

NATO's relations with Russia



NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen (left) and the then Russian President Dmitry Medvedev arrive at the NATO-Russia Council meeting in Sochi, Russia, on 4 July 2011.

The 28 Allies and Russia work together as equal partners in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), which was established in 2002. The NRC provides a framework for consultation on current security issues and practical cooperation in a wide range of areas of common interest. Its agenda builds on the basis for bilateral cooperation that was set out in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.

NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept stresses the importance to the Allies of developing "a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia" and their determination to "enhance political consultation and practical cooperation with Russia in areas of shared interests" and to "use the full potential of the NRC for dialogue and joint action".

At the Chicago Summit in May 2012, Allied leaders welcomed the important progress in cooperation over the years and reiterated their desire to see a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia, as agreed at the NRC Summit in Lisbon in 2010.

At Lisbon, the 29 NRC leaders pledged to "work towards achieving a true strategic and modernized partnership based on the principles of reciprocal confidence, transparency, and predictability, with the aim of contributing to the creation of a common space of peace, security and stability." They endorsed a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges, which include Afghanistan, terrorism, piracy, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as natural and man-made disasters. Important progress has been made in a number of these areas, since then.

Recognizing that differences remain on specific issues, the Allies have underlined the need to improve trust, reciprocal transparency and predictability.

NRC nations agree that the NRC is a valuable instrument for building practical cooperation and for political dialogue on all issues – where they agree and disagree. The driving force behind the NRC's pragmatic spirit of cooperation is the realization that NATO and Russia share strategic priorities and face common challenges. Further developing practical cooperation – including on missile defence – will help increase mutual trust.

Framework for cooperation

Cooperation between Russia and NATO member states is directed by the NRC and developed through various subordinate working groups and committees. Every year, NRC member countries agree on an annual work programme.

Key areas of cooperation include the fight against terrorism, defence reform, military-to-military cooperation, counter-narcotics training of Afghan, Central Asian and Pakistani personnel, theatre missile defence/missile defence, counter-piracy, crisis management, non-proliferation, airspace management, civil emergency planning, scientific cooperation and environmental security.

The NRC has provided a forum for the development of a continuous political dialogue on current security issues, which has expanded steadily to include frank and constructive exchanges on topical and sometimes controversial issues. Discussions have been held on subjects such as the situation in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asia, the Middle East, Iraq and Libya, as well as exchanges on issues such as NATO's transformation, energy security, missile defence and the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. Dialogue also generates ideas for practical cooperation to help address shared security challenges.

To facilitate cooperation, Russia has established a diplomatic mission to NATO and Russian Military Branch Offices have been set up at NATO's two top military command headquarters. In Moscow, a NATO Information Office seeks to explain NATO and promote the benefits of the NATO-Russia partnership, and a Military Liaison Mission is helping improve transparency and coordination on the military side.



NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen (left) meets the then Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, during his first trip to Russia in December 2009. He confirms that the relaunch of the NATO-Russia partnership would be one of his priorities during his term at the helm of NATO.

Key areas of cooperation

Support for ISAF and the Afghan Armed Forces

In spring 2008, Russia offered to facilitate the land transit of non-military equipment for ISAF contributors across Russian territory in support of the NATO-led, UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Similar arrangements have been concluded with the other transit states, opening up this important supply route for ISAF in 2010. At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders agreed amendments to the arrangements agreed in 2008 with a view to allowing land transit both to and from Afghanistan of non-lethal cargo. At Chicago, Allied leaders welcomed the progress on developing arrangements with Central Asian partners and Russia, which will allow multi-modal reverse transit, using a mix of rail and air transit for ISAF equipment through Russian territory.

NRC leaders agreed at Lisbon to establish an NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund to help the Afghan Armed Forces to operate their helicopter fleet. The project was officially launched in March 2011, aimed at providing a much-needed maintenance and repair capacity, including spare parts and technical training. Germany is acting as the lead nation for the project and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) serving as executing agent. Ten donor nations (Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Russia, Turkey and United States) have contributed a total of around seven million US dollars in financial contributions and 15 million US dollars worth of in-kind contributions to the Trust Fund project. Tailored training for Afghan Air Force helicopter maintenance staff started in April 2012 at the OAO Novosibirsk Aircraft Repair Plant in Russia.

