



NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE L'OTAN

DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE (DSC)

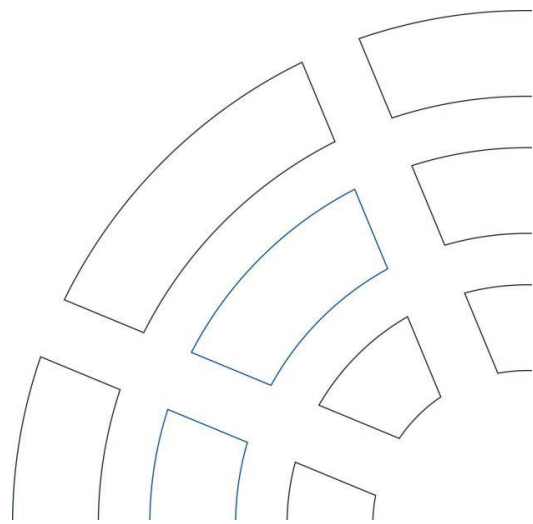
GENERAL REPORT

RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE: IMPLICATIONS FOR ALLIED COLLECTIVE DEFENCE AND THE IMPERATIVES OF THE NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT

General Report
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013 DSC 22 E rev.2 fin – Original: French –20 November 2022

Founded in 1955, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly acts as a consultative interparliamentary organisation which is institutionally separate from NATO. This report was adopted by the Committee at the 68th Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. It is based on information from publicly available sources or NATO PA meetings, which are all unclassified.



Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine proves that it is not just a *threat to*, but an active *spoiler of* European security and stability. Russia, however, is not the only challenge to Euro-Atlantic security, which complicates a longer-term response to Moscow's reckless assault on the rules-based international order. Allies have acknowledged they are entering an era of global strategic competition with "assertive and authoritarian powers". The impact of China's rise on Allied interests has moved from the periphery to the centre of the agenda. Terrorism remains the persistent principal asymmetrical challenge. Cyber, hybrid, space, and information space manipulation challenges are being amplified by the arrival of emerging disruptive technologies. Rapid advances in Weapons of Mass Destruction, particularly nuclear forces, are also being magnified by the parallel erosion of the long-standing arms control architecture. Finally, but not least significant, all these rapid developments are happening within a context of climate change, which Allies have recognised as a 'threat multiplier' to Allied security concerns.

Faced with such a challenging strategic environment, Allies came to the 28 June NATO Summit in Madrid with a clear-cut two-fold objective: first, to demonstrate a strong and unified response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine and immediate threats to broader Euro-Atlantic security; and second, to adopt a Strategic Concept that would serve as a clear roadmap and strong political mandate in support of Allied adaptation and modernisation over the coming decade. Allies delivered on both, with immediate commitments setting a new baseline for deterrence and defence to enable a modern forward defence posture, while the new Strategic Concept serves as a guideline for effective adaptation to defend against the broader range of complex threats and challenges to Allied territories, interests, and common values.

NATO parliaments have a key role in funding and sustaining the outcomes of the Madrid Summit. This report advocates a broad range of actions for immediate and longer-term consideration to achieve these ambitious, but achievable goals.

