

Beat: Politics

THE NATO UNVEILS THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO REINFORCE THE EUROPEAN AMERICAN BOND

STATEMENT OVER CHINA SYSTEMIC CHALLENGE

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USPA NEWS - The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation summits are always held in a NATO member country and are chaired by the NATO Secretary General. The next one will take place on 14 June 2021, in Brussels, Belgium. The 2021 Summit is announced as a unique opportunity to reinforce NATO as the enduring embodiment of the bond between Europe and North America. The Summit will address decisions on the substantive and forward-looking NATO 2030 agenda to deal with the challenges of today and tomorrow: Russia's aggressive actions, the threat of terrorism, cyber-attacks, emerging and disruptive technologies, the security impact of climate change, and the rise of China. NATO leaders warned on Monday that China presents "systemic challenges," taking a forceful stance towards Beijing in a communique at Joe Biden's first summit with an alliance that Donald Trump openly disparaged. The new U.S. president has urged his fellow NATO leaders to stand up to China's authoritarianism and growing military might, a change of focus for an alliance created to defend Europe from the Soviet Union during the Cold War." Source: NATO

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The language in the summit's final communique, which will set the path for alliance policy, came a day after the Group of Seven (G7) rich nations issued a statement on human rights in China and Taiwan that Beijing said slandered its reputation.

"China's stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to alliance security," NATO leaders said in the communique." Source: NATO-----

PRESS RELEASE - BRUSSELS COMMUNIQUE ISSUES BY THE HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATING IN THE MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL IN BRUSSELS -----

We publish the full transcript text of the Joint statement

Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels

14 June 2021

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the 30 NATO Allies, have gathered in Brussels to reaffirm our unity, solidarity, and cohesion, and to open a new chapter in transatlantic relations, at a time when the security environment we face is increasingly complex. NATO remains the foundation of our collective defence and the essential forum for security consultations and decisions among Allies. NATO is a defensive Alliance and will continue to strive for peace, security, and stability in the whole of the Euro-Atlantic area. We remain firmly committed to NATO's founding Washington Treaty, including that an attack against one Ally shall be considered an attack against us all, as enshrined in Article 5. We will continue to pursue a 360-degree approach to protect and defend our indivisible security and to fulfil NATO's three core tasks of collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security.

2. NATO is the strongest and most successful Alliance in history. It guarantees the security of our territory and our one billion citizens, our freedom, and the values we share, including individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. We are bound together by our common values, enshrined in the Washington Treaty, the bedrock of our unity, solidarity, and cohesion. We commit to fulfilling our responsibilities as Allies accordingly. We reaffirm our adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations (UN) Charter. We are committed to the rules-based international order. We commit to reinforce consultations when the

security or stability of an Ally is threatened or when our fundamental values and principles are at risk.

3. We face multifaceted threats, systemic competition from assertive and authoritarian powers, as well as growing security challenges to our countries and our citizens from all strategic directions. Russia's aggressive actions constitute a threat to Euro-Atlantic security; terrorism in all its forms and manifestations remains a persistent threat to us all. State and non-state actors challenge the rules-based international order and seek to undermine democracy across the globe. Instability beyond our borders is also contributing to irregular migration and human trafficking. China's growing influence and international policies can present challenges that we need to address together as an Alliance. We will engage China with a view to defending the security interests of the Alliance. We are increasingly confronted by cyber, hybrid, and other asymmetric threats, including disinformation campaigns, and by the malicious use of ever-more sophisticated emerging and disruptive technologies. Rapid advances in the space domain are affecting our security. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the erosion of the arms control architecture also undermine our collective security. Climate change is a threat multiplier that impacts Alliance security. The greatest responsibility of the Alliance is to protect and defend our territories and our populations against attack, and we will address all threats and challenges which affect Euro-Atlantic security.

4. We gather at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic continues to test our nations and our resilience. NATO and Allied militaries have supported the civilian response to the pandemic, while ensuring our collective defence and the effectiveness of our operations. We have also provided critical assistance to a number of partners through the delivery of vital medical supplies. We pay tribute to all those who combat this pandemic in our countries and around the world.

5. At our December 2019 meeting in London, we asked the Secretary General to carry out a forward-looking reflection process to further strengthen NATO's political dimension, including consultations. We recognise the important contribution of the independent group appointed by the Secretary General to support NATO 2030. As a result, today we agree NATO 2030 – a transatlantic agenda for the future. Throughout its history, NATO has continuously adapted to a changing security environment. The NATO 2030 agenda complements and builds on our ongoing political and military adaptation, strengthens our ability to deliver on the three core tasks and contributes to making our strong Alliance even stronger and ready for the future.

6. To that end we agree to:

a. Reaffirm that NATO is the unique, essential and indispensable transatlantic forum for consultations and joint action on all matters related to our individual and collective security. We pledge to strengthen and broaden our consultations and to ensure that NATO remains flexible and effective to conduct military operations in support of our common security. We reaffirm the Alliance's shared democratic principles as well as our commitment to the spirit and the letter of the North Atlantic Treaty. We commit to reinforcing consultations when the security or stability of an Ally is threatened or when our fundamental values and principles are at risk.

b. Strengthen NATO as the organising framework for the collective defence of the Euro-Atlantic area, against all threats, from all directions. We reiterate our commitment to maintaining an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities for deterrence and defence, and to the 2014 Defence Investment Pledge, in its entirety. We commit to the full and speedy implementation of ongoing work to further strengthen our deterrence and defence posture, and we pledge to continue to improve the readiness of our forces and to strengthen and modernise the NATO Force Structure to meet current and future defence needs.

c. Enhance our resilience. Noting that resilience remains a national responsibility, we will adopt a more integrated and better coordinated approach, consistent with our collective commitment under Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty, to reduce vulnerabilities and ensure our militaries can effectively operate in peace, crisis and conflict. Allies will develop a proposal to establish, assess, review and monitor resilience objectives to guide nationally-developed resilience goals and implementation plans. It will be up to each individual Ally to determine how to establish and meet national resilience goals and implementation plans, allowing them to do so in a manner that is compatible with respective national competences, structures, processes and obligations, and where applicable those of the EU.

d. Foster technological cooperation among Allies in NATO, promote interoperability and encourage the development and adoption of technological solutions to address our military needs. For this purpose we will launch a civil-military Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic. We also agree to establish a NATO Innovation Fund, where Allies who so wish can support start-ups working on dual-use emerging and disruptive technologies in areas key to Allied security.

e. Enhance NATO's ability to contribute to preserve and shape the rules-based international order in areas that are important to Allied security. We will increase our dialogue and practical cooperation with existing partners, including with the European Union, aspirant countries and our partners in the Asia Pacific, and strengthen our engagement with key global actors and other new interlocutors beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, including from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

f. Substantially strengthen NATO's ability to provide training and capacity building support to partners, recognising that conflict, other security developments and pervasive instability in NATO's neighbourhood directly impact Allied security.

g. Aim for NATO to become the leading international organisation when it comes to understanding and adapting to the impact of climate change on security. We agree to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from military activities and installations without impairing personnel safety, operational effectiveness and our deterrence and defence posture. We invite the Secretary

General to formulate a realistic, ambitious and concrete target for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the NATO political and military structures and facilities and assess the feasibility of reaching net zero emissions by 2050. We will also initiate a regular high-level climate and security dialogue to exchange views and coordinate further action.

h. Invite the Secretary General to lead the process to develop the next Strategic Concept. The Concept will be negotiated and agreed by the Council in Permanent Session and endorsed by NATO Leaders at the next Summit.

