

ISTANBUL SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE

Issued by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs
participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, met today to reaffirm our common commitment to the Alliance and further strengthen NATO to meet the grave new threats and profound security challenges of the 21st century. Bound by our common vision embodied in the Washington Treaty, we commit ourselves to facing the new developing and rapidly changing threats of today. The 37 nations of NATO are steadfast in our commitment to the transatlantic link; to NATO's fundamental security tasks including collective defence; to our shared democratic values; and to the United Nations Charter.
2. The members of NATO recognise that the Alliance faces a wide range of threats that call for different approaches. The Atlantic Alliance measures the seriousness of a threat on the basis of established facts that assess the immediacy and expected consequences. The Alliance reserves the right to act outside of its borders according to the United Nations Charter if these threats are determined to be of a substantial danger to the security of the Alliance.
3. The threats to the Alliance which may justify such actions may include, but are not limited to:
 - Transnational terrorism that affects the security of the Alliance
 - The proliferation, threat, or actual use of weapons of mass destruction
 - Regional conflicts, including ethnic cleansing and genocide.
 - Failed states, especially upon the incapacity of the native government to exercise its responsibility to protect its people and ensure regional stability
 - Systemic threats, such as cyber terrorism, humanitarian catastrophes, trafficking of human beings, and small arms, and serious human rights violations
4. Diplomacy and formal dialogue should be exercised and exhausted before NATO acts. [Where United Nations Security Council or national governments choose not to exercise their authority and responsibility to resolve such situations, this shall not preclude NATO from action.]
5. The members of the Alliance recognize that instability outside of our members' borders can create environments that affect NATO members, allowing for the development and proliferation of the threats cited in this communiqué.
6. These operations would take place only after the situation has been identified by the United Nations, as one that could potentially require some form of military, peacekeeping, or security involvement. In the framework of international law, we will continue dialogue and cooperation on a case-by-case basis with United Nations and regional organisations.

7. [NATO recognises the United Nations Security Council as the primary body for maintaining international peace and security in accordance with the United Nations Charter, and that NATO should always make all possible effort to get a mandate from the United Nations Security Council.]
8. The NATO member states agree that permanent structures are better and more reliable than ad-hoc alliances for dealing with international security issues. NATO member states also believe that any decision concerning out-of-area operations has to be based on the political consensus of all NATO member states.
9. As far as the legal framework of NATO out-of-area operations is concerned, such operations will take place in accordance with international law.
10. Alliance members recognise that, in exceptional cases, it may be necessary to engage in rapid and decisive operations. Dealing with very urgent situations, we understand that we cannot ignore events that threaten the security of NATO members. Therefore we will always look for the appropriate solution to serve the fundamental security of NATO members in the quickest possible way.
11. NATO will consider action in any situation in accordance with the following criteria:
 - In the case of specific human rights violations. In accordance with longstanding principles of international law and based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in clear cases of genocide and ethnic cleansing, NATO member states are required to make all efforts to end such human rights violations. Other exceptional cases can be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by consensus.
 - When all other efforts are exhausted. Diplomacy and formal dialogue should be exercised and exhausted before NATO will act.
 - Incapacity of local government. In the event of a failed state, or a state which has failed to exercise its responsibility to protect its people and ensure regional stability, NATO may choose to intervene, in accordance with international law.
 - To prevent the spread of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction
 - To fight terrorism where there is a threat to regional security and/or when terrorist action can be taken against NATO member states.
 - In clear cases of proliferation, imminent threat of use, or actual use of chemical biological, nuclear, or radiological weapons that could lead to regional insecurity, NATO will act in accordance with international law.

This shall be done in full cooperation and dialogue with international organisations, primarily the United Nations.

