North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Chicago Summit Declaration

2012-05-20

We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, have gathered in Chicago to renew our commitment to our vital transatlantic bond; take stock of progress in, and reconfirm our commitment to, our operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo and elsewhere; ensure the Alliance has the capabilities it needs to deal with the full range of threats; and strengthen our wide range of partnerships.

Our nations are united in their commitment to the Washington Treaty and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Based on solidarity, Alliance cohesion and the indivisibility of our security, NATO remains the transatlantic framework for strong collective defence and the essential forum for security consultations and decisions among Allies. Our 2010 Strategic Concept continues to guide us in fulfilling effectively, and always in accordance with international law, our three essential core tasks – collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security – all of which contribute to safeguarding Alliance members.

At a time of complex security challenges and financial difficulties, it is more important than ever to make the best use of our resources and to continue to adapt our forces and structures. We remain committed to our common values, and are determined to ensure NATO’s ability to meet any challenges to our shared security.

We pay tribute to all the brave men and women from Allied and partner nations serving in NATO-led missions and operations. We commend them for their professionalism and dedication and acknowledge the invaluable support provided to them by their families and loved ones. We owe a special debt of gratitude to all those who have lost their lives or been injured during the course of their duties, and we extend our profound sympathy to their families and loved ones.

Today we have taken further important steps on the road to a stable and secure Afghanistan and to our goal of preventing Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region, and the world. The irreversible transition of full security responsibility from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) is on track for completion by the end of 2014, as agreed at our Lisbon Summit. We also recognise in this context the importance of a comprehensive approach and continued improvements in governance and development, as well as a political process involving successful reconciliation and reintegration. We welcome the announcement

by President Karzai on the third tranche of provinces that will start transition. This third tranche means that 75% of Afghanistan's population will live in areas where the ANSF have taken the lead for security. By mid-2013, when the fifth and final tranche of provinces starts transition, we will have reached an important milestone in our Lisbon roadmap, and the ANSF will be in the lead for security nationwide. At that milestone, as ISAF shifts from focusing primarily on combat increasingly to the provision of training, advice and assistance to the ANSF, ISAF will be able to ensure that the Afghans have the support they need as they adjust to their new increased responsibility. We are gradually and responsibly drawing down our forces to complete the ISAF mission by 31 December 2014.

By the end of 2014, when the Afghan Authorities will have full security responsibility, the NATO-led combat mission will end. We will, however, continue to provide strong and long-term political and practical support through our Enduring Partnership with Afghanistan. NATO is ready to work towards establishing, at the request of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a new post-2014 mission of a different nature in Afghanistan, to train, advise and assist the ANSF, including the Afghan Special Operations Forces. This will not be a combat mission. We task the Council to begin immediately work on the military planning process for the post-ISAF mission.

At the International Conference on Afghanistan held in Bonn in December 2011, the international community made a commitment to support Afghanistan in its Transformation Decade beyond 2014. NATO will play its part alongside other actors in building sufficient and sustainable Afghan forces capable of providing security for their own country. In this context, Allies welcome contributions and reaffirm their strong commitment to contribute to the financial sustainment of the ANSF. We also call on the international community to commit to this long-term sustainment of the ANSF. Effective funding mechanisms and expenditure arrangements for all strands of the ANSF will build upon existing mechanisms, integrating the efforts of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and of the international community. They will be guided by the principles of flexibility, transparency, accountability, and cost effectiveness, and will include measures against corruption.

We reiterate the importance Allies attach to seeing tangible progress by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan regarding its commitments made at the Bonn Conference on 5 December 2011 to a democratic society, based on the rule of law and good governance, including progress in the fight against corruption, where the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens, including the equality of men and women and the active participation of both in Afghan society, are respected. The forthcoming elections must be conducted with full respect for Afghan sovereignty and in accordance with the Afghan Constitution. Their transparency, inclusivity and credibility will also be of paramount importance. Continued progress towards these goals will encourage NATO nations to further provide their support up to and beyond 2014.

We also underscore the importance of our shared understanding with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan regarding the full participation of all Afghan women in the reconstruction, political, peace and reconciliation processes in Afghanistan and the need to respect the institutional arrangements protecting their rights. We recognise also the need for the protection of children from the damaging effects of armed conflict.

We also recognise that security and stability in the “Heart of Asia” is interlinked across the region. The Istanbul Process on regional security and cooperation, which was launched in November 2011, reflects the commitment of Afghanistan and the countries in the region to jointly ensure security, stability and development in a regional context. The countries in the region, particularly Pakistan, have important roles in ensuring enduring peace, stability and security in Afghanistan and in facilitating the completion of the transition process. We stand ready to continue dialogue and practical cooperation with relevant regional actors in this regard. We welcome the progress on transit arrangements with our Central Asian partners and Russia. NATO continues to work with Pakistan to reopen the ground lines of communication as soon as possible.

