO".

"My dream is that NATO headquarters be relocated to Moscow", The Dalai Lama cited in [Dalai Lama would like to see NATO HQ in Moscow](#), In Serbia, 17 August 2017

Ivanka Barzashka and Wyn Bowen, [What would it take to trigger war between Russia and NATO? Just a spark](#), The Conversation, 29 September 2017

Must Read: Fyodor Lukyanov, [Atlantic Drift: Russia and the U.S.-Europe Divide](#), Carnegie Moscow Center Commentary, 18 September 2017

Scott Taylor, [NATO film rewrites history, glorifies Nazis](#), The Chronicle Herald, 10 September 2017

[Chairman of NATO Military Committee, General Pavel met with Russian Chief of General Staff, General Gerasimov](#), NATO Press Release, 7 September 2017

[NATO-Russia meeting in Baku: Azerbaijan as link between Moscow, West](#), Trend, 7 September 2017

Katrina vanden Heuvel, [Washington and Moscow Must Embrace Détente—Despite Trump](#), The National Interest, 27 August 2017

[Dalai Lama 'Dreams' of NATO Relocating to Moscow](#), Moscow Times, 16 August 2017

[Russia wins military 'olympics'](#), Eurasia Times, 14 August 2017

[Eugene Rumer and Andrew Weiss, Vladimir Putin's Russia Goes Global](#), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 4 August 2017

Adomas Abromaitis, [Is History a New NATO Weapon against Russia?](#), International Policy Digest, 14 July 2017

[Secretary General discusses NATO-Russia Council](#), NATO News Release, 13 July 2017

[NATO-Russia Council Meeting 'Useful' Despite 'Fundamental Disagreements'](#), Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty, 13 July 2017

[NATO, Russia set to urge each other to curb 'unsafe' Baltic jet maneuvers](#), Reuters, 12 July 2017

[Russian, NATO Planes Play Risky Game Over Baltic Sea](#), Wall Street Journal, 12 July 2017

[Russia quietly moves border hundreds of yards into occupied Georgia](#), Independent, 11 July 2017

[Russia moves its border with Georgia and hardly anyone notices](#), Yahoo News, 7 July 2017

Must Read: Gudrun Persson, [The War of the Future: A Conceptual Framework and Practical Conclusions: Essays on Strategic Thought](#), Russian Studies, NATO Defense College, 03/17, July 2017 – the author gives a detailed and nuanced review of an important new book, written by two prominent Russian commentators on military and security matters. The review illuminates the influence of Russian history on today's debates.

Strategic Concept

The Strategic Concept is an official document that outlines NATO's enduring purpose and nature and its fundamental security tasks. At the Summit meeting in Lisbon in 2010, NATO leaders adopted a new Strategic Concept that is intended to serve as the alliance's roadmap for ten years.

Patrick Keller, [The case for a new Strategic Concept for NATO](#), American Enterprise Institute, 28 September 2017

Technology

NATO is [adopting](#) a standard protocol for underseas communication, called JANUS, which was developed by the NATO Science and Technology Organization's Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (see infographic below).

[Autonomous military drones: no longer science fiction](#), NATO Review, 28 July 2017

[NATO adopts new protocol standard for underwater communications](#), All About Circuits, 18 July 2017

[NATO Unveils JANUS, First Standardized Acoustic Protocol for Undersea Systems](#), Spectrum, 11 July 2017

[Underwater Robots Learn a New Language, JANUS](#), Spectrum, 8 July 2017



[Patterns of NATO's Visibility, Capability, Evaluation, and Local Resonance](#), Asian Security, 2017, published online 14 September 2017

[NATO releases the Resource Policy and Planning Board's 2016 Annual Report](#), NATO News Release, 20 July 2017

Urban Warfare

NATO has admitted it is unprepared for waging wars in big cities and is asking outside contractors to pitch concepts on military operations in urban areas. The unclassified document, '[Development of NATO Military Operations in Urban Environment Concept](#)', was published on FedBizOpps, a website where US federal contracts can be viewed.

NATO is no stranger to urban wars, however. During the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia, NATO targeted major cities including the capital, Belgrade. The air campaign killed around 500 civilians, according to a [report](#) by Human Rights Watch. Urban warfare also features in NATO military exercises. In November 2016, almost 4,000 troops from the US, the UK, Germany, Canada, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Luxembourg and the three Baltic states took part in the [Iron Sword](#) exercise that involved military action in urban environments.

