North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

NATO: Ready, Robust, Rebalanced

Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Carnegie Europe Event
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Thank you, Jan, for that very kind introduction and thank you to Carnegie for organizing this morning session.

I have been looking forward to meeting you this morning to outline some major security policy priorities as we are approaching two important security policy events within the next year : an EU Summit on defence and security in December, and a NATO Summit next year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We live in a world in transition. And transition often leads to turmoil and turbulence. In such times, we need something strong. Stable. And secure. For 28 nations in Europe and North America, that pillar of strength is NATO. We are seeing tragic turmoil and turbulence just beyond NATO's south eastern border. We have also recently seen renewed efforts by the international community to stop the terrible bloodshed in Syria.

I welcome the framework for the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons agreed between the United States and Russia. The next step should be an expeditious agreement of a United Nations Security Council Resolution to ensure effective implementation. The swift, secure and verifiable elimination of Syria's substantial stocks of chemical weapons is key.

It is clear that what happened around Damascus on 21st August is a war crime. And it is clear that the international community has a duty to hold those responsible to account.

NATO remains vigilant. We continue to keep the situation in Syria under close review. And we continue to protect the Alliance's south-eastern border.

While the ultimate solution to the Syrian crisis can only be political, I have no doubt that the recent agreement could not have been reached without a credible military option.
This demonstrates once again that we need strong defence capabilities to support strong diplomatic efforts and make them effective.
And this brings me to the theme of my speech: NATO's future.

Of course, every crisis around the world is different. And NATO cannot be the response for every crisis. But I do believe that NATO is the foundation on which any Ally or group of Allies can build their response to any crisis.

Our political consultations. Our common standards and procedures. Our military command and control structures. And our common experiences in combat and in peace-keeping on three continents. All these make NATO unique. They mean that Allied nations stand ready to act. And that when they act, they can be more effective.

Today, in many parts of the world, Allies are acting under NATO's command and control – often with partner nations. To safeguard security at home. And to help bring stability and safety to troubled areas of the world. In Afghanistan and Kosovo. In the Mediterranean and off the Horn of Africa. Over the Baltic states and near Turkey's border.

This clearly demonstrates that NATO remains an essential source of stability in an unpredictable world.

Together, the Allies form a unique community of values, committed to individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The world will change. The threats will change. But our values never will. So we must always ensure that we have the military capabilities to protect those values and the political will to do so.

We have a strong base on which to build. At the Lisbon Summit in 2010, we approved NATO's new Strategic Concept. We have been successfully implementing it since. And as we draw down from Afghanistan and take stock of twenty years of operations, we have the most capable and tightly connected forces in history, and the widest network of partners.

I cannot predict today what NATO's next mission will be. But whatever the next challenge is, we need to remain ready to face it. To do that, I see three priorities.

First, to maintain robust defence and deterrence.

Second, to reaffirm the bond between Europe and North America and rebalance our relationship.

And third, to bolster our global perspective and remain ready to work with partners and protect our values in our region and beyond.

Let me take each of these priorities in turn.
First, ensuring robust defence and deterrence.

Collective defence and deterrence is the greatest responsibility of our Alliance. And it will always be a transatlantic task. Because the security of Europe and the security of North America are indivisible.

The nature of collective defence is not the same as it was when NATO was founded in 1949. The threats are not the same, and neither are the means to address them.

To be frank, some of the capabilities we have, we don't need. And some of the capabilities we need, we don't have.

It is no longer sufficient to line up tanks along our borders to patrol and protect them. Today's threats - and tomorrow's – often come from the other side of the world, even from cyber space. And they come in many forms and guises.

To stop terrorism hitting us at home, we must be ready to address it at its source. That's why Allies deployed troops to Afghanistan. Leading the largest coalition in modern history, NATO has now denied a safe haven for international terrorists there. And in doing so, we have improved our own security at home. I believe this is modern collective defence.

The missile threat is another example. Over thirty countries around the world have -- or are developing -- missile technology. Some of Europe's cities are well within range. And against real threats, we need real defences. That is why NATO is building a missile defence system to protect European populations and territory. This, as well, is modern collective defence.

Similarly, we saw in Estonia in 2007 how cyber attacks can harm our economies and our security. We have made good progress in improving our cyber defences. For me, the next step should be to consider how we could assist Allies who come under cyber attack. I believe this, too, is modern collective defence.

Moreover, we must continue to look for ways to improve our joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, including the acquisition of observation drones and modernisation of our AWACS aircraft.

Acquiring modern capabilities is not easy when many Allies face declining defence budgets. That is why we need a new spirit of solidarity and cooperation within NATO.

That means developing, acquiring and maintaining military equipment together in multilateral projects. And it means prioritising, specialising and helping each other.