We look forward to our expanded ISAF meeting tomorrow.

The Alliance continues to be fully committed to the stability and security of the strategically important Balkans region. We reiterate our full support for KFOR, which continues to act carefully, firmly and impartially in accordance with its United Nations mandate set out in United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1244. KFOR will continue to support the development of a peaceful, stable, and multi-ethnic Kosovo. KFOR will also continue to contribute to the maintenance of freedom of movement and ensuring a safe and secure environment for all people in Kosovo, in cooperation with all relevant actors, including the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the EU Special Representative, as agreed, and the Kosovo authorities. We will maintain KFOR’s robust and credible capability to carry out its mission. We remain committed to moving towards a smaller, more flexible, deterrent presence, only once the security situation allows. We welcome the progress made in developing the Kosovo Security Force, under NATO’s supervision and commend it for its readiness and capability to implement its security tasks and responsibilities. We will continue to look for opportunities to develop NATO’s ongoing role with the Kosovo Security Force.

Last year, through the UN-mandated Operation Unified Protector (OUP), and with the support of the League of Arab States, our Alliance played a crucial role in protecting the civilian population in Libya and in helping save thousands of lives. We commend the Libyan people for the progress achieved to date on their path towards building a new, free, democratic Libya that fully respects human rights and fundamental freedoms, and encourage them to build on that progress.

Our successful operation in Libya showed once more that the Alliance can quickly and effectively conduct complex operations in support of the broader international community. We have also learned a number of important lessons which we are incorporating into our plans and policies. With OUP, NATO set new standards of consultation and practical cooperation with partner countries who contributed to our operation, as well as with other international and regional organisations. In this context, we recognise the value of the Libya Contact Group.

The Alliance is also contributing to peace and security through other operations and missions:

We welcome the extension of the mandate of our counter-piracy operation off the Horn of Africa, Operation Ocean Shield, for a further two years through to 2014. The decision to carry out enhanced actions at sea should allow us to be more effective in eroding the operational reach of pirates at sea. We remain committed to supporting international counter-piracy efforts, including through working together with the EU Operation Atalanta, as agreed, Combined Task Force 151 and other naval forces, and through our ongoing participation in the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. We encourage the shipping industry to adopt Best Management Practices and other measures proven effective against piracy, in compliance with international law.

Operation Active Endeavour is our Article 5 maritime operation in the Mediterranean which contributes to the fight against terrorism. We are reviewing strategic options for the future of this operation.

We continue to provide the African Union (AU) with operational support, at its request. We have agreed to extend strategic air and maritime lift support for the AU's Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and support the development of the AU's long-term peacekeeping capabilities, including the African Stand-by Force. We stand ready to consider further AU requests for NATO training assistance.

We have successfully concluded the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) which contributed to a more stable Iraq by assisting in the capacity building of Iraq's security institutions.

Widespread sexual and gender-based violence in conflict situations, the lack of effective institutional arrangements to protect women, and the continued under-representation of women in peace processes, remain serious impediments to building sustainable peace. We remain committed to the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and related Resolutions which are aimed at protecting and promoting women's rights, role, and participation in preventing and ending conflict. In line with the NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) Policy, the Alliance, together with its partners, has made significant progress in implementing the goals articulated in these Resolutions. In this regard, we have today endorsed a Strategic Progress Report on mainstreaming UNSCR 1325 and related Resolutions into NATO-led Operations and

Missions, and welcomed Norway's generous offer to provide a NATO Special Representative for these important issues. In this context, and to further advance this work, we have tasked the Council to: continue implementing the Policy and the Action Plan; undertake a review of the practical implications of UNSCR 1325 for the conduct of NATO operations and missions; further integrate gender perspectives into Alliance activities; and submit a report for our next Summit.

We also remain committed to the implementation of UNSCR 1612 and related Resolutions on the protection of children affected by armed conflict. We note with concern the growing range of threats to children in armed conflict and strongly condemn that they are increasingly subject to recruitment, sexual violence and targeted attacks. NATO-led operations, such as ISAF in Afghanistan, are taking an active role in preventing, monitoring and responding to violations against children, including through pre-deployment training and a violations alert mechanism. This approach, based on practical, field-oriented measures, demonstrates NATO's firm commitment on this issue, as does the recent appointment of a NATO Focal Point for Children and Armed Conflict in charge of maintaining a close dialogue with the UN. NATO-UN cooperation in this field is creating a set of good practices to be integrated in NATO training modules and taken into account in possible future operations.

Our operational experiences have shown that military means, although essential, are not enough on their own to meet the many complex challenges to our security. We reaffirm our Lisbon Summit decisions on a comprehensive approach. In order to fulfil these commitments, important work on NATO's contribution to a comprehensive approach and on stabilisation and reconstruction is ongoing. An appropriate but modest civilian crisis management capability has been established, both at the NATO Headquarters and within Allied Command Operations, in accordance with the principles and detailed political guidance we set out at our Summit in Lisbon.

