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## Contents

- 2 NATO-Ukraine Summit
- 3-6 Focus on demilitarisation project; Action Plan implementation; military cooperation; defence industry; science project

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# Ukraine News

## NATO-Ukraine Summit

- A NATO-Ukraine Summit marks the beginning of a new chapter in relations.
- A Partnership for Peace Trust Fund is being launched to help Ukraine destroy surplus weapons and munitions.

## → NATO-Ukraine Summit

“This summit marked the beginning of a new chapter in our relations,” declared NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer after the summit meeting between Ukraine’s new President Victor Yushchenko and NATO leaders in Brussels on 22 February.

De Hoop Scheffer echoed the views that had been expressed by many NATO leaders during the summit meeting, when, addressing President Yushchenko in front of the press, he said: “You and millions of your compatriots have demonstrated how passionately the democratic values that underpin this alliance are very much alive and felt in Ukraine as well. I was a witness of these uplifting emotions during your memorable inauguration ceremony in Kyiv in that sea of orange.... This passion and this devotion to democracy cannot be ignored... NATO is ready to work with you, to support you, and to help you build a better future.”

During the meeting, President Yushchenko outlined his plans and priorities for reform in Ukraine to the Allied heads of state and government. They expressed support for Ukraine’s ambitious reform agenda and agreed to

sharpen and refocus NATO-Ukraine cooperation in line with the new government’s priorities, within the framework of existing arrangements.

Yushchenko was clear about Ukraine’s Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations: “The people who went on Kyiv’s squares and streets, they were motivated because they want to see Ukraine in Europe, not the neighbour of Europe... We would like to see Ukraine being integrated into the European Union and into the North Atlantic Alliance.” However, having stated Ukraine’s hope to join NATO’s Membership Action Plan soon, he accepted that, in the meantime, the existing instruments for cooperation – the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan and its related Annual Target Plans – provided possibilities to work towards this end and to elevate NATO-Ukraine relations to “an absolutely new level”.

De Hoop Scheffer restated NATO’s open door policy. “European democracies that fulfil the criteria for membership can enter through that open door,” he said, emphasising that this process is “performance-based”. However, he pointed out that Ukraine had “a good head start” thanks to the Distinctive Partnership and its ongoing cooperation with NATO.

While emphasising NATO’s determination to deepen its partnership with Ukraine, the Secretary General was careful to point out that “Ukraine’s democratic future should never be seen as some kind of contest between East and West.” He stressed that Ukraine’s future was in the hands of Ukrainians themselves. Yushchenko was also very clear on this point: “Russia is our strategic partner and Ukraine’s policy towards NATO will by no means be against the interest of other countries, including Russia.”

In terms of next steps, guidance will be prepared in time for the upcoming NATO-Ukraine Commission meeting of foreign ministers in Vilnius, Lithuania, in April, on how to carry out refocused cooperation within the framework of implementing the Distinctive Partnership and the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan. In June, a meeting of defence ministers will provide another high-level opportunity to streamline military and defence sector cooperation to meet the reform priorities of the new government.



President Victor Yushchenko outlines his reform priorities to Allied leaders.

## → Destroying surplus weapons and munitions

Ukraine has huge stockpiles of surplus and obsolete weapons and munitions, and planned reforms of the armed forces will be adding to these in the coming years. The country holds as much as seven million small arms and light weapons and two million tonnes of munitions. Much of this is stored in the open, posing a major security threat to local populations and infrastructure, as was demonstrated by the tragic loss of life and the damages caused by the munitions explosions in Melitopol in May 2004. The stockpiles also pose a potential physical risk to Ukraine as a whole, as well as to the wider region, as this materiel could fall into the wrong hands.

A Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund is being established this spring to help Ukraine address this issue. It is the largest single demilitarisation project of its kind in the world to date and a practical demonstration of NATO's continuing commitment to support Ukraine's defence reform.

The project aims to destroy some 133,000 tonnes of munitions and 1.5 million small arms and light weapons including man-portable air-defence missiles, while also building capacity within Ukraine to address remaining stockpiles. The safe destruction of these stocks will contribute to managing the consequences of defence reform and to the common fight against terrorism.

