North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Remarks

by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the opening session of the Munich Security Conference
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Wolfgang Ischinger: So, without further ado, may I ask Jens Stoltenberg to address his audience. Jens, you have the floor.

Jens Stoltenberg [NATO Secretary General]: Thank you Wolfgang and it's really great to be back here at the Munich Security Conference, a very important platform for dialogue, especially in times when we see high tensions and many challenges, as we see now. And in the report for this conference, you have warned us all that we are moving towards the brink of a significant conflict, and my main message today is that it is our common responsibility to enable us to move away from that brink and to prevent conflict. And in my introductory remarks I will address three issues, which are key if we are to achieve exactly that; the transatlantic partnership, EU efforts on defence, and nuclear challenges.

First, some words about the transatlantic partnership. In front of the new NATO Headquarters, there are two memorials. One is a section of the Berlin Wall and the other, a twisted girder from the wreckage of the Twin Towers in New York, and together they symbolise NATO's steel hard commitment to our collective defence, and our solidarity in the fight against terrorism. But most of all, they symbolise the unbreakable bond that unites the continents of North America and Europe. During the Cold War, NATO successfully deterred the Soviet Union. When the Cold War ended, we extended a hand of friendship to former adversaries and welcomed them into the Euro-Atlantic family. NATO helped to end two wars in the Balkans and we remain in Afghanistan to ensure it never again becomes a safe haven for international terrorists.

Without the enduring power of the transatlantic partnership, none of this would have been possible. But the paradox is that, throughout our history, people have questioned the transatlantic partnership, from the Suez Crisis to the Iraq War, from America's Pivot to Asia, to perceived lack of support for Article 5, and unfair burden-sharing. All of this has fuelled an impression of weakening transatlantic bond. But the reality is that the bond has proven to be resilient, because both Europe and North America benefit from the bond. What we see now is North Americans coming back to Europe, just as Europeans are stepping up their contributions to our shared security. Not just in words, but also in deeds. After the end of the Cold War, the United States reduced its military presence in Europe. In autumn 2013, the last American battle tank left Europe. Now the Americans are back with a new armoured brigade.

And this week, Washington rolled out a plan for further substantial increases in US presence in Europe. Billions for equipment, prepositioned supplies, training and infrastructure. Canadian troops have also returned to Europe for the first time in a generation, leading a multinational battlegroup in Latvia.

But the transatlantic partnership is not a one-way street. European Allies and Canada have stood with America in the fight against terrorism for the better part of two decades: in Afghanistan, in Iraq and in Syria. European Allies are also sharing the financial burden of our security. For years, defence spending by European Allies and Canada was in decline. But in 2014, facing a changed security environment, all Allies made a commitment to reverse that trend. We promised to stop the cuts and the cuts have stopped. We promised to start increasing defence spending and defence spending, across Europe and Canada, has increased, for three consecutive years, for the first time in many years. We promised to move towards spending 2% of GDP on defence within a decade and we are moving. Remember that in 2014, only three Allies met the 2% guideline. This year we expect eight Allies and by 2024, we expect at least 15. All NATO Allies have put forward plans to increase spending in real terms. This is major progress and it is a very good start. But we still have a long way to go and hard work ahead.

The simple message is the transatlantic Alliance remains the most powerful, most effective and most reliable alliance the world has ever seen. Because, in times of need, we are all prepared to do what is necessary for our shared security.

Let me turn to EU's efforts on defence, which I know will be one of the main topics discussed during this conference. I welcome EU efforts on defence. They are an opportunity to further strengthen the European pillar within NATO and contribute to better burden-sharing. But with opportunity comes risk. The risk of weakening the transatlantic bond, the risk of duplicating what NATO is already doing and the risk of discriminating against non-EU members of the NATO Alliance. These risks must be avoided. The reality is the European Union cannot protect Europe by itself. European leaders themselves have underlined this point many times. NATO countries outside the EU play a fundamental role in the defence of Europe. After Brexit, 80% of NATO's defence spending will come from non-EU Allies.

