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NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

Vilnius Summit Communiqué

Issued by NATO Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Vilnius 11 July 2023

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The NATO Invitee associates itself with this Communiqué.

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Alliance, bound by shared values of individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, have gathered in Vilnius as war continues on the European continent, to reaffirm our enduring transatlantic bond, unity, cohesion, and solidarity at a critical time for our security and international peace and stability. NATO is a defensive Alliance. It is the unique, essential and indispensable transatlantic forum to consult, coordinate and act on all matters related to our individual and collective security. We reaffirm our iron-clad commitment to defend each other and every inch of Allied territory at all times, protect our one billion citizens, and safeguard our freedom and democracy, in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. We will continue to ensure our collective defence from all threats, no matter where they stem from, based on a 360-degree approach, to fulfil NATO's three core tasks of deterrence and defence, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security. We adhere to international law and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and are committed to upholding the rules-based international order. This Summit marks a milestone in strengthening our Alliance.

2. We warmly welcome President Zelenskyy to the inaugural meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Council. We look forward to our valuable exchanges with the Heads of State and Government of Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea, as well as the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission at this Summit. We also welcome the engagements with the Foreign Ministers of Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, and with the Deputy Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as we

continue to consult closely on the implementation of NATO's tailored support measures.

3. We welcome Finland as the newest member of our Alliance. This is an historic step for Finland and for NATO. For many years, we worked closely as partners; we now stand together as Allies. NATO membership makes Finland safer, and NATO stronger.

4. We reaffirm our commitment to NATO's Open Door policy and to Article 10 of the Washington Treaty. Every nation has the right to choose its own security arrangements. We look forward to welcoming Sweden as a full member of the Alliance and, in this regard, welcome the agreement reached between the NATO Secretary General, the President of Türkiye, and the Prime Minister of Sweden.

5. Peace in the Euro-Atlantic area has been shattered. The Russian Federation has violated the norms and principles that contributed to a stable and predictable European security order. The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, is the most direct asymmetric threat to the security of our citizens and to international peace and prosperity. The threats we face are global and interconnected.

6. Strategic competition, pervasive instability and recurrent shocks define our broader security environment. Conflict, fragility and instability in Africa and the Middle East directly affect our security and the security of our partners. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values. We remain open to constructive engagement with the PRC, including to build reciprocal transparency, with a view to safeguarding the Alliance's security interests. We continue to be confronted by cyber, space, hybrid and other asymmetric threats, and by the malicious use of emerging and disruptive technologies.

7. Russia bears full responsibility for its illegal, unjustifiable, and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, which has gravely undermined Euro-Atlantic and global security and for which it must be held fully accountable. We continue to condemn in the strongest terms Russia's blatant violations of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, and OSCE commitments and principles. We do not and will never recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexations, including Crimea. There can be no impunity for Russian war crimes and other atrocities, such as attacks against civilians and the destruction of civilian infrastructure that deprives millions of Ukrainians of basic human services. All those responsible must be held accountable for violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law, particularly against Ukraine's civilian population, including the forced deportation of children and conflict-related sexual violence. The destruction of the Kakhovka dam highlights the brutal consequences of the war started by Russia. Russia's war has had a profound impact on the environment, nuclear safety, energy and food security, the global economy, and the welfare of billions of people around the world. Allies are working to enable exports of Ukrainian grain and actively support international efforts to alleviate the

global food crisis.

8. Russia must immediately stop this illegal war of aggression, cease its use of force against Ukraine, and completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its forces and equipment from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, extending to its territorial waters. We urge all countries not to provide any kind of assistance to Russia's aggression and condemn all those who are actively facilitating Russia's war. Belarus' support has been instrumental as it continues to provide its territory and infrastructure to allow Russian forces to attack Ukraine and sustain Russia's aggression. In particular Belarus, but also Iran, must end their complicity with Russia and return to compliance with international law.

9. We welcome the strong support in the UN General Assembly for efforts to promote a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine. We welcome and support President Zelensky's commitment in setting out the principles for such a peace through his Peace Formula. We are committed to achieving a just and lasting peace that upholds the principles of the UN Charter, in particular sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. We underline that this cannot be realised without Russia's complete and unconditional withdrawal. While we have called on Russia to engage constructively in credible negotiations with Ukraine, Russia has not shown any genuine openness to a just and lasting peace.

10. We reaffirm our unwavering solidarity with the government and people of Ukraine in the heroic defence of their nation, their land, and our shared values. We fully support Ukraine's inherent right to self-defence as enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter. We remain steadfast in our commitment to further step up political and practical support to Ukraine as it continues to defend its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, and will continue our support for as long as it takes. We welcome efforts of all Allies and partners engaged in providing support to Ukraine.

11. We fully support Ukraine's right to choose its own security arrangements. Ukraine's future is in NATO. We reaffirm the commitment we made at the 2008 Summit in Bucharest that Ukraine will become a member of NATO, and today we recognise that Ukraine's path to full Euro-Atlantic integration has moved beyond the need for the Membership Action Plan. Ukraine has become increasingly interoperable and politically integrated with the Alliance, and has made substantial progress on its reform path. In line with the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine and the 2009 Complement, Allies will continue to support and review Ukraine's progress on interoperability as well as additional democratic and security sector reforms that are required. NATO Foreign Ministers will regularly assess progress through the adapted Annual National Programme. The Alliance will support Ukraine in making these reforms on its path towards future membership. We will be in a position to extend an invitation to Ukraine to join the Alliance when Allies agree and conditions are met.

12. The security of Ukraine is of great importance to Allies and the Alliance. To support Ukraine's further integration with NATO, today we have agreed a substantial package of expanded political and practical support. We have decided to establish the NATO-Ukraine Council, a new joint body where Allies and Ukraine sit as equal members to advance political dialogue, engagement, cooperation, and Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. It will provide for joint consultations, decision-making, and activities, and will also serve as a crisis consultation mechanism between NATO and Ukraine.

13. The continued delivery of urgently needed non-lethal assistance to Ukraine by NATO through the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP) remains a priority. Since the Madrid Summit, Allies and partners have committed over 500 million Euros to the CAP. To support Ukraine's deterrence and defence in the short, medium, and long term, we have agreed today to further develop the CAP into a multi-year programme for Ukraine. The assistance provided will help rebuild the Ukrainian security and defence sector and transition Ukraine towards full interoperability with NATO. Allies will continue to fund the CAP in a sustained and predictable way. We highly welcome and encourage partner contributions.

