

NATO-Georgia relations



Georgia is an aspirant for NATO membership. It actively contributes to NATO-led operations and cooperates with Allies and other partner countries in many other areas. At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, Allied Heads of State and Government agreed that Georgia will become a member of NATO. This decision was subsequently reconfirmed at successive NATO Summits in 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2014.

The NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC) provides the framework for cooperation between NATO and Georgia. Created in September 2008, the NGC serves as a forum for both political consultations and practical cooperation to help Georgia advance its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Cooperation programmes take place within the framework of the NGC.

In December 2008, NATO foreign ministers decided to further enhance the NGC through the development of an Annual National Programme (ANP). In addition to Georgia's contributions to Euro-Atlantic peace and stability, key areas of cooperation under the Annual National Programme include political, military and security-sector reforms. NATO agrees to support Georgia in these reforms by providing focused and comprehensive advice and activities in several frameworks (both civilian and military) towards its reform goals.

Substantial NATO-Georgia Package

At the 2014 Wales Summit, Allied Heads of State and Government endorsed the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package. The Package aims to strengthen Georgia's defences and ability to work side-by-side with NATO forces. It involves advice and training, strengthened liaison, multi-national exercises and enhanced interoperability opportunities. These measures will help Georgia advance in its preparations for membership in the Alliance.

One major initiative, the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre, was inaugurated in Tbilisi on 27 August 2015. The Centre is assisting Georgia in reforming, modernising and strengthening its security and defence sector. The Centre will also be open to partner countries. It will offer multi-national training and exercise opportunities, fostering cooperation between forces from Georgia, NATO and interested partner countries. Through regional training opportunities, the Centre will also contribute to promoting regional stability in the Black Sea and Caucasus region.

The first training exercises started in spring 2016.

Georgia has solid experience from its outstanding participation in NATO operations and missions. Georgia also has longstanding expertise in hosting multinational exercises. In July 2015, Georgia hosted the 2015 edition of Exercise Agile Spirit. Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, and Romania participated with troops. Armenia and Moldova were represented by military observers.

Contributions to NATO operations and missions

Georgia is the second largest contributor to the current NATO-led Resolute Support Mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in Afghanistan. The Georgian government has also pledged financial support for the long-term sustainment of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. Georgia was the largest non-NATO troop contributor to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which came to an end in December 2014.

Georgia also supports Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's counter-terrorism maritime surveillance operation in the Mediterranean. It contributes to the 2015 rotation of the NATO Response Force (NRF), and has committed to continue to contribute to the NRF in subsequent years as well.



Making use of Partnership tools

Georgia cooperates with NATO and other partner countries in a wide range of areas through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

In parallel with the establishment of the NATO-Georgia Commission, the Military Committee with Georgia was also created for meetings focused on military cooperation. The principal aim of NATO-Georgia military cooperation is to assist Georgia with strategic planning, defence reforms and with the implementation of military and defence-related issues of the Annual National Programme (ANP). The work of the Military Committee with Georgia also helps to increase interoperability in support of Georgia's contributions to NATO-led operations. The Military Committee with Georgia Work Plan defines key areas and objectives for military cooperation between NATO and the Georgian Armed Forces.

Georgia's participation in the Planning and Review Process (PARP) since 1999 has helped develop the ability of Georgia's forces to work with NATO and is also providing planning targets that are key to security reform objectives in several areas. NATO support has, for example, helped Georgia build units that are deployable according to NATO standards and interoperable with Allied forces.

Georgia's defence reform objectives within the Planning and Review Process have facilitated improved financial management in the Ministry of Defence, assisted in reforming the intelligence structure of the armed forces and ensured that a credible Strategic Defence Review was conducted.

One priority in the area of defence and security-sector reform has been to support demilitarization and training projects in Georgia, through the NATO/PfP Trust Fund mechanism. This mechanism allows individual Allies and partner countries to provide financial support to key projects in partner countries on a voluntary basis.

Over the years, a number of Trust Fund projects have helped to address problems posed by stockpiles of surplus and obsolete weapons and munitions, and promoted their safe disposal. Currently, the Czech Republic and Lithuania are leading the Georgia IV Trust Fund, which aims to clear mines and unexploded munitions from the ammunition depot at Skra in Georgia.

Georgia also participates in the Building Integrity (BI) programme that is tailored to provide practical assistance and advice to strengthening integrity, accountability and transparency in the defence and security sector. Georgia has implemented many of the suggestions made under the Building Integrity programme and is also sharing its experiences with other partner countries.

Training and Education

Defence education and training is also a key objective of NATO-Georgia cooperation. NATO is leading a tailored programme for Georgia – the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) – with the support of the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes, which are formed by the Partnerships Training and Education Centres and Allied defence institutions.

The Defence Education Enhancement Programme focuses primarily on the development of the National Defence Academy of Georgia. Georgia has a mountain training site, which is accredited as a Partnership Training and Education Centre and offers courses and training to Allies and other partner countries.

Following Georgia's request in 2008, NATO and Georgia launched a Professional Development Programme for Civilian Personnel in the Ministry of Defence and other Security Institutions in Georgia. The programme, launched in 2009, provides training with the aim of strengthening the capacity for democratic management and oversight in the Ministry of Defence, as well as other security sector institutions. Current priorities are to support Georgia's civil service reform and enhance Georgia's own capacity for providing training to security sector civilian personnel.

Finally, a NATO Liaison Office was established in Tbilisi in 2010 to assist and support Georgia's reform efforts.

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