However, this is not only about money, it is also about geography. It is hard to imagine European security without the close involvement of Norway in the North, Turkey in the South, and the United States, Canada and United Kingdom in the West. But if we remove the risks and make the most out of the opportunities, if the EU actions complement NATO and are not seen as an alternative, then I see great potential for improving European security. That is why a closer NATO-EU cooperation is vital. NATO and EU are natural partners, we share the same values, the same challenges, the same people. More than 90% of the people living in EU countries live in a NATO country. I am proud that, over the past couple of years, we have made unprecedented progress on NATO-EU cooperation. Today, we are working side-by-side in the Aegean and Mediterranean, in Afghanistan and Iraq, in Georgia, Ukraine and the

Western Balkans, and on exercises, cyber and hybrid threats. EU defence can strengthen NATO and keep Europe safe, if they are anchored within the transatlantic partnership.

Then, before I close, let me say a few words about the re-emergence of nuclear challenges. For many years, the nuclear threat receded from view. Unfortunately, it is back on our agenda and it would be irresponsible to ignore it. Proliferation is happening now, today, and cornerstone nuclear agreements are under threat, including the INF Treaty. I belong to a political generation from whom… for whom debates on nuclear forces in Europe in the 1970s and the 1980s defined our understanding of security issues. The deployment of SS20, Pershing and cruise missiles was a profound concern for publics and politicians alike. In 1987, the INF Treaty banned all these weapons. Since then, it has been a pillar for European security.

The problem is that the US has determined that Russia is in violation of the INF Treaty, by developing and flight testing a new intermediate-range ground-launched cruise missile. We must protect the INF Treaty and we call on Russia to address the concerns of all NATO Allies, in a substantial, transparent and verifiable way. We see that Russia is modernising its nuclear capabilities, developing new nuclear systems and increasing the role of nuclear weapons in its military strategy. This is a cause for real concern.

At the same time, North Korea continues to develop its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, which pose a threat to us all. All Allies are now within range of North Korean missiles. Pyongyang is closer to Munich than it is to Washington DC and therefore we must put maximum pressure on North Korea to abandon its nuclear programme, by political and diplomatic means and, not least, through effective economic sanctions. Russia and China have a special responsibility, as members of the UN Security Council and as neighbours of North Korea. Iran also possesses a proliferation concern. That is why NATO Allies place great importance on the Iran Nuclear Deal, but to be effective it must be properly implemented. All these developments forces us to pay more attention to nuclear threats.

And let me be clear, NATO's goal is a world without nuclear weapons, but as long as they exist NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. A world where Russia, China and North Korea have nuclear weapons, but NATO does not, is not a safer world. That is why the ultimate guarantee of NATO's security is the strategic nuclear forces of Allies, particularly those of the United States. We need to maintain a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent. At the same time, Allies remain committed to reducing the number of nuclear weapons, in a balanced and verifiable way. And we have a strong track record. Since the height of the Cold War, NATO Allies have reduced the nuclear arsenal in Europe by 90%. In it's recent Nuclear Posture Review, the US reconfirmed its commitment to nuclears… nuclear arms control and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. And United States has also reiterated its global leadership role in reducing the number of nuclear weapons.

Only last week, Washington and Moscow announced that the limits of the new START Treaty have been reached, restricting United States and Russia to 1550 deployed warhead… warheads each, down from 12,000 in 1994, when the first START Treaty came into force. That shows the importance of such landmark agreements. It shows that arms control can work and it shows that the risk of conflict can be effectively reduced.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our world may have become more dangerous, but conflict is not inevitable. To preserve the peace, we need the military strength of the NATO Alliance, combined with the political courage to seek dialogue, to deescalate, reduce tensions and find peaceful solutions to our differences. Then we move away from the brink of conflict.

Thank you.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Ladies and Gentlemen, we have about 20 minutes for Q&As and, before I call on any of you, let me start by asking a question myself. Mr Secretary General, when one looks at newspaper reports of the current situation in certain parts of Syria, it looks as if two NATO Allies are at risk of militarily confronting each other. Now of course, this is not the first time in the history of the Alliance that we have had friction between Allies, between Greece and Turkey, it's an old story, but this is the first time that two really major Allies, the United States and Turkey, are having a real problem. So, if you could tell us how you think this can or should be handled, and how it will be handled, in order to re-establish a perception of a NATO Alliance that is not divided in a very important way.