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I- INTRODUCTION

1. Peace in Europe is broken again. Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine proves that it is not just a *threat to*, but an active *spoiler of* European security and stability. Since the end of the Cold War, NATO Allies endeavoured to work in partnership with Russia to painstakingly build what many thought would be an enduring peace architecture in Europe. These efforts were guided by three main principles: first, the equal importance and interdependence of the security of all European states; second, that all states have the sovereign right to choose their security alignments; and third, that no European powers would consider any part of the continent to be within their sphere of influence. All have been undermined and disrupted by Russia's actions.
2. Russia's war in Ukraine also breaks the post-WWII established principles for the use of force outlined in the UN Charter, which prohibits the use of force against a sovereign state except in the case of self-defence or under Security Council authorisation – something made even more outrageous given Russia's long-standing narrow view of international law through the prism of the UN Charter. Russia's apparent wilful disregard for international humanitarian law – as revealed by the documented summary executions, torture, and rape of civilians – has also shocked Allies to the uglier realities of the Russia challenge today.
3. Russia's aggressive and destructive policies towards its neighbours began well before its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Russia's 2008 invasion of Georgia, for example, resulted in the occupation of 20% of Georgian territory – Russia continues to slowly expand the areas it occupies in Georgia via its creeping 'borderisation' policies. Given the steady progression of Russia's aggressive foreign policy, backed by military power and reckless nuclear rhetoric since 2014, Allies recognise that Russia's war in Ukraine fits into an unfortunate pattern. Considering this sea change in the European security order, Allies are steeling themselves to confront a new era of heightened tension, aggravated by Russia's attempts to further disrupt Euro-Atlantic peace and prosperity across a range of conventional and unconventional activities.
4. Russia, however, is not the only challenge to Euro-Atlantic security, which complicates a longer-term response to Moscow's reckless assault on the rules-based international order. Allies have acknowledged they are entering an era of global strategic competition with 'assertive and authoritarian powers'; the impact of China's rise on Allied interests has moved from the periphery to the centre of the agenda. Terrorism remains the persistent principal asymmetrical challenge. Cyber, hybrid, space, and information space manipulation challenges are being amplified by the arrival of emerging disruptive technologies. Rapid advances in Weapons of Mass Destruction, particularly nuclear forces, are also being magnified by the parallel erosion of the long-standing arms control architecture. Finally, but not least significant, all these rapid developments are happening within a context of climate change, which Allies have recognised as a 'threat multiplier' to Allied security concerns.
5. Faced with such a challenging strategic environment, Allies came to the 28 June NATO Summit in Madrid with a clear-cut two-fold objective: first, to demonstrate a strong and unified response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine and immediate threats to broader Euro-Atlantic security; and second, to adopt a Strategic Concept that would serve as a clear roadmap and strong political mandate in support of Allied adaptation and modernisation over the coming decade. Allies delivered on both, with immediate commitments setting a new baseline for deterrence and defence to enable a modern forward defence posture, while the new Strategic Concept serves as a guideline for effective adaptation to defend against the broader range of complex threats and challenges to Allied territories, interests, and common values.

6. NATO parliaments have a key role in funding and sustaining the outcomes of the Madrid Summit. This report advocates a broad range of actions for immediate and longer-term consideration to achieve these ambitious, but achievable goals.

II- A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR A NEW GEOPOLITICAL REALITY

A. WHAT IS A STRATEGIC CONCEPT AND WHY IS NATO'S 2022 STRATEGIC CONCEPT IMPORTANT?

7. Broadly speaking, Strategic Concepts identify the policies and capabilities necessary to adapt the Alliance to the security environment it faces. Assessing current and over-the-horizon security challenges, any Strategic Concept defines NATO's core tasks and strategic objectives, thereby guiding future political and military development. The periodic revision of such a core document also allows Allies to reconfirm their commitment to their values and principles.

8. Allies clearly articulated these values and principles in their founding treaty, in which they commit to 'democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law'. These values drove the formation of the Alliance and proved a key element in defining the tensile strength of the transatlantic bond throughout the Cold War. They continue to drive the adaptation and relevance of NATO today. By defining what Allies stand for, rather than against, there is an enduring strength and understood necessity to maintain the Alliance. As Allies engage in an era of 'systemic competition from assertive and authoritarian powers', the recognition of these values and principles as a key pillar of the Alliance is essential.

9. NATO's previous Strategic Concept, the 2010 *Active Engagement, Modern Defence* was adopted in a period of peace and stability across the Euro-Atlantic region, characterised by earnest attempts at strategic partnership with Russia. The potential implications of China's rise were not mentioned. The threat of conventional attack was indicated as 'low', and the use of nuclear weapons 'extremely remote', with Allies being urged to seek to create the conditions for further reductions of their nuclear arsenals in the future, in line with their Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) commitments.

