

THE KEY TO THE PRAGUE SUMMIT



AN AGENDA FOR CHANGE

Operational Capabilities

Key Information

Key Definitions

- **DCI** (Defence Capabilities Initiative) – launched in 1999 to improve NATO defence and military capabilities to meet current and future security challenges and guarantee the effectiveness of future multinational operations.
- **The Alliance's Strategic Concept** – published in 1991, revised and reissued in 1999. This is the authoritative statement of NATO's purpose, objectives and tasks and the political and military means to be used in achieving them.

Key Facts

- DCI target areas: mobility and deployability, sustainability, survivability and effectiveness and interoperability of command, control and information systems.
- DCI objectives have aimed to strengthen European defence capabilities and to contribute to the development of the European Security and Defence Identity.
- Further measures to improve operational capabilities will be adopted at the Prague Summit in November 2002, when Heads of State and Government will launch a new initiative, concentrating on capabilities essential to the full range of Alliance missions including capabilities for defence against terrorism.

Key Dates

- **25 April 1999** – The Defence Capabilities Initiative is launched at the Washington Summit.
- **6 June 2002** – Defence ministers announce measures to bring about improvements in operational capabilities to be adopted at the Prague Summit.

Key Documents

- The Alliance's Strategic Concept, 24 April 1999.
www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm
- Statement on the Defence Capabilities Initiative by NATO Heads of State and Government, 25 April 1999.
www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99s069e.htm
- Statement on Defence Capabilities by NATO defence ministers, 6 June 2002.
www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-074e.htm

Key Issues

- Proposals to be submitted for approval by Heads of State and Government at the Prague Summit will focus on a new capabilities initiative, concentrating on a small number of capabilities essential to the full range of Alliance missions. The proposals will be based on firm national commitments with specific target dates. The initiative will also help to strengthen capabilities for defence against terrorism.
- Recommendations will address defence against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks; strategic lift and modern strike capabilities; secure command communications and information superiority, interoperability of deployed forces and key aspects of combat effectiveness; and rapid deployment and sustainment of combat forces.

More Information

- NATO's Defence Capabilities Initiative, April 1999.
www.nato.int/docu/facts/2000/nato-dci.htm
- *The Pursuit of Enhanced Defence Capabilities* – address by Robert Bell, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Support, 24 January 2002.
www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020124b.htm
- “NATO's Future” – speech by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson, 3 February 2002.
www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020203a.htm
- “*Keeping NATO's Military Edge Intact in the 21st Century*” – address by General Joseph Ralston, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, 3 October 2002.
www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021003d.htm
- “*The World in 2015 - Predicting the Unpredictable*” – speech by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson, 14 October 2002.
www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021014a.htm

Key Quotations

“The maintenance of an adequate military capability and clear preparedness to act collectively in the common defence remain central to the Alliance’s security objectives. Such a capability, together with political solidarity, remains at the core of the Alliance’s ability to prevent any attempt at coercion or intimidation, and to guarantee that military aggression directed against the Alliance can never be perceived as an option with any prospect of success.”

From the Alliance’s Strategic Concept, April 1999, Paragraph 28.

www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm

“The objective of this initiative is to improve defence capabilities to ensure the effectiveness of future multinational operations across the full spectrum of Alliance missions in the present and foreseeable security environment with a special focus on improving interoperability among Alliance forces, and where applicable also between Alliance and Partner forces.”

From the Statement on the Defence Capabilities Initiative, April 1999, Paragraph 1.

www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99s069e.htm

“In identifying the most important areas for improvement, and with a special focus on interoperability, the work has concentrated on the deployability and mobility of Alliance forces, on their sustainability and logistics, their survivability and effective engagement capability, and on command and control and information systems.”

From the Statement on the Defence Capabilities Initiative, April, 1999, Paragraph 5.

www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99s069e.htm

“We are committed to providing NATO with the capabilities to carry out the full range of its missions [...].

The range of actions which NATO will be able to take in the future in response to terrorism and other challenges will depend on the success of our efforts to modernize the Alliance’s military capabilities.

[...] We noted the progress made in implementing the Defence Capabilities Initiative, launched at the Washington Summit, and agreed that a greater and more focused effort is now necessary. We therefore directed the Council in Permanent Session to prepare recommendations for a new capabilities initiative, taking into account military advice and national proposals. This should focus on a small number of capabilities essential to the full range of Alliance missions.

[...] The new initiative should be based on firm national commitments, with specific target dates, that our countries will make [...]. The initiative should lead to increased multinational cooperation and role sharing, including, where appropriate, through

commonly owned and operated systems. It should achieve mutual reinforcement and full transparency with the related activities of the European Capability Action Plan [...]”.