We will continue to enhance our political dialogue and practical cooperation with the UN in line with the UN-NATO Declaration of September 2008. We welcome the strengthened cooperation and enhanced liaison between NATO and the UN that has been achieved since our last Summit meeting in Lisbon in November 2010, and which also contributed to the success of OUP.

NATO and the EU share common values and strategic interests. The EU is a unique and essential partner for NATO. Fully strengthening this strategic partnership, as agreed by our two organisations and enshrined in the Strategic Concept, is particularly important in the current environment of austerity; NATO and the EU should continue to work to enhance practical cooperation in operations, broaden political consultations, and cooperate more fully in capability development. NATO and the EU are working side by side in crisis management operations, in a spirit of mutual reinforcement, and in particular in Afghanistan, Kosovo and fighting piracy. NATO recognises the importance of a stronger and more capable European defence. NATO also recognises non-EU Allies' ongoing concerns and their significant

contributions to strengthening the EU's capacities to address common security challenges. For the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, non-EU Allies' fullest involvement in these efforts is essential. In this context, NATO will work closely with the EU, as agreed, to ensure that our Smart Defence and the EU's Pooling and Sharing initiatives are complementary and mutually reinforcing; we welcome the efforts of the EU, in particular in the areas of air-to-air refuelling, medical support, maritime surveillance and training. We also welcome the national efforts in these and other areas by European Allies and Partners. We also encourage the Secretary General to continue his dialogue with the EU High Representative with a view to making our cooperation more effective, and to report to the Council in time for the next Summit.

We continue to work closely with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in particular in areas such as conflict prevention and resolution, post-conflict rehabilitation, and in addressing new security threats. We are committed to further enhancing our cooperation, both at the political and operational level, in all areas of common interest.

NATO has a wide network of partnership relations. We highly value all of NATO's partners and the contributions they make to the work of the Alliance as illustrated through several partnership meetings we are holding here in Chicago. Partnerships play a crucial role in the promotion of international peace and security. NATO's partnerships are a key element of Cooperative Security which is one of the core tasks of the Alliance, and the Alliance has developed effective policies in order to enhance its partnerships. Through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace, we have pursued cooperation with our Euro-Atlantic partners to build a Europe whole, free and at peace. For twenty years, our partnerships have facilitated, and provided frameworks for, political dialogue and practical regional cooperation in the fields of security and defence, contribute to advancing our common values, allow us to share expertise and experience, and make a significant contribution to the success of many of our operations and missions. NATO Foreign Ministers in Berlin in April 2011 approved a More Efficient and Flexible Partnership Policy to enhance the effectiveness of NATO's partnerships. We will continue to actively pursue its further implementation with a view to strengthening NATO's partnerships, including by: reinforcing the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, and our relationships with partners across the globe, while making full use of flexible formats; further developing our political and practical cooperation with partners, including in an operational context; and through increasing partner involvement in training, education, and exercises, including with the NATO Response Force. We will intensify our efforts to better engage with partners across the globe who can contribute significantly to security, and to reach out to partners concerned, including our newest partner Mongolia, to build trust, increase transparency, and develop political dialogue and practical cooperation. In this context, we welcome the Joint Political Declaration between Australia and NATO.

We appreciate our partners' significant contributions to our practical cooperation activities and to the different Trust Funds which support our partnership goals. We welcome the Status

Report on Building Integrity and the progress achieved by NATO's Building Integrity Programme which has made important contributions to promoting transparency, accountability, and integrity in the defence sector of interested nations.

We welcome our meeting in Chicago with thirteen partners 1 who have recently made particular political, operational, and financial contributions to NATO-led operations. This is an example of the enhanced flexibility with which we are addressing partnership issues in a demand and substance-driven way. Our meeting in Chicago with partners provides us with a unique opportunity to discuss the lessons learned from our cooperation, and to exchange views on the common security challenges we face. Joint training and exercises will be essential in maintaining our interoperability and interconnectedness with partner forces, including when we are not engaged together in active operations. We will share ideas generated at this Chicago meeting with all our partners, within the appropriate frameworks, for additional discussion.

In accordance with Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, NATO's door will remain open to all European democracies which share the values of our Alliance, which are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, which are in a position to further the principles of the Treaty, and whose inclusion can contribute to security in the North Atlantic area. Based on these considerations, we will keep the progress of each of the partners that aspire to join the Alliance under active review, judging each on its own merits. We reaffirm our strong commitment to the Euro-Atlantic integration of the partners that aspire to join the Alliance in accordance with previous decisions taken at the Bucharest, Strasbourg-Kehl, and Lisbon Summits. We welcome progress made by these four partners and encourage them to continue to implement the necessary decisions and reforms to advance their Euro-Atlantic aspirations. For our part, we will continue to offer political and practical support to partners that aspire to join the Alliance. NATO's enlargement has contributed substantially to the security of Allies; the prospect of further enlargement and the spirit of cooperative security continue to advance stability in Europe more broadly.

