

NATO-Afghanistan relations



NATO is strongly committed to its mission in Afghanistan. NATO's support to Afghanistan is focused on three main areas:

- the NATO-led Resolute Support mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces and institutions;
- funding of the Afghan security forces as part of a broader international effort;
- and the NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership, which is being developed jointly with the Government of Afghanistan.

Resolute Support Mission

Resolute Support is a NATO-led, non-combat mission. It was launched on 1 January 2015, following the conclusion of the previous NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, and the assumption of full security responsibility by the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF). Its purpose is to help the Afghan security forces and institutions develop the capacity to defend Afghanistan and protect its citizens in a sustainable manner.

The Resolute Support Mission currently comprises around 13,000 personnel from 39 NATO Allies and partners. It operates with one 'hub' (Kabul/Bagram) and four 'spokes' (Mazar-e-Sharif in the north, Herat in the west, Kandahar in the south, and Laghman in the east).

The Resolute Support Mission focuses primarily on training, advice and assistance activities at the security-related ministries, in the country's institutions, and among the senior ranks of the army and police. The Resolute Support Mission works closely with different elements of the Afghan army, police, and air force. The Commander of the mission has a degree of flexibility in the use of personnel and assets at his disposal. This ensures that training, advice and assistance are delivered most effectively and where they are most needed.

The mission performs supporting functions in several areas. These include: operational planning; budgetary development; force generation process; management and development of personnel; logistical sustainment; and civilian oversight (in order to ensure the Afghan security forces and institutions act in accordance with the rule of law and good governance).

At the NATO Summit in Warsaw on 8-9 July 2016, Heads of State and Government decided to sustain the Resolute Support Mission beyond 2016, using a flexible, regional model which would continue to deliver training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security institutions, including the police, the air force, and special operations forces. They also committed to keeping the mission and its design under review.

This year, ahead of the meeting of NATO Leaders in Brussels on 25 May, Allies and Resolute Support operational partners reaffirmed the decisions taken in Warsaw. They noted that the ANDSF are improving, whilst still requiring support; and they agreed to continue sustaining the Resolute Support Mission and to keep it under review.

At the next meeting on 9 November 2017, Defence Ministers from all of the 39 troop contributing nations to the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission are expected to take stock of the progress that the Afghan security forces and institutions continue to make. They are also expected to reaffirm NATO and partners commitment to keep Resolute Support under review and to maintain a conditions-based approach in our support to Afghanistan. Finally, they are expected to decide on what more needs to be done to strengthen our efforts to train, advise, and assist the Afghan army, police, and air force so that we can continue to support our Afghan partners in the most effective way. This will help prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for international terrorism and to pave the way for a lasting, negotiated political solution.





Financial support for the Afghan security forces

Chief responsibility for financial support of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces rests with the Afghan government. At the Chicago Summit in 2012, the Afghan authorities agreed to provide at least 500 million USD per year initially, with this contribution increasing steadily over time. At the same time, NATO and partner nations continue to play an important role in financially supporting the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

One of the main pillars of this effort is the NATO-run Afghanistan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund, first established in 2007. The ANA Trust Fund is one of three funding streams used by the international community to channel its financial support to Afghanistan's security forces and institutions. The other two are the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United States Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF).

Following a decision made at the NATO Summit in Chicago, the ANA Trust Fund has been adapted to make it more flexible, transparent, accountable and cost-effective.

Total contributions to the NATO-run Afghanistan National Army Trust Fund to date amount to around 2 billion USD. Yearly contributions to the ANA Trust Fund and to the LOTFA are around 1 billion USD.

At the Warsaw Summit, NATO Allies and Resolute Support Mission partners committed to giving financial support to the Afghan security forces until 2020, as part of the broader effort by the international community. The Afghan authorities will continue to maintain and increase financial contributions to support their army and police forces.



NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership

The Declaration on an Enduring Partnership was signed at the NATO Lisbon Summit in 2010, by NATO and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Enduring Partnership provides a framework for long-term political consultations and practical cooperation between NATO and Afghanistan.

The Enduring Partnership includes a series of mutually-agreed programmes, many of which support capacity building and military education such as NATO's Building Integrity (BI) programme – which provides practical tools to strengthen integrity, transparency and accountability – and the Defence Education Enhancement Programme. Other areas of practical cooperation include supporting the normalisation of the aviation sector, civil emergency planning and disaster preparedness, and continued public diplomacy efforts.

At the NATO Summit in Wales in 2014, Afghanistan, NATO and Resolute Support partners agreed to strengthen the Enduring Partnership, by enhancing practical cooperation – including by building up the capacity of Afghan security institutions – as well as political dialogue, and regular consultations on a range of topics of mutual interest.

At their Summit in Warsaw in July 2016, NATO leaders committed to strengthen and enhance the Enduring Partnership. The enhanced Partnership recognises the strategic importance of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan and underscores the commitment to global partnerships outlined in the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept. It is intended as a bridge towards a more traditional partnership between NATO and Afghanistan in the longer term.

Afghanistan still faces many challenges, including a difficult security environment. In concert with the efforts of the international community, NATO and its partners remain committed to Afghanistan and its people as they pursue a secure and stable future.



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