

# NATO and Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

NATO is committed to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, including the full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear weapons (NPT). As stated in the Washington Declaration, NATO reaffirms its commitment to all decisions, principles and commitments with regard to NATO's nuclear deterrence, arms control policy and non-proliferation and disarmament objectives as stated in the 2022 Strategic Concept and 2023 Vilnius Communiqué. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance. NATO's goal is a safer world for all; we seek to create the security environment for a world without nuclear weapons. As we approach the 11th Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons it is important to set the record straight on NATO's approach to the NPT and nuclear disarmament.

## Myth

**NATO does not support the objective of nuclear disarmament**

## FACT

Allies are committed to the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and disarmament architecture, and the only credible path to nuclear disarmament.

Allies have a long track record of doing their part on arms control and disarmament, including in the nuclear domain. Nuclear weapons committed to NATO's defence have been reduced by 90 per cent since the height of the Cold War.

Allies have been actively engaged in multilateral initiatives to build political support and enable lasting progress on nuclear disarmament and risk reduction, including Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND), the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), the Nuclear Disarmament Verification (NuDiVe) exercise, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI); and the Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament.

They have taken part in multilateral efforts in the context of the two Groups of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, a critical component building international capacity to implement successful nuclear disarmament efforts.

The three Allies who are nuclear-weapons states have declared a moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons, and observe zero-yield moratoria on nuclear explosive testing. They actively promote dialogue with Russia and China to reduce strategic risks and increase transparency on doctrines and arsenals, as concrete and meaningful measures to make progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

The U.S. has repeatedly affirmed its willingness to engage on nuclear arms control discussions with Russia and China without preconditions. So far, however, it has not received a positive response.

The absence of a political and security environment conducive to elimination does not preclude action on nuclear arms control and strategic stability. These measures can in turn foster the cooperation and confidence needed to advance nuclear disarmament as envisioned under Article VI of the NPT.

## Myth

**NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements are contrary to the NPT**

## FACT

NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements have always been and continue to be fully consistent with the NPT. The first US forward deployed nuclear weapons arrived in Europe in 1954, well before the NPT entered into force in 1970, and NPT negotiations accounted for NATO's nuclear posture. This has long been accepted by all States Party to the NPT, including by Russia itself until 2015. Articles I and II of the NPT prohibit the transfer of nuclear weapons. The treaty was negotiated to preclude any loophole that would provide for the proliferation or joint control of nuclear weapons through military Alliances. As the United States retains full custody and control over its nuclear weapons forward deployed in Europe, NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements are in strict compliance with both articles. All NATO members have always adhered to their obligations under the NPT, and will continue to do so.

## Myth

### NATO is escalating tensions against Russia and is not transparent

## FACT

NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression.

In line with NATO's commitment to strategic risk reduction reaffirmed in the 2022 Strategic Concept, Allies have regularly demonstrated transparency on their national or NATO military exercises, by providing briefings at the OSCE, through bilateral meetings, and information shared on NATO's related websites.

NATO has in particular been transparent about its annual nuclear exercise, STEADFAST NOON, to reduce risk and prevent misunderstanding. And in multilateral formats, Allies have explained and reported on their nuclear policies, doctrines, threat assessments, and capabilities both towards the international community at large, but also in fora with China and Russia, such as the P5.

In contrast, Russia has increased its reliance on nuclear weapon systems and continued to diversify its nuclear arsenal, including by deploying a suite of short- and intermediate-range dual-capable systems in its war against Ukraine. It is also expanding its nuclear capabilities by developing and testing novel systems. Russia has violated, selectively implemented, and walked away from longstanding arms control obligations and commitments, thereby undermining the global arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation architecture.

We condemn Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and coercive nuclear signaling, including its announced stationing of nuclear weapons in Belarus, which demonstrate a posture of strategic intimidation. We oppose any placement of nuclear weapons in orbit around Earth, which would violate Article IV of the Outer Space Treaty, and would gravely threaten global security.

Russia uses these steps to support a more aggressive posture of strategic intimidation, including through its military build-up, large-scale no-notice and snap exercises, military integration with Belarus, and repeated violations of Allied airspace.

NATO has strengthened its deterrence and defence posture to deny any potential adversary any possible opportunities for aggression.

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