14. Russia has increased its multi-domain military build-up and presence in the Baltic, Black, and Mediterranean Sea regions, and maintains significant military capabilities in the Arctic. Russia's more assertive posture, novel military capabilities, and provocative activities, including near NATO borders, as well as its large-scale no-notice and snap exercises, continue to threaten the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. In the High North, its capability to disrupt Allied reinforcements and freedom of navigation across the North Atlantic is a strategic challenge to the Alliance. NATO and Allies will continue to undertake necessary, calibrated, and coordinated activities, including by exercising relevant plans.

15. Russia's deepening military integration with Belarus, including the deployment of advanced Russian military capabilities and military personnel in Belarus, has implications for regional stability and the defence of the Alliance. NATO will remain vigilant and further monitor developments closely, in particular the potential deployment of so-called private military companies to Belarus. We call on Belarus to stop its malign activities against its neighbours, to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to abide by international law.

16. Russia is modernising its nuclear forces, including its large stockpile of theatre-range weapons, and expanding its novel and disruptive dual-capable delivery systems. It is unacceptable that Russia uses such dual-capable systems to attack civilians and critical civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. We condemn Russia's announced intention to deploy nuclear weapons and nuclear-capable systems on Belarusian territory, which further demonstrates how Russia's repeated actions undermine strategic stability and overall security in the Euro-Atlantic area. We condemn Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and coercive nuclear signalling. We recall the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear Weapons

States issued on 3 January 2022 on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races. We call on Russia to recommit – in words and deeds – to the principles enshrined in that Statement.

17. Russia's actions demonstrate a posture of strategic intimidation and underline the continued need for NATO to monitor all of these developments and adapt its posture as necessary. Allies will continue to work closely together to address the threats and challenges posed by Russia and reiterate that any use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear weapons by Russia would be met with severe consequences.

18. Russia has intensified its hybrid actions against NATO Allies and partners, including through proxies. This includes interference in democratic processes, political and economic coercion, widespread disinformation campaigns, malicious cyber activities, and illegal and disruptive activities of Russian intelligence services. We are enhancing the tools at our disposal to counter Russian hybrid actions and will ensure that the Alliance and Allies are prepared to deter and defend against hybrid attacks.

19. We seek stability and predictability in the Euro-Atlantic area and between NATO and Russia. NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia. In light of its hostile policies and actions, we cannot consider Russia to be our partner. Any change in our relationship depends on Russia halting its aggressive behaviour and fully complying with international law. We remain willing to keep open channels of communication with Moscow to manage and mitigate risks, prevent escalation, and increase transparency. At the same time, we will continue to consult on and assess the implications of Russia's policies and actions for our security, and respond to Russian threats and hostile actions in a united and responsible way.

20. We categorically reject and condemn terrorism in the strongest possible terms. Countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is essential to our collective defence. NATO's role in the fight against terrorism contributes to all three core tasks of the Alliance and is integral to the Alliance's 360-degree approach to deterrence and defence. Allies will continue to fight this threat with determination, resolve, and in solidarity. As part of a broader effort to better respond collectively to this threat, we will further develop Allies' capabilities, and continue to engage with the Global Coalition to Defeat Da'esh and with partner countries in order to support their efforts and to help them build their capacity to counter terrorism. NATO will also continue to engage, as appropriate, with other international actors to ensure added value and complementarity.

21. Terrorist organisations threaten the security of our populations, forces and territory. They have expanded their networks, enhanced their capabilities and invested in new technologies to improve their reach and lethality. We will continue to deter, defend and respond to threats and challenges posed by terrorist groups, based on a combination of prevention, protection and denial measures. We have today tasked the Council in permanent session to update NATO's Policy Guidelines and Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism, and

reassess, in consultation with our regional partners, the areas where NATO can provide civil-military assistance to partners in this field. Our approach to terrorism, and its causes, is in accordance with international law and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and upholds all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions on the fight against terrorism.

22. NATO's southern neighbourhood, particularly the Middle East, North Africa and Sahel regions, faces interconnected security, demographic, economic, and political challenges. These are aggravated by the impact of climate change, fragile institutions, health emergencies, and food insecurity. This situation provides fertile ground for the proliferation of non-state armed groups, including terrorist organisations. It also enables destabilising and coercive interference by strategic competitors. Russia is fuelling tensions and instability across these regions. Pervasive instability results in violence against civilians, including conflict-related sexual violence, as well as attacks against cultural property and environmental damage. It contributes to forced displacement, fuelling human trafficking and irregular migration. These trends pose serious transnational and humanitarian challenges and have a disproportionate impact on women, children, and minorities. In response to the profound implications of these threats and challenges within and in the vicinity of the Euro-Atlantic area, we have today tasked the North Atlantic Council in permanent session to launch a comprehensive and deep reflection on existing and emerging threats and challenges, and opportunities for engagements with our partner nations, international organisations, and other relevant actors in the region, to be presented by our next Summit in 2024.

23. The People's Republic of China's stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values. The PRC employs a broad range of political, economic, and military tools to increase its global footprint and project power, while remaining opaque about its strategy, intentions and military build-up. The PRC's malicious hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric and disinformation target Allies and harm Alliance security. The PRC seeks to control key technological and industrial sectors, critical infrastructure, and strategic materials and supply chains. It uses its economic leverage to create strategic dependencies and enhance its influence. It strives to subvert the rules-based international order, including in the space, cyber and maritime domains.

24. We remain open to constructive engagement with the PRC, including to build reciprocal transparency, with a view to safeguarding the Alliance's security interests. We are working together responsibly, as Allies, to address the systemic challenges posed by the PRC to Euro-Atlantic security and ensure NATO's enduring ability to guarantee the defence and security of Allies. We are boosting our shared awareness, enhancing our resilience and preparedness, and protecting against the PRC's coercive tactics and efforts to divide the Alliance. We will stand up for our shared values and the rules-based international order, including freedom of navigation.

25. The deepening strategic partnership between the PRC and Russia and their mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order run counter to our values and interests. We call on the PRC to play a constructive role as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, to condemn Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, to abstain from supporting Russia's war effort in any way, to cease amplifying Russia's false narrative blaming Ukraine and NATO for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and to adhere to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. We particularly call on the PRC to act responsibly and refrain from providing any lethal aid to Russia.

26. In 2014, at the Wales Summit Allied Heads of State and Government agreed the Defence Investment Pledge. Since then Allies have made remarkable progress and all have increased their defence spending, developed further their forces and capabilities, and have contributed to Allied operations, missions and activities. However, as the Strategic Concept sets out, our nations are now facing more profound security threats and challenges than at any time since the end of the Cold War.