The project will cover the progressive acquisition of equipment and development of facilities, while at the same time enabling the destruction of weapons and munitions throughout the life of the project. Priorities include developing industrial processes which conform to safety and environmental standards, and maximising the recycling of component parts.

The project will be executed in four phases over 12 years. The United States has agreed to act as lead nation for the first three-year phase of the project, which is estimated to cost seven million euros. The United Kingdom and Norway have also pledged funds for this project. The 12-year project will include considerable contributions from



Surplus and obsolete munitions: a security risk and an environmental hazard.

Ukraine in terms of operational and in-kind contributions such as manpower, security and transportation, with the PfP Trust Fund providing some 25 million euros to improve infrastructure and to purchase equipment. A feasibility study for the project was carried out in 2003, led by Greece and supported by Germany and Turkey.

This is the second PfP Trust Fund project to be launched in Ukraine. The first involved the destruction over a 15-month period in 2002-2003 of some 400,000 anti-personnel mines at a chemical plant in Donetsk and the recycling of the mine casings into plastic toys.

The PfP Trust Fund was originally established in 2000 as a mechanism to assist Partner countries in the safe destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines. The scope of the Fund was extended in 2001 to include the destruction of munitions and small arms and light weapons. At the end of 2002, the Trust Fund policy was again revised to allow for its use to support Partner countries in managing the consequences of defence reform through initiatives such as retraining and the conversion of military bases. To date, Trust Fund projects have destroyed more than two million anti-personnel landmines in Albania, Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

## → Assessing progress

On 7-10 November 2004, a team of NATO experts visited Kyiv to assess the implementation of the overall objectives of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan as well as the impact of the activities set out in the Annual Target Plans (ATPs) on achieving these goals. Discussions focused in particular on identifying possibilities for more effective development and implementation of future ATPs and on the future development of NATO-Ukraine relations.

Almost all aspects of the Action Plan were covered in the various meetings, including foreign policy issues; security-sector reforms and export controls; defence reform; practical cooperation between militaries and in the area of disaster-preparedness; cooperation in the areas of public information and science; and issues related to democracy-building, freedom of the media and of expression, judicial reform, the rule of law and corruption.

The team took note of the progress in several areas, particularly as regards Ukraine's contributions to international peacekeeping efforts and in planning its defence reform. A generally positive assessment was made of Ukraine's progress in implementing the ATP for 2004, but concern was expressed about the lack of progress in some key areas. Most notably, a number of specific goals set in the areas of media freedom and democracy-building had clearly not been implemented.

During their visit, the team also met a group of Verkhovna Rada deputies, and welcomed the fact that a parliamentary committee has been set up to review implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan.

Work on developing the Annual Target Plan for 2005 started in the autumn of last year under the previous administration. The mid-year review process in the summer will allow activities to be refocused on the new government's reform priorities.

## → Military meetings



Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, General Harald Kujat (front centre), arrives for an historic meeting of the Committee with Ukrainian military representatives, the first to be held in Kyiv.

NATO's highest military authority, the Military Committee, met for a session with Ukrainian military representatives on 21 September, for the first time in Kyiv. The meeting was hosted by Ukraine's Chief of Defence, Lieutenant General (now Colonel General) Serhiy Kyrychenko, and chaired by the Chairman of the Military Committee, General Harald Kujat.

In his opening remarks, General Kyrychenko welcomed the fact that regular meetings of military staff at different levels had become an integral part of NATO-Ukraine cooperation and were a useful forum for discussion and decision-making. He also highlighted the acceleration in Ukraine's defence reform efforts, thanks to practical assistance from NATO, in particular, with the successful conduct of the defence review which had helped Ukraine clearly define the directions for future work up to 2015.

The key focus of the meeting was Ukraine's defence reforms plans and ongoing work to review its force structure. The committee also reviewed progress in implementing the NATO-Ukraine Military Work Plan and discussed priority areas for the 2005 Work Plan.

Speaking to the press after the meeting, General Kujat emphasised that although defence reforms are "a painful and long-term process", it was important for Ukraine to pursue further progress in this area and reiterated NATO's commitment to assist in this process. He stressed the need for the support of the whole of Ukrainian society for the ongoing reforms and, in this context, pointed to the need to improve social security provision for retiring servicemen in order to avoid social tensions.