7. The NATO 2030 agenda sets a higher level of ambition for NATO. It provides clear guidelines for further adaptation to address existing, new and future threats and challenges, building on the ongoing political and military adaptation of the Alliance. Delivering on the NATO 2030 agenda, the three core tasks and the next Strategic Concept requires adequate resourcing through national defence expenditure and common funding. Based on requirements, we agree to increase such resourcing, including as necessary NATO common funding starting in 2023, taking into account sustainability, affordability and accountability. When we meet in 2022, we will agree, alongside the Strategic Concept, the specific requirements for additional funding up to 2030 and the resource implications across the NATO Military Budget, the NATO Security Investment Programme and the Civil Budget, as well as identify potential efficiency measures.

8. NATO's fundamental and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. The evolving security environment increasingly requires us to address threats and challenges through the use of military and non-military tools in a deliberate, coherent, and sustained manner. NATO will take a tailored and structured approach. NATO uses a variety of non-military tools which support the Alliance's three core tasks. It also serves as a platform for enhancing the coherent use of these tools by Allies, under their own authority and control, and alongside other international actors. We will continue to strengthen effective, clear, and convincing strategic communication as an essential element to support all three of NATO's core tasks.

9. For more than twenty-five years, NATO has worked to build a partnership with Russia, including through the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). While NATO stands by its international commitments, Russia continues to breach the values, principles, trust, and commitments outlined in agreed documents that underpin the NATO-Russia relationship. We reaffirm our decisions towards Russia agreed at the 2014 Wales Summit and all our subsequent NATO meetings. We have suspended all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia, while remaining open to political dialogue. Until Russia demonstrates compliance with international law and its international obligations and responsibilities, there can be no return to "business as usual". We will continue to respond to the deteriorating security environment by enhancing our deterrence and defence posture, including by a forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance. NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia. Decisions we have taken are fully consistent with our international commitments, and therefore cannot be regarded by anyone as contradicting the NATO-Russia Founding Act.

10. We call on Russia to rescind the designation of the Czech Republic and the United States as "unfriendly countries" and to refrain from taking any other steps inconsistent with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

11. Russia's growing multi-domain military build-up, more assertive posture, novel military capabilities, and provocative activities, including near NATO borders, as well as its large-scale no-notice and snap exercises, the continued military build-up in Crimea, the deployment of modern dual-capable missiles in Kaliningrad, military integration with Belarus, and repeated violations of NATO Allied airspace, increasingly threaten the security of the Euro-Atlantic area and contribute to instability along NATO borders and beyond.

12. In addition to its military activities, Russia has also intensified its hybrid actions against NATO Allies and partners, including through proxies. This includes attempted interference in Allied elections and democratic processes; political and economic pressure and intimidation; widespread disinformation campaigns; malicious cyber activities; and turning a blind eye to cyber criminals operating from its territory, including those who target and disrupt critical infrastructure in NATO countries. It also includes illegal and destructive activities by Russian Intelligence Services on Allied territory, some of which have claimed lives of citizens and caused widespread material damage. We stand in full solidarity with the Czech Republic and other Allies that have been affected in this way.

13. Russia has continued to diversify its nuclear arsenal, including by deploying a suite of short- and intermediate-range missile systems that are intended to coerce NATO. Russia has recapitalised roughly 80 percent of its strategic nuclear forces, and it is expanding its nuclear capabilities by pursuing novel and destabilising weapons and a diverse array of dual-capable systems. Russia continues to use aggressive and irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and has increased its ongoing emphasis on destabilising conventional exercises that include dual-capable systems. Russia's nuclear strategy and comprehensive nuclear weapon systems modernisation, diversification, and expansion, including the qualitative and quantitative increase of Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons, increasingly support a more aggressive posture of strategic intimidation. We will continue to work closely together to address all the threats and challenges posed by Russia.

14. We reiterate our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova within their internationally recognised borders. In accordance with its international commitments, we call on Russia to withdraw the forces it has stationed in all three countries without their consent. We strongly condemn and will not recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, and denounce its temporary occupation. The human rights abuses and violations against the Crimean Tatars and members of other local communities must end. Russia's recent massive military build-up and destabilising activities in and around Ukraine have further escalated tensions and undermined security. We call on Russia to reverse its military build-up and stop

restricting navigation in parts of the Black Sea. We also call on Russia to stop impeding access to the Sea of Azov and Ukrainian ports. We commend Ukraine's posture of restraint and diplomatic approach in this context. We seek to contribute to de-escalation. We are also stepping up our support to Ukraine. We call for the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements by all sides, and support the efforts of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group. Russia, as a signatory of the Minsk Agreements, bears significant responsibility in this regard. We call on Russia to stop fuelling the conflict by providing financial and military support to the armed formations it backs in eastern Ukraine. We reiterate our full support to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. We stress the importance of ensuring its safety and full and unhindered access throughout the entire territory of Ukraine, including Crimea and the Russia-Ukraine border, in accordance with its mandate. We further call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia as independent states; to implement the EU-mediated 2008 ceasefire agreement; to end its militarisation of these regions and attempts to forcibly separate them from the rest of Georgia through the continued construction of border-like obstacles; and to cease the human rights violations, arbitrary detentions, and harassments of Georgian citizens. We reiterate our firm support to the Geneva International Discussions. We also call on Russia to engage constructively in the Transnistria Settlement Process. We are committed to supporting the Republic of Moldova's democratic reforms and providing assistance through our Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative.