27. Consistent with our obligations under Article 3 of the Washington Treaty, we make an enduring commitment to invest at least 2% of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annually on defence. We do so recognising more is needed urgently to sustainably meet our commitments as NATO Allies, including to fulfil longstanding major equipment requirements and the NATO Capability Targets, to resource NATO's new defence plans and force model, as well as to contribute to NATO operations, missions and activities. We affirm that in many cases, expenditure beyond 2% of GDP will be needed in order to remedy existing shortfalls and meet the requirements across all domains arising from a more contested security order.

28. We commit to invest at least 20% of our defence budgets on major equipment, including related Research and Development. We recognise this should be met in conjunction with a minimum of 2% of GDP annual defence expenditure. We need to maintain our technological edge, and continue to modernise and reform our forces and capabilities, including through the integration of innovative technologies.

29. We commit to contribute the necessary forces, capabilities and resources to the full range of NATO operations, missions and activities. This includes meeting requirements for deterrence and defence, providing the forces needed to implement NATO's defence plans and contribute to NATO crisis management operations. Allies will ensure that our forces are ready and have the necessary personnel, equipment, training, spares, logistics, infrastructure, and stockpiles. We commit to improve the interoperability of our national forces, including through transparent compliance with, and further development of, NATO standards and doctrines.

30. To have the necessary capabilities, the Alliance requires a strong and capable defence industry, with resilient supply chains. A strong defence industry across the Alliance, including a stronger defence industry in Europe and greater defence industrial cooperation within

Europe and across the Atlantic, remains essential for delivering the required capabilities. Furthermore, consistent with our commitments, obligations and processes, we will reduce and eliminate, as appropriate, obstacles to defence trade and investment among Allies.

31. NATO is the foundation of our collective defence. NATO's key purpose and greatest responsibility is to ensure our collective defence, against all threats, from all directions. NATO will continue to fulfil three core tasks: deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security. These are complementary to ensure the collective defence and security of all Allies.

32. Deterrence and defence are at the heart of the Alliance, underpinned by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and an enduring transatlantic bond. We are modernising NATO for a new era of collective defence. We are united in our commitment and resolve to prevail against any aggressor and defend every inch of Allied territory.

33. Guided by our sovereign decisions, and in response to the threats we face, we remain vigilant and stand together in solidarity ensuring a substantial and persistent presence of our military forces across the Alliance on land, in the air and at sea, in line with our 360-degree approach. NATO's deterrence and defence posture is based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities, complemented by space and cyber capabilities. It is defensive, proportionate and fully in line with our international commitments. We will employ military and non-military tools in a proportionate, coherent and integrated way to respond to all threats to our security in the manner, timing and in the domain of our choosing.

34. In response to a radically changed security environment, we are strengthening NATO's collective defence, against all threats, from all directions. We cannot discount the possibility of an attack against Allies' sovereignty and territorial integrity. Since 2014, and in particular at the 2022 Madrid Summit, we have taken decisions to strengthen our posture and set a clear trajectory for accelerated military adaptation. Today, we have agreed significant measures to further enhance NATO's deterrence and defence posture in all domains, including strengthening forward defences and the Alliance's ability to rapidly reinforce any Ally that comes under threat. We will fully implement these measures and deny any potential adversary any possible opportunities for aggression. We have:

- Put in place a new generation of regional defence plans, building on our existing strategic and domain-specific plans. Together this family of plans will significantly improve our ability and readiness to deter and defend against any threats, including on short or no notice, and ensure timely reinforcement of all Allies, in line with our 360-degree approach. To a greater extent than at any time since the end of the Cold War, the planning for our collective defence will be fully coherent with the planning for our forces, posture management, capabilities, and command and control. We have committed to fully resource and regularly exercise these plans to be prepared for high-

intensity and multi-domain collective defence.

- Agreed that our defence plans are the main driver for the organisation of our forces and the specific military requirements NATO asks of them, allowing us to respond faster and at a greater scale. With the new NATO Force Model, agreed at the Madrid Summit, Allies are delivering a larger pool of dedicated combat-capable forces, including forces at high readiness, improving our military responsiveness, and harnessing regional expertise and geographic proximity. We are also establishing a new multinational and multi-domain Allied Reaction Force, which will provide more options to respond swiftly to threats and crises in all directions. We are committed to provide the necessary forces and capabilities in full.
- Agreed to strengthen NATO's command and control, to ensure that it is sufficiently agile, resilient and staffed to execute our plans. This will improve our ability to conduct exercises, to manage NATO's posture in peacetime and in the transition to crisis and conflict, and to undertake command and control for the full spectrum of missions, including large-scale multi-domain operations for collective defence, conducted by SHAPE and its subordinate commands, including the three equally capable Joint Force Commands.
- Reaffirmed our decisions at the Madrid Summit to put in place additional robust in-place combat-ready forces on NATO's Eastern Flank, to be scaled up from the existing battlegroups to brigade-size units where and when required, underpinned by credible rapidly available reinforcements, prepositioned equipment, and enhanced command and control. The eight multinational battlegroups are now in place. We will continue our efforts to implement these decisions, including by demonstrating the ability to scale up our military presence through robust live exercises across the Eastern Flank of the Alliance. We welcome ongoing efforts by Allies to increase their presence on NATO's Eastern Flank, which further adds to credible deterrence and defence. All these forces demonstrate our resolve and readiness to defend every inch of Allied territory.
- Agreed to further improve the readiness, preparedness, and interoperability of NATO's Integrated Air and Missile Defence, in particular through regular training and rotational presence of modern air defence systems and capabilities across SACEUR's Area of Responsibility, with an initial focus on the Eastern Flank, thereby strengthening our deterrence.
- Agreed to continue our work on multi-domain operations, enabled by NATO's Digital Transformation, which further drives our military and technological advantage,

strengthening the Alliance's ability to operate decisively across the land, air, maritime, cyberspace and space domains.

35. We welcome the rapid progress towards the full integration of Finland into NATO's deterrence and defence, and have agreed to complete this process as soon as possible.

36. We need a robust and resilient defence industry able to sustainably meet the need of significantly strengthened collective defence. We have endorsed a Defence Production Action Plan, and its action items. This Plan will ensure long-term NATO engagement across the Alliance based on the principles of transparency, equitable treatment and inclusive participation. With this Plan, and in support of Allies' own priorities, we are committed to leveraging the Alliance's role as a convener, standard-setter, requirement setter and aggregator, and delivery enabler to promote sustainable defence industrial capacity. This will be underpinned by a renewed and urgent focus on interoperability and improving materiel standardization to ensure that our forces can operate seamlessly together, with an initial focus on land munitions. The Plan will ensure our understanding of defence industry across the Alliance, including small and medium size enterprises, help aggregate demand to meet NATO's capability targets, encourage multinational cooperation and more agile procurement, and enhance transparency with industry.