10. The 2010 Concept confirmed the growing importance of crisis management and cooperative security, and elevated them to a quasi-equal footing with collective defence. By 2010, Allies were influenced by their already seven-year effort in Afghanistan, and thus focused on how to hone interoperability among their own forces, as well as with international partners to help project stability far beyond the Alliance's borders. The Concept also foresaw an over-the-horizon challenge emerging in the cyber domain due to the rapid pace of technological development.

B. THE RAPIDLY CHANGING STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT POST-2010: THE DRIVERS OF A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT

11. Not long after the adoption of *Active Engagement, Modern Defence*, the security environment it described began to crumble. The changes were principally driven by the Alliance's declining relations with Russia. This happened slowly at first, as NATO and Russia moved away from their November 2010 agreement to develop a cooperative NATO-Russia missile defence, which collapsed in 2013; it picked up speed after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, which set Russia on a clear escalating path to today's pivotal moment in Euro-Atlantic and, by extension, global security. As reported in this Committee since 2014, Russia's brinkmanship with Allies manifested via an increasingly aggressive foreign policy backed by an assertive and modernised military posture.

12. Russia's military modernisation and expansion of its conventional and strategic forces became a clear growing challenge since 2014. Russia used these new forces to provoke Allied forces in all domains during exercises, while on patrol, or via reckless behaviour along the eastern flank from the Barents to the Mediterranean Seas. Russia's deployment of dual-capable missiles to Kaliningrad and Crimea has made it clear that Russia seeks to build formidable anti-access/area denial (A2AD) bubbles to block access to the Baltic and Black Seas. Russia is also placing modern multi-role maritime, land, and air assets, as well as advanced missile systems in its Barents region. These efforts reflected a shift to an active defence posture to gain speed and firepower advantages over Allies along NATO's eastern flank, thereby potentially posing a challenge to NATO's post-2014 tripwire defence and deterrence posture in the East, which was itself a response to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea.

13. Russia's heavy investment to modernise and expand its strategic and tactical nuclear forces also became a growing concern. This effort includes Russia's new 'exotic' weapons, which are a range of highly destabilising modern nuclear systems, such as the *Burevestnik* (NATO – SSC-X-9 Skyfall), a nuclear-powered nuclear-armed cruise missile, and the *Poseidon*, a nuclear-powered nuclear-armed autonomous underwater vehicle, which is reportedly designed to cause a radiation-contaminated tsunami along the coastline of its intended target. Added to this has been Russia's reckless use of nuclear rhetoric to threaten Allies, and the evolution of an intentionally ambiguous nuclear doctrine. Russia's opaque nuclear doctrine has sparked debate among experts about whether Russia does indeed have an 'escalate-to-deescalate' doctrine today, which would in turn signal Russia's willingness to launch a limited nuclear strike with a low-yield tactical weapon if faced with potential conventional military defeat and, what it nebulously terms, an 'existential threat to the Russian Federation' – such a strike, Russian doctrine notes, would signal Russia's resolve and compel an enemy to back down (Oliker and Baklitskiy, 2018). Russia's dangerous nuclear rhetoric since its invasion of Ukraine illustrates the ambiguity and danger surrounding this issue well.

14. Russia's persistent hybrid activities have also been undermining Allied political and economic institutions and strengths. Russian attempted interference in democratic processes is well documented (Tennis, 2020). Cyber meddling either by Russian government agencies or via cyber criminals operating freely in Russia has targeted Allied governmental and financial institutions, and critical infrastructure – at times being severely disruptive.¹ All of this, in addition to Russia's full invasion of Ukraine, clearly underscores the direct, diverse, and complex Russian threat to Allied security.