JENS STOLTENBERG [NATO Secretary General]: The way to handle this is that the United States and Turkey sit down and find ways to avoid any… how should I say… incidents or conflicts or further problems in Northern Syria, and I welcome the fact that that’s exactly what they are doing. For instance, during the Defence Ministerial Meeting in Brussels of NATO yesterday, Secretary Mattis met with his Turkish counterpart. Secretary Tillerson was recently in Ankara and we have seen the reports that they are now sitting down and really making efforts to solve the problems we all face in Northern Syria, but they are on the ground and they are present. NATO provides support to the Global Coalition to defeat ISIS and Turkey has been a key partner, or member, of that Coalition. The progress we have made in defeating ISIS in Iraq and Syria would not have been possible to achieve without Turkey being a key player, because Turkey is bordering Iraq, bordering Syria, and has provided a critical infrastructure, airports, and many other facilities which has been important. But now, the important thing is to find ways for US and Turkey to deconflict, and I welcome that that is exactly what they are doing, through the many different high-level meetings which are taking place now.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Thank you. I have [Klaudia Haut], [inaudible] from Moscow and I have a couple of more. Yes, Carl, I see you. And I have question from Fritz Felgentreu. Why don’t we take, if you agree with this, why don’t we bundle them, take three together. And we'll start of course with Klaudia Haut from the…

QUESTION [Klaudia Haut]: [in German]

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: I will read a question that is related not to Syria, but to Iraq, if you agree, from Fritz Felgentreu.

In a recently ongoing discussion, I'm quoting here, "NATO is considering taking responsibility for a mission of capability building with the Iraqi armed forces. This project is meant to be a sequel to the War on Daesh, aimed at stabilising Iraq in the process of reconstruction. The objective is reasonable, but why should such a mission be regarded to be a task for NATO?" Fritz Felgentreu.

And then we'll take a question from Mr Kuzichev, please.

QUESTION [Mr Kuzichev]: Thank you. Thank you, Mr Secretary General. My question would be about the last part of your speech related to the dangers of proliferation of nuclear weapons. You mentioned, as far as I could see, three nuclear countries; Russia, China and Iran, to my surprise, as… and…

[inaudible]

QUESTION [Mr Kuzichev]: Thank you. Then it was a misinterpretation, OK. But in any case, would you be so kind and make certain comments on United States' attempts to set additional pressure on North Korea, expressing its intentions to wipe North Korea out of the Earth's face in the UN General Assembly this year, as well as the United States' threats or intentions to withdraw from the Iranian deal. How do you believe these actions and threats either strengthen or weaken the proliferation system, in the case of North Korea and in the case of Iran? Thank you.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: OK, so we have three questions, Jens.

JENS STOLTENBERG [NATO Secretary General]: First, about Syria. Well, I was asked about the challenges between Turkey and the United States in Syria, that was the reason why I respond to that. But I agree that the situation in Syria is about much more than the relationship between Turkey and Syria… and United States. Of course, we share the concerns about the humanitarian situation, the suffering of the people, the violence, the killing of civilians, and therefore the main message is that we all support the efforts to find a peaceful, political, negotiated solution and we strongly support the efforts of the UN and by Steffan de Mistura, to energise these efforts to find a political solution. So, NATO's main message is to support those efforts. Then, the reality is that, in the lack of a political solution, we have a very difficult situation in Northern Syria and the… and the NATO Allies have… have all participated in the campaign to defeat ISIS, both in Syria and Iraq, and NATO is member of the

Coalition to defeat ISIS, and we have also provided support to the Coalition with our AWACS surveillance planes and with training of Iraqi officers. But again, we don't think there is a

military solution, we need a political solution.

Turkey has some legitimate security concerns. No other NATO Ally has suffered more terrorist attacks than Turkey, but we expect them to address these concerns in a proportionate and measured way, and we also welcome the fact that Turkey has briefed all NATO Allies on the operation in Afrin, where several Allies have underlined the importance of a measured and proportionate response.