Ian Anthony, [Secure Cities: Inclusivity, Resilience and Safety](#), SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security, No 2017/3 August 2017

[Big city war: NATO seeks concepts for waging urban conflict](#), RT, 17 August 2017

[NATO calls for help to prepare for war in big cities](#), True News, 17 August 2017

Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance

Must Read:

NATO allies are ostensibly [bound](#) by a shared belief in "democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law." But what happens when an ally shuns those principles and takes up the mantle of illiberalism or even authoritarianism? NATO has confronted such questions before—weathering a nationalist Portuguese regime, a Greek junta, and successive Turkish coups. Given the worrying trends in certain allied capitals today—namely Ankara, Budapest, and Warsaw, to varying degrees—NATO leaders would be prudent to consider what lessons can be learned from managing these difficult moments in the organization's history.

Lisa Sawyer Samp, [How to deal with authoritarianism inside NATO](#), War on the Rocks, 25 August 2017

[NATO conference examines ways to enhance good governance in defence institutions](#), NATO News Release, 28 September 2017

Natalia Chaban, Svetlana Beltyukova and Christine Fox, [Communicating NATO in the Asia-Pacific Press: Comparative Analysis of](#)

Security News from NATO Member States:

Bulgaria

[Bulgaria Courts NATO's Ire by Cutting Defence Spending](#), Balkan Insight, 26 September 2017

[Defense Minister calls for NATO deployment against migrants](#), Daily Caller, 17 August 2017

[U.S., Eastern European Partners Conduct Training in Bulgaria](#), US Department of Defense, 27 July 2017

Canada

Canadians are leading a multinational on-land battle group in Latvia, as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence. In addition to 450 Canadian troops, the battalion includes military personnel from Albania, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, and Spain.

Canada [announced](#) an investigation into recent reports of the use of Canadian-made military equipment to violently suppress protest in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province.

Andris Banka, [Canada is winning hearts and minds in Latvia](#), Policy Options, 25 September 2017

Rob Breakenridge, [Of course we should join missile defence. We should have done so long ago](#), Global News, 9 September 2017

[Final rotation of soldiers returns to Edmonton from NATO-led operation in Poland](#), Global News, 30 August 2017

[Canadian-led NATO multinational battlegroup in Latvia proves its capability and interoperability](#), Canada Ministry of Defence News Release, 27 August 2017

[Latvia mission plays to Forces' strengths: Canadian troops' multicultural makeup an advantage in foreign deployments](#), Times Colonist, 13 August 2017

[Ottawa calls for probe into apparent Saudi use of Canadian-made armoured vehicles against citizens](#), *The Globe and Mail*, 28 July 2017

Canadian Global Affairs Institute:
2017 NATO Series Papers
Canada's Military Operations on NATO's Eastern Flank: Why They Matter, Andrew Rasiulis, July 2017

[Closed for Repairs? Rebuilding the Transatlantic Bridge](#), Richard Cohen, August 2017

[Keeping the Americans In](#), Colin Robertson, August 2017

[NATO: A Personal Perspective](#), Yves Brodeur, August 2017

[NATO, Canada and the U.S. Bank of Mom and Dad](#), Julian Lindley-French, August 2017

[NATO's Challenge: The Economic Dimension](#), Ian Brodie, September 2017

Denmark

The Danish government has, proposed to create a new 4000-strong brigade to be deployed abroad. "We must build a brigade that can operate outside the country's borders. In principle, throughout the territory of NATO, but most likely around the Baltic countries. It must be able to defend itself against air strikes", [said](#) Danish defence minister Claus Hjort Frederiksen.

Estonia

NATO jets intercepted two Russian fighter jets and one Russian transport plane near Estonian airspace, in early August. The incident occurred less than a day after US Vice President Mike Pence visited Estonia and reaffirmed US commitment to the collective security of the Baltic states as part of its NATO membership obligation.

[NATO jets intercept Russian aircraft near Estonian airspace](#), CNN, 1 August 2017

France

In July, French President Emmanuel Macron nominated General François Lecointre to serve as Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces. Lecointre's

appointment followed the abrupt resignation of incumbent General Pierre de Villiers over concerns about Macron's proposed \$979 million cut to the 2017 defence budget of \$32 billion. De Villiers had taken the unusual step of publicly voicing concerns about the implications of the cut for France's military preparedness in the first test of leadership for the new French president. Macron rebuked de Villiers in an annual [speech](#) before the armed forces. The French leader seeks to bring the French budget in line (for the first time in a decade) with the EU requirement to keep deficits below 3% of GDP. However, he also intends to raise defence spending to 2% of GDP by 2025, in line with NATO requirements.