15. We remain open to a periodic, focused, and meaningful dialogue with a Russia willing to engage on the basis of reciprocity in the NRC, with a view to avoiding misunderstanding, miscalculation, and unintended escalation, and to increase transparency and predictability. NRC meetings have helped us communicate clearly our positions, and we are ready for the next meeting of the NRC. We will continue to focus our dialogue with Russia on the critical issues we face. The conflict in and around Ukraine is, in current circumstances, the first topic on our agenda. NATO remains committed to making good use of the existing military lines of communication between both sides to promote predictability and transparency, and to reduce risks, and calls on Russia to do so as well. We continue to aspire to a constructive relationship with Russia when its actions make that possible.

16. Terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, continues to pose a direct threat to the security of our populations, and to international stability and prosperity. We categorically reject and condemn terrorism in the strongest possible terms. Allies will continue to fight this threat with determination, resolve, and in solidarity. While nations retain the primary responsibility for their domestic security and their own resilience, the fight against terrorism demands a coherent, long-term effort by the international community as a whole, involving a wide range of instruments and actors. NATO's role in the fight against terrorism contributes to all three core tasks of the Alliance, and is an integral part of the Alliance's 360-degree approach to deterrence and defence. Cooperation in NATO adds value to Allies' national efforts and capacity to prevent, mitigate, respond to, and be resilient against acts of terrorism. We condemn all financial support of terrorism. We also recognise the need to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Our approach to terrorism, and its causes, is in accordance with international law and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and upholds all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) on the fight against terrorism.

17. We remain fully committed to NATO's enhanced role in the international community's fight against terrorism, including through awareness and analysis, preparedness and responsiveness, capabilities, capacity building and partnerships, and operations. We continue to implement our 2019 Action Plan and will update it by the end of this year, to take account of the evolving terrorist threats. We are determined to meet our commitments under UNSCR 2396, including through NATO's new Battlefield Evidence Policy, supported by improved information and data collection, preservation, sharing, and analysis, within NATO's mandate. We will continue our work to defend against improvised explosive devices and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats. We are developing capabilities to protect our forces against terrorist misuse of technology, while capitalising on emerging technologies to help us in the fight against terrorism. We are also stepping up support to partner countries to fight terrorism themselves and deny terrorists safe haven, which in turn strengthens NATO's own security. NATO will also continue to engage, as appropriate, with partner countries and other international actors to ensure added value and complementarity. NATO continues to play its part in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS/Da'esh, including through our Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS) surveillance flights and staff-to-staff support.

18. After almost 20 years, NATO's military operations in Afghanistan are coming to an end. We have denied terrorists a safe haven from which to plot attacks against us, helped Afghanistan to build its security institutions, and trained, advised, and assisted the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces; they are now taking on full responsibility for security in their country. We pay tribute to those who have lost their lives or have been wounded, and express our deep appreciation to all the men and women who have served under the NATO flag, and to their families.

19. Withdrawing our troops does not mean ending our relationship with Afghanistan. We will now open a new chapter. We affirm our commitment to continue to stand with Afghanistan, its people, and its institutions in promoting security and upholding the hard-won gains of the last 20 years. Recalling our previous commitments, NATO will continue to provide training and financial support to

the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, including through the Afghan National Army Trust Fund. NATO will retain a Senior Civilian Representative's Office in Kabul to continue diplomatic engagement and enhance our partnership with Afghanistan. Recognising its importance to an enduring diplomatic and international presence, as well as to Afghanistan's connectivity with the world, NATO will provide transitional funding to ensure continued functioning of Hamid Karzai International Airport. We will also step up dialogue on Afghanistan with relevant international and regional partners. We continue to support the ongoing Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process, and call on all stakeholders to help Afghanistan foster a lasting inclusive political settlement that puts an end to violence; safeguards the human rights of Afghans, particularly women, children, and minorities; upholds the rule of law; and ensures that Afghanistan never again serves as a safe haven for terrorists.

20. NATO remains a leading and active contributor to international security through operations, missions, and activities. We are grateful to our partners for their substantial contributions to these efforts. NATO and Allies support Iraq in its fight against ISIS/Da'esh and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We commend the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Security Forces for their continued efforts to combat ISIS/Da'esh. Based on a request from the Iraqi Government, we will strengthen our support to Iraq through our NATO Mission Iraq. We will broaden our non-combat advisory, training, and capacity building mission to support Iraq in building more effective, sustainable, accountable, and inclusive security institutions and forces. This expansion of NATO Mission Iraq, including additional support to the Iraqi security institutions, will be demand-driven, incremental, scalable, and based on conditions on the ground. It will be carried out with the full consent of the Iraqi authorities, in full respect of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in close coordination with relevant partners and international actors, including the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS/Da'esh, the United Nations, and the European Union.

21. Deterrence and defence are at the heart of the Alliance, underpinned by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and an enduring transatlantic bond. We are united and resolute in our ability and commitment to defend one another. We will maintain and further develop the full range of ready forces and capabilities necessary to ensure credible deterrence and defence and provide the Alliance with a wide range of options to tailor our response to specific circumstances and to respond to any threats, from state and non-state actors, from wherever they arise, and potentially from multiple directions in more than one region simultaneously. While reaffirming our commitment to the three core tasks, we have placed a renewed emphasis on collective defence, and have also ensured that NATO retains the ability to project stability and fight against terrorism.

22. We welcome the significant progress already made to implement our previous decisions to strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence posture and reaffirm our commitment to their full and speedy implementation. We have accelerated our military adaptation with increased defence spending, modern capabilities, enhanced political and military responsiveness, and higher readiness of our forces. NATO is taking forward a new military strategy through the implementation of two significant military concepts that will further strengthen our ability to deter and defend against any potential adversary and to maintain and develop our military advantage now and in the future. The deterrence and defence concept provides a single, coherent framework to contest and deter and defend against the Alliance's main threats in a multi-domain environment, and will strengthen our preparedness to address challenges, particularly pervasive instability and strategic shocks. The warfighting concept provides a long-term vision for maintaining and developing NATO's decisive military edge. The implementation of the deterrence and defence concept will guide enhanced advance planning to respond to potential crisis and conflict, as well as further improve the use and organisation of Allied forces and capabilities in all operational domains and ensure more effective command and control. We are developing strategic, domain-specific and regional military plans to improve our ability to respond to any contingencies and ensure timely reinforcement. We will emphasise persistent activities in peacetime to support deterrence, including through the presence and dynamic posture of our military forces and exercises, based on enhanced coordination amongst Allies and NATO. Through the implementation of the warfighting concept, we will ensure that the Alliance continuously develops its military and technological advantage, as the character of conflict evolves. We commit to the full implementation of these new concepts, and to taking the necessary steps to enhance the coherence between relevant national and NATO activities and plans and the concepts.