Then, on Iraq, well the main message is that we are more safe when our neighbours are more secure and Iraq is a neighbour of NATO, a neighbour of Turkey, which is a neighbour… which is a NATO Ally, so NATO feels a responsibility to try to also help to stabilise our neighbourhood. We do that of course in close cooperation with the Iraqi government. NATO has the structures, the experience, the knowledge, of how to train forces, and I think that we have seen a significant shift in the way NATO is contributing to the fight against terrorism over the last years. Before, NATO conducted big combat operations, as we for instance have done in Afghanistan over many years. Now, we are shifting from combat to train. So, for instance in Afghanistan, we ended the combat operation, we do now training of local forces, and that's exactly also what we are going to do, or scale up, in Iraq. Because I believe that in the long run, it's much more viable, much more sustainable, that we train local forces, enabling them to stabilise their own countries, instead of NATO conducting big combat operations. So, to enable the Iraqi forces to avoid ISIL or Al-Qaeda, or anything like that, to come back, we have to help them build their military institutions, train their officers, and one of the issues where NATO is going to work a lot is on how to build as a… military academies, military schools, to train the trainers and to help Iraq build a strong defence and security sector.

Sorry, nuclear. Sorry. Yes, well first of all, we attach great importance to the Iran Nuclear Deal and it is important that it is fully implemented. Second, when it comes to North Korea, well I think the good news is that at least the UN Security Council, with all the permanent members, have… or has been able to agree on tougher sanctions and we need maximum pressure on North Korea, which then of course depends on strict economic sanctions. And we have seen tougher sanctions and we have seen also that the sanctions are implemented to a larger extent now than before. I'm not saying this is easy, but I am saying that pressure on North Korea is the way to denuclearise and to make sure that North Korea abandon their nuclear missile programmes.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Thank you. We have time for maybe three or four more questions. There is a question in the back, but there was Carl Bildt. So, I'll call on Carl. Then I'll call on the lady, is this Natalie? And on the gentleman over there, third… yes. Is that Frank?

FRANK: Yes.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: OK. Right, Carl Bildt.

QUESTION [Carl Bildt]: Secretary General, you mentioned, rightly I think, the dangers associated with INF Treaty, if that were to sort of be endangered one way or the other, there are several issues there. But you highlighted the Russian one, needless to say, and the ground launch cruise missile that one way or the other is there. I noticed your… how you phrased it, you say Russia has flight tested, no, developed and flight tested a cruise… a ground launch cruise missile. But you avoided, or you did not mention, the word deployed. Was that a deliberate phrasing or was it just an omission?

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: All right. Then the next one is Natalie. Yes, there.

QUESTION [Natalie]: Concerning European defence, indeed there have been remarkable steps being made over the last couple of years, and what's interesting is that these steps have been made in close communication with NATO and have gone hand in hand with an unprecedented deepening of EU-NATO cooperation. Now, you put a lot of emphasis on the risks and, listening to you, it seems a bit like going back to the 1990s, you know, the older debate of the three Ds, and what's not clear to me is, why is there this resurgence of doubts within NATO concerning the desirability of European defence?

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Thank you. And then we have Frank Wisner, over there.

QUESTION [Frank Wisner]: Secretary General, on 7th February the European Commission published a very strong report pointing to the deteriorating situation in the Western Balkans and calling for a number of measures to accelerate the progress the European… of Western Balkans into Europe during this year, heading towards the Summit in Sofia. Integration is not just an economic and social matter. The Western Balkans is a dangerous place and security is a hugely important factor, particularly in the face of rising threats, including increased Russian activity. Is it possible to imagine close coordination between a fresh round of EU efforts and NATO efforts, to jointly bring the nations of the Western Balkans into the transatlantic community?

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: All right. Back to you, Jens.

JENS STOLTENBERG [NATO Secretary General]: First, to Carl Bildt. Well, I used the official language the United States is using, and the reason why I did that was that I would like to be very precise, because this is not a NATO… how should I say… assessment, this is a US assessment, because US's part in the INF Treaty. Then there may be reports about other things, but I used the official US language because this is a US determination. Regardless, the important thing is to make sure that we protect INF Treaty and that Russia is transparent and verifiable, in compliance with the treaty. That’s the main message.

