



NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

NATO 2021 BRUSSELS SUMMIT: KEY OUTCOMES

14 June 2021

Executive Brief

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EXECUTIVE BRIEF

1. Heads of State and Government of NATO's 30 member states met in Brussels on 14 June 2021. This was NATO's first Summit since the election of US President Joseph R. Biden. Allied leaders issued a detailed 79-paragraph communiqué. It covers the entire range of NATO's priorities and policies – in line with previous NATO Summits – with the exception of the very short declaration issued at the 2019 Leaders' meeting in London. Allied leaders also agreed on NATO 2030 – a transatlantic agenda for the future, covering eight key priorities, as well as the need to resource the agenda through commensurate Allied defence spending and NATO's common funding, which may be increased starting in 2023.

2. Only the headlines of the NATO 2030 agenda were made public in the Summit communiqué. The agenda is expected to serve as the core guidance for NATO's next Strategic Concept – NATO's key strategic guiding document. Allied leaders agreed to endorse a new Strategic Concept at NATO's 2022 Summit in Spain. The Spain Summit will also be the current NATO Secretary General's last as his mandate expires in September 2022.

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3. The **NATO 2030** process was launched after the 2019 Leaders' meeting. The original intention was to strengthen NATO's political dimension following a series of differences and tensions among Allies, which had raised concern about the unity and cohesion of the Alliance. After consultations with an independent group of experts, a group of young leaders, the NATO PA and other key stakeholders, the NATO Secretary General submitted his proposals to Allied leaders, who approved a set of eight priorities:

1. "Reaffirm that NATO is the unique, essential and indispensable transatlantic forum for consultations and joint action on all matters related to our individual and collective security."
2. "Strengthen NATO as the organising framework for the collective defence of the Euro-Atlantic area, against all threats, from all directions."
3. "Enhance our resilience."
4. "Foster technological cooperation among Allies in NATO, promote interoperability and encourage the development and adoption of technological solutions to address our military needs."
5. "Enhance NATO's ability to contribute to preserve and shape the rules-based international order in areas that are important to Allied security."
6. "Substantially strengthen NATO's ability to provide training and capacity building support to partners, recognising that conflict, other security developments and pervasive instability in NATO's neighbourhood directly impact Allied security."
7. "Aim for NATO to become the leading international organisation when it comes to understanding and adapting to the impact of climate change on security."
8. "Invite the Secretary General to lead the process to develop the next Strategic Concept."

4. Allied leaders also agreed that this new level of ambition will require additional resources. They therefore reaffirmed the 2014 Defence Investment Pledge in which Allies agreed, among others, to move towards spending 2% of GDP on defence by 2024 and dedicate 20% of that to major equipment, including related research and development. They also agreed to examine, at the 2022 Summit, the levels of NATO's common funding across the civil, military and investment budgets. This could pave the way to increase NATO common funding starting in 2023.

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5. The **Summit communiqué** itself makes clear Allies intend to open a new chapter in transatlantic relations. While much of the communiqué reaffirms core NATO priorities and long-standing policies on a broad range of issues, it also includes a number of new priorities and initiatives. Among these:

- A stronger emphasis on Allies' commitment to democratic values and role in defending and shaping the rules-based international order – in line with the first and fifth priorities for NATO 2030
- A recognition of the changes in the threat environment, including systemic competition with authoritarian powers, the challenges relating to China's rise, the misuse of emerging and disruptive technologies and climate change, among others
- A renewed emphasis on collective defence – in line with the second priority for NATO 2030
- A strong condemnation of Russia's threatening actions and multiple violations, combined with a reaffirmed openness to dialogue, under specific conditions, particularly on strategic risk reduction
- A first attempt to outline an Allied agreed policy on China
- A new focus on resilience – in line with the third priority for NATO 2030
- Concrete initiatives to support Allied investment in new technologies, including a Defence Innovation Accelerator and a NATO Innovation Fund
- An ambitious agenda on climate change – in line with priority seven for NATO 2030
- Confirmation of the end of NATO's military mission in Afghanistan and of the parameters of NATO's future relationship with Afghanistan