23. We commit to further strengthening and modernising the NATO Force Structure to meet current and future deterrence and defence needs. We will ensure a flexible, agile, and resilient multi-domain force architecture with the right forces in the right place at the right time. We will strengthen modern command and control tailored to support our 360-degree posture, dynamic force management, improved response system, and plans. In doing so, we will place increased emphasis on the interdependence of geography, domains, and readiness. As part of these overall efforts, we are committed to continue increasing the readiness of our forces and the Alliance's rapid response capability, including through the ongoing implementation of the NATO Readiness Initiative, which is designed to strengthen the culture of readiness and help to provide forces at 30 days readiness or less. We have sourced all the combat forces of the NATO Readiness Initiative with 30 major naval combatants, 30 heavy or medium manoeuvre battalions, and 30 kinetic air squadrons. They are being organised and trained as larger combat formations for reinforcement and high-intensity warfighting, or for rapid military crisis intervention.

24. We will ensure that the NATO Command Structure is robust, resilient, and able to undertake all elements of effective command and control for simultaneous challenges across all domains and the full spectrum of missions, including large-scale

operations for collective defence. Our two new commands, Joint Force Command Norfolk headquarters and Joint Support and Enabling Command, as well as the Cyberspace Operations Centre, have achieved Initial Operational Capability. Allied contributions to command and control through the NATO Force Structure and national headquarters as well as their strengthened relationship with the NATO Command Structure, including by providing host nation support, remain essential to improve the Alliance's regional understanding, vigilance, and ability to rapidly respond to any threat from any direction.

25. We will not be constrained by any potential adversary as regards the freedom of movement of Allied forces by land, air, or sea to and within any part of Alliance territory. Our deterrence and defence posture is underpinned by credible forces, both in-place and ready for reinforcement within Europe and from across the Atlantic. We will continue to strengthen and regularly exercise the Alliance's ability to rapidly reinforce any Ally that comes under threat. We will continue to give high priority, both nationally and in the Alliance, to ensuring enablement of SACEUR's Area of Responsibility to improve our ability to support the deployment and sustainment of Allied forces into, across, and from the entire Alliance territory. These efforts include taking forward our work on fuel supply distribution arrangements. We reiterate that NATO's efforts to ensure a coherent approach and synergies with the EU in the area of military mobility should be pursued, including with regard to military mobility related procedures that should apply to all Allies equally. We continue to reinforce our maritime posture and to protect our sea lines of communication. We welcome the establishment of the NATO Maritime Security Centre of Excellence in Turkey. We will maintain awareness of any potential threats to our critical undersea infrastructure and will continue to address them nationally and, where needed, collectively. We welcome the Full Operational Capability of NATO's Rapid Air Mobility which was activated and utilised by Allies for relief flights carrying critical supplies to Allies and partners in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

26. We reaffirm our commitment to respond in a measured, balanced, coordinated, and timely way to Russia's growing and evolving array of conventional and nuclear-capable missiles, which is increasing in scale and complexity and which poses significant risks from all strategic directions to security and stability across the Euro-Atlantic area. We will continue to implement a coherent and balanced package of political and military measures to achieve Alliance objectives, including strengthened integrated air and missile defence; advanced defensive and offensive conventional capabilities; steps to keep NATO's nuclear deterrent safe, secure, and effective; efforts to support and strengthen arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation; intelligence; and exercises. We have no intention to deploy land-based nuclear missiles in Europe.

27. NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) is an essential and continuous mission in peacetime, crisis, and times of conflict, which contributes to deterrence and defence and the indivisible security and freedom of action of the Alliance, including NATO's capability to reinforce, and to provide a strategic response. NATO IAMD incorporates all measures to contribute to deter any air and missile threat or to nullify or reduce their effectiveness. This mission is conducted in a 360-degree approach and tailored to address all air and missile threats emanating from all strategic directions.

28. NATO has enhanced its IAMD mission and we have taken steps to improve our IAMD forces' readiness and responsiveness in peacetime, crisis, and times of conflict, strengthening our ability to ensure that all necessary measures are implemented for the security of the Alliance. We are taking into account the increasingly diverse and challenging air and missile threats from state and non-state actors ranging from simple Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to sophisticated hypersonic missiles.

29. Allies will continue to work on NATO IAMD to ensure that it remains flexible and adaptive. Allies will also continue to effectively train and exercise their IAMD forces. Allies have committed to improving NATO IAMD capabilities, including sensors, interceptors, and command and control, in particular through the NATO Defence Planning Process. We welcome the establishment of NATO's new IAMD Centre of Excellence in Greece.

30. Resilience is essential for credible deterrence and defence and the effective fulfilment of the Alliance's core tasks. It is a national responsibility and a collective commitment, anchored in Article 3 of the Washington Treaty. Recognising the significant progress achieved since our Resilience Commitment at the 2016 Warsaw Summit, we have agreed today a Strengthened Resilience Commitment that sets out further steps we intend to take in the coming years. We will continue to take a whole-of-government approach to enhancing the resilience of our societies, and achieving the seven NATO Baseline Requirements for national resilience, through enhanced civil-military cooperation and civil preparedness; closer engagement with our populations, the private sector, and non-governmental actors; and the centres of expertise on resilience established by Allies. We welcome the establishment of the Euro-Atlantic Centre for Resilience in Romania. NATO and Allies, within their respective authority, will maintain and enhance the security of our critical infrastructure, key industries, supply chains, and communication information networks, including 5G. NATO will further strengthen its own resilience, ensuring our ability to consult, decide, and act together. We will continue to work closely with our partners and other international organisations engaged in similar efforts in order to make the Euro-Atlantic area and our broader neighbourhood more secure.

31. Our nations continue to face threats and challenges from both state and non-state actors who use hybrid activities to target our political institutions, our public opinion, and the security of our citizens. While the primary responsibility for responding to hybrid threats rests with the targeted nation, NATO is ready, upon Council decision, to assist an Ally at any stage of a hybrid campaign being

conducted against it, including by deploying a Counter Hybrid Support Team. In cases of hybrid warfare, the Council could decide to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, as in the case of an armed attack. NATO and Allies will continue to prepare for, deter, and defend against hybrid threats. Individual Allies may consider, when appropriate, attributing hybrid activities and responding in a coordinated manner, recognising attribution is a sovereign national prerogative. We are enhancing our situational awareness and expanding the tools at our disposal to counter hybrid threats, including disinformation campaigns, by developing comprehensive preventive and response options. We will also continue to support our partners as they strengthen their resilience in the face of hybrid challenges.