Underlining the shared commitment to securing Afghanistan's future, Russia was invited to participate in the expanded ISAF meeting at the Chicago Summit.

Counter-narcotics training of Afghan and Central Asian personnel

The NRC pilot project for counter-narcotics training of Afghan and Central Asian personnel was launched by NRC foreign ministers in December 2005 to help address the threats posed by the trafficking in Afghan narcotics. It seeks to build local capacity and to promote

regional networking and cooperation by sharing the combined expertise of NRC member states with mid-level officers from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Pakistan became the seventh participating country in 2010.

The project is being implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). It is a joint endeavour of many NRC nations – Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States – and Finland (since 2007) together with the project's beneficiary countries. Ukraine will shortly become the second, non-NRC contributing nation.

Fixed training takes place in one of four institutes either in Turkey, Russia or the United States and mobile courses are being conducted in each of the six participating countries. At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders agreed to expand the scope of the project to provide further direct assistance to institutional capacity building in the future. By April 2012, some 2000 officers had been trained under the NRC project.



Russian President Vladimir Putin visits the training facilities of the Russian Institute for Advanced Training of the Interior Ministry in Domodedovo (Moscow Region) in May 2012. He meets counter-narcotics officers from Afghanistan, Central Asian countries and Pakistan, who are being trained there under a NATO-Russia Council project.

Combating terrorism

An NRC Action Plan on Terrorism was launched by NRC foreign ministers in December 2004 to improve overall coordination and provide strategic direction for cooperation in this area. NRC leaders underlined the continued importance of cooperation in the fight against terrorism at Lisbon in November 2010 and an updated Action Plan on Terrorism was approved by NRC foreign ministers at their meeting in April 2011 in Berlin. A first civilian-military counter-terrorism table top exercise was conducted in the framework of the NRC at NATO Headquarters in March 2012.

Regular exchanges of information and in-depth consultations take place within the NRC on various aspects of combating terrorism. Under the Cooperative Airspace Initiative (see below), an information exchange system has been developed to provide air-traffic transparency and early notification of suspicious air activities to help prevent terrorist attacks such as the 9/11 attacks on the United States. In the scientific and technical field, work is ongoing on the

STANDEX project, which aims to develop technology that will enable the stand-off detection of explosive devices in mass transport environments. Trials are due to take place in 2013. Countering improvised explosive devices is another important focus of ongoing work.

Over the years, several Russian ships have been deployed in support of Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's maritime operation against terrorism in the Mediterranean.

Cooperative Airspace Initiative

The Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI) – aimed at preventing terrorists from using aircraft to launch attacks similar to those of 9/11 – is now operational. The CAI information exchange provides air traffic transparency and early notification of suspicious air activities. This facilitates transparency, predictability and interoperability in airspace management.

Based on a feasibility study completed in 2005, detailed system requirements and a project plan were agreed for the system to enable the reciprocal exchange of air traffic data between centres in NATO countries and in Russia. Implementation started in 2006. The system reached its operational capability in December 2011 and the CAI operational phase is expected to be formally launched by mid-2012, once national procedures regarding the reciprocal coordination of air-traffic situations for countering air terrorist threats have been completed in participating countries, allowing entry into force of the legal agreement concerning CAI.

The operational readiness of the CAI system was demonstrated during the first live-flying, real-time counter-terrorism exercise, "Vigilant Skies 2011", which took place in June 2011.

A total of around 10 million euros have been invested in the CAI project. Nations that have contributed financially include Canada, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The system is open for participation by other nations. So far, Finland and Ukraine have indicated an interest in joining the initiative.

The NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A) has led the implementation of the NATO part of the CAI system, and the software was procured from EUROCONTROL. Implementation of the Russian part of the system was led by the State Air Traffic Management Corporation, under the guidance of the

Federal Air Navigation Authority. The Russian segment of the system was developed and supplied by the "Almaz-Antey" Concern.

The CAI system consists of two coordination centres, in Moscow and in Warsaw, and local coordination sites in Russia (Murmansk, Kaliningrad, Rostov-on-Don) and in NATO member countries (Bodø, Norway; Warsaw, Poland; and Ankara, Turkey).

Theatre missile defence/ ballistic missile defence

Cooperation in the area of theatre missile defence (TMD) has been underway for a number of years to address the unprecedented danger posed to deployed forces by the increasing availability of ever more accurate ballistic missiles. A study was launched in 2003 to assess the possible levels of interoperability among the theatre missile defence systems of NATO Allies and Russia.