That is Smart Defence.

We also need to strengthen the connection between our forces through more joint exercises, education and training. And to reinforce our NATO Response Force. To defend any Ally. Deploy anywhere. And deter against any threat.

And that is the aim of our Connected Forces Initiative.

Taken together, these steps will ensure NATO remains robust.

Our second priority is to strengthen the transatlantic relationship and rebalance the Alliance.

North America and Europe remain each other's partner of choice. And we can only be fully effective by working together.

That's why we must all continue to invest in our Alliance. And why we must all shoulder a fair share of the burden, just as we all share in the benefits.

The engagement of the United States in European security remains strong. And it is keeping up with the security challenges.

A few years ago, the last American nuclear submarines left Sardinia. But shortly afterwards, we saw the first American Aegis ship deploy to the Mediterranean to enhance our defence against missile attacks.

Earlier this year, the last American tank left Germany. But next month the first American Brigade Combat Team will deploy to Europe as part of the NATO Response Force during exercise Steadfast Jazz in the Baltic region.

In May, we saw the last anti-tank aircraft fly out of Germany. But in June, the first American vertical-lift transport aircraft deployed to the United Kingdom to enhance special operations forces.

These are all signs of North America's continuing commitment to modern transatlantic security.

Europeans are also making important contributions. For instance, by deploying forces on NATO operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean. But I believe that European nations can, and should, do more, to match America's commitment.

Because a strong NATO needs a strong Europe – with strong capabilities, strong defence industries, and strong political commitment.

I would like to see European Allies playing their part to acquire more drones to improve surveillance. More large transport and air-to-air refuelling aircraft to enhance their ability to deploy on operations. And more upgraded radars on their ships so they can be integrated into our NATO missile defence.

To deliver a strong Europe we also need a strong European defence industrial base. So far, the European defence industry remains too national and too fragmented. This is why I welcome the European Commission's proposals to enhance the industry's efficiency and competitiveness. And to help it to fund research and develop new military technologies.

Finally, a strong Europe will require strong political will. To increase defence spending when our economies start to recover, as they will. To develop long-term procurement and investment programmes. And to assume more security responsibilities in Europe's neighbourhood.

I was encouraged by the debate we had at the recent European Union defence ministerial in Vilnius. So I expect the European Council on security and defence in December to

demonstrate strong political commitment. It will help to strengthen Europe. It will help to strengthen the transatlantic partnership. And it will help to rebalance NATO. This is an opportunity not to be missed.

Finally, our third priority is to develop a truly global perspective of security, and the partnerships to match that perspective.

I welcome the increased attention that the United States is paying to the Asia-Pacific region. This is also in Europe's interest. It is certainly not at the expense of the transatlantic relationship. On the contrary, by paying greater attention to Asia and the Pacific, the United States is also contributing to Europe's security and well-being. Earlier this year, I visited South Korea and Japan. And I was struck by how well these partners understand our interdependence.

Security today can only be cooperative security. Dialogue and cooperation with partners play an integral part in helping our understanding of world events – and in strengthening international stability and security. And we must now deepen our relationships, and widen our network.

In particular, I believe we should explore ways to help others build their security capacity. We have been doing this successfully both in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

NATO's unique expertise and experience means we are particularly well suited to helping countries manage difficult political transitions. Modernise their security sectors. Train their forces to deal with internal challenges. And assist them in operating together with their neighbours' forces to manage crises together. Projecting stability without the need to project forces. That is good for our partners. And it's good for our Allies too.

Alongside the United Nations, the European Union, and individual nations, NATO is looking into a request by the Libyan Prime Minister to provide advice in the development of Libya's national security forces. And I believe other countries in that region could benefit from NATO's experience and expertise.

I would also like to see NATO further develop co-operative relations with regional organizations – such as the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the African Union. To contribute to regional security including, if they so wish, by developing their capacities to manage future crises.

All these steps will not lead to NATO becoming a global policeman. But they will lead to a better global understanding by NATO. And this is essential for NATO to be ready to deal with the security challenges of today's globalised world.

Ladies and Gentleman,
Throughout many turbulent decades, NATO has provided a solid foundation for our freedom and security. And for the stability of the world.

The political and military bonds forged in NATO between Europe and North America; our unrivalled capabilities; and our extensive network of partners – form an Alliance that is strong, flexible, and able to perform a wide range of tasks. The tasks we can foresee, and those we can't yet imagine.

Our job today is to make NATO ready, robust, and rebalanced for the future. So that, in an unpredictable world, it remains an essential source of stability we can all rely on.

Thank you.

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Source: https://www.nato.int/en/news-and-events/events/transcripts/2013/09/19/nato-ready-robust-rebalanced