32. Cyber threats to the security of the Alliance are complex, destructive, coercive, and becoming ever more frequent. This has been recently illustrated by ransomware incidents and other malicious cyber activity targeting our critical infrastructure and democratic institutions, which might have systemic effects and cause significant harm. To face this evolving challenge, we have today endorsed NATO's Comprehensive Cyber Defence Policy, which will support NATO's three core tasks and overall deterrence and defence posture, and further enhance our resilience. Reaffirming NATO's defensive mandate, the Alliance is determined to employ the full range of capabilities at all times to actively deter, defend against, and counter the full spectrum of cyber threats, including those conducted as part of hybrid campaigns, in accordance with international law. We reaffirm that a decision as to when a cyber attack would lead to the invocation of Article 5 would be taken by the North Atlantic Council on a case-by-case basis. Allies recognise that the impact of significant malicious cumulative cyber activities might, in certain circumstances, be considered as amounting to an armed attack. We remain committed to act in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law as applicable. We will promote a free, open, peaceful, and secure cyberspace, and further pursue efforts to enhance stability and reduce the risk of conflict by supporting international law and voluntary norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace. We will make greater use of NATO as a platform for political consultation among Allies, sharing concerns about malicious cyber activities, and exchanging national approaches and responses, as well as considering possible collective responses. If necessary, we will impose costs on those who harm us. Our response need not be restricted to the cyber domain. We will enhance our situational awareness to support NATO's decision-making. Resilience and the ability to detect, prevent, mitigate, and respond to vulnerabilities and intrusions is critical, as demonstrated by malicious cyber actors' exploitation of the COVID-19 pandemic. NATO as an organisation will therefore continue to adapt and improve its cyber defences. Five years since the adoption of our Cyber Defence Pledge, we remain committed to uphold strong national cyber defences as a matter of priority. We continue to implement cyberspace as a domain of operations. We will enhance the effective integration of sovereign cyber effects, provided voluntarily by Allies, into collective defence and Alliance operations and missions, in the framework of strong political oversight. We will further seek to develop mutually beneficial and effective partnerships as appropriate, including with partner countries, international organisations, industry, and academia, furthering our efforts to enhance international stability in cyberspace. We welcome the recent opening of the NATO Communications and Information Academy in Portugal.

33. We recognise the growing importance of space for the security and prosperity of our nations and for NATO's deterrence and defence. Secure access to space services, products, and capabilities is essential for the conduct of the Alliance's operations, missions and activities. We will accelerate our work to deepen and expand our use of space as an operational domain, including through the NATO Space Centre in Germany and the upcoming establishment of the Space Centre of Excellence in France, which we welcome. We will strengthen NATO's space domain awareness and better integrate space in our activities, including training and exercises, resilience, and innovation efforts. Consistent with the Overarching Space Policy, NATO's approach to space will remain fully in line with international law. We support the international efforts to promote responsible behaviour in space. We consider that attacks to, from, or within space present a clear challenge to the security of the Alliance, the impact of which could threaten national and Euro-Atlantic prosperity, security, and stability, and could be as harmful to modern societies as a conventional attack. Such attacks could lead to the invocation of Article 5. A decision as to when such attacks would lead to the invocation of Article 5 would be taken by the North Atlantic Council on a case-by-case basis.

34. We continue to stand and act together in response to the challenging security environment. As it continues to evolve, the Alliance will continue to respond and adapt as necessary. Since the Warsaw Summit, we have established a forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance. We continue to improve our enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland through alignment with plans and by ensuring the ability of the four combat-ready battlegroups to operate with national home defence forces in an integrated manner. We have increased our contributions to our tailored Forward Presence on land, at sea, and in the air in the Black Sea region, and we remain committed to its full implementation. Our assurance measures, including exercises and various other air, land, and maritime activities, remain in place and continue to provide the fundamental baseline requirement for assurance and deterrence. We have increased our contributions to our tailored assurance measures for Turkey, and we remain committed to their full implementation. We have a range of forces, including the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, which are ready to deploy on short notice to respond to any contingencies and reinforce Allies. The full implementation of NATO's Framework for the South, as an enduring component of NATO's deterrence and defence posture, is ongoing. Building on the progress achieved

since 2016, including the establishment of the Hub for the South, we will continue to strengthen our capacity to deal with the threats and challenges emanating from the South, including in the Mediterranean Sea region and its approaches, by enhancing our strategic awareness, our plans, and the readiness of our forces. In the High North, we will continue to undertake necessary, calibrated, and coordinated activities in support of the Alliance's security interests. We will seek to strengthen cooperation with relevant and like-minded partners in the interests of NATO's agreed deterrence and defence objectives, in line with NATO's decisions, policies and procedures, as appropriate, and with consideration of political implications.

35. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to all aspects of the Defence Investment Pledge agreed at the 2014 Wales Summit. Fair burden sharing underpins the Alliance's cohesion, solidarity, credibility, and ability to fulfil our fundamental Article 3 and Article 5 commitments. We are, individually and collectively, committed to further improving the balance of sharing the costs and responsibilities of Alliance membership. We have made considerable progress since the Wales Summit with seven consecutive years of real growth in non-US defence expenditure, which reinforces our shared responsibility to provide capabilities to the Alliance. All Allies have increased the amount they spend on defence in real terms and this trend is set to continue. Since 2014, European Allies and Canada will have added 260 billion US dollars by the end of this year. Furthermore, ten Allies are expected to spend 2% or more of GDP on defence this year. About two-thirds of Allies plan to reach or exceed the 2% guideline by 2024. Additionally, 24 Allies are spending more than 20% of their defence expenditures on major equipment, including related research and development, and, according to their national plans, 27 Allies will meet the 20% guideline by 2024. Our overall security and defence depend both on how much we spend and how we spend it. Allies continue to make valuable force and capability contributions that benefit the security of the Euro-Atlantic area through NATO's operations, missions, and other activities, as well as through the operations and missions conducted under national authority and the authority of other organisations. Allies invest considerable resources in preparing their forces, capabilities, and infrastructure for Alliance activities and Allies' operations. In the years ahead, in line with the Defence Investment Pledge and building on the good progress to date, we affirm our commitment to continue our efforts as a matter of priority across the three pillars of cash, capabilities, and contributions. We must and will do more.

36. We are investing in our military capabilities in order to meet new and enduring challenges across all operational domains. We continue to deliver an array of robust and sophisticated capabilities across all domains, including heavier, more high-end, technologically advanced, better-supported forces and capabilities at the required readiness. We will continue to improve and adapt the sustainability, deployability, and interoperability of our capabilities for a demanding strategic environment, as well as high-end operations. Our national capability development plans will support the full and timely implementation of the capabilities, in particular those required by the Alliance in line with the NATO Defence Planning Process. In light of the pace, breadth, and scale of technological developments, as we further develop our forces and capabilities, we recognise the vital importance of research and development and innovation to exploit the opportunities and to address the challenges posed by emerging and disruptive technologies. This will help to ensure, individually and collectively, our technological edge now and in the future. We continue working to address, as appropriate, existing dependencies on Russian-sourced legacy military equipment through national efforts and multinational cooperation. We welcome the modernisation of the NATO AWACS fleet and the progress of the Alliance Future Surveillance and Control programme, as well as the initial operations of the new Alliance Ground Surveillance Force. Through NATO-supported multinational cooperation projects, Allies are committed to working together to develop or acquire new capabilities in key areas such as air-to-air refuelling, training, precision strike, munitions, air defence, CBRN defence, autonomous systems, and next-generation rotorcraft capability.