Three command post exercises have been held – the first in the United States in March 2004, the second in the Netherlands in March 2005, and the third in Russia in October 2006. Computer-assisted exercises have taken place in Germany in January 2008 and March 2012. Together with the interoperability study, these exercises are intended to provide the basis for future improvements to interoperability and to develop mechanisms and procedures for joint operations in the area of theatre missile defence.

In December 2009, an NRC Missile Defence Working Group was established. It was tasked to build on the lessons learned from the previous TMD cooperation and to exchange views on possible mutually beneficial cooperation on ballistic missile defence, based on a joint assessment of missile threats.

At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders approved the joint ballistic missile threat assessment and agreed to discuss pursuing missile defence cooperation. They decided to resume TMD cooperation and to develop a joint analysis of the future framework for missile defence cooperation.

While differences remain on the subject of ballistic missile defence, discussions continue. At Chicago, NATO leaders stressed that NATO's planned missile defence capability is not directed against Russia, nor will it undermine Russia's strategic deterrent. It is intended to defend against potential threats from beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. While regretting recurrent Russian statements and measures directed against NATO's missile defence system, the Allies welcome Russia's willingness to continue dialogue on finding a way to develop future cooperation on missile defence.

NATO is determined to work through the NRC to see how independent NATO and Russian missile defence systems could work together to enhance European security. The Allies look forward to the establishment of the proposed NATO-Russia Missile Data Fusion Centre and the joint Planning Operations Centre. They also propose to develop a new transparency regime based on a regular exchange of information about the current respective missile defence capabilities of NATO and Russia.

Non-proliferation and arms control

Dialogue on a growing range of issues related to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) has developed under the NRC. Concrete recommendations have been made to strengthen existing non-proliferation arrangements. A number of in-depth discussions and expert seminars have been held to explore opportunities for practical cooperation in the protection against nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Since under the NRC, work has been underway to assess global trends in WMD proliferation and their means of delivery, and to review areas in which NRC nations could work together politically to promote effective multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.



The first joint NATO-Russia live-flying, real-time counter-terrorism exercise "Vigilant Skies 2011" takes place in June 2011 to demonstrate the operational readiness of the Cooperative Airspace Initiative. During the exercise, Polish, Russian and Turkish fighter jets intervened in response to the simulated hijacking of a passenger aircraft by terrorists.

The NRC has also provided a forum for frank discussions on issues related to conventional arms control, such as the CFE Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty and confidence-and-security-building measures. A key priority for all NRC nations is to work towards the ratification of the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. The Allies have expressed concern over Russia's unilateral "suspension" of its participation in the treaty in December 2007. While differences remain on this issue, it is important to note that the Allies remain committed to ratifying the Adapted Treaty. Discussions are ongoing with Russia, both in the framework of the NRC and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe on how to make this possible.

At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders emphasized their strong support for the revitalisation and modernisation of the conventional arms control regime in Europe and their readiness to continue dialogue on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation issues of interest to the NRC. A Joint NRC Statement was agreed for the 7th Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in December 2011.

Nuclear weapons issues

In the nuclear field, experts have developed a glossary of terms and definitions and organized exchanges on nuclear doctrines and strategy.

Experts and representatives from Russia and NATO member countries have also observed four nuclear-weapon-accident-response field exercises in Russia in 2004, the United Kingdom in 2005, the United States in 2006, and France in 2007. As a follow-on to these four exercises, in June 2011 Russia and NATO member countries also participated in a table top exercise dealing with emergency response to a nuclear weapon incident. Inviting experts to attend such exercises increases transparency, develops common understanding of nuclear-weapon-accident-response procedures, and builds full confidence that the nuclear weapon states of NATO (France, the United Kingdom and United States) and Russia are fully capable to respond effectively to any emergency involving nuclear weapons. Expert seminars have also been held to discuss nuclear doctrine and strategy (2005, 2009 and 2011), lessons learned from nuclear weapons incidents and accidents (2007) and potential responses to the detection of improvised nuclear or radiological devices (2010).