We reiterate the agreement at our 2008 Bucharest Summit, as we did at subsequent Summits, to extend an invitation to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2 to join the Alliance as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue has been reached within the framework of the UN, and strongly urge intensified efforts towards that end. An early solution, and subsequent membership, will contribute to security and stability in the region. We encourage the negotiations to be pursued without further delay and expect them to be concluded as soon as possible. We welcome, and continue to support, the ongoing reform efforts in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and encourage continued implementation. We also encourage its efforts to further build a multi-ethnic society. We appreciate the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's substantial contributions to our operations, as well as its active role in regional cooperation activities. We value the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's long-standing commitment to the NATO accession process.

We welcome the significant progress that Montenegro has made towards NATO membership and its contribution to security in the Western Balkans region and beyond, including through its active role in regional cooperation activities and its participation in ISAF. We also welcome the increasing public support for NATO membership in Montenegro, and will continue to assist this process. Montenegro's active engagement in the MAP process demonstrates firm commitment to join the Alliance. Montenegro has successfully implemented significant political, economic and defence reforms, and we encourage it to continue on that path so it can draw even closer to the Alliance. We will keep Montenegro's progress towards membership under active review.

We continue to fully support the membership aspirations of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the significant progress that has been made in recent months, including the establishment of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers, and the political agreement reached on 9 March 2012 on the registration of immovable defence property as state property. These developments are a sign of the political will in Bosnia and Herzegovina to move the reform process forward, and we encourage all political actors in the country to continue to work constructively to further implement the reforms necessary for its Euro-Atlantic integration. The political agreement on defence and state properties is an important step towards fulfilment of the condition set by NATO Foreign Ministers in Tallinn in April 2010 for full participation in the MAP process. We welcome the initial steps taken regarding implementation, and we urge the political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina to further their efforts to work constructively to implement the agreement without delay in order to start its first MAP cycle as soon as possible. The Alliance will continue to follow progress in implementation and will provide assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina's reform efforts. We appreciate Bosnia and Herzegovina's contribution to NATO-led operations and commend its constructive role in regional and international security.

At the 2008 Bucharest Summit we agreed that Georgia will become a member of NATO and we reaffirm all elements of that decision, as well as subsequent decisions. The NATO-Georgia Commission and Georgia's Annual National Programme (ANP) have a central role in supervising the process set in hand at the Bucharest Summit. We welcome Georgia's progress since the Bucharest Summit to meet its Euro-Atlantic aspirations through its reforms, implementation of its Annual National Programme, and active political engagement with the Alliance in the NATO-Georgia Commission. In that context, we have agreed to enhance Georgia's connectivity with the Alliance, including by further strengthening our political dialogue, practical cooperation, and interoperability with Georgia. We continue to encourage and actively support Georgia's ongoing implementation of all necessary reforms, including democratic, electoral, and judicial reforms, as well as security and defence reforms. We stress the importance of conducting free, fair, and inclusive elections in 2012 and 2013. We appreciate Georgia's substantial contribution, in particular as the second largest non-NATO troop contributing nation to ISAF, to Euro-Atlantic security.

We reiterate our continued support to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. We welcome Georgia's full compliance with the EU-mediated cease-fire agreement and other unilateral measures to build confidence. We welcome Georgia's commitment not to use force and call on Russia to reciprocate. We continue to call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of Georgia as independent states. We encourage all participants in the Geneva talks to play a constructive role as well as to continue working closely with the OSCE, the UN, and the EU to pursue peaceful conflict resolution in the internationally-recognised territory of Georgia.

Here in Chicago, our Foreign Ministers are meeting with their counterparts from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgia, in order to take stock of their individual progress, plan future cooperation, and exchange views with our partners, including on their participation in partnership activities and contributions to operations. We are grateful to these partners that aspire to NATO membership for the important contributions they are making to NATO-led operations, and which demonstrate their commitment to our shared security goals.

In the strategically important Western Balkans region, democratic values, regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are important for lasting peace and stability. We are encouraged by the progress being made, including in regional cooperation formats, and will continue to actively support Euro-Atlantic aspirations in this region. Together, Allies and partners of the region actively contribute to the maintenance of regional and international peace, including through regional cooperation formats.

We continue to support Serbia's Euro-Atlantic integration. We welcome Serbia's progress in building a stronger partnership with NATO and encourage Belgrade to continue on this path. NATO stands ready to continue to deepen political dialogue and practical cooperation with Serbia. We will continue assisting Serbia's reform efforts, and encourage further work.