37. Our robust military capabilities are critical for NATO's deterrence and defence. We continue to invest more in advanced and interoperable capabilities across all domains, placing particular emphasis on combat capable, predominantly heavy, high-end forces and capabilities. These will reflect the requirements of NATO's defence plans and other tasks. We will ensure that these capabilities are resourced to maintain the required high levels of readiness. We continue to improve the deployability, interoperability, standardisation, responsiveness, force integration and support of our forces in order to conduct and sustain high intensity operations, including crisis response operations, in demanding environments. The NATO Defence Planning Process plays a key role in the sharing of risks and responsibilities, and we reaffirm our commitment to providing our respective shares of the capabilities required by the Alliance to fulfil our three core tasks. Our capability development plans will ensure that we maintain our technological edge, recognising the challenges and opportunities presented by emerging and disruptive technologies, while ensuring their timely integration. We have also decided to significantly increase our stockpiles of certain battle-decisive munitions.

38. We will continue to strengthen and regularly exercise the Alliance's ability to rapidly reinforce any Ally that comes under threat. Exercises are a key way of demonstrating the Alliance's resolve and capability. We are adapting and streamlining our decision-making processes and improving the effectiveness of our alert and response system.

39. We will individually and collectively deliver the full range of forces, capabilities, plans,

resources, assets and infrastructure needed for deterrence and defence, including for high-intensity, multi-domain warfighting against nuclear-armed peer-competitors. Accordingly, we will strengthen training and exercises that simulate conventional and, for Allies concerned, a nuclear dimension of a crisis or conflict, facilitating greater coherence between conventional and nuclear components of NATO's deterrence and defence posture across all domains and the entire spectrum of conflict.

40. We have accelerated our efforts, both nationally and in NATO, to ensure the enablement of SACEUR's Area of Responsibility, including logistics, and to improve our ability to support the reinforcement and sustainment of Allied forces into, across, and from the entire Alliance territory, including through prepositioning of ammunition and equipment. As part of the enablement of SACEUR's Area of Responsibility, we are taking forward our work on fuel supply distribution arrangements, as the timely provision of fuel to NATO's military forces where required in Europe underpins the Alliance's readiness and responsiveness. We recognise that the changed security environment represents a more demanding challenge to the Alliance's collective logistics and we will make political and military efforts to address this challenge, recognising that credible deterrence and defence relies on adequate logistics capability. Effective military mobility is essential for enablement and further progress is required. Efforts to ensure a coherent approach and synergies between NATO and the EU in the area of military mobility should be pursued.

41. NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) remains key for credible deterrence and defence, and the indivisible security and freedom of action of the Alliance, including NATO's capability to reinforce, and to provide a strategic response. NATO IAMD is an essential and continuous mission in peacetime, crisis, and times of conflict. NATO IAMD incorporates all measures to contribute to deter any air and missile threat or to nullify or reduce their effectiveness. This mission is conducted in a 360-degree approach, and tailored to address all air and missile threats emanating from all strategic directions from state and non-state actors.

42. Allied IAMD deployments, including those on the Eastern flank in response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine, as well as exercises and training demonstrate Allied solidarity and resolve. Based on the Strategic Concept, the new baseline for deterrence and defence posture agreed in Madrid in 2022, and the new generation of defence plans, NATO continues to strengthen its IAMD by improving IAMD readiness, responsiveness, effectiveness, and interoperability, as well as availability of airspace. NATO and Allies continue to improve IAMD capabilities, such as surveillance, interceptors, and command and control. We will continue to take into account the increasingly diverse and challenging air and missile threats ranging from simple Uncrewed Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to sophisticated hypersonic missiles.

43. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent

coercion and deter aggression. Nuclear weapons are unique. 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. The circumstances in which NATO might have to use nuclear weapons are extremely remote. Any employment of nuclear weapons against NATO would fundamentally alter the nature of a conflict. The Alliance has the capabilities and resolve to impose costs on an adversary that would be unacceptable and far outweigh the benefits that any adversary could hope to achieve.

44. The strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States, are the supreme guarantee of the security of the Alliance. The independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France have a deterrent role of their own and contribute significantly to the overall security of the Alliance. These Allies' separate centres of decision-making contribute to deterrence by complicating the calculations of potential adversaries. NATO's nuclear deterrence posture also relies on the United States' nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe. National contributions, by Allies concerned, of dual-capable aircraft, as well as the provision of conventional forces and military capabilities in support of NATO's nuclear deterrence mission, remain central to this effort.

45. NATO will take all necessary steps to ensure the credibility, effectiveness, safety and security of the nuclear deterrent mission. This includes continuing to modernise NATO's nuclear capability and updating planning to increase flexibility and adaptability of the Alliance's nuclear forces, while exercising strong political control at all times. The Alliance reaffirms the imperative to ensure the broadest possible participation by Allies concerned in NATO's nuclear burden-sharing arrangements to demonstrate Alliance unity and resolve.

46. The Alliance is committed to ensuring greater integration and coherence of capabilities and activities across all domains and the spectrum of conflict, while reaffirming the unique and distinct role of nuclear deterrence. NATO will continue to maintain credible deterrence, strengthen its strategic communications, enhance the effectiveness of its exercises and reduce strategic risks. NATO is ready and able to deter aggression and manage escalation risks in a crisis that has a nuclear dimension.

47. Missile defence can complement the role of nuclear weapons in deterrence; it cannot substitute them. The aim and political principles of NATO Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) remain unchanged from the 2010 Lisbon Summit. NATO BMD is purely defensive and is aimed at countering ballistic missile threats emanating from outside of the Euro-Atlantic area. Allies remain committed to the full development of NATO BMD, to pursue the Alliance's collective defence and to provide full coverage and protection for all NATO European populations, territory, and forces against the increasing threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

48. NATO BMD is based on voluntary national contributions, including the US European Phased Adaptive Approach assets in Romania, Türkiye, Spain, and Poland, as well as the

NATO BMD command and control, the only component eligible for common funding. Additional voluntary national contributions will provide robustness. We are committed to completing additional essential components of NATO BMD command and control, which is necessary for achieving the next major milestone before reaching the Full Operational Capability.

49. Strategic stability, delivered through effective deterrence and defence, arms control and disarmament, and meaningful and reciprocal political dialogue remains essential to our security. Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation strongly contribute to the Alliance's objectives. Allies' efforts on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation aim to reduce risk and enhance security, transparency, verification, and compliance. We will pursue all elements of strategic risk reduction, including promoting confidence building and predictability through dialogue, increasing understanding, and establishing effective crisis management and prevention tools. These efforts will take the prevailing security environment and the security of all Allies into account and complement the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture. We will make use of NATO as a platform for in-depth discussion and close consultations on arms control efforts.

50. Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation have made and should continue to make an essential contribution to achieving the Alliance's security objectives and for ensuring strategic stability and our collective security. NATO has a long track record of doing its part on disarmament and non-proliferation. After the end of the Cold War, NATO dramatically reduced the number of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and its reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO strategy. Allies remain collectively determined to uphold and support existing disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation agreements and commitments. We will further strengthen arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation, as a key element of Euro-Atlantic security, taking into account the prevailing security environment and the security of all Allies.

51. Russia's violations and selective implementation of its arms control obligations and commitments have contributed to the deterioration of the broader security landscape. We condemn Russia's purported suspension of the New START treaty and failure to comply with its legally-binding obligations under the Treaty. We call on Russia to return to full implementation of the Treaty as well as to act responsibly and engage constructively to reduce strategic and nuclear risks. We also condemn Russia's decision to withdraw from the landmark Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which further demonstrates Russia's continued disregard for arms control, and is the latest in a series of actions to undermine Euro-Atlantic security. Allies urge Russia to implement its commitments and obligations, and to use the remaining time before its withdrawal to reconsider its decision. Allies will continue to consult on the implications of Russia's withdrawal from the CFE Treaty and its impact on the security of the Alliance.

52. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the essential bulwark against the spread of nuclear weapons. It is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and disarmament architecture, the only credible path to nuclear disarmament, and the framework for international cooperation in sharing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, science and technology. Allies remain strongly committed to the full implementation of the NPT across its three pillars, including Article VI. Russia blocking consensus at the Tenth NPT Review Conference was irresponsible. We call on all NPT States Parties to work together to implement and strengthen the NPT in the current NPT Review Cycle. We underline the urgent need to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force. We call for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices in accordance with Conference on Disarmament report CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. We call on all states that have not yet done so to declare and maintain voluntary moratoria on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

53. NATO Allies support the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons, in full accordance with all provisions of the NPT, achieved in an effective and verifiable way that promotes international stability and which is based on the principle of undiminished security for all. NATO's nuclear burden-sharing arrangements have always been fully consistent with the NPT.

54. We reiterate that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) stands in opposition to and is inconsistent and incompatible with the Alliance's nuclear deterrence policy, is at odds with the existing non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, risks undermining the NPT, and does not take into account the current security environment. The TPNW does not change the legal obligations on our countries with respect to nuclear weapons. We do not accept any argument that the TPNW reflects or in any way contributes to the development of customary international law. We call on our partners and all other countries to reflect realistically on the ban treaty's impact on international peace and security, including on the NPT, and join us in working to improve collective security through tangible and verifiable measures that can reduce strategic risks and enable lasting progress on nuclear disarmament.

55. The PRC is rapidly expanding and diversifying its nuclear arsenal with more warheads and a larger number of sophisticated delivery systems to establish a nuclear triad, while failing to engage in meaningful transparency or good faith efforts to achieve nuclear arms control or risk reduction. We oppose any attempt to produce or support the production of plutonium for military programmes under the guise of civilian programmes, which undermines the objectives of the NPT. We urge the PRC to engage in strategic risk reduction discussions and to promote stability through greater transparency with regard to its nuclear weapon policies, plans and capabilities.

56. We reiterate our clear determination that Iran must never develop a nuclear weapon. We remain deeply concerned about Iran's escalation of its nuclear programme. We call on Iran to fulfil its legal obligations under its Non-Proliferation Treaty-required safeguards agreement and political commitments regarding nuclear non-proliferation without further delay. The fulfilment by Iran of these obligations and commitments is crucial to allow the IAEA to provide credible assurances of the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. We also call on Iran to stop all ballistic missile activities inconsistent with UNSCR 2231.

57. We condemn in the strongest terms the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) WMD and ballistic missile programmes which violate multiple UN Security Council Resolutions. We reiterate that the DPRK must abandon its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, and any other weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We urge the DPRK to return to, and fully comply with, the NPT and IAEA safeguards. We call on the DPRK to accept the repeated offers of dialogue put forward by all parties concerned, including Japan, the United States, and the Republic of Korea.

58. The potential use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) materials or weapons against NATO by hostile state and non-state actors remains a central and evolving threat to our security. We are implementing NATO's new CBRN defence policy, as agreed at the Madrid Summit, and are investing in the military capabilities required to effectively operate, fight and prevail in any environment, and to ensure our national and collective resilience against CBRN risks and threats.

59. NATO safeguards the freedom and security of all its members using both political and military means. The evolving security environment increasingly requires that NATO will take a structured and tailored approach that uses non-military and military tools in a deliberate, coherent, and sustained manner, throughout the full spectrum of peace, crisis and conflict. NATO uses a variety of non-military tools which support the Alliance's three core tasks. It also continues to serve as a platform for enhancing the coherent use of these tools by Allies, under their own authority and control, and alongside other international actors. We will continue to strengthen effective, clear, and convincing strategic communication.

60. As the war in Europe has fundamentally shifted the nature of the Euro-Atlantic security environment, the emphasis on intelligence has become even more prominent and essential to Alliance decision-making and strategic planning. The value of the NATO intelligence enterprise comes first and foremost from the Allied intelligence and security services working closely together to share intelligence and continue to ensure that the Alliance has a comprehensive understanding of the global strategic picture. To that end, Allies' intelligence capabilities will contribute to improving NATO's understanding of the threats, risks and challenges, and to optimising our significant and diverse analysis capabilities. We will strengthen our intelligence cooperation within the Alliance and with

partners as appropriate. NATO and Allies will enhance their security and counter-intelligence measures to respond effectively to hostile intelligence activity.

61. National and collective resilience are an essential basis for credible deterrence and defence and the effective fulfilment of the Alliance's core tasks, and vital in our efforts to safeguard our societies, our populations and our shared values. Resilience is a national responsibility and a collective commitment rooted in Article 3 of the Washington Treaty. Today we have agreed the 2023 Alliance Resilience Objectives. We build on the 2021 Strengthened Resilience Commitment. The Resilience Objectives will strengthen NATO and Allied preparedness against strategic shocks and disruptions. They will boost our national and collective ability to ensure continuity of government and of essential services to our populations, and enable civil support to military operations, in peace, crisis and conflict. Allies will use these objectives to guide the development of their national goals and implementation plans, consistent with their respective national risk profile. We will also work towards identifying and mitigating strategic vulnerabilities and dependencies, including with respect to our critical infrastructure, supply chains and health systems. Allies should also promote societal resilience. As we strengthen our efforts to build resilience, we will continue to work with our partners engaged in similar efforts, in particular the European Union, in order to make the Euro-Atlantic area and our broader neighbourhood more secure. The actions, commitments and legal obligations of individual Allies in other international bodies also contribute to enhancing our resilience.