In September, France [announced](#) that it is to arm drones that are currently used exclusively for surveillance and intelligence, a first for the French military. The decision will initially apply only to the six unarmed Reaper surveillance drones that France bought from the United States, and which are mainly deployed against the Islamic State in Africa's Sahel region.

Later in September President Macron called for a unified European defence budget and a joint intervention force in a speech on EU reform.

[Highlights: French President Macron's speech on the EU](#), Reuters, 26 September 2017

[France to arm military surveillance drones](#), Defense News, 5 September 2017

[France's Top General Resigns in Dispute Over Military Spending](#), *New York Times*, 19 July 2017

[Macron slaps down defense chief, pledges higher spending](#), Reuters, 13 July 2017

Germany

German Chancellor Angela Merkel won a fourth term in federal elections on 24 September. Merkel's centre-right Christian Democrats received the largest number of votes (33% of the

total) as the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party came in third place (with 13% of the votes) and will be the first far-right party to enter the Bundestag since 1961. Merkel will have to form a new coalition with smaller parties because her previous coalition partner, the Social Democrats (SPD), announced they would join the opposition.

During the election, defence emerged as one of the few issues where there was a clear difference between Merkel and Mr Schulz, who took over as leader of the SPD this year. Schulz had vowed to secure the removal of US nuclear weapons from German soil and questioned the pledge to raise defence spending to meet the NATO target of 2% of GDP.

In July, Germany began its [threatened withdrawal](#) of troops from Incirlik Air Base in Turkey. Germany's parliament passed legislation mandating the removal of German troops participating in the anti-Islamic State coalition after Turkey refused to allow members of parliament to visit the facility (following Germany's refusal to extradite Turkish asylum seekers that Turkey accuses of participating in last year coup attempt). After the withdrawal is complete, Germany's military [will begin operating from a base in Jordan](#) to resume its participation in the coalition.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [said](#) the German and Turkish foreign ministers should meet to resolve their differences. NATO also proposed a compromise in which German officials visit the base as a part of a NATO delegation, and this [visit](#) took place on 8 September.

Whether the visit will ease the worsening diplomatic relations between the two NATO allies remains an open question. The feud between the two countries escalated following the continued detention of German-Turkish human rights activists by Turkish authorities. In late July, German

Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said the relationship was about to get an "overhaul" and that German companies should reconsider investing in Turkey. Germany's economy ministry also [said](#) it would be reviewing Turkey's applications to purchase weapons from German producers.

Caspar Kolster, [German Elections: Party Views on Security and Defense](#), GMF Blog, 15 September 2017

[German MPs visit Konya NATO base in Turkey](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 8 September

Rainer L. Glatz and Martin Zapfe, [Ambitious Framework Nation: Germany in NATO Bundeswehr Capability Planning and the "Framework Nations Concept"](#), SWP Comments 35, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, September 2017

[Schulz taps pacifist tradition by playing the Trump card](#), *Financial Times*, 28 August 2017

[German forces relocate to Jordan as tensions with Turkey simmer](#), Al Araybia, 23 August 2017

Lars Miethke, [German defence policy: An election primer ahead of the 2017 federal elections](#), LSE Blog, August 2017

[Merkel's rivals play Trump card on defense](#), Politico, 17 August 2017

[Trump's demand that Germany increase its military defense spending enters German election campaign](#), *LA Times*, 15 August 2017

[Angela Merkel attacks SPD rival over Germany's Nato budget pledge](#), *Financial Times*, 14 August 2017

[Turkey confirms German MPs will visit troops in Konya under NATO flag](#), Hurriyet Daily News, 10 August 2017

[Germany's SPD rejects NATO 2 percent defense spending target](#), Reuters, 6 August 2017

Karl-Heinz Kamp, [NATO Struggles to Align Turkey and Germany](#), The Cipher Brief, 4 August 2017

[Don't interfere in Turkish affairs, Erdogan tells Germany](#), AFP, 24 July 2017

