

## NATO's Response to the Threats Posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction

NATO Allies are deeply concerned by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD), as well as their means of delivery. States and non-state actors are increasingly using, or seeking, WMD that threaten our populations, territory, and forces. Addressing these threats remains an urgent international priority. WMD proliferation continues to have incalculable consequences for national, regional and global security, especially in volatile regions. These negative trends are likely to continue in the future.

### NATO's policies to curb WMD proliferation

NATO works to prevent WMD proliferation through an active political agenda across the arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation domains, as well as through defence and deterrence. Allies develop and harmonize their WMD policies and work in concert in various international fora to curb proliferation. Allies also cooperate to create CBRN defence capabilities, and, when necessary, employ them, consistent with political decisions. Curbing proliferation requires a combination of political and military efforts. It also requires Allies to develop resilience in the face of potential WMD use. These lines of effort are part of a comprehensive approach that requires engagement and cooperation with NATO partners and international organizations. The basis for NATO's approach is outlined in the 2009 "Comprehensive, Strategic-Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of WMD and Defending against CBRN Threats," which was endorsed by heads of state and government at the recent Brussels 2018 Summit.

### Improving CBRN defence capabilities

NATO continues to improve its CBRN defence posture through development of different capabilities. These capabilities include the Combined Joint CBRN Defence Task Force (CJ-CBRND-TF), the NATO CBRN Reachback Capability, the Joint CBRN Defence Centre of Excellence (JCBRN Defence COE), and the Defence against Terrorism Center of Excellence. Allies continue to invest significant resources in capabilities ranging from CBRN reconnaissance and decontamination, to warning and reporting, individual protection, bio-medical protection, and CBRN hazard management. Further, the Alliance has a short-term goal to develop an initial WMD disablement capability by 2022. Many of the above referenced CBRN defence capabilities will be an integral part of WMD disablement.

### The NATO Combined Joint CBRN Defence Task Force

The CJ-CBRND-TF is designed to perform a full range of CBRN defence missions. It comprises a multinational CBRN Defence Battalion and a Joint Assessment Team. Under normal circumstances, the Task Force operates within the NATO Response Force (NRF), which is a multinational force designed to respond rapidly to emerging crises across the full spectrum of Alliance missions. However, the Task Force also operates independently of the NRF on other tasks, as required.



## Joint Centre of Excellence on CBRN Defence

The JCBRN Defence COE in Vyškov, Czech Republic, was created in July 2007. The COE offers recognised expertise and experience in the field of CBRN for the benefit of the Alliance. Its activities aim to improve interoperability and capabilities by enhancing multinational education, training and exercises; assisting in concept, doctrine, procedures and standards development; and testing and validating concepts through experimentation. It also integrates a CBRN Reachback Element (RBE), which provides expertise, assessments, and advice to NATO, including its deployed forces, during the planning and execution of operations and exercises. The RBE, together with its secondary network, can operate 24/7 if needed.

## Improving civil preparedness

National authorities are primarily responsible for protecting their populations and critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks, CBRN incidents, and natural disasters. Within NATO, Allies have agreed baseline requirements for national resilience and are developing guidelines to help Allies achieve them. The Alliance also serves as a forum to exchange best practices and lessons learned to improve preparedness and national resilience. For instance, NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) can play a coordinating role in a response to a potential CBRN incident. It also organizes major international field exercises to practice responding to simulated disaster situations and consequence management.

## International outreach and cooperation with partners

The Alliance engages actively to enhance international security through cooperation with NATO Partners and relevant international organizations. NATO's partnership programmes provide effective framework for dialogue, consultation and coordination on WMD non-proliferation and CBRN defence. NATO's Science for Peace and Security Programme helps Allies and partner countries to develop technologies and concepts to address WMD threats, including CBRN detection. Consultation and cooperation with NATO Partners occurs regularly in the Committee on Proliferation, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, and other political and military committees. The Alliance also works with international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Only by working together can we make Allies safer.



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