From the Statement on Capabilities by the North Atlantic Council in Defence Ministers Session, 6 June 2002.

www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-074e.htm

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“Capabilities, capabilities, capabilities.”

NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson, on NATO priorities, 20 July 2000.

www.nato.int/docu/speech/2000/s000720a.htm

“Europeans can surely expect a tougher U.S. stance on transatlantic burden sharing. America’s allies should not fear this reaction in Washington. It is in all our interests to maximise individual and collective military capabilities.”

NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson, 10 October 2001.

www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s011010b.htm

“What specifically will such a transformation mean? Smaller but highly mobile, robust and technologically advanced armed forces, highly specialised and capable of immediate co-operation on various missions.”

President Havel of the Czech Republic, 19 May 2002.

www.hrad.cz/president/Havel/speeches/2002/1905_uk.html

“Defence capabilities have become the key to so many elements of the transatlantic agenda: from achieving success in NATO operations, to giving weight to the European pillar, to balancing transatlantic burdens more fairly, to meeting new threats.”

NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson, 23 September 2002.

www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020923a.htm

“The true measure of military effectiveness must be our ability to provide the full range of options to our political authorities [...] and to deliver on those options, whether the task is defending the Alliance borders or providing humanitarian aid out of area.”

General Joseph Ralston, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, 3 October 2002.

www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021003d.htm

Backgrounder

At the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 6 June 2002, defence ministers issued a Statement on Capabilities in which they directed the Council in Permanent Session to prepare recommendations for a new capabilities initiative, taking into account military advice and national proposals, to be submitted to Heads of State and Government at the Prague Summit. They directed that the initiative should focus on a small number of capabilities essential to the full range of Alliance missions and should be based on firm national commitments, with specific target dates.

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The 1999 Defence Capabilities Initiative

At the Washington Summit in April 1999, NATO Heads of State and Government launched a Defence Capabilities Initiative designed to bring about improvements in the capabilities needed to ensure the effectiveness of future multinational operations across the full spectrum of Alliance missions, with a special focus on improving interoperability.

The statement accompanying this announcement emphasised that in accordance with its Strategic Concept, NATO must continue to maintain capabilities to deal with large-scale aggression against one or more of its members, although the probability of this occurring in the foreseeable future is low. Warning times for the possible emergence of such a threat are likely to remain long. Potential threats to Alliance security are more likely to result from regional conflicts, ethnic strife or other crises beyond Alliance territory, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Future Alliance military operations are likely to be smaller in scale than those which were the basis for Alliance planning during the Cold War and may also be longer in duration, extending multinational cooperation to lower levels and taking place concurrently with other Alliance operations. In many cases, such operations will include force contributions from partner countries and possibly from other non-NATO countries. Operations may need to be undertaken with little or no access to NATO infrastructure.

These developments will make new demands on the capabilities required of Alliance forces, in particular in the field of interoperability. However, many allies have limited capabilities for the rapid deployment of forces outside national territory, or for sustaining operations and protecting forces far from home bases. Against this background, the 1999 Defence Capabilities Initiative focused on interoperability, deployability and mobility, sustainability and logistics, survivability and effective engagement capability, and command and control and information systems.

New initiatives

While the Defence Capabilities Initiative has contributed to improvements in Alliance capabilities, progress has been uneven. The 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States increased both the urgency and the importance of further improvements. Accordingly, further measures will be adopted at the Prague Summit in November 2002, when Heads of State and Government will launch a new initiative. This is likely to concentrate on a small number of capabilities essential to the full range of Alliance missions and to strengthen capabilities for defence against terrorism.

The areas on which the initiative will concentrate, identified by NATO defence ministers in their statement of 6 June 2002, include the following:

- defence against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks;
- secure command communications and information superiority;
- improvements in interoperability of deployed forces and key aspects of combat effectiveness;
- rapid deployment and sustainment of combat forces.

The June statement on defence capabilities recognised that the ability of the Alliance to fulfil the full range of its missions would depend largely on the ability of member countries to increase substantially the proportion of their combat and support forces available for deployment on operations beyond home territory or where there is no substantial host nation support. Moreover, despite progress made in implementing the Defence Capabilities Initiative launched at the Washington Summit, a greater and more focused effort was needed. The new initiative should be realistic and achievable and be based on firm national commitments.

The statement identified several needs, including new methods to identify and implement cost-efficient solutions to defence capability shortfalls; and measures to reduce fragmentation of effort, to encourage appropriate pooling of military capabilities, to increase role specialisation, and to promote cooperative acquisition of equipment and common and multinational funding.