We call upon Serbia to support further efforts towards the consolidation of peace and stability in Kosovo. We urge all parties concerned to cooperate fully with KFOR and EULEX in the execution of their respective mandates for which unconditional freedom of movement is necessary. We urge Belgrade and Pristina to take full advantage of the opportunities offered to promote peace, security, and stability in the region, in particular by the European Union-facilitated dialogue. We welcome progress made in the European Union-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, including the Agreement on Regional Cooperation and the IBM technical protocol. Dialogue between them and Euro-Atlantic integration of the region are key for a sustained improvement in security and stability in the Western Balkans. We call on both parties to implement fully existing agreements, and to move forward on all outstanding issues, including on the conclusion of additional agreements on telecommunications and electricity. We welcome progress achieved and encourage further efforts aimed at consolidating the rule of law, and other reform efforts, in Kosovo.

An independent, sovereign and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security. Marking the fifteenth anniversary of the NATO-Ukraine Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, we welcome Ukraine's commitment to enhancing political dialogue and interoperability with NATO, as well as its contributions to NATO-led operations and new offers made. We note the recent elimination of Ukraine's highly enriched uranium in March 2012, which demonstrates a proven commitment to non-proliferation. Recalling our decisions in relation to Ukraine and our Open Door policy stated at the Bucharest and Lisbon Summits, NATO is ready to continue to develop its cooperation with Ukraine and assist with the implementation of reforms in the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Commission and the Annual National Programme (ANP). Noting the principles and commitments enshrined in the NATO-Ukraine Charter and the ANP, we are concerned by the selective application of justice and what appear to be politically motivated prosecutions, including of leading members of the opposition, and the conditions of their detention. We encourage Ukraine to address the existing shortcomings of its judicial system to ensure full compliance with the rule of law and the international agreements to which it is a party. We also encourage Ukraine to ensure free, fair and inclusive Parliamentary elections this autumn.

NATO-Russia cooperation is of strategic importance as it contributes to creating a common space of peace, stability and security. We remain determined to build a lasting and inclusive peace, together with Russia, in the Euro-Atlantic area, based upon the goals, principles and commitments of the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the Rome Declaration. We want to see a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia, and we will act accordingly with the expectation of reciprocity from Russia.

This year, we mark the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) and the fifteenth anniversary of the NATO-Russia Founding Act. We welcome important progress in our cooperation with Russia over the years. At the same time, we differ on specific issues and there is a need to improve trust, reciprocal transparency, and predictability in order to realise the full potential of the NRC. In this context, we intend to raise with Russia in the NRC Allied concerns about Russia's stated intentions regarding military deployments close to Alliance borders. Mindful of the goals, principles and commitments which underpin the NRC, and on this firm basis, we urge Russia to meet its commitments with respect to Georgia, as mediated by the EU on 12 August and 8 September 2008 3. We continue to be concerned by the build-up of Russia's military presence on Georgia's territory and continue to call on Russia to ensure free access for humanitarian assistance and international observers.

NATO and Russia share common security interests and face common challenges and our practical achievements together reflect that reality. Today, we continue to value the important role of the NRC as a forum for frank and honest political dialogue – including on subjects where we disagree – and for promoting practical cooperation. Our cooperation with Russia on issues related to Afghanistan – notably the two-way transit arrangements offered by Russia in

support of ISAF, our joint training of counter narcotics personnel from Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Pakistan, and the NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund in support of a key ANSF need – is a sign of our common determination to build peace and stability in that region. NATO-Russia counter-terrorism cooperation has expanded and all NRC nations will benefit from the lessons to be learned from the first civil-military NRC Counter-Terrorism exercise, and the capabilities available under the NRC aviation counter-terrorism programme which is now operational. We also note with satisfaction our growing counter-piracy cooperation off the Horn of Africa. We are committed to, and look forward to, further improving trust and reciprocal transparency in: defence matters; strategy; doctrines; military postures, including of non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe; military exercises; arms control and disarmament; and we invite Russia to engage with the Alliance in discussing confidence-building measures covering these issues.

At a time of unprecedented change in the Mediterranean and broader Middle East, NATO is committed to strengthening and developing partnership relations with countries in the region, with whom we face common security challenges and share the same goals for peace, security and stability. NATO supports the aspirations of the people of the region for democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law – values which underpin the Alliance.

The Libya crisis illustrated the benefits of cooperation with partners from the region. It also showed the merit of regular consultations between the Alliance and regional organisations, such as the Gulf Cooperation Council and the League of Arab States.

NATO is ready to consult more regularly on security issues of common concern, through the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), as well as bilateral consultations and 28+n formats. We recall our commitment to the MD and the ICI and to the principles that underpin them; the MD and ICI remain two complementary and yet distinct partnership frameworks. We are also ready to consider providing, upon request, support to our partners in the region in such areas as security institution building, defence modernisation, capacity development, and civil-military relations. Individualised programmes will allow us to focus on agreed priorities for each partner country.