Military-to-military cooperation

Since the NRC was established, military liaison arrangements have been enhanced, at the Allied Commands for Operations and for Transformation, as well as in Moscow. A key objective of military-to-military cooperation is to build trust, confidence and transparency, and to improve the ability of NATO and Russian forces to work together in preparation for possible future joint military operations.

Military-to-military cooperation has resumed, following a temporary suspension in the wake of the August 2008 Georgia crisis. The military work plan for 2011 focuses on several agreed areas of cooperation – logistics, combating terrorism, search-and-rescue at sea, counter-piracy, theatre missile defence and military academic exchanges – and related military activities.

A "Political-Military Guidance Towards Enhanced Interoperability Between Forces of Russia and NATO Nations" was approved by NRC defence ministers in June 2005.

Another key document is the Partnership for Peace Status of Forces Agreement (signed by Russia in 2004 and ratified by the Russian parliament in May 2007), aimed at facilitating military-to-military and other practical cooperation, in particular the deployment of forces participating in joint operations and exercises.



The Russian Chief of Defence, Army General Nikolay Makarov (left), meets NATO's Chairman of the Military Committee, General Knud Bartels, at a meeting of NATO-Russia Council Military Representatives at NATO Headquarters in January 2012.

Countering piracy

Countering piracy is one of the key areas of common interest and concern identified in the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges approved at Lisbon in November 2010. Cooperation at the tactical level has been developing between Allied ships and Russian vessels since late 2008.

NATO and Russia have agreed to explore ways to strengthen cooperation to counter piracy under the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) Work Programme for 2012. Building on ongoing military tactical cooperation off the Horn of Africa, they are seeking to strengthen information exchange and coordination and considering possible mutual support, such as refuelling and medical assistance, for ships involved in counter-piracy operations.

Submarine-crew search and rescue

Work in the area of submarine-crew search and rescue at sea intensified following the signing of a framework agreement on cooperation in this area in February 2003.

A Russian navy submarine was fully integrated into a NATO-led exercise for the first time during search-and-rescue exercise Bold Monarch 2011 off the coast of southern Spain, from 30 May to 10 June 2011. The Alrosa submarine was supported by three other Russian ships – a submarine-rescue vessel, a salvage vessel and a heavy-lifting vessel.

Prior to this, Russia took part in NATO's exercise Sorbet Royal, in June 2005. The experience and networks developed during the exercise contributed to the success of an actual rescue operation in August 2005 off the coast of Russian Kamchatka peninsula. Russia also participated in exercise Bold Monarch 2008.

Crisis management

NATO and Russia have a long history of cooperation in crisis management. In fact, between 1996 and 2003, Russia was the largest non-NATO troop contributor to NATO-led peacekeeping operations. Close cooperation in the Balkans has been critical in improving relations and building trust between the Russian and Allied militaries.

Since 2002, the NRC has taken steps to prepare for possible future cooperation in this area, notably through the approval in September 2002 of "Political Aspects for a Generic Concept for Joint

NATO-Russia Peacekeeping Operations”. This paper explores common approaches, establishes a framework for consultation, planning and decision-making during an emerging crisis, and defines issues related to joint training and exercises. These were tested in a procedural exercise, conducted in three phases between May 2003 and September 2004.

Defence transparency, strategy and reform

With a view to building mutual confidence and transparency, dialogue is ongoing on doctrinal issues, strategy and policy, including their relation to defence reform, nuclear weapons issues, force development and posture.

Past initiatives launched in the area of defence reform have focused on the evolution of the military, management of human and financial resources, reform of defence industries, managing the consequences of defence reform, and defence-related aspects of combating terrorism. NATO and Russian linguists have also produced a terminological glossary to support practical cooperation and contribute to understanding within the NRC, which was completed in 2011.

From 2002 to 2008, a NATO-Russia Resettlement Centre helped facilitate the integration of former Russian military personnel into civilian life by providing information regarding job-search and resettlement, professional courses for trainees, job-placement services, and English-language and management courses for small and medium-sized enterprises. Set up in Moscow in July 2002, its operations were gradually expanded into the regions. Over the project’s lifetime, around 2820 former military personnel from the Russian armed forces were retrained and over 80 per cent found civilian employment as a result of the retraining or the help of the Centre’s job placement unit.

Defence industrial cooperation

A broad-based “Study on NATO-Russia Defence Industrial and Research and Technological Cooperation”, launched in January 2005 and completed in 2007, concluded that there is potential in combining scientific and technological capabilities to address global threats.