37. The speed of technological change has never been higher, creating both new opportunities and risks in the security environment and to the way NATO operates. We are determined to preserve our technological edge, and ensure Alliance interoperability, in order to maintain the credibility of our deterrence and defence posture. We have recently taken important steps to that end, building on the Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (EDTs) Roadmap we agreed in 2019, and have now adopted our strategy to foster and protect EDTs. This strategy outlines a clear approach for identifying, developing, and adopting EDTs at the speed of relevance, guided by principles of responsible use, in accordance with international law, and taking into account discussions in relevant international fora. Moreover, this strategy seeks to preserve our interoperability; safeguard our sensitive technologies; and actively address the threats and challenges posed by technological developments by others, both now and in the future. Drawing on the extensive innovation expertise of all 30 Allies, we will further leverage our partnerships, including with the private sector and academia, to maintain our technological edge.

38. The greatest responsibility of the Alliance is to protect and defend our territory and our populations against attack, as set out in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. No one should doubt NATO's resolve if the security of any of its members were to be threatened. Faced with a highly diverse, complex, and demanding international security environment, NATO is determined to maintain the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against any threat to the safety and security of our populations, wherever it should arise.

39. Credible deterrence and defence is essential as a means to prevent conflict and war and will continue to be based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities. A robust deterrence and defence posture strengthens Alliance cohesion and provides an essential political and military transatlantic link, through an equitable and sustainable distribution of

roles, responsibilities, and burdens. We acknowledge the increasingly challenging security environment with risks arising from changes in the posture, doctrine, and behaviour of potential adversaries and their significant investments to develop, modernise, and expand capabilities. NATO continues to adapt and remains steadfast in its resolve to take all necessary steps to ensure that its deterrence and defence posture remains credible, coherent, resilient, and adaptable to the security environment.

40. Allies' goal is to continue to bolster deterrence as a core element of our collective defence and to contribute to the indivisible security of the Alliance. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. In response to the more challenging security environment, NATO has taken steps to ensure its nuclear deterrent capabilities remain safe, secure, and effective. The strategic forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States, are the supreme guarantee of the security of Allies. The independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France have a deterrent role of their own and contribute significantly to the overall security of the Alliance. These Allies' separate centres of decision-making contribute to deterrence by complicating the calculations of potential adversaries. NATO's nuclear deterrence posture also relies on United States' nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe and the capabilities and infrastructure provided by Allies concerned. National contributions of dual-capable aircraft to NATO's nuclear deterrence mission remain central to this effort. The Alliance reaffirms the imperative to ensure the broadest possible participation by Allies concerned in the agreed nuclear burden-sharing arrangements to demonstrate Alliance unity and resolve. Allies concerned will continue to drive forward progress on sustaining leadership focus and institutional excellence for the nuclear deterrence mission. Allies will also continue to ensure greater coherence between conventional and nuclear components of NATO's deterrence and defence posture, strengthen effective strategic communications and enhance the effectiveness of NATO exercises to maintain and demonstrate a credible deterrence and reduce strategic risk. NATO supports efforts towards strategic risk reduction which constitute important contributions to regional and international security. In particular, transparency and dialogue can help avoid misunderstanding and miscalculation.

41. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion, and deter aggression. Given the deteriorating security environment in Europe, a credible and united nuclear Alliance is essential. Nuclear weapons are unique. The circumstances in which NATO might have to use nuclear weapons are extremely remote. NATO reiterates that any employment of nuclear weapons against NATO would fundamentally alter the nature of a conflict. If the fundamental security of any of its members were to be threatened, however, NATO has the capabilities and resolve to impose costs on an adversary that would be unacceptable and far outweigh the benefits that any adversary could hope to achieve.

42. Missile defence can complement the role of nuclear weapons in deterrence; it cannot substitute them. We reaffirm our commitment to continue to deliver a NATO Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) capability, to pursue the Alliance's core task of collective defence and to provide full coverage and protection for all NATO European populations, territory, and forces against the increasing threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles. NATO BMD is purely defensive. The aim and political principles of NATO BMD remain unchanged from the 2010 Lisbon Summit. These principles are the indivisibility of Allies' 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.

43. NATO BMD is based on voluntary national contributions, including the US European Phased Adaptive Approach assets in Romania, Turkey, Spain, and Poland, as well as the NATO BMD command and control, the only component eligible for common funding. Additional voluntary national contributions will provide robustness. We are committed to completing additional essential components of NATO BMD command and control, which is necessary for achieving the next major milestone before reaching the Full Operational Capability. Full Allied political control and oversight are essential, and full implementation will be ensured and monitored. We will continue to engage with third states on a case-by-case basis to enhance transparency, build mutual confidence, and increase ballistic missile defence effectiveness.

44. NATO BMD is not directed against Russia and will not undermine Russia's strategic deterrence. NATO BMD is intended to defend against potential threats emanating from outside the Euro-Atlantic area. We have explained to Russia many times that the BMD system is not capable against Russia's strategic nuclear deterrent and there is no intention to redesign this system to have such a capability in the future. Hence, Russian statements threatening to target Allies because of NATO BMD are unacceptable and counterproductive. Should Russia be ready to discuss BMD with NATO, and subject to Alliance agreement, NATO remains open to the discussion.

45. Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation have made and should continue to make an essential contribution to achieving the Alliance's security objectives and for ensuring strategic stability and our collective security. NATO has a long track record of doing its part on disarmament and non-proliferation. After the end of the Cold War, NATO dramatically reduced the number of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and its reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO strategy. We regret that the conditions for achieving disarmament have not been realised since the 2018 Brussels NATO Summit. Allies remain collectively determined to uphold and support existing disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation agreements and commitments. We will further

strengthen arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation, as a key element of Euro-Atlantic security, taking into account the prevailing security environment. We welcome and fully support the agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation to extend the New START Treaty for five years. NATO Allies believe the New START Treaty contributes to international stability, and Allies again express their strong support for its continued implementation and for early and active dialogue on ways to improve strategic stability. Allies will welcome new strategic talks between the United States and Russia on future arms control measures, taking into account all Allies' security. Allies will support further arms control negotiations, with the aim of improving the security of the Alliance, taking into account the prevailing international security environment.