15. Beyond the NATO-Russia dyad, however, the Euro-Atlantic also faces a rapidly evolving and complex range of pressing security threats and challenges. In their 2021 Brussels Summit Declaration, Allies noted that they faced 'systemic competition from assertive and authoritarian powers'. While it was clear Russia was evolving as an increasingly acute near-term threat, China, it was becoming evident, constituted a longer-term challenge. In line with its global investments, China increasingly made it clear that it had global geopolitical ambitions. In parallel with this evolution was the growing investment in modern military capabilities to defend those interests. As such, Allies' views on China evolved relatively quickly. China's first appearance in a 2019 NATO official statement noted that the country's 'growing influence and international policies present both opportunities and challenges' (NATO, 2019b). Two years later, Allies expressed their concern that China's 'stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security' (NATO, 2021).

16. According to some observers, Chinese investments – part of its global Belt and Road Initiative – were creating potential strategic vulnerabilities within the Alliance. In parallel, China's navy was

¹ Russia's cyber capabilities and history of past and recent malicious cyber activities are described in detail in the DSCFC report on [NATO's cyber challenge](#) [015 DSCFC 22 E rev. 1 fin].

increasingly present in the Euro-Atlantic area (Martinho, 2021). Allies increasingly understood that China's declared military ambitions would progressively tread upon Allied interests in three key domains: sea, space, and cyber – the preservation of freedom of navigation norms, the security of satellite communication networks, and cyberspace, which has been declared an arena of strategic competition and disruption by Beijing. A principal challenge for Allies was China's 'opaque' implementation of its military modernisation, which included a significant expansion of its modern strategic forces (NATO, 2021).

17. At the 2021 Brussels Summit, Allies directly called upon China 'to uphold its international commitments and to act responsibly...in keeping with its role as a major power' (NATO, 2021). China's refusal to recognise, not to mention condemn, Russia's use of force in Ukraine as illegal was a clear indicator Beijing was not heeding the call. Further, the lack of condemnation countered Beijing's long-standing diplomatic position opposing the use of force in international relations outside the limits of the UN Charter. By not condemning Russia, China was making it clear it sees the current rules-based international order supported by Allies not only as no longer serving its long-term interests, but also as presently disposable. This position added to the growing understanding that future Allied relations with China will likely be more adversarial than cooperative.

18. Russia and China's efforts to recapitalise and significantly expand their strategic and, at least in Russia's case, tactical nuclear forces also came at a time of eroding arms control architecture. By early 2021 the global arms control architecture rested largely on the bi-lateral New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and Russia, which expires on 5 February 2026, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The principal post-Cold War conventional arms control agreements underpinning Euro-Atlantic security – the Vienna Document, the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, and the Open Skies Treaty² – were under significant strain due to Russian direct violation or selective implementation of its arms control obligations. In parallel, China demonstrated no interest in engaging in meaningful arms control discussions or negotiations.

19. Russia and China were also suspected to be the most significant, but not the only, drivers of the advanced and persistent cyber-attacks against Allies. Cyber operations constituted a key pillar of the larger array of efforts to harm Allies – the United States being the most targeted – and, in parallel, for China to bolster its technology base via cyber espionage (Lewis, 2022; White House, 2021). Cyber operations were also enabling Russia's conventional war effort in Ukraine by attacking Ukrainian government, civilian, and military communications networks, military command and control systems, financial institutions, energy infrastructure, and more (Cattler and Black, 2022). Iran and North Korea were also using malign cyber activities for disruptive geopolitical goals, though not to the same effect (Lewis, 2022). The exponential expansion of inter-connected devices and increasing dependence of modern economies, societies, and militaries on software and network-enabled systems continue to drive up the potential vulnerabilities and costs of state-led or -sponsored malign cyber activity.

