



Discover NATO



Protecting people

We often take it for granted that we can walk around freely in a safe and economically stable environment. Security in all areas of everyday life is key to our well-being.

Combating new threats

As the nature of threats changes, so must the methods of preserving peace. NATO is reorienting its defence capabilities towards today's threats. It is adapting forces and developing multinational approaches to deal with terrorism, failed states and other security threats such as weapons of mass destruction.

Forging partnerships

Establishing dialogue and cooperation is crucial for peaceful relations and deeper international understanding.

NATO provides a unique opportunity for member and partnership countries to consult on security issues to build trust and, in the long run, help to prevent conflict.

Through practical cooperation and multilateral initiatives, countries are facing new security challenges together.

Building peace & stability

The benefits of stability can be enjoyed simultaneously by many parties. It is crucial to stabilize regions where tensions pose security threats. This is why NATO takes an active role in crisis-management operations, in cooperation with other international organizations.

Member and partnership countries

signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949

MEMBER COUNTRIES (DATES OF ACCESSION)

- Albania /2009
- Belgium /1949
- Bulgaria /2004
- Canada /1949
- Croatia /2009
- Czech Republic /1999
- Denmark /1949
- Estonia /2004
- France /1949
- Germany /1955
- Greece /1952
- Hungary /1999
- Iceland /1949
- Italy /1949
- Latvia /2004
- Lithuania /2004
- Luxembourg /1949
- Netherlands /1949
- Norway /1949
- Poland /1999
- Portugal /1949
- Romania /2004
- Slovakia /2004
- Slovenia /2004
- Spain /1982
- Turkey /1952
- United Kingdom /1949
- United States /1949

PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE (PFP) COUNTRIES

- Armenia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Finland
- Georgia
- Ireland
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyz Republic
- Malta
- the Republic of Moldova
- Montenegro
- Russia
- Serbia
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Tajikistan
- the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan

MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUE COUNTRIES

- Algeria
- Egypt
- Israel
- Jordan
- Mauritania
- Morocco
- Tunisia

ISTANBUL COOPERATION INITIATIVE COUNTRIES (ICI)

- Bahrain
- Kuwait
- Qatar
- United Arab Emirates

*Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

What is NATO?



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is one of the world's major international institutions. It is a political and military alliance that brings together 28 member countries from Europe and North America.

These countries meet to cooperate in the field of security and defence. In this respect, NATO provides a unique link between these two continents for political and security cooperation.

What does NATO do?



NATO is committed to protecting its members through political and military means. It also encourages consultation and cooperation with non-NATO countries in a wide range of security-related areas such as defence reform and peacekeeping.

Through its discussions and partnerships, NATO contributes to preventing conflicts within and beyond the frontiers of its member countries.

It promotes democratic values and is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes. If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military capacity needed to undertake crisis-management and peacekeeping operations alone or in cooperation with other countries and international organizations.

NATO also has a third dimension which consists of activities in the area of civil emergency planning, helping Allies and Partners to cope with disasters, as well as to promote cooperation in the field of science and the environment.

Each member country has a permanent delegation at NATO's political headquarters in Brussels. It is headed by an ambassador, who represents his/her government in the Alliance's consultation and decision-making process.

The North Atlantic Council is the most important political decision-making body within the Organization. It meets at different levels and is chaired by the Secretary General of NATO who helps members reach agreement on key issues.

All decisions within each of NATO's committees are reached by consensus. A "NATO decision" is therefore the expression of the collective will of all member countries.

NATO has very few permanent forces of its own. When an operation is agreed by the North Atlantic Council, members contribute forces on a voluntary basis. These forces return to their countries once the mission is completed.

How does NATO work?

It is the role of the military command structure to coordinate and conduct these operations. This structure consists of headquarters and bases located in different member countries.

NATO's day-to-day activities, civil and military structures and security investment programmes are funded through common budgets to which member governments contribute in accordance with an agreed cost-sharing formula.