Following the informal meeting of defence ministers in Warsaw on 24 September 2002, NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson stated that the commitments on capabilities to be made at Prague would provide individual national pledges to meet agreed shortcomings over a clear timetable, focusing on the areas identified above.

While the focus of the new initiative will be much sharper and will involve individual commitments by NATO member countries to the specific capability improvements that they will contribute, either alone or with other allies, it will seek attainable targets. Its aim is very simple: to deliver the urgently needed capability improvements that the Alliance needs to carry out its missions.

The statement also announced further steps to enhance NATO's ability to defend its forces against chemical, biological and radiological weapons by endorsing a comprehensive package of WMD-defence capability initiatives.

A NATO Response Force

In parallel with the Alliance's drive to generate the operational capabilities it requires to fulfil its tasks, discussions are taking place on the best means of organising NATO forces in a manner that will optimise the Alliance's ability to respond to new challenges and threats. At the 24 September meeting of defence ministers in Warsaw, United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld proposed the creation of a NATO Response Force, able to deploy rapidly wherever needed and to conduct integrated joint operations to deal with small-scale contingencies or larger, higher intensity conflicts. The proposal envisages a joint force, drawing on a rotational pool of combat forces, headquarters and support elements that could rapidly be tailored to individual missions, and on the capabilities identified in the commitments to be made at Prague. Initial reactions to the proposal have been generally positive and further discussions are taking place in this context.

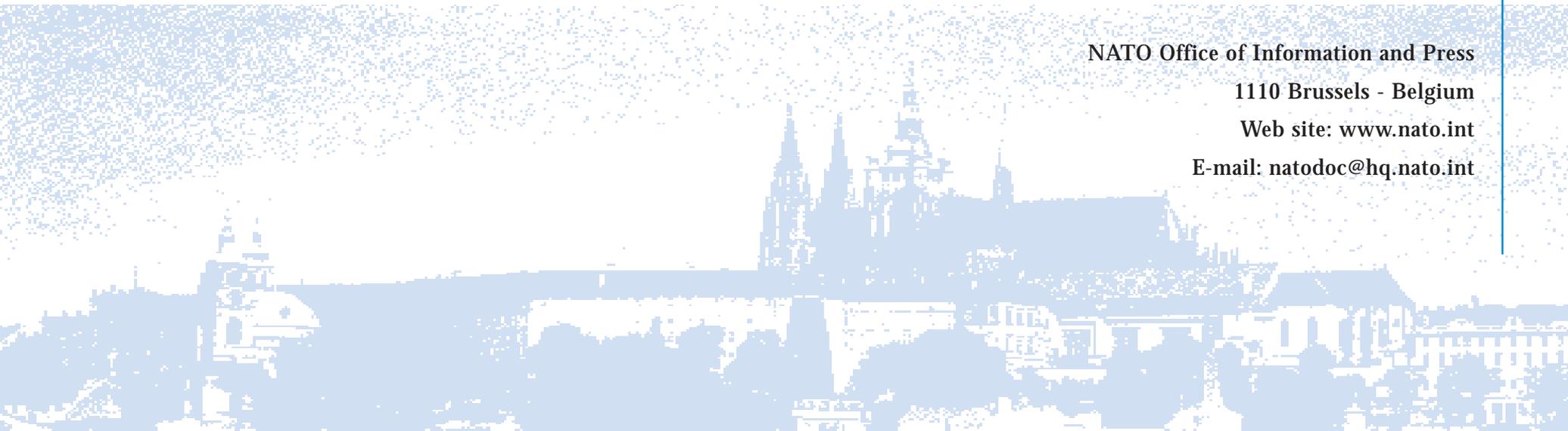
A military concept for defence against terrorism

In June 2002, defence ministers also reviewed the progress made on the development of a military concept for defence against terrorism, designed to guide the development of more detailed policies and doctrines. This might require the further adaptation of Alliance structures and capabilities to meet the threat posed by terrorism. The Concept will be incorporated into the package of measures to increase the Alliance's effectiveness against terrorism to be submitted to Heads of State and Government at the Prague Summit.

In addition, defence ministers stated that despite earlier measures to adapt NATO's force structure to meet the demands of the post-Cold War security environment, there is an ongoing need both to adapt to new challenges, in particular to those posed by terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and to ensure NATO member countries have the structures and deployable forces capable of responding to new threats.

The command structure

A review of NATO's command arrangements is being undertaken as a further input into preparations for the Prague Summit, with the intention of establishing clear guidance and a firm timeframe for completion, so that decisions on command arrangements can be taken in 2003. The review encompasses crisis-related operational requirements, as well as peace-time requirements, both for the NATO command structure and the integrated force structure.



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