Logistics

Logistics form the backbone of any military operation and in today’s security environment, the need for more mobile forces and multinational operations calls for improved coordination and the pooling of resources, wherever possible. Various initiatives are pursuing logistic cooperation on both the civilian and the military side.

Meetings and seminars have focused on establishing a sound foundation of mutual understanding in the field of logistics by promoting information sharing in areas such as logistic policies, doctrine, structures and lessons learned. Opportunities for practical cooperation are being explored in areas such as air transport, air-to-air refuelling, medical services, and water purification. Cooperation is being extended to explore potential capabilities and enhance interoperability to support future operations, particularly in Afghanistan.

Civil emergencies

NATO and Russia have been cooperating since 1996 to develop a capacity for joint action in response to civil emergencies, such as earthquakes and floods, and to coordinate detection and prevention of disasters before they occur. Moreover, it was a Russian proposal that led to the establishment in 1998 of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre, which coordinates responses to disasters among all countries of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (the 28 NATO members and 22 Partner countries).

Under the NRC, a key focus of cooperation in this area has been to develop capabilities to manage the consequences of terrorist attacks.



Disaster-management exercise takes place in Kaliningrad in 2004.

Two disaster-response exercises held in Russia (Bogorodsk, 2002, and Kaliningrad, 2004) and another in Italy, in 2006, have resulted in concrete recommendations for consequence management. Another table top consequence-management exercise was hosted by Norway in 2010. Current work is focused on risk reduction, capacity building and cooperation in the area of civil preparedness and consequence management related to high visibility events.

New threats and challenges

Scientific and technological cooperation between NATO and Russia dates back to 1998. Over the years, NATO’s science programmes, which foster collaboration and research between scientists in NATO and Partner countries, have awarded more grants to scientists from Russia than any other country.

Under the NRC Science for Peace and Security Committee, promising work is taking place on confronting new threats and challenges through scientific and environmental cooperation. Key areas include explosives detection (such as the STANDEX project mentioned above), protection from chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents, cyber security, psychosocial consequences of terrorism, transport security, defence-related environmental issues, environmental security and eco-terrorism, and the forecast and prevention of catastrophes.

Raising public awareness of the NRC

An NRC web site (<http://www.nato-russia-council.info/>) was launched in June 2007 to increase public awareness of NRC activities.

All NRC nations have stated their commitment to explaining the merits of NATO-Russia cooperation to the public.

Evolution of relations

NATO-Russia relations formally began in 1991, when Russia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997), a forum created to foster transparency and dialogue with the countries after the end of the Cold War. Russia joined the Partnership for Peace in 1994, paving the way for more practical cooperation and, in 1996, Russia deployed a major contingent to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security provided the formal basis for NATO-Russia relations and led to the development of a bilateral programme of consultation and cooperation under the Permanent Joint Council (PJC). However, lingering Cold War prejudices prevented the PJC from achieving its potential. Differences over the Kosovo air campaign also impacted on relations. However, Russia played a notable diplomatic role in resolving the Kosovo crisis and deployed peacekeepers to support the Kosovo Force in June 1999. From 1999, NATO-Russia relations began to improve significantly.

In 2002, the relationship was given new impetus and substance with the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council. The decision to establish the NRC was taken in the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks, which reinforced the need for coordinated action to respond to common threats. It demonstrated the shared resolve of NATO member states and Russia to work more closely together towards the common goal of building a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic Area – a goal which was first expressed in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.

Following Russia's disproportionate military action in Georgia in early August 2008, the Alliance suspended formal meetings of the NRC and cooperation in some areas, while it considered the implications of Russia's actions for the NATO-Russia relationship.

A decision to resume formal meetings and practical cooperation was taken in 2009 and the first formal ministerial-level meeting of the NRC since the Georgia crisis took place in December 2009. Ministers agreed to improve the working methods of the NRC itself, to make it more result-oriented and politically relevant, and to launch a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges.

The Joint Review was endorsed by NRC leaders at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, where they also agreed on practical cooperation to address some of the security challenges identified. Moreover, they agreed to discuss pursuing broader missile defence cooperation.