62. The Alliance's ability to fulfil its core tasks increasingly relies on the adoption of digital technologies. Recognising the urgency of a digitally-transformed Alliance, we have endorsed a Digital Transformation Implementation Strategy to underpin our ability to conduct Multi-Domain Operations, drive interoperability across all domains, enhance situational awareness, political consultation, and employ data-driven decision-making.

63. Emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs) bring both opportunities and risks. They are altering the character of conflict, acquiring greater strategic importance and becoming key arenas of global competition. The operational importance of EDTs as well as of access to and adaptation of commercial technologies in current operations have been highlighted in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. NATO's strategic competitors and potential adversaries are investing heavily in technologies that can be highly effective, particularly in malign hybrid activities, and decisive in conflict. We are accelerating our own efforts to ensure that the Alliance maintains its technological edge in emerging and disruptive technologies to retain our interoperability and military edge, including through dual-use solutions. We are working together to adopt and integrate new technologies, cooperate with the private sector, protect our innovation ecosystems, shape standards, and commit to principles of responsible use that reflect our democratic values and human rights. We will ensure that we act in accordance with international law and seek to build public trust. NATO's Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) has now launched its

first challenges to start-ups in NATO countries. To further develop our transatlantic innovation ecosystem, the NATO Innovation Fund, the world's first multi-sovereign venture capital fund, will begin to invest in deep-tech in the coming months. Complementing the recently agreed strategies on Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy, NATO will develop further strategies for key emerging and disruptive technologies, including on Quantum Technologies and on Biotechnology and Human Enhancement to address the opportunities and risks they present.

64. We continue to face growing hybrid threats and challenges from state and non-state actors, who use hybrid activities, including through interference and the harmful use of technologies, to target our political institutions, our critical infrastructure, our societies, our democratic systems, our economies, and the security of our citizens. We remain united in defending our open and democratic societies against these malign activities. We reiterate that hybrid operations against Allies could reach the level of an armed attack and could lead the Council to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. We will continue to prepare for, deter, defend against and counter hybrid threats, including by potentially deploying Counter Hybrid Support Teams. We continue to develop comprehensive preventive and response options and stand ready to apply them to enhance resilience and deter malign actors from engaging in hybrid operations. Individual Allies may consider, when appropriate, attributing hybrid activities and responding in a coordinated manner, recognising attribution is a sovereign national prerogative. We will continue to address disinformation and misinformation, including through positive and effective strategic communications. We will also continue to support our partners as they strengthen their resilience in the face of hybrid challenges.

65. The threat to critical undersea infrastructure is real and it is developing. We are committed to identifying and mitigating strategic vulnerabilities and dependencies with respect to our critical infrastructure, and to prepare for, deter and defend against the coercive use of energy and other hybrid tactics by state and non-state actors. Any deliberate attack against Allies' critical infrastructure will be met with a united and determined response; this applies also to critical undersea infrastructure. The protection of critical undersea infrastructure on Allies' territory remains a national responsibility, as well as a collective commitment. NATO stands ready to support Allies if and when requested. We have agreed to establish NATO's Maritime Centre for the Security of Critical Undersea Infrastructure within NATO's Maritime Command (MARCOM). We also agreed to set up a network that brings together NATO, Allies, private sector, and other relevant actors to improve information sharing and exchange best practice.

66. Cyberspace is contested at all times as threat actors increasingly seek to destabilise the Alliance by employing malicious cyber activities and campaigns. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has highlighted the extent to which cyber is a feature of modern conflict. We are countering the substantial, continuous, and increasing cyber threats,

including to our democratic systems and our critical infrastructure, as well as where they are part of hybrid campaigns. We are determined to employ the full range of capabilities in order to deter, defend against and counter the full spectrum of cyber threats, including by considering collective responses. A single or cumulative set of malicious cyber activities could reach the level of armed attack and could lead the North Atlantic Council to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, on a case-by-case basis. We remain committed to act in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law as applicable. We continue to promote a free, open, peaceful, and secure cyberspace, and further pursue efforts to enhance stability and reduce the risk of conflict, by ensuring that international law is respected and by supporting voluntary norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace. Today, we endorse a new concept to enhance the contribution of cyber defence to our overall deterrence and defence posture. It will further integrate NATO's three cyber defence levels - political, military, and technical - ensuring civil-military cooperation at all times through peacetime, crisis, and conflict, as well as engagement with the private sector, as appropriate. Doing so will enhance our shared situational awareness. Strengthening our cyber resilience is key to making our Alliance more secure and better able to mitigate the potential for significant harm from cyber threats. Today we restate and enhance our Cyber Defence Pledge and have committed to ambitious new national goals to further strengthen our national cyber defences as a matter of priority, including critical infrastructures. We have launched NATO's new Virtual Cyber Incident Support Capability (VCISC) to support national mitigation efforts in response to significant malicious cyber activities. This provides Allies with an additional tool for assistance. We will further seek to develop mutually beneficial and effective partnerships as appropriate, including with partner countries, international organisations, industry, and academia, furthering our efforts to enhance international stability in cyberspace. Complementing our existing exchanges, we will hold the first comprehensive NATO Cyber Defence Conference in Berlin this November, bringing together decision-makers across the political, military, and technical levels.

67. Space plays a critical role for the security and prosperity of our nations. Space is also an increasingly contested domain, marked by irresponsible behaviour, malicious activities, and the growth of counterspace capabilities by NATO's potential adversaries and strategic competitors. Maintaining secure use and unfettered access to space is key to effective deterrence and defence. As part of our work on space as an operational domain, we are accelerating the integration of space into planning, exercising and executing joint and multi-domain operations in peacetime, crisis, and conflict in order to ensure space effects are coordinated across all domains. We have committed to enhancing the sharing of our space data, products and services within NATO in support of the Alliance's requirements and defence plans. We welcome the ongoing efforts on the Alliance Persistent Surveillance from Space (APSS) multinational programme, which will improve NATO's intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capacity. We welcome the establishment of the NATO Space Centre of

Excellence in France. Allies are committed to upholding international law and we will continue to support international efforts to reduce space threats by promoting norms, rules, and principles of responsible space behaviours. We reaffirm that hostile operations to, from, or within space could reach the level of armed attack and could lead the North Atlantic Council to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

68. Energy security plays an important role in our common security. The energy crisis intentionally exacerbated by Russia has underlined the importance of a stable and reliable energy supply and the diversification of routes, suppliers, and sources. We will continue to develop NATO's capacity to support national authorities in protecting critical energy infrastructure. We are committed to ensuring secure, resilient, and sustainable energy supplies to our military forces. As we adapt our Alliance to the ongoing energy transition, we will ensure military capability, effectiveness and interoperability. Allies are seeking and will continue to seek diversification of their energy supplies, in line with their needs and conditions.