The MD helps to strengthen mutual understanding, political dialogue, practical cooperation and, as appropriate, interoperability. We welcome the Moroccan-led initiative to develop a new, political framework document for the MD, and look forward to developing it together soon with our MD partners. We encourage the MD partner countries to be proactive in exploiting the opportunities offered by their partnership with NATO. The MD remains open to other countries in the region.

We welcome Libya’s stated interest to deepen relations with the Alliance. We are ready to welcome Libya as a partner, if it so wishes. In that perspective, the MD is a natural framework for this partnership. We stand ready, if requested, and on a case-by-case basis, to consider providing assistance to Libya in areas where NATO can add value. NATO’s activities would

focus primarily on security and defence sector reform, while taking into account other international efforts.

We will strengthen political dialogue and practical cooperation in the ICI. We warmly welcome the generous offer by the State of Kuwait to host an ICI Regional Centre, which will help us to better understand common security challenges, and discuss how to address them together. We encourage our ICI partner countries to be proactive in exploiting the opportunities offered by their partnership with NATO. We remain open to receiving new members in the ICI.

We are following the evolution of the Syrian crisis with growing concern and we strongly support the efforts of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, including full implementation of the six-point Annan plan, to find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

We welcome progress being made in Iraq. The NATO Transition Cell now established in Iraq is helping to develop our partnership.

With our vision of a Euro-Atlantic area at peace, the persistence of protracted regional conflicts in South Caucasus and the Republic of Moldova continues to be a matter of great concern for the Alliance. We welcome the constructive approach in the renewed dialogue on Transnistria in the 5+2 format, and encourage further efforts by all actors involved. With respect to all these conflicts, we urge all parties to engage constructively and with reinforced political will in peaceful conflict resolution, and to respect the current negotiation formats. We call on them all to avoid steps that undermine regional security and stability. We remain committed in our support of the territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova, and will also continue to support efforts towards a peaceful settlement of these regional conflicts, based upon these principles and the norms of international law, the United Nations Charter, and the Helsinki Final Act.

The Black Sea region continues to be important for Euro-Atlantic security. We welcome the progress in consolidating regional cooperation and ownership, through effective use of existing initiatives and mechanisms, in the spirit of transparency, complementarity and inclusiveness. We will continue to support, as appropriate, efforts based on regional priorities and dialogue and cooperation among the Black Sea states and with the Alliance.

Cyber attacks continue to increase significantly in number and evolve in sophistication and complexity. We reaffirm the cyber defence commitments made at the Lisbon Summit. Following Lisbon, last year we adopted a Cyber Defence Concept, Policy, and Action Plan, which are now being implemented. Building on NATO’s existing capabilities, the critical elements of the NATO Computer Incident Response Capability (NCIRC) Full Operational Capability (FOC), including protection of most sites and users, will be in place by the end of 2012. We have committed to provide the resources and complete the necessary reforms to bring all NATO bodies under centralised cyber protection, to ensure that enhanced cyber defence capabilities protect our collective investment in NATO. We will further integrate cyber defence measures into Alliance structures and procedures and, as individual nations, we

remain committed to identifying and delivering national cyber defence capabilities that strengthen Alliance collaboration and interoperability, including through NATO defence planning processes. We will develop further our ability to prevent, detect, defend against, and recover from cyber attacks. To address the cyber security threats and to improve our common security, we are committed to engage with relevant partner nations on a case-by-case basis and with international organisations, inter alia the EU, as agreed, the Council of Europe, the UN and the OSCE, in order to increase concrete cooperation. We will also take full advantage of the expertise offered by the Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Estonia.

We continue to be deeply concerned about the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD), as well as their means of delivery. Proliferation threatens our shared vision of creating the conditions necessary for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We share the United Nations Security Council's serious concern with Iran's nuclear programme and call upon Iran to fully comply with all its international obligations, including all relevant Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors. We further call upon Iran to cooperate with the international community to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme in compliance with its NPT obligations. We support the immediate resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomatic means and encourage a sustained process of engagement within the format of the P5+1 and Iran talks. We are deeply concerned by the proliferation activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and call on it to comply fully with all relevant UNSCRs and international obligations, especially by abandoning all activities related to its existing nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We strongly condemn the launch by the DPRK on 13 April 2012 using ballistic missile technology. We call for universal adherence to, and compliance with, the NPT and the Additional Protocol to the International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguard Agreement, and call for full implementation of UNSCR 1540 and welcome further work under UNSCR 1977. We also call on all states to strengthen the security of nuclear materials within their borders, as called for at the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit. We will continue to implement NATO's Strategic-Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of WMD and Defending Against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Threats. We will ensure NATO has the appropriate capabilities, including for planning efforts, training and exercises, to address and respond to CBRN attacks.

Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations can never be tolerated or justified. We deplore all loss of life from acts of terrorism and extend our sympathies to the victims. We reaffirm our commitment to fight terrorism with unwavering resolve in accordance with international law and the principles of the UN Charter. Today we have endorsed NATO's Policy Guidelines on Counter-Terrorism, and task the Council to prepare an Action Plan to further enhance NATO's

ability to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism by identifying initiatives to enhance our threat awareness, capabilities, and engagement.

A stable and reliable energy supply, diversification of routes, suppliers and energy resources, and the interconnectivity of energy networks, remain of critical importance. While these issues are primarily the responsibility of national governments and other international organisations concerned, NATO closely follows relevant developments in energy security. Today, we have noted a progress report which outlines the concrete steps taken since our last Summit and describes the way forward to integrate, as appropriate, energy security considerations in NATO's policies and activities. We will continue to consult on energy security and further develop the capacity to contribute to energy security, concentrating on areas where NATO can add value. To this end, we will work towards significantly improving the energy efficiency of our military forces; develop our competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure; and further develop our outreach activities in consultation with partners, on a case-by-case basis. We welcome the offer to establish a NATO-accredited Energy Security Centre of Excellence in Lithuania as a contribution to NATO's efforts in this area. We task the Council to continue to refine NATO's role in energy security in accordance with the principles and the guidelines agreed at the Bucharest Summit and the direction provided by the new Strategic Concept as well as the Lisbon decisions. We task the Council to produce a further progress report for our next Summit.

Key environmental and resource constraints, including health risks, climate change, water scarcity and increasing energy needs will further shape the future security environment in areas of concern to NATO and have the potential to significantly affect NATO planning and operations.

In Lisbon, we called for a review of NATO's overall posture in deterring and defending against the full range of threats to the Alliance, taking into account the changes in the evolving international security environment. We have today approved, and made public, the results of our Deterrence and Defence Posture Review. NATO is committed to maintaining an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities for deterrence and defence to fulfil its commitments as set out in the Strategic Concept. Consistent with the Strategic Concept and their commitments under existing arms control treaties and frameworks, Allies will continue to support arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation efforts.

We will ensure that the Alliance continues to have the capabilities needed to perform the essential core tasks to which we committed ourselves in the Strategic Concept. To that end, we have agreed a separate Chicago Defence Declaration and endorsed the Defence Package for the Chicago Summit, outlining a vision and a clear way forward towards our goal of NATO Forces 2020.

We welcome the recent Council decision to continue the NATO Air Policing Mission in the Baltic states, and appreciate the recent commitment by the Baltic states to enhance their host nation support to the participating Allies. Allies remain committed to contributing to this mission, which is also an example of Smart Defence in practice. This peacetime mission and other Alliance air policing arrangements demonstrate the Alliance's continued and visible commitment to collective defence and solidarity.

The Alliance's recent operational experiences also show that the ability of NATO forces to act together seamlessly and rapidly is critical to success. We will, therefore, ensure that the Alliance's forces remain well connected through expanded education, training and exercises. In line with the Alliance's commitment to transparency, and in the expectation of reciprocity, these activities are open for partner participation and observation on a case-by-case basis. In this context, we attach particular importance to next year's "Steadfast Jazz" exercise for the NATO Response Force which, along with other exercises, will contribute to the ability of NATO forces to operate together anywhere on Alliance territory and in wider crisis management operations.

We continue to be concerned by the increasing threats to our Alliance posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles. At our Summit in Lisbon we decided to develop a NATO Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) capability to pursue our core task of collective defence. The aim of this capability is to provide full coverage and protection for all NATO European populations, territory and forces against the increasing threats posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles, based on the principles of indivisibility of Allied security and NATO solidarity, equitable sharing of risks and burdens, as well as reasonable challenge, taking into account the level of threat, affordability and technical feasibility and in accordance with the latest common threat assessments agreed by the Alliance. Should international efforts reduce the threats posed by ballistic missile proliferation, NATO missile defence can, and will, adapt accordingly.

Missile defence can complement the role of nuclear weapons in deterrence; it cannot substitute for them. This capability is purely defensive.

We are pleased today to declare that the Alliance has achieved an Interim NATO BMD Capability. It will provide with immediate effect an operationally significant first step, consistent with our Lisbon decision, offering the maximum coverage within available means, to defend our populations, territory and forces across southern NATO Europe against a ballistic missile attack. Our aim remains to provide the Alliance with a NATO operational BMD that can provide full coverage and protection for all NATO European populations, territory and forces, based on voluntary national contributions, including nationally funded interceptors and sensors, hosting arrangements, and on the expansion of the Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence (ALTBMD) capability. Only the command and control systems of ALTBMD and their expansion to territorial defence are eligible for common funding. Within the context of the NATO BMD capability, Turkey hosts a forward-based early-warning radar. We note the

potential opportunities for cooperation on missile defence, and encourage Allies to explore possible additional voluntary contributions, including through multinational cooperation, to provide relevant capabilities, as well as to use potential synergies in planning, development, procurement, and deployment.