While acknowledging the considerable achievements already made in terms of improving interoperability between Ukrainian and Allied forces – a key factor for Ukraine's participation in NATO-led and other multinational operations – Kujat stressed that more work was required in this area. This includes the need to improve language skills and professional training as well as to make equipment and armaments systems more compatible with each other.

In this context, the 2005 Military Work Plan was approved at the Military Committee meeting of the Allied and Ukrainian Chiefs of Staff, which took place at NATO headquarters on 16 November. Key priorities for military cooperation in the coming year include activities aimed at managing the consequences of defence reform; the continuation of a pilot project launched in the context of the review of the force structure, which focuses on developing doctrines and concepts for the Navy and the Air Force; further developing the concept of Joint Rapid Reaction Forces, which would be used for both national defence and peacekeeping and crisis-response operations; improving the military command and control system; increasing operational capabilities; and continued participation in NATO peacekeeping operations as well as in NATO initiatives to strengthen capabilities available for NATO-led operations.

These priorities remain valid under the new Ukrainian administration, as was confirmed by the Deputy Head of Ukraine's Mission to NATO, during a meeting of the Military Committee in Permanent Session with Ukraine in early March 2005. He also stressed that the results of the comprehensive defence review, which was approved in summer 2004 and incorporated in Ukraine's Strategic Defence Bulletin, remain the foundation for the future transformation of Ukraine's armed forces. However, certain provisions are currently being reviewed, with the help of NATO expert advice, to take into account available resources.

## → Defence industry roundtable

Some 60 experts took part in roundtable discussions addressing the defence industry's challenges and prospects, which took place in Kyiv on 11 November, jointly organised by NATO and Ukraine's Ministry for Industrial Policy.

In the roundtable's first session, Ukrainian panel participants briefed on the difficult restructuring process the Ukrainian defence industry is undergoing, which is inadequately financed. They also focused on problems experienced by Ukrainian companies seeking to promote their products on the international market. In the second session, NATO experts gave presentations on key issues for the defence industry including procurement and procurement planning, product trends, privatisation, market globalisation and competition.

The discussions highlighted that four key factors are driving defence industry restructuring and transformation, namely: changes in the strategic environment and new security threats; globalisation, which requires companies to develop a more open, cooperative and commercial

approach in order to be competitive in the world market; the need to incorporate new technologies not traditionally associated with the defence sector; and the transformation of military warfare, which calls for greater interoperability, interconnectivity and adaptability.

## → New energy technology

A potential breakthrough technology for low-cost, clean and highly efficient production of electricity and heat is the subject of a three-year project led by Ukraine, which has just been launched under NATO's Security through Science programme. The project could help reduce energy consumption in Ukraine and other countries, while also contributing to environmental protection.

Traditional methods of using hydrocarbon fuels to produce heat or electricity use only about one-third of the energy stored in the fuels and the rest is simply lost. Solid oxide fuel cells make it possible to use as electricity some of the energy that would otherwise have been lost, leading to between 70 and 80 per cent efficiency. In addition to energy savings, the use of such fuel cells would also significantly reduce the amount of harmful pollution and greenhouse gases usually produced by power stations.

The project brings together leading experts in fuel cell technology and energy security from Ukraine, Russia, Azerbaijan, the United States and the United Kingdom. Their aim is to develop a prototype fuel cell capable of operating at lower temperatures than other solid oxide fuel cells, which would improve reliability and reduce costs and thereby make the technology more viable to use for decentralised energy generation and supply.

The project then aims to commercialise the technology by seeking potential end-users, such as power plants, industrial enterprises and hospitals. Ultimately, the diversification and decentralisation of the power supply

would increase energy security, for instance, by allowing hospitals to continue to operate during an energy blackout caused by a terrorist attack or other disaster.

A key focus of the project is to use raw materials that are readily available in Ukraine, such as low-cost zirconium and scandium oxides ( $ZrO_2$  and  $Sc_2O_3$ ) which will help keep costs down. Once the product has been commercialised, opening access to these powders to other partner countries wishing to produce and install the new fuel cell technology should lead to further industrial development and create jobs.

*NATO-Ukraine News* aims to highlight different aspects of NATO's cooperation with Ukraine. It is based on *Novyny NATO*, a quarterly newsletter for audiences in Ukraine, which is published in both Ukrainian and Russian versions.

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