12. The objectives of intervention are:
 - To end violence.
 - To provide a force to facilitate further stabilisation in the area of operation and to maintain security while stabilisation occurs.
13. The force used to resolve a conflict must be proportional to the threats.
14. NATO shall always act with legitimacy as based on the Washington Charter and United Nations Security Council resolutions. [If the United Nations Security Council chooses not to reach a decision and the fundamental security interests of one or more NATO-member states are threatened, NATO can decide to engage in out-of-area operation in accordance with the provisions of this communiqué.]
15. NATO shall contribute to all operations necessary to insure the security of its members according to NATO's definition of threats. NATO will consider the following out-of-area operations: conflict prevention, conflict management, peacekeeping, stabilization missions, non-combat evacuations, disaster management, humanitarian crisis management, counter terrorism and high intensity combat, and demonstrative use of force.
16. NATO's armament activities must meet the Alliance's evolving military needs. We therefore reaffirm the importance we attach to mutually advantageous transatlantic defence industrial cooperation. This includes strengthening NATO's ties with the European defence industry. Focus should be on technology within the areas of information sharing and joint combined intelligence operations and training, air and sea transport capabilities, communications technology development, special operations and response capacity to civil and military crises, especially against the threat of unconventional weapons.
17. NATO must address its collective capacity to provide for a defensive response standard operating procedure for asymmetrical threats specifically on the European continent.
18. The question of funding NATO out-of-area operations will be addressed at the upcoming meeting of NATO Ministers of Defence in Madrid in October, 2007.
19. It is important that the Alliance maintain strong and cordial relationships with international and regional organisations because often these organisations are the most able to contribute substantial resources to out-of-area operations.
20. NATO recognizes the importance of the United Nations and its associated bodies and recognizes the United Nations as the primary governing authority in international law. NATO members appreciate the efforts of the United Nations in working for stability and working for security around the world. NATO is committed to further developing the relationship between NATO and the United Nations to address the threats that have been identified in this communiqué.

21. The Alliance is committed to working closely with the European Union, our vital and important ally. The Alliance recognizes the unique role of the European Union and its strong capability through the European Security and Defence Policy to deal with issues such as conflict management and resolution, in conjunction, and without duplication, with NATO.
22. To further promote peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic Area, NATO will continue to develop its fruitful and close cooperation with the OSCE, namely in the complementary areas of conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.
23. The Alliance will develop closer relationships with other regional organisations that may want to contribute to potential out-of-area operations. These may include organisations such as the African Union, the Arab League, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Caribbean Community, Commonwealth of Independent States, the Economic Community of West African States, the Inter-governmental Authority on Government, and the Organisation of American States.
24. NATO believes that strong regional organisations can help promote stability and security. Therefore, it is in the interests of the Alliance to provide assistance, where possible.
25. The Alliance recognises the growing importance of non-governmental organisations in the development of peace and stability. We therefore commit to investigating methods for involving NGOs in the planning and implementation of out-of-area operations, as they are often a source of information and expertise that is not directly available to NATO.
26. We recognize the need to institutionalise the Alliance's cooperation with the Peoples' Republic of China. Both parties have already expressed the aspiration to interact as equal partners in many areas of common interest, including the struggle against terrorism and in areas of crisis management. Therefore, we express our determination to engage in intensified negotiations with China. The aim of negotiations is to establish a NATO-China Council before the next NATO Summit in 2009.
27. The members of the Alliance express their appreciation for the existing relationship between NATO and the countries of the Mediterranean Dialogue. However we see the need to strengthen this relationship and commit to investigate the implementation of methods for the development of more substantial structures.
28. The Alliance accords substantial importance to the development of a Greater Middle-Eastern and North-African Dialogue. The Alliance considers the stability of the Greater Middle-East and North-Africa to be one of the most important conditions for ensuring the security of the region and of the world. Stability in the Greater Middle-East and North-Africa will also help to alleviate the threat of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, the Alliance will make efforts to initiate a formal relationship between NATO and the countries of the Greater Middle-East and North-Africa.

29. NATO is willing to explore the development of closer relationships with other countries on a bilateral basis expressing an interest in assisting with NATO out-of-area operations.
30. NATO shall establish a Centre for training, analysis and consulting on the peaceful resolution of conflicts and conflict prevention and management. The Centre is to maintain a close cooperation with similar bodies (including those of the EU, the United Nations, other international organisations as well as member states).
31. We express our deep appreciation for the gracious hospitality extended to us by the Government of Turkey, the Turkish Atlantic Council, Community of Volunteers Foundation and Koç University as well as the initiative and efforts of the Atlantic Council of the United States, NATO Public Diplomacy Division and the Atlantic Treaty Association. Here in Istanbul, a city that bridges two continents, we have reaffirmed our commitment to the Alliance, we have strengthened the Alliance's ability to deal with the threats and challenges of an ever changing world.

*Done during the NATO Simulation at the Istanbul Pan-Atlantic Student Summit
28-30 June, 2004.*