Milestones

- 1991** Russia joins the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (later renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council), created as a forum for consultation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War; the Soviet Union actually dissolves during the inaugural meeting of this body.
- 1994** Russia joins the Partnership for Peace (PfP).
- 1996** Russian soldiers deploy as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Memorandum of understanding on civil emergency cooperation is signed.
- 1997** At a summit in Paris, Russian and Allied leaders sign the NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations,

Cooperation and Security and establish the Permanent Joint Council (PJC).

- 1998** Russia establishes a diplomatic mission to NATO. Memorandum of understanding on scientific and technological cooperation is signed.
- 1999** Russia suspends participation in the PJC for a few months because of NATO's Kosovo air campaign. Russian peacekeepers deploy as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo.
- 2000** Vladimir Putin becomes President of Russia and says he will work to rebuild relations with NATO in a "spirit of pragmatism". Broader cooperation in the PJC resumes, following a meeting of NATO and Russian foreign ministers in Florence. The nuclear submarine Kursk sinks, highlighting the need for cooperation between NATO and Russia.
- 2001** The NATO Information Office opens in Moscow. President Putin is the first world leader to call the US President after the September 11 terrorist attacks, which underscore the need for concerted international action to address terrorism and other new security threats. Russia opens its airspace to the international coalition's campaign in Afghanistan and shares relevant intelligence.
- 2002** First high-level conference on the role of the military in combating terrorism is held in Rome. NATO opens a Military Liaison Mission in Moscow. At a summit in Rome, Russian and Allied leaders sign a declaration on "NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality" and establish the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) to replace the PJC. A joint NATO-Russia Resettlement Centre opens to help discharged Russian military personnel return to civilian life. Russia hosts a multinational disaster-response exercise in Noginsk. Second high-level conference on the role of the military in combating terrorism is held in Moscow.
- 2003** NATO and Russia sign an agreement on submarine-crew rescue. An NRC meeting is held in Moscow for the first time. Russian troops withdraw from the NATO-led peacekeeping forces in the Balkans.
- 2004** The NATO Secretary General tries out a new hotline to the Russian defence minister. The first NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise takes place in Colorado Springs, United States. Agreements establish Russian military liaison offices to NATO's strategic command headquarters. Russia hosts a multinational disaster-response exercise in Kaliningrad. At an NRC meeting of foreign ministers in Istanbul, Russia offers to contribute a ship to NATO's maritime counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean, Operation Active Endeavour. Observers from NRC countries are invited to observe a Russian nuclear-weapons-accident-response field exercise near Murmansk. The first NATO interoperability courses are held in Moscow military academies. In the wake of several terrorist attacks in Russia, NRC foreign ministers approve a comprehensive NRC Action Plan on Terrorism.

NATO and Russia exchange letters, agreeing procedures to prepare the way for Russia's support for Operation Active Endeavour.

NRC foreign ministers issue a common statement concerning the conduct of the Ukrainian presidential elections.

2005 The second NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise takes place in the Netherlands.
Russia signs the PfP Status of Forces Agreement.
NRC defence ministers endorse a "Political-Military Guidance" aimed at developing, over time, interoperability between Russian and Allied forces at the strategic, operational and tactical command levels.
Russia takes part in a major NATO search-and-rescue-at sea exercise, Sorbet Royal.
A UK team helps rescue Russian sailors trapped in a submarine off the Kamchatka shore.
Observers from NRC countries are invited to observe a UK nuclear-weapons-response field exercise in Edinburgh.
Russian teachers and instructors from the General Staff Academy give the first interoperability courses at the NATO School in Oberammergau.
The NRC launches a pilot project on counter-narcotics training for Afghan and Central Asian personnel.

2006 NRC foreign ministers meeting in Sofia agree a set of priorities and recommendations to guide the NRC's future work.
Observers from NRC countries are invited to observe a US nuclear-weapons-response field exercise in Wyoming.
The third NRC theatre missile defence command post exercise takes place in Moscow.
An NRC civil emergency exercise takes place in Montelibretti, Italy.
The first Russian frigate deploys to the Mediterranean to support Operation Active Endeavour.

2007 Observers from NRC countries are invited to observe a French nuclear-weapons-response field exercise.
Russian parliament ratifies the PfP Status of Forces Agreement.
10th anniversary of the Founding Act and 5th anniversary of the NRC.
A second Russian frigate deploys in active support of Operation Active Endeavour.