Then, on EU defence. Well, I am as positive as I can, meaning that I welcome the efforts to strengthen European, or EU, defence in all my speeches, but I think also that in all my speeches I have also highlighted that we need to avoid duplication. I think I have used the word duplication in all my speeches, just to make sure that there is no risk for duplication and

no risk for competition. And, for instance, that has to done in a way which strengthens the European pillar within NATO. I think that's a direct quote of Ursula von der Leyen, that has stated many times that this is not about creating an alternative to NATO, but this is about strengthening the European pillar within NATO. So, I think actually it is important that I, but also European leaders, as they have done many times, state again and again that this is not about competing with NATO, because… and it's easier for us to provide full support and easier for us to also then calm down those who might be still a bit… what should I say… afraid that this may create duplication or be an alternative to NATO. And the reason why European leaders themselves so strongly have underlined that this is not about collective defence, this is not about creating alternative command structures or an alternative to NATO, it's that it is obvious that, when it comes to protecting Europe, which is more than the EU, then we need the transatlantic bond and we need non-EU Allies, as Britain soon to be, Norway in the North, Turkey in the South. So… and of course Canada and United States. 80% of NATO's defence spending is non-EU, so there is no way EU can replace NATO, but EU efforts can complement and strengthen NATO, and therefore I strongly welcome those efforts. That's my… I think that has been my message in all my speeches and… and I continue to say so.

Then on the Western Balkans, well NATO has a history there, the EU has a history there, we have a responsibility and sometimes I am a bit afraid that we are so focused on Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, which is important, that we forget our closest neighbourhood, the Western Balkans. And we have to be focused on the Western Balkans, because there are some developments which are really going in the wrong direction, but at least we… and I really believe that NATO and the EU can do more together. We already work together, but we can do more together. NATO, we have as EU members in the region, Slovenia and Croatia, but NATO ... also Albania and Montenegro, and I recently visited Skopje and I really hope that it is possible to find a solution to the name issue, because then we can also move on that issue, when it comes to membership. But this is not only about membership, this is also about working with partners, for instance Serbia. I welcome that we are strengthening our partnership with Serbia, I welcome also that EU is… what should I say… working on that. So, the Western Balkan is absolutely a region where we have to do more and have to do more together with the European Union.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: OK. Any final questions? Two more. [Horst Tajik] first and then Steve Arlanger.

QUESTION [Horst Tajic]: [in German]

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: And the last question goes to Steve Arlanger.

QUESTION [Steve Arlanger]: Thank you Wolfgang. Mr Stoltenberg, you were pretty explicit about your concerns about EU strategic autonomy, as some people have put it. But I want to press you a little more on two things. One, do you think the French idea of a European

intervention force is duplicative or a good idea or a bad idea, explicitly? And secondly, American officials have been quoted lately as saying they have grave doubts about PESCO and what it entails for NATO. Are those comments helpful to… helpful to you or are they hurtful? And have they been coordinated with you? Thank you.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Jens, before you reply, since we are talking here about NATO-related issues and about the transatlantic relationship, allow me to use just 30 seconds to set the record straight. There was a news item on German television, and this is why I will say what I say now in Deutsche; ... [in German]

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Back to you, Jens.

JENS STOLTENBERG [NATO Secretary General]: So, first on arms control. I agree that arms control is very important and that's also the reason why I actually spoke a lot about arms control in my introduction, about the importance of nuclear arms control. And the first thing we can do is to make sure that agreements we have are fully implemented, meaning that we make sure that the INF Treaty, which is not just a small agreement, but it's actually an agreement that abolish a whole category of weapons, intermediate-range weapons, that we make sure that that treaty is fully respected. The other message is that we have to make sure that Non-Proliferation Treaty is fully respected and that we avoid proliferation, and that's the Iran deal and that's also to make sure that, for instance, North Korea is not developing nuclear weapons. And then of course I mentioned the fact that a week ago, on 5th February, that was the date where we fully implemented the new START agreement, which puts a ceiling 1,550 warheads in total on each side, in Russia and United States. That's a big achievement and it shows that nuclears… that arms control works. And I think we should use that as an inspiration to do more.

And then I welcome the fact that, for instance Secretary Mattis, in his testimony to the Congress, reiterated the US commitment to further reductions in nuclear weapons. So, we should protect the agreements we have and build on them to achieve more. Meaning also that we have to, for instance, protect what we call the Vienna Document, which is a very important document on conventional issues and how to make sure that we have transparency and risk reduction. We do get that Russia is finding ways to at least undermine the intentions and the way this document is working. We want to modernise it, but so far we have not been able to reach agreement with Russia on modernising the Vienna Document. Open Skies, an important agreement, which is working. And then we have to [forget] that CFE is not in place.