69. Climate change is a defining challenge with a profound impact on Allied security facing present and future generations. It remains a threat multiplier. NATO is committed to becoming the leading international organisation when it comes to understanding and adapting to the impact of climate change on security. We will continue to address the impact of climate change on defence and security, including through the development of innovative strategic analysis tools. We will integrate climate change considerations into all of NATO's core tasks, adapt our infrastructure, military capabilities and technologies ensuring resilience to future operating environments. To contribute to the mitigation of climate change, we are committed to significantly cutting greenhouse gas emissions by the NATO political and military structures and facilities; we will also contribute to combatting climate change by improving energy efficiency, transitioning to clean energy sources, and leveraging innovative next-generation clean technologies, while ensuring military effectiveness and a credible deterrence and defence posture. We will continue to strengthen our exchanges with partner countries, the scientific community, as well as other international and regional organisations that are active on climate change and security. We welcome the establishment of a NATO Centre of Excellence for Climate Change and Security in Montreal.

70. We are committed to integrating the Human Security and the Women, Peace and Security agendas across all our core tasks. We will continue to work towards fully operationalising this objective, through robust policies and clear operational guidelines, in order to enhance our operational effectiveness and ensure synergies between the civilian and military structures. In doing so, we are working with partners, international organisations, and civil society. We reaffirm our commitment to an ambitious human security agenda. Our Human Security Approach and Guiding Principles allows us to develop a more comprehensive view of the human environment, contributing to lasting peace and security. Today, we endorse a NATO Policy on Children and Armed Conflict, and an updated Policy on

Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings. Our ongoing work on human security also includes cultural property protection.

71. We recognise the critical importance of women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in all aspects of peace and stability, noting the disproportionate impact that conflict has on women and girls, including through conflict-related sexual violence. We will consistently continue to implement our Policy on Women, Peace and Security, and, in this context, we will advance gender equality and integrate gender perspectives and foster the principles of the Women, Peace and Security agenda set out by the UN Security Council in all that we do, including in NATO operations, missions, activities, and our work on emerging challenges. We will assess and update NATO's Policy on Women, Peace and Security.

72. NATO's partnerships are, and will continue to be, essential to the way NATO works. They play an important role in supporting NATO's three core tasks and our 360-degree security approach. We are grateful to our partners for their significant contributions to NATO's situational awareness, operations, missions, and activities, including Trust Fund projects. The current security environment highlights the significance of partnerships. They are crucial to protect the global commons and enhance our resilience. We will strengthen our ties with partners that share the Alliance's values and interest in upholding the rules-based international order. We will continue to strengthen political dialogue and practical cooperation with partners, based on mutual respect, benefit and interest of both Allies and partners. This contributes to stability beyond our borders and enhances our security at home. We will increase outreach to countries in our broader neighbourhood and across the globe and remain open to engagement with any country or organisation, when doing so could bolster our mutual security. We remain committed to the principles underpinning our relations with our partners, and have taken steps to make our partnerships more strategic, more coherent and more effective. We will discuss common approaches to global security challenges where NATO's interests are affected, share perspectives through deeper political engagement, and seek concrete areas for cooperation to address shared security concerns. In line with our Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, we will continue to pursue coherence within NATO's own tools and strands of work, concerted approaches with partner nations and organisations such as the UN, the EU, and the OSCE, as well as further dialogue with non-governmental organisations.

73. The European Union remains a unique and essential partner for NATO. Our strategic partnership is essential for the security and prosperity of our nations and of the Euro-Atlantic area. It is built on our shared values, our determination to tackle common challenges and our unequivocal commitment to promote and safeguard peace, freedom and prosperity. NATO recognises the value of a stronger and more capable European defence that contributes positively to transatlantic and global security and is complementary to, and interoperable with NATO. The development of coherent, complementary and interoperable defence capabilities, avoiding unnecessary duplication, is key in our joint efforts to make the

Euro-Atlantic area safer. Such efforts, including recent developments, will lead to a stronger NATO, help enhance our common security, contribute to transatlantic burden sharing, help deliver needed capabilities, and support an overall increase in defence spending. Non-EU Allies continue to make significant contributions to the EU's efforts to strengthen its capacities to address common security challenges. For the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, non-EU Allies' fullest involvement in EU defence efforts is essential. We look forward to mutual steps, representing tangible progress, in this area to support a strengthened strategic partnership. We reaffirm in their entirety all the decisions, principles, and commitments with regard to NATO and EU cooperation. We will continue to further strengthen this partnership in a spirit of full mutual openness, transparency, complementarity, and respect for the organisations' different mandates, decision-making autonomy and institutional integrity, and as agreed by the two organisations.

74. In the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, NATO-EU cooperation has become more significant. We have unequivocally demonstrated unity of purpose and common resolve in leveraging our complementary, coherent and mutually reinforcing roles. NATO and EU will continue to support Ukraine. In this respect, we welcome the establishment of the dedicated NATO-EU Staff Coordination on Ukraine. We have also achieved tangible results in strategic communications, including the fight against disinformation, countering hybrid and cyber threats, exercises, operational cooperation, defence capabilities, defence industry and research, counter-terrorism, and defence and security capacity building. We are further expanding our cooperation on resilience, protection of critical infrastructure, emerging and disruptive technologies, space, security implications of climate change, and geostrategic competition. We will also continue to address the systemic challenges posed by the PRC to Euro-Atlantic security. Political dialogue between NATO and the EU remains essential to advance NATO-EU cooperation.

75. The Western Balkans is a region of strategic importance for NATO as highlighted by our long history of cooperation and operations. We remain strongly committed to the security and stability of the Western Balkans by supporting reforms that advance the respective NATO and EU aspirations of the countries in the region. We will continue to enhance our political dialogue and practical cooperation in order to support reforms, regional peace and security, and counter malign influence, including disinformation, hybrid, and cyber threats, posed by both state and non-state actors. The region requires continued attention and commitment from the Alliance and the international community to counter these challenges. Democratic values, the rule of law, domestic reforms, and good neighbourly relations are vital for regional cooperation and Euro-Atlantic integration, and we look to continued progress in this regard.