20. Cyber channels have also become the key means by which both Russia and China, but also other competitors, seek to weaponise disinformation against Allies. Disinformation campaigns by Russia and China seek to splinter consensus, undermine democracy, and divide public opinion and discourse as much as possible. A key grey zone strategy and tactic, disinformation is increasingly

² The United States withdrew from the Open Skies Treaty in November 2020 due to Russia's repeated violations of its treaty obligations. Russia withdrew in December 2021. The 32 remaining state parties to the treaty continue to adhere to the treaty and its implementing body, the Open Skies Consultative Commission, which meets monthly at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Headquarters in Vienna.

present, as Allies witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, during their recent electoral periods, and today with the competing narratives about Russia's war in Ukraine.

21. Terrorism also remains a rapidly evolving asymmetrical threat occupying significant domestic intelligence, policing, and military resources. It also remains a key evolving challenge for the Alliance as well. Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) are still key threats; though the main thrust of their franchises has shifted loci to the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, their persistence in Iraq and Syria highlights their endurance in the Middle East. In addition, experts warned of a possible resurgence of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan after the Taliban recaptured Kabul in August 2021.

22. Further, it has become clear that the rapid evolution of emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs) has made the maintenance of a technological edge essential to future power: the ability to develop, integrate, and use EDTs in military applications, experts warned, has even become an existential proposition. NATO Allies have understood that innovation in nine key areas³ has become essential to maintain a leading technological edge and operational advantage over adversaries (Soare and Pothier, 2021; NATO, 2022).

23. The global climate has also demonstrated accelerated change since the 2010 Strategic Concept – meaning Allies were literally living in a different world by the time they were assessing the challenges of the strategic environment for the 2022 Strategic Concept. The NATO 2030 initiative identified climate change as a major security issue for Allies. The normalisation of extreme weather events and rising average temperatures have already impacted the regions surrounding the Euro-Atlantic – recent Committee reporting on the High North notes an outsized impact of climate change on the region, while increased droughts and extreme temperatures have been wreaking havoc across the Middle East, North Africa, and the Sahel, ruining agricultural cycles, drying up water sources, and pushing people onto perilous migratory paths toward Europe.

24. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed previously unconsidered hurdles to reinforced Alliance resilience – at various stages in the pandemic, supplies of critical materials were recognised to have been delegated to strategic competitors, rather than being produced within the Alliance, underscoring the essential role of resilience in Allied defence. Attempts to undermine Allies' critical infrastructure and societal cohesion via hybrid warfare tactics have become a key element of the broader strategic competition Allies find themselves in with assertive authoritarian powers.

C. NATO'S 2022 STRATEGIC CONCEPT: AN EVOLVING PERCEPTION OF THE THREATS AND CHALLENGES FACING ALLIES

25. By the time Allies came to the 28 June Summit in Madrid, they understood the imperative of taking bold actions to counter an increasingly hostile security environment. This is clearly reflected in the new Strategic Concept to which they agreed. The Strategic Concept considers all the elements outlined above and bundles them into a description of the strategic environment that synthesises the evolving language of NATO's official statements from the 2014 Wales Summit, which marked the turning point of Allied perceptions of the threats and challenges facing them. The following highlights changes in the Strategic Concept's description of the strategic environment facing Allies – key deterrence and defence initiatives are outlined in Section V.

26. As Allies state clearly in the 2022 Strategic Concept: "The Euro-Atlantic is not at peace" (NATO, 2022h). Understanding what is at stake, Allies are also clear about what they are defending: "We remain steadfast in our resolve to protect our one billion citizens, defend our territory and

³ Artificial intelligence, data and computing, autonomy, quantum-enabled technologies, biotechnology and human enhancements, hypersonic technologies, space, novel materials and manufacturing, and energy and propulsion (NATO, 2022).

safeguard our freedom and democracy” (NATO, 2022h). The consensus on the threat Russia poses is also striking: “The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies’ security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area” (NATO, 2022h). In response, Allies agreed to set ‘a new baseline’ for Allies’ deterrence and defence posture, stating clearly: “We will deter and defend forward with robust in-place, multi-domain, combat-ready forces, enhanced command and control arrangements, prepositioned ammunition and equipment and improved capacity and infrastructure to rapidly reinforce any Ally, including at short or no notice” (NATO, 2022h). In effect, a *modern* forward defence posture.