As with all of NATO's operations, full political control by Allies over military actions undertaken pursuant to this Interim Capability will be ensured. Given the short flight times of ballistic missiles, the Council agrees the pre-arranged command and control rules and procedures including to take into account the consequences of intercept compatible with coverage and protection requirements. We have tasked the Council to regularly review the implementation of the NATO BMD capability, including before the Foreign and Defence Ministers' meetings, and prepare a comprehensive report on progress and issues to be addressed for its future development, for us by our next Summit.

The Alliance remains prepared to engage with third states, on a case by case basis, to enhance transparency and confidence and to increase ballistic missile defence effectiveness. Given our shared security interests with Russia, we remain committed to cooperation on missile defence in the spirit of mutual trust and reciprocity, such as the recent NRC Theatre Missile Defence Exercise. Through ongoing efforts in the NATO-Russia Council, we seek to determine how independent NATO and Russian missile defence systems can work together to enhance European security. We look forward to establishing the proposed joint NATO-Russia Missile Data Fusion Centre and the joint Planning Operations Centre to cooperate on missile defence. We propose to develop a transparency regime based upon a regular exchange of information about the current respective missile defence capabilities of NATO and Russia. Such concrete missile defence cooperation is the best means to provide Russia with the assurances it seeks regarding NATO's missile defence plans and capabilities. In this regard, we today reaffirm that the NATO missile defence in Europe will not undermine strategic stability. NATO missile defence is not directed against Russia and will not undermine Russia's strategic deterrence capabilities. NATO missile defence is intended to defend against potential threats emanating from outside the Euro-Atlantic area. While regretting recurrent Russian statements on possible measures directed against NATO's missile defence system, we welcome Russia's willingness to continue dialogue with the purpose of finding an agreement on the future framework for missile defence cooperation.

We remain committed to conventional arms control. NATO CFE Allies recall that the decisions taken in November 2011 to cease implementing certain CFE obligations with regard to the Russian Federation are reversible, should the Russian Federation return to full implementation. NATO CFE Allies continue to implement fully their CFE obligations with respect to all other CFE States Parties. Allies are determined to preserve, strengthen and modernise the conventional arms control regime in Europe, based on key principles and commitments, and continue to explore ideas to this end.

At our Summit in Lisbon, we agreed on an ambitious reform programme. This package of reforms remains essential for guaranteeing the Alliance is responsive and effective in carrying out the ambitious tasks envisioned in our Strategic Concept, the Lisbon Declaration, as well as the Declaration on Defence Capabilities we have adopted today. To this end:
NATO Command Structure. We are implementing a leaner, more effective and affordable NATO Command Structure with its first phase and its package elements being effective during 2012. The number of subordinate headquarters, as well as the peacetime staffing and establishment, are being significantly reduced and implementation will be complete by 2015.

NATO Headquarters. We have rationalised a number of services between the International Staff (IS) and the International Military Staff (IMS). The move to the new headquarters in 2016 provides a unique opportunity to achieve more efficient and effective support to the work of the Alliance. We welcome the ongoing review of the IS, and the forthcoming review of the IMS; we look forward to the continuation of these reforms in line with those being carried out by nations. An important part of this comprehensive reform will be a review of our priorities and IS and IMS spending to identify activities that are no longer needed, improve efficiency, and achieve savings. This review will take place with the appropriate involvement of the Military Committee.

NATO Agencies. The consolidation and rationalization of the existing NATO Agencies' functions and services is underway with new NATO Agencies for Support, Communication & Information, and Procurement, to be stood up on 1 July 2012. The new Agencies' executives will work to optimise savings and improvements in effectiveness as the new entities mature over the next two years.

Resource Management. We have achieved solid progress in reforming the management of NATO's resources in the areas of programming, transparency, accountability, and information management. These reforms are making NATO resource and financial management more efficient, and are helping us to match resources to requirements. In this context, we will continue to reform our structures and procedures in order to seek greater efficiencies including from better use of our budgets.

We look forward to a further report on progress on these reforms by the time of our next Summit.

We express our appreciation for the generous hospitality extended to us by the Government of the United States as well as the people and City of Chicago. The decisions we have taken at our Summit in Chicago reinforce our common commitments, our capabilities and our cooperation, and will strengthen the Alliance for the years ahead.

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Source: https://www.nato.int/en/about-us/official-texts-and-resources/official-texts/2012/05/20/chicago-summit-declaration