46. NATO remains clear-eyed about the challenges Russia poses, including the qualitative and quantitative increase of Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons. The Alliance will be guided by experience, not least Russia's material breach of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which ultimately led to the termination of that agreement. NATO will continue to respond in a measured and responsible way to the significant risks posed by the Russian 9M729 missile, and other short- and intermediate-range missiles, to Allied security. We have agreed a balanced, coordinated, and defensive package of measures to ensure NATO's deterrence and defence posture remains credible and effective, including through potential arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation contributions. Russia's proposal for a moratorium on the deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Europe is inconsistent with Russia's unilateral and ongoing deployment of such systems on the continent and would not prevent Russia from building up such missiles outside of its European territory; this proposal is therefore not credible and not acceptable. At the same time, NATO Allies remain open to meaningful arms control discussions and dialogue on reciprocal transparency and confidence-building measures that would take into account security interests of all Allies and increase security across the Alliance.

47. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the essential bulwark against the spread of nuclear weapons, the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, and the framework for international cooperation in sharing the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, science, and technology. Allies remain strongly committed to the full implementation of the NPT in all its aspects, as an irreplaceable platform, and the strengthening of the NPT across its mutually reinforcing three pillars. We are committed to working towards a meaningful outcome at the upcoming Tenth Review Conference, which presents a major opportunity to contribute to the preservation, universalisation, and full implementation of the NPT. The Alliance reaffirms its resolve to seek a safer world for all and to take further practical steps and effective measures to create the conditions for further nuclear disarmament negotiations. NATO Allies support the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons in full accordance with all provisions of the NPT, including Article VI, in an ever more effective and verifiable way that promotes international stability, and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all. NATO's nuclear arrangements have always been fully consistent with the NPT, which remains the only credible path to nuclear disarmament. The enduring success of the NPT cannot be taken for granted and requires sustained effort to further its achievements. In this spirit, we call on all NPT States Parties to work together towards a successful Tenth Review Conference. We reiterate our opposition to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) which is inconsistent with the Alliance's nuclear deterrence policy, is at odds with the existing non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, risks undermining the NPT, and does not take into account the current security environment. The TPNW does not change the legal obligations on our countries with respect to nuclear weapons. We do not accept any argument that the TPNW reflects or in any way contributes to the development of customary international law. We call on our partners and all other countries to reflect realistically on the ban treaty's impact on international peace and security, including on the NPT, and join us in working to improve collective security through tangible and verifiable measures that can reduce strategic risks and enable lasting progress on nuclear disarmament.

48. While NATO is not itself party to any arms control agreement, Allies will make best use of NATO as an important platform for in-depth discussion and close consultations on arms control efforts that will support Alliance unity, political cohesion, and solidarity. We continue actively to address the collapse of the INF Treaty due to Russian actions, and we are committed to maintain appropriate consultations among Allies on these issues.

49. We remain deeply concerned by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD), as well as their means of delivery and related materials, by states and non-state actors, which represents a growing threat to our populations, territory, and forces. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the repeated use of chemical weapons in Syria, as well as use in Iraq, Russia, Malaysia, and, for the first time since NATO's foundation on Allied territory, the United Kingdom. The use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone, for any reason is unacceptable. There can be no impunity for those who use chemical weapons. We therefore welcome, as an important step towards accountability, the decision by the April 2021 Conference of the State Parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to suspend Syria's rights and privileges under the CWC. We are determined to uphold the CWC and the global norm against the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, and to hold those who use chemical weapons accountable for their actions, including through our joint commitment within the International Partnership Against the Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons. We support the full implementation of the CWC and the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in addressing WMD threats and condemn those who seek to

impede its work. NATO remains committed to ensuring that Allies can protect their populations, forces, and territories against CBRN threats, including through reviewing NATO's Comprehensive, Strategic Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Defending against CBRN Threats. We are united in our resolve to promote the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We underline the need to bring the treaty into force and we support the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization Preparatory Commission, including the International Data Centre and International Monitoring System. We call for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices in accordance with Conference on Disarmament report CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. In the meantime, the Alliance calls on all states to declare and maintain voluntary moratoria on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

50. We remain committed to conventional arms control as a key element of Euro-Atlantic security. We are determined to preserve, strengthen, and modernise conventional arms control in Europe, based on key principles and commitments, including reciprocity, transparency, and host nation consent. Russia's continuing aggressive military posture, its refusal to fully comply with its obligations under the Treaty on Open Skies, its ongoing selective implementation of the Vienna Document, and its long-standing failure to implement the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, continue to undermine security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Allies call on Russia to return to full implementation of, and compliance with the letter and spirit of all of its international obligations and commitments, which is essential to rebuilding trust and confidence, military transparency and increasing predictability in the Euro-Atlantic region. We specifically call on Russia to be open and transparent about its no-notice snap exercises, large-scale exercises and large-scale troop movements, in accordance with its Vienna Document commitments, particularly in light of its recent unprovoked and unjustified military build-up in and around Ukraine. Allies underscore the importance of modernising the Vienna Document, and welcome the broad support for its comprehensive modernisation package. We look forward to intensified discussions in the Forum for Security Cooperation leading to consensus on an updated Vienna Document at the 2021 OSCE Ministerial. To maintain the contributions of the Treaty on Open Skies to the security of all State Parties, it is essential that all State Parties fully implement its provisions. We will continue to actively support ongoing discussions at the OSCE, including the Structured Dialogue. We call on Russia to engage constructively on all these efforts.

51. We reiterate the Alliance's full support to the goal of the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearisation of North Korea, in accordance with relevant UNSCRs. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to engage in meaningful negotiations with the United States towards achieving this goal. We urge the DPRK to fully implement its international obligations; to eliminate its nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare capabilities and ballistic missiles; to return to the NPT and its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); and to abandon all related programmes. We call on nations to fully implement existing UN sanctions.

52. We are committed to ensuring that Iran will never develop a nuclear weapon. We welcome the substantive discussions between Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) participants, and separately with the United States, to accomplish a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA by the United States and Iran. We support the goal of restoring the non-proliferation benefits of the JCPOA and of ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. It is vital that Iran preserves the space for these discussions by avoiding any further escalation. We strongly support the IAEA in its crucial monitoring and verification work to help ensure Iran's compliance with the NPT-related safeguards obligations, as well as its other commitments. A restored and fully implemented JCPOA could also pave the way to further address regional and security concerns, including in support of the non-proliferation regime. We condemn Iran's support to proxy forces and non-state armed actors, including through financing, training, and the proliferation of missile technology and weapons. We call on Iran to stop all ballistic missile activities inconsistent with UNSCR 2231, refrain from destabilising actions, and play a constructive role in fostering regional stability and peace.