2008 A computer-assisted exercise takes place in Germany under the NRC theatre missile defence project.
In support of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation in Afghanistan, Russia offers transit to ISAF contributors.
Russia takes part in a major NATO search-and-rescue-at sea exercise, Bold Monarch.
Following Russia's disproportionate military action in Georgia in early August 2008, formal meetings of the NRC and cooperation in some areas are suspended. Cooperation continues in key areas of common interest, such as counter-narcotics and the fight against terrorism.
NATO foreign ministers, meeting in December, agree to pursue a phased and measured approach to re-engagement with Russia.

2009 NATO foreign ministers, meeting in March, decide to resume formal meetings and practical cooperation under the NRC.

In December, at the first formal NRC ministerial since the Georgia crisis, foreign ministers take steps to reinvigorate

NRC cooperation and agree to launch a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges.

2010 In June, the NRC meets for the first time in a political advisory format in Rome for a two-day informal, off-the-record exchange of views on how to make the NRC a more substance-based forum.
In July, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola visits Moscow to discuss the implementation of NRC military-to-military cooperation with the Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, Army General Nikolay Makarov and his staff.
In September, the NRC foreign ministers meet in New York to chart the way forward in relations and cooperation.
In early November, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen visits Russia for meetings with President Dmitry Medvedev and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to prepare for the upcoming NRC summit meeting in Lisbon.
At the Lisbon Summit, NRC leaders pledge to "work towards achieving a true strategic and modernized partnership". They endorse a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges and agreed to resume cooperation in the area of theatre missile defence as well as to develop a comprehensive joint analysis of the future framework for broader missile defence cooperation. They also agree on a number of initiatives to assist in the stabilization of Afghanistan and the wider region.

2011 In April, NRC foreign ministers meet in Berlin to discuss the situation in Libya and Afghanistan, as well as ongoing work on outlining the future framework for missile defence cooperation between Russia and NATO. They launch the NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund to support the Afghan security forces' helicopter fleet, and also approve an updated NRC Action Plan on Terrorism.
In May, a NATO-Russia Council Consolidated Glossary of Cooperation (NRC-CGC) is launched, containing over 7000 agreed terms in Russian and English and covers almost all key areas of NATO-Russia political and military cooperation.

In June, for the first time in three years, the NRC defence ministers meet in Brussels to discuss a broad range of defence issues; a Russian submarine takes active part in NATO exercise "Bold Monarch 2011"; joint exercise "Vigilant Skies 2011" demonstrates the operational readiness of the NRC Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI); an NRC conference on the protection of critical infrastructure takes place in Turkey; NATO and Russia participate in a table top exercise dealing with a nuclear weapon incident scenario.

In July, the NRC meets in Sochi, Russia, at the invitation of the Russian authorities, and also meets Russian President Medvedev. NRC ambassadors restate their commitment to pursuing cooperation on missile defence as well as cooperation in other security areas of common interest.
In October, a seminar on national nuclear doctrines and strategies takes place in Germany.

In December, NRC foreign ministers meet in Brussels to discuss international security issues and NRC practical cooperation, including on Afghanistan, counter-piracy and counter-terrorism. They approve the NRC Work Programme 2012 and announce that the Cooperative Airspace Initiative is ready to initiate operations.

2012 In January, Army General Nikolay Makarov, the Russian Chief of General Staff, visits Allied Command Operations in Mons, Belgium.

In March, the fifth theatre missile defence (TMD) computer-assisted exercise is conducted in Germany; a first civilian-military NRC counter-terrorism table top exercise is organized at NATO Headquarters.

In April, the first training course for Afghan Air Force helicopter-maintenance staff gets underway in Novosibirsk under the NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund Project; NRC foreign ministers meet in Brussels to discuss NRC practical cooperation.

In May, NATO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Alexander Vershbow attends a conference on missile defence organized by Russia's Ministry of Defence.

Russia sends special representative to participate in the expanded ISAF meeting at the Chicago Summit.

May marks the 15th anniversary of the Founding Act and 10th anniversary of the NRC.

June 2012

For more in-depth information and videos on NATO's relations with Russia go to the A-Z index at:

www.nato.int/a-z

Please visit the E-bookshop for NATO info products:

www.nato.int/ebookshop

NATO Public Diplomacy Division - 1110 Brussels, Belgium - www.nato.int - infoproducts@hq.nato.int