

The Future of NATO: A Strong Alliance in an Unpredictable World

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Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Dr Niblett, Robin, thank you very much for your words of introduction.

And I am really pleased to share a platform with you again so soon! You recently participated in a very lively debate at our Transatlantic Bond Project Conference in Brussels. And you played a significant role in shaping the project's recommendations as we prepare for our Wales summit in September.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is great to be back at Chatham House. And let me start by thanking you for your timely invitation. This is one of the world's most prestigious forums for open debate, trusted analysis and new ideas. And your stated mission is to help build a sustainable secure, prosperous and just world.

This is exactly the world that NATO has been helping to build over the last 65 years. As the Alliance withstood the tests of the Cold War and created the secure environment which allowed the European Union to develop. And NATO will continue to play a key role to keep our nations safe and to help keep the world secure.

In September, we will chart the way ahead for NATO. Leaders from NATO's 28 allies, partner nations and organisations around the world will gather for an important summit in Wales.

It was actually here in London that NATO leaders first met after the fall of communism. They started the work to erase the divisions on our continent. And laid the foundations for the new NATO of today.

Now, we are facing another turning point in history. The world that we helped build after the end of the Cold War is being challenged. In different ways and from different directions. To our east, Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an attempt to rewrite international rules and recreate a sphere of influence. At the same time, to our south, we see states or extreme groups using violence to assert their power. And overall, we see threats old and new, from piracy to terrorism to cyber attacks.

The choice is clear. Either we allow the world order that is the basis of our freedom, security and prosperity to unravel. Or we continue to make it stronger.

Our summit must give a clear answer. And our response must be strength and unity. I see three key parts to that response:

- Responsibly completing our combat mission in Afghanistan.
- Strengthening our collective defence.
- And staying engaged globally.

Of course, the UK has made a real contribution here, notably in Helmand Province where military personnel, and the civilians working alongside them, have promoted NATO's values and delivered security both to Afghans and more broadly. Indeed, over the past decade, we have not seen attacks on our own nations launched from Afghanistan.

First, Afghanistan. With ISAF, we have forged one of the biggest coalitions in recent history. Fifty countries from many continents, making sure that Afghanistan no longer serves as a haven for international terrorists. And that capable Afghan forces can secure their own country.

Afghanistan today *is* a different country. And increased security has created the conditions for significant gains in education, health, economic growth, media and women's rights. Afghan men and women now have the chance to develop their own country and decide their own future. The first democratic transition of power is now underway, after presidential elections entirely secured by Afghans.

At the Wales summit, we expect to turn a new page in our relationship with the new president of Afghanistan. By launching a new, non-combat mission, to train, advise and assist the Afghan forces from 2015. And I am increasingly confident that we will soon conclude the necessary legal agreements to make this possible. Because we see – not least from Iraq - how important it is to consolidate the gains we have made with such sacrifice, and continue to build the capacity of local security forces.

The second big question for our Wales summit is how to strengthen our collective defence.

NATO's core purpose remains to defend our citizens. But in today's unpredictable security environment, we cannot become a one-dimensional Alliance. We need to be ready to respond and to act quickly – whenever, and wherever required.

So we are developing an Alliance Readiness Action Plan in preparation for the summit.

As part of the plan, we are looking closely at how we can best deploy our forces for defence and deterrence. This includes force posture, positions, and presence.

We are considering reinforcement measures, such as necessary infrastructure, designation of bases and pre-positioning of equipment and supplies. We are reviewing our defence plans, threat assessments, intelligence-sharing arrangements, early-warning procedures, and crisis response planning. We are developing a new exercise schedule, adapted to the new security environment. And we want to further strengthen our NATO Response Force and Special Forces, so we can respond more quickly to any threat against any member of the Alliance, including where we have little warning.

The United Kingdom has shown leadership in developing a multinational Joint Expeditionary Force. Because this force will make an important contribution not only to our overall capabilities, but also to our enhanced readiness. It will preserve and build on our previous operational cooperation and experience. It will be a flexible and scalable force. And it will be ready to support NATO or other operations.

We will also take important steps to improve our capabilities. And we will focus on the 16 most critical capabilities that we need to meet the security challenges of today and tomorrow. Such as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, missile defence, cyber defence, precision guided munitions, air-to-air refuelling.

But taking all these necessary steps to improve our collective defence cannot be done on the cheap. They require adequate and appropriate investment. Indeed, since 2008, Russia has increased its defence spending by around 50 per cent while, on average, NATO allies have decreased theirs by about 20 per cent. This gap needs to be addressed.

In addition, of the total defence spending by NATO allies today, fully two thirds is spent by the United States. And many of the major capabilities we need are provided solely by America. Quite simply, this is unsustainable. If we Europeans want the United States to remain committed to European security, we must show a commitment to pick up our part of the bill.

European nations must do more. NATO has an agreed benchmark of two per cent of GDP to be spent on defence. And if all European nations were to meet the two per cent spending guideline this year, we would have an extra \$90 billion to invest in defence.

So it's time to stop the defence cuts. To start reversing the trend. And to gradually increase our defence spending as our economies recover. Here, again, I would like to commend the United Kingdom. It is one of only four allies that is projected to be at this level this year. And I am confident it will continue to do so.

Clearly, what matters is not just what we spend. But also how we spend our limited resources. And again, the United Kingdom is setting an example through its focus on clear outputs in support of clear priorities. And its increasing use of multinational cooperation to achieve those goals.

At the Wales summit, we need a common commitment to investing more in security and defence. And to back up that commitment with action.

Now the third big issue for our Wales summit – how do we remain engaged globally?

An effective response to today's complex challenges requires the right connections with other nations and organisations, wherever they may be located on the globe. While it is possible to surge military forces, it is not possible to surge trust and cooperation at will. They need patience, preparation and partnership.

At the summit, we will outline ways to build on the considerable experience we have gained in over 20 years of working with our partners. We want to respond to those partners who want to do more with us -- politically and militarily. And we want to offer more to those partners who would like our assistance.

We want to be able to assist partners and fragile states build a stronger security sector when they turn to us. To help them help themselves. And to project stability without always projecting significant forces of our own.

To provide coherent, effective and timely support, we are now developing a new Defence Capacity Building initiative. This will allow us to better focus our support in the areas of defence reform, defence planning, and military training. Depending on what a partner country may request, our assistance could range from sending specialist advisory teams all the way through to establishing a training mission.

As an example, Libya requested our assistance last year. And we remain ready to provide it, should conditions allow. But NATO Defence Capacity Building can also be relevant for partner countries in Eastern Europe.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our plan for 'Future NATO' is comprehensive and ambitious. But it is also realistic. It builds on our proven strengths. And answers the questions raised by the new security realities of the 21st century.

As we look to the future, we need to remember that the transatlantic bond is the foundation for the world order. And as security threats and our responses change, the historical, political and economic bond between Europe and North America remains rock solid.

Just two weeks ago, on the Normandy beaches, we saw the most vivid, moving and important reminder of the benefits of our transatlantic partnership. It is the bedrock of our shared security. While the world is changing, NATO's essential mission remains the same: to ensure that the Alliance remains a strong

community of freedom, peace, security and shared values. At the summit we will reaffirm and strengthen this transatlantic bond.

Our Wales summit will be an opportunity to demonstrate that NATO remains an essential source of stability in an unpredictable world.

Because NATO is more than a military alliance. We are a community of values. And we stand ready to protect and promote the values upon which we have built our free societies and created unparalleled progress and prosperity: individual liberty, democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

Thank you.