[Disputes Between Germany and Turkey Threaten to Affect NATO Mission](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 24 July 2017

[Berlin reviews Turkish arms requests as crisis deepens](#), Reuters, 21 July 2017

[Germany continues war of words with Turkey, reviews arms sales](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 21 July 2017

[NATO urges Turkey, Germany to settle air base row](#), Reuters, 16 July 2017

[Germany starts to withdraw troops from Turkish Incirlik base](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 10 July 2017

Italy

[Italian Defence Budget Fails to Meet NATO Targets](#), Raddington Report, 16 August 2017—Italy's failure to meet NATO spending targets won't just annoy the White House, but it is likely to leave holes in the Italian armed forces

[Italy pushes NATO to improve Russia ties, Focus on southern threats](#), World Politics Review, 17 July 2017

Latvia

Rudis Krontis, [NATO makes Latvia vulnerable](#), Modern Diplomacy, 8 September 2017

[Latvia warns of cyber attacks](#), Eurasia Times, 4 September 2017

Lithuania

[NATO Fighters Escort Russian Jets in Int'l Airspace 7 Times in Week - Lithuania](#), Sputnik International, 4 September 2017

['We know how to live next to Russia': Lithuania builds border fence with Kaliningrad](#), *The Guardian*, 24 August 2017

Montenegro

On 5 June 2017, Montenegro became the 29th member of NATO. Relations between Montenegro and NATO began in late 2006 when the country was invited to join the Partnership for Peace programme; the official invitation to join the alliance came in December 2015.

[Three months from Montenegrin accession to NATO: The same old song?](#) European Western Balkans, 29 September 2017

[Montenegro in the new NATO headquarters by the end of the year](#), European Western Balkans, 9 August 2017

[What Montenegro's NATO membership means for the Balkans and the Alliance](#), World Economic Forum, 9 August 2017

[NATO provides swift forest fire assistance to new Ally Montenegro](#), NATO News, 19 July 2017

Norway

Norway will send ten extra soldiers to Afghanistan in response to calls by NATO and Donald Trump for more troops for the Afghan mission.

[Norway responds to Nato request for Afghanistan troops](#), The Local, 28 September 2017

Poland

In August, Poland [announced](#) an increase in defence spending by an additional \$55 billion through 2032. Most of the money will go towards doubling the size of Poland's army. About 17,000 Polish and NATO troops took part in the Dragon-17 military exercises in Poland in September.

[Polish, NATO troops in land, sea and air drills](#), Radio Poland, 20 September 2017

[Secretary General praises Poland's contributions to the Alliance, visits NATO battlegroup](#), NATO News Release, 25 August 2017

[NATO troop presence is a guarantee of peace: Polish defence minister](#), Radio Poland, 25 August 2017

[Poland to allocate additional \\$55 blion on defense by 2032: deputy minister](#), Reuters, 23 August 2017

(NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets with enhanced Forward Presence troops in Poland, 25 Aug. 2017. Photo credit: NATO)



Romania

In July, the US State Department's Defense Security Cooperation Agency [approved](#) the sale of Patriot anti-missile systems to Romania. The proposed sale involves seven Patriot batteries and would cost an estimated \$3.9 billion. The Romanian Defence Minister Adrian Tutuianu [confirmed](#) the purchase later the same month.

[Canadian fighters ready to begin enhanced Air Policing over Romania](#), NATO Allied Air Command, News Release, 31 August 2017

[Defence Ministry to buy 4 corvettes by 2024 in a EUR 1.6bn investment](#), The Romanian Journal, August 2017

[Romanian Defense Minister Confirms \\$3.9 Billion U.S. Missile Deal](#), Bloomberg, 26 July 2017

Turkey

In July, Turkish police detained ten senior human rights workers, including the head of Amnesty International Turkey, after interrupting a digital security training session on the tourist island of Buyukada. The Turkish government has pursued an aggressive crackdown on civil liberties, drawing the rebuke of foreign governments. A broad series of conflicts between NATO members and Turkey have now arisen over recent internal political developments and deteriorating humanitarian conditions (see Germany above).

Also in July, Turkey [agreed](#) to pay \$2.5 billion to acquire Russia's most advanced S-400 air defence system, in a deal (subsequently signed in September) that possibly signalled a turn away from NATO (although Greece has already

purchased Russian S-300 systems).