Syria retains an inventory of short-range ballistic missiles whose range covers parts of NATO's territory and some of our partners' territories. Syria has used these missiles extensively against its own population. We remain vigilant over missile launches from Syria which could again hit or target Turkey. We continue to monitor and assess the ballistic missile threat from Syria.

The increasing threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles in the vicinity of the south-eastern border of the Alliance has been, and remains a driver in NATO's development and deployment of a ballistic missile defence system, which is configured to counter threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic area.

53. The conflict in Syria has entered its eleventh year and continues to have significant consequences on the stability of the region and the security of NATO's south-eastern border. We remain concerned and vigilant over its ramifications. We reiterate our determination to defend NATO territory and borders against any threats and to address challenges emanating from Syria. The presidential elections held on 26 May 2021 by the Syrian regime cannot be considered as free and fair and do not contribute to the efforts to achieve a political solution. We underline that stability and security cannot be reinstated in Syria without a genuine political process in line with UNSCR 2254. We call for a nationwide ceasefire and the reauthorisation and expansion of the UN cross-border humanitarian assistance for a period of at least 12 months in order to meet the needs of the Syrian people. We reiterate our appreciation to our Ally Turkey for hosting millions of Syrian refugees.

54. Allies remain deeply concerned about developments in Belarus since August 2020. The policies and actions of Belarus have

implications for regional stability and have violated the principles which underpin our partnership. NATO will remain vigilant of and monitor the implications for the security of the Alliance. The unacceptable diversion of a civilian aircraft in May 2021 and the subsequent arrest of a journalist and his partner travelling on board endangered the safety of civilians and was a grave affront to political dissent and freedom of the press. We support the independent investigations, including by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). We support measures taken by Allies individually and collectively in response to this incident. We call on Belarus to abide by international law, respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners, including those belonging to the Union of Poles in Belarus. A democratic, sovereign, and stable Belarus is in all of our interests. Allies stand ready for a mutually beneficial NATO-Belarus partnership, taking into account political and security conditions. We will follow the scale, scope, and aftermath of the Zapad-2021 exercise, and continue to call on Russia and Belarus to act in a predictable, transparent way in compliance with their international obligations and OSCE commitments.

55. China's stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security. We are concerned by those coercive policies which stand in contrast to the fundamental values enshrined in the Washington Treaty. China is rapidly expanding its nuclear arsenal with more warheads and a larger number of sophisticated delivery systems to establish a nuclear triad. It is opaque in implementing its military modernisation and its publicly declared military-civil fusion strategy. It is also cooperating militarily with Russia, including through participation in Russian exercises in the Euro-Atlantic area. We remain concerned with China's frequent lack of transparency and use of disinformation. We call on China to uphold its international commitments and to act responsibly in the international system, including in the space, cyber, and maritime domains, in keeping with its role as a major power.

56. NATO maintains a constructive dialogue with China where possible. Based on our interests, we welcome opportunities to engage with China on areas of relevance to the Alliance and on common challenges such as climate change. There is value in information exchange on respective policies and activities, to enhance awareness and discuss potential disagreements. Allies urge China to engage meaningfully in dialogue, confidence-building, and transparency measures regarding its nuclear capabilities and doctrine. Reciprocal transparency and understanding would benefit both NATO and China.

57. We are working together as an Alliance and with like-minded partners, in particular with the European Union, to protect critical infrastructure, strengthen resilience, maintain our technological edge, and address these challenges to the rules-based international order.

58. Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our times. It is a threat multiplier that impacts Allied security, both in the Euro-Atlantic area and in the Alliance's broader neighbourhood. Climate change puts our resilience and civil preparedness to the test, affects our planning and the resilience of our military installations and critical infrastructure, and may create harsher conditions for our operations. Today we have endorsed an Action Plan to implement our NATO Agenda on Climate Change and Security, which increases our awareness, adaptation, mitigation, and outreach efforts, while ensuring a credible deterrence and defence posture and upholding the priorities of the safety of military personnel and operational and cost effectiveness. To increase awareness, NATO will conduct annual assessments of the impact of climate change on its strategic environment as well as on missions and operations. To adapt to climate change, NATO will incorporate climate change considerations into its full spectrum of work, ranging from defence planning and capability development to civil preparedness and exercises. To contribute to the mitigation of climate change, drawing on best practices of Allies, and taking into account their different national circumstances, NATO will develop a mapping methodology to help Allies measure greenhouse gas emissions from military activities and installations, which could contribute to formulating voluntary goals to reduce such emissions. NATO will also strengthen exchanges with partner countries as well as with international and regional organisations that are active on climate change and security issues.

59. Energy security plays an important role in our common security. A stable and reliable energy supply, the diversification of routes, suppliers, and energy resources, including the integration of sustainable energy sources, and the interconnectivity of energy networks, are all of critical importance and increase our resilience against political and economic pressure. It is essential to ensure that the members of the Alliance are not vulnerable to political or coercive manipulation of energy, which constitutes a potential threat. Allies will therefore continue to seek further diversification of their energy supplies, in line with their needs and conditions. While these issues are primarily the responsibility of national authorities, energy developments can have significant political and security implications for Allies and also affect our partners. Consequently, we will continue to enhance our strategic awareness, including through regular Allied consultations and intelligence sharing, and will strengthen our links with relevant international organisations. We will further develop NATO's capacity to support national authorities in protecting critical infrastructure, including against malicious hybrid and cyber activity. We will ensure reliable energy supplies to our military forces.

60. NATO has long recognised the importance of Human Security, which focuses on risks and threats to populations in conflict or crisis areas and how to mitigate and respond to them. Taking a Human Security approach is a reflection of our values and makes us more operationally effective. We are committed to ensuring that all efforts are made to avoid, minimise, and mitigate any potential negative effects on civilians arising from our missions or activities, as underscored in our Policy for the Protection of Civilians.

Today, we endorse NATO's new Policy on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, a landmark demonstration of our commitment to addressing such violence, which inflicts long-term stigma and trauma on individuals and families, contributes to their marginalisation, destroys the social fabric of communities, triggers displacement, fuels armed actors' activities, fosters prolonged conflict and instability, and is an impediment to sustainable peace and reconciliation. We are updating our policy on combating trafficking in human beings. Our ongoing work on Human Security also includes Children and Armed Conflict and Cultural Property Protection. NATO will continue to work with its partners, international organisations, and civil society to further our Human Security agenda, which includes robust policies and clear operational guidelines, in support of lasting peace and security and our populations' common defence.

61. Recognising the critical importance of women's full, equal, and meaningful SOURCE: NATO

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