The NATO-Russia Council is important and the good news is that after two years with no meetings at all, from 2014 to the summer of 2016, we have had six meetings since then. Those meetings are not solving all the problems, but at least there are… the meetings of NATO-Russia Council, they are a platform for NATO Allies and Russia to sit down around a table and address issues as Ukraine, as risk reduction and transparency, military posture, Afghanistan and other issues. I think that's… that is important. The dialogue with Russia is

not easy, but that's exactly why it is important and I will continue to work for dialogue with Russia. Russia is our neighbour, Russia is here to stay, we have to strive for a better relationship with Russia.

PESCO and… well, we had a Defence Ministerial Meeting on Wednesday and Thursday and we all welcomed PESCO. We welcome PESCO, we welcome the European Defence Fund, but the message has been all the way, from me and from all other who have addressed this, that it has to be done in a way which is not duplicating NATO. I think that was in my first comment when I was commenting on the PESCO. I welcomed the launch of PESCO, but at the same time I actually quoted EU leaders and European leaders, who have themselves stated that this is not going to duplicate NATO, this is not an alternative to NATO, we are dependent on NATO, NATO is important for European security, and they are… because they are aware of that 80% of NATO's defence spending is coming from non-NATO…

QUESTION: That's what you just said three minutes ago and I'm asking you if [inaudible]

JENS STOLTENBERG [NATO Secretary General]: Well yeah, then I can… so, we welcome…

QUESTION: [inaudible]

JENS STOLTENBERG [NATO Secretary General]: Yeah. You asked me about then, as a new European capabilities, a French force. We welcome also of course new European capabilities. Forces, equipment and so on. What we have underlined, and again in all my comments and in all my meetings with EU Ministers and press statements and so on, is that it has… that there are three important points. One is coherence when it comes to capability developments, because NATO has a defence planning process and we can not end up in a world where there is one list from NATO and then a competing capability requirements from the EU. And that's a problem for me, but it's an even bigger problem for the nations, because then they will have two institutions coming with two lists and asking for different capabilities. So, it's obvious that there has to be coherence in the capability developments between NATO and the European Union. No way it can work without coherence. I say that, but also EU leaders say that. Second, is the principle of availability. NATO has asked European Allies to provide more capabilities for years. Then we can not… what shall I say… criticise them when they start to develop capabilities. We should welcome that, as long as those capabilities are available for NATO operations. And they have stated clearly yes, these capabilities, if drones or divisions or brigades or ships, whatever it is, they will of course be available for NATO operations. So, that's fine. And the third principle is the strongest possible inclusion of non-EU Allies, taking of course into consideration, respecting the autonomy and the integrity of the European Union, but we have to integrate and include non-EU Allies as much as possible, because the European Union will not be able to protect Europe by itself, partly because we are dependent on North America, but also on non-EU NATO Allies. Because EU is big, but there are also actually some European countries which are not a member of the European Union, like Turkey, important in the South in the fight against terrorism, like Norway

in the North, addressing all the challenges in the Barents Sea, and like for instance the United Kingdom in the West.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Mr Secretary General, thank you so much. I want to remind the audience that those of you who are interested in the relationship between NATO and the EU, in the defence area, please come back in half an hour because we continue this debate with two Defence Ministers from the European Union, with Jens's Deputy, Rose Gottemoeller, and a few other experts. So, be back in half an hour. Now let's give a hand to Secretary Stoltenberg.

WOLFGANG ISCHINGER: Ladies and Gentlemen, we have about 20 minutes for Q&As and, before I call on any of you, let me start by asking a question myself. Mr Secretary General, when one looks at newspaper reports of the current situation in certain parts of Syria, it looks as if two NATO Allies are at risk of militarily confronting each other. Now of course, this is not the first time in the history of the Alliance that we have had friction between Allies, between Greece and Turkey, it's an old story, but this is the first time that two really major Allies, the United States and Turkey, are having a real problem. So, if you could tell us how you think this can or should be handled, and how it will be handled, in order to re-establish a perception of a NATO Alliance that is not divided in a very important way.

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