Michael Totten, [The Black Sheep of NATO](#), World Affairs, 25 September 2017

[Turkish missile deal with Russia reflects stormy relationship with NATO](#), Reuters, 22 September 2017

[How strongly is NATO ally Turkey pivoting to Russia and Iran?](#) Christian Science Monitor, 22 September 2017

Gregg Roman, [NATO needs to admit Turkey is shredding democratic values](#), The Hill, 22 September 2017

[Judy Asks: Is Turkey Weakening NATO?](#) Carnegie Europe, 20 September 2017—A selection of experts answer this question from Judy Dempsey

[Turkey presses ahead with Nato exercises despite Russian arms deal](#), Middle East Eye, 20 September 2017

Daniel Pipes, [I Taught NATO to Stand Up to a Dictator](#), National Review Online, 19 September 2017

[What you need to know about Turkey's S-400 air defence missiles](#), EuroNews, 15 September 2017

[Members have sovereign right to choose for military purchases, NATO says](#), Daily Sabah, 14 September 2017

[Nato went 'crazy' over Russia deal, says Erdogan](#), EuroNews, 13 September 2017

[Turkey signs deal to get Russian S-400 air defence missiles](#), BBC News, 12 September 2017

[NATO Deputy Secretary General leads parliamentary delegation to Konya](#), NATO News Release, 8 September 2017

Dave Harrison, [Opinion: Turkey is not a good fit for European Union or NATO](#), Times Colonist, 5 September 2017

[Disquiet in Nato as Turkey, Russia inch closer to arms deal](#), Straits Times, 4 September 2017

Ozan Ceyhun, [NATO and EU must intervene in Turkish-German crisis](#), Daily Sabah, 24 August 2017

[Turkey's Potemkin Defense Industry](#), Defense One, 15 August 2017

[Warming Turkish-Russian ties, growing rift with West creates troubling scenario for NATO](#), CNBC, 14 August 2017

David Oualaalou, [The last time I checked, Turkey was still a member of NATO](#), Huffington Post, 31 July 2017

[Finalising S-400 agreement with Russia, Turkey rejects NATO interoperability argument](#), IHS Jane's, 31 July 2017

Mustafa Kibaroglu, [Double standards mar NATO's S-400s stance](#), Anadolu Agency, 27 July 2017 - When Turkey decided to buy Russian air defense system, ostensible allies turned on Ankara

[Turkey hoping for easing of Russian sanctions with missile deal](#), VOA, 26 July 2017

Selim Koru, [Turkey's Black Sea Policy: Navigating between Russia and the West](#), Foreign Policy Research Institute, 18 July 2017

[Turkey: We're buying both Russian and European Air Defense](#), EurasiaNet, 17 July 2017

[US to Turkey: Russian S-400s aren't compatible with NATO tech](#), Defense Tech, 17 July 2017

[Statement by the NATO Secretary General on first anniversary of coup attempt in Turkey](#), NATO News Release, 15 July 2017

[Turkey Chooses Russia Over NATO for Missile Defense](#), Bloomberg, 13 July 2017

[Ex-NATO officers seek asylum in Brussels](#), Deutsche Welle, 13 July 2017

[Turkey Detains Human-Rights Activists in Tourist Island](#), Wall Street Journal, 6 July 2017

United Kingdom

In September, the Ministry for Defence [announced](#) a radical shake-up of how warships will be built for the Royal Navy that aims to spread the work around the country. Under the new National Shipbuilding Strategy, Britain will buy five Type 31e general purpose frigates, with the first one intended to enter service in 2023. The [successful first firings](#) of Sea Ceptor missiles, the new air missile defence system that will form part of the protection for the UK's new aircraft carriers, also took place.

[MoD accused of cooking books to hit Nato defence spending target](#), *The Times*, 26 September 2017

[HMS Diamond guards the Mediterranean after taking command of NATO task group](#), Royal Navy News Release, 20 September 2017

[UK Defence Chief appointed as NATO Chairman of Military Committee](#), UK MoD News Release, 16 September 2017

[Britain orders fleet of 'budget battleships' in deal to boost shipbuilding](#), *The Telegraph*, 6 September 2017

[Britain to defend Nordic and Baltic states from Russia](#), *EU Observer*, 4 September 2017

[Britain could go to war with North Korea if it strikes Guam — even though it doesn't have to under NATO rules](#), *Business Insider*, 30 August 2017