76. NATO strongly supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a stable and secure Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other relevant international agreements. We encourage

domestic reconciliation, and urge political leaders to refrain from divisive and secessionist rhetoric and actions. We remain committed to the country's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. We continue to support reform efforts, including through the newly agreed Defence Capacity Building package, NATO HQ Sarajevo, and wide-ranging cooperative security and partnership tools, and through the country's Reform Programme with NATO. We encourage Bosnia and Herzegovina to take advantage of NATO's support and intensify efforts to make progress on reforms in key areas, including the much-needed political, electoral, rule of law, economic, and defence reforms, without prejudice to a final decision on NATO membership.

77. Strengthening NATO-Serbia relations would be of benefit to the Alliance, to Serbia, and to the whole region. We look to Serbia to engage with NATO and its neighbours in a constructive manner, including in its public communications on the mutual benefits of NATO-Serbia cooperation. We support the EU-facilitated Dialogue and other efforts aimed at the normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina, and urge the sides to seize the moment and engage in good faith towards reaching a lasting political solution. We call on both sides to immediately de-escalate, return to dialogue, and engage constructively in implementing the agreement on the path to normalisation between Belgrade and Pristina reached recently in Brussels and Ohrid.

78. We remain committed to NATO's continued engagement in Kosovo, including through the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR). KFOR will continue to provide a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement in Kosovo in line with UNSC Resolution 1244. The recent escalatory actions are unacceptable and we condemn the violence in northern Kosovo as well as the unprovoked attacks that caused serious injuries to NATO soldiers. We have increased KFOR's troop presence to respond to the recurrent tensions. Any changes to our force posture in KFOR will remain conditions-based and not calendar driven.

79. The Black Sea region is of strategic importance for the Alliance. This is further highlighted by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. We underline our continued support to Allied regional efforts aimed at upholding security, safety, stability and freedom of navigation in the Black Sea region including, as appropriate, through the 1936 Montreux Convention. We will further monitor and assess developments in the region and enhance our situational awareness, with a particular focus on the threats to our security and potential opportunities for closer cooperation with our partners in the region, as appropriate.

80. We reiterate our support to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. We stand firm in our support for Georgia's right to decide its own future and foreign policy course free from outside interference. We call on Russia to withdraw the forces it has stationed in Georgia without its consent. We further call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia; to end the militarisation of these regions and continued attempts to forcibly separate them from the rest of Georgia through the construction of border-like obstacles; and to cease the

human rights violations and abuses, including arbitrary detentions, and harassments of Georgian citizens. We highly appreciate Georgia's substantial contributions to NATO operations, which demonstrate its commitment and capability to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security. We remain committed to making full use of the NATO-Georgia Commission and the Annual National Programme (ANP) in deepening political dialogue and practical cooperation with Georgia. We reiterate the decision made at the 2008 Bucharest Summit that Georgia will become a member of the Alliance with the Membership Action Plan (MAP) as an integral part of the process; we reaffirm all elements of that decision, as well as subsequent decisions. We welcome the progress made in implementing the enhanced Substantial NATO-Georgia Package, including Crisis Management, Cyber Security, Military Engineering, and Secure Communications, as well as new initiatives in the areas of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence and Training Facilities. To advance its Euro-Atlantic aspirations, Georgia must make progress on reforms, including key democratic reforms, and make best use of the ANP.

81. We reiterate our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders and call on Russia to withdraw all of its forces stationed in the Transnistrian region without Moldova's consent. We stand firm in our support for Moldova's right to decide its own future and foreign policy course free from outside interference, and fully respect Moldova's constitutional neutrality. NATO is stepping up political and practical support to strengthen its resilience and uphold its political independence in light of the deteriorating security environment. Allies welcome Moldova's efforts to promote democratic reforms and are committed to supporting Moldova as it advances its European integration. NATO will continue to provide practical assistance through the enhanced Defence Capacity Building Package, as Moldova works to strengthen its security and defence capabilities and modernise its Armed Forces.

82. The Middle East and Africa are regions of strategic interest. We will deepen our political engagements and public diplomacy outreach to our long-standing partners in the Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. We will also increase our outreach to relevant regional organisations, including the African Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council. We are implementing the Defence Capacity Building packages for Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania, and Tunisia. We will also explore with the Jordanian authorities the possibility of establishing a NATO Liaison Office in Amman.

83. NATO and Allies remain committed in our support to Iraq and its ability to stabilise the country. We recognise the continued efforts and progress of the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Security Forces to combat ISIS/Da'esh. We encourage further progress in Iraq's fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Our NATO Mission Iraq continues to deliver non-combat advisory and capacity building support to the Iraqi security institutions in the greater Baghdad area, and has deepened collaboration with Iraq's Ministry of Defence. Based on the request from the Iraqi government, we are considering broadening NATO

Mission Iraq, by evolving it to provide advice to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior on its Federal Police. NATO Mission Iraq will continue to be demand-driven, and will be carried out with the full consent of the Iraqi authorities, in full respect of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in close coordination with relevant partners and international actors.

84. Iran's support to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has an impact on Euro-Atlantic security. We call upon Iran to cease its military support to Russia, in particular its transfer of Uncrewed Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) which have been used to attack critical infrastructure, causing widespread civilian casualties. We express our serious concern over Iran's malicious activities within Allied territory. We also call upon Iran to refrain from destabilising actions, including seizures of maritime vessels, and to play a constructive role in fostering regional stability and peace.

85. The Indo-Pacific is important for NATO, given that developments in that region can directly affect Euro-Atlantic security. We welcome the contribution of our partners in the Asia-Pacific region – Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea – to security in the Euro-Atlantic, including their commitment to supporting Ukraine. We will further strengthen our dialogue and cooperation to tackle our shared security challenges, including on cyber defence, technology and hybrid, underpinned by our shared commitment to upholding international law and the rules-based international order.

86. NATO's engagement with other international and regional organisations, including the United Nations, the OSCE, and the African Union, contributes to international security. We will strengthen these interactions to advance our shared interests. We are exploring the possibility of establishing a Liaison Office in Geneva to further strengthen our engagement with the United Nations and other relevant international organisations.

87. We will ensure that our political decisions are adequately resourced. We will build on the progress made to ensure that increased national defence expenditures and NATO common funding will be commensurate with the challenges of a more contested security order.

88. We pay tribute to all women and men who work tirelessly for our collective security, honour all those who have paid the ultimate price or have been wounded to keep us safe, and their families.

89. NATO remains the strongest Alliance in history. As in the past, we will stand the test of time in safeguarding the freedom and security of our Allies and contributing to peace and security.

90. We express our appreciation for the generous hospitality extended to us by the Republic of Lithuania. We look forward to meeting again for the Alliance's 75th anniversary in Washington, D.C. in 2024, followed by a meeting in the Netherlands in 2025.