[Government accused of making Britain 'reliant on others' for defence as 37 Nato aircraft deployed to Scotland](#), *Independent*, 28 July 2017—RAF awaiting arrival of new P-8 maritime patrol aircraft after Nimrod programme scrapped

[Defence Secretary reaffirms leadership in NATO on Washington trip](#), *UK Government News*, 7 July 2017

United States

In September, President Donald Trump threatened to “totally destroy” North Korea, in a bellicose first address to the United Nations General Assembly. It was a speech heavy with echoes of George W Bush’s “Axis of Evil” State of the Union address more than 15 years earlier. “If the righteous many do not confront the wicked few, then evil will triumph”, President Trump said.

In July, President Trump [delivered](#) a speech in Warsaw in which he declared that the West must “defend our civilization” and saying that “[t]he fundamental question of our time is whether the West has the will to survive”. In a news conference with Polish President Andrejz Duda, Trump reaffirmed the US commitment to its NATO obligations, including the Article

V obligation to mutual security assurance. Trump also said he “thought” Russia tried to meddle in the election, though he was not convinced it was the sole actor.

Also in July, the Pentagon [criticised](#) Turkey's state-owned Anadolu news agency for publishing the locations of several US bases in Syria used as staging areas for supporting the anti-Islamic State coalition and “expos[ing] Coalition forces to unnecessary risk”. Defense Department spokesman Eric Pahon said the Pentagon “would be very concerned if officials from a NATO ally would purposefully endanger our forces by releasing sensitive information”.

[Donald Trump threatens to 'totally destroy' North Korea in UN speech](#), *The Guardian*, 19 September 2017

William J. Astore, [The American Military Uncontained: Out Everywhere and Winning Nowhere](#), *TomDispatch*, 12 September 2017

Must Read: Alfred W. McCoy, [The Pentagon's New Wonder Weapons for World Dominion: Or Buck Rogers in the 21st Century](#), *TomDispatch*, 10 September 2017

[Victory at Last! In America's Wars, Failure Is the New Success](#), Tom Engelhardt. *TomDispatch*, 5 September 2017

[Air Force Assumes Lead for NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission](#), US Department of Defense News Release, 31 August 2017

Kay Bailey Hutchinson, US Ambassador to NATO, [Washington remains united behind NATO](#), *New York Times*, 30 August 2017

[Trump dodges question on Russia security threat while standing next to key Nato ally](#), *Newsweek*, 29 August 2017

[Trump says U.S. 'very protective' of Baltic region](#), *Reuters*, 28 August 2017

[New US ambassador to NATO brings relief and pledges of continued support](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 28 August 2017

[USS Porter enters Black Sea to strengthen NATO defences](#), *Stripes.com*, 25 August 2017

[Trump's Defence Secretary James Mattis makes passionate case against America](#)

[withdrawing from the world](#), Independent, 12 August 2017

[Turkey's publication of U.S. troop locations poses risk, Pentagon says](#), Reuters, 20 July 2017

[Trump, in Poland, asks if West has the 'Will to Survive'](#), *New York Times*, 6 July 2017

Upcoming Events and New Research Projects:

6-9 October 2017: The Parliament of Romania will host the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's 63rd Annual Session, which will bring together in Bucharest some 300 parliamentarians from the 29 NATO member countries from North America and Europe as well as delegates from partner countries and observers to discuss current international security issues and the reports and policy recommendations prepared by the Assembly's Committees.

The 7 and 8 October will be devoted to the meetings of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's five Committees: Political, Defence and Security, Science and Technology, Civil Dimension of Security and Economics and Security. Each Committee will be addressed by speakers from government, academia, NGO's and NATO. A Plenary Session will take place on 9 October. All of these meetings are open to the press.

A draft programme for the media containing names and timings for the speakers and the discussion of the Committee reports is available and regularly updated on the [NATO PA website Session page](#).

NATO Intra-Alliance Diplomacy After 2014

This [comparative research project](#) convened by the Oxford Changing Character of War Centre examines the political goals and diplomatic tactics of

the UK, France, Germany, Poland and Romania in relation to NATO's emerging deterrence posture vis-a-vis Russia in the aftermath of the 2014 Crimea annexation. In particular, it examines the process leading to the decisions taken at the 2016 Warsaw Summit to support an Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic States and Poland as well as to increase the NATO presence in the Black Sea.

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