27. Allies also state, however, that they ‘do not seek confrontation’ with Russia, nor does the NATO Alliance pose any threat (NATO, 2022h). They also state that any form of partnership with Russia is ruled out due to Russia’s ‘hostile policies and actions’, but ‘remain willing to keep open channels of communication with Moscow to manage and mitigate risks, prevent escalation and increase transparency’ (NATO, 2022h).

28. The 2022 Strategic Concept states clearly that ‘NATO’s key purpose is to ensure [Allies’] collective defence, based on a 360-degree approach’, as the threats Allies face are ‘global and interconnected’ (NATO, 2022h). To deal with the range of complex threats and challenges, the Strategic Concept reaffirms Allies’ core tasks as deterrence and defence, crisis prevention, and cooperative security, but recognises that deterrence and defence constitute the ‘backbone of [Allies’] Article 5 commitment to defend each other’. Allies also make clear that their broader deterrence and defence posture must be understood as multidomain: “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” (NATO, 2022h).

29. All tasks are underpinned by a recommitment to resilience, which is understood to be simultaneously ‘a national responsibility and a collective commitment’ (NATO, 2022i). Allies’ commitment to increased resilience casts a wide net. The Strategic Concept gives more attention to the resilience of cyber and space capabilities to ensure collective defence and security. It also underscores the broader importance across member states (and the Alliance as a whole) of the resilience of critical infrastructure, energy, supply chains and health systems. Further, it implies resilience in the face of the “coercive use of political, economic, energy, information and other hybrid tactics by state and non-state actors”. Here, Russia is indicated as a key culprit in hybrid warfare against Allies and partners as it “seeks to establish spheres of influence and direct control through coercion, subversion, aggression and annexation” via “conventional, cyber and hybrid means” (NATO, 2022h).

30. Allies identify terrorism “in all its forms and manifestations” as the “most direct asymmetric threat” to Allied security. Expanding networks, access to new technologies, and better capabilities are extending the reach and lethality of terrorist groups today. As such, countering terrorism is identified as essential to collective defence; NATO counterterrorism policies contribute to all three core tasks and the 360-degree approach to deterrence and defence. More broadly, Allies identify the challenge non-state armed groups pose as growing, particularly due to their ability to exploit ‘conflict and weak governance’. Allies note that, along NATO’s southern flank in particular, ‘conflict, fragility and instability...aggravated by the impact of climate change, fragile institutions, health emergencies and food insecurity’ affect Allied and partner security.

31. In the new Strategic Concept, Allies also note their evolving understanding of the challenge of China’s rise, stating that the country’s “stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge [Allied] interests, security and values”, and that China uses a “broad range of political, economic and military tools to increase its global footprint and project power”. More specifically, its “malicious hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric and disinformation target Allies and harm Alliance security” (NATO, 2022h). Allies also note that China “seeks to control key technological and industrial

sectors, critical infrastructure, and strategic materials and supply chains” – all of which can be understood as potentially undermining Allied resilience along the vectors listed above. Further, China’s “deepening strategic partnership” with Russia “and their mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order run counter to [Allied] values and interests” (NATO, 2022h). This language is far stronger than that used by Allies in their 2019 and 2021 statements.

32. The shift in tone on China is also clearly driven by China’s lack of firm position against Russia’s aggression in Ukraine, its rhetorical support for Russia’s position in the war, and its role as a pressure release valve for Russia’s heavily sanctioned economy. While Allies note they will ‘remain open to constructive engagement’ with China, they also pledge to enhance their ‘resilience and preparedness’ to address the ‘systemic challenges’ posed by China. This will include closer coordination with the European Union (EU) on NATO-China policies, as well as “strengthen[ed] dialogue and cooperation with new and existing partners in the Indo-Pacific to tackle cross-regional challenges and shared security interests” (NATO, 2022h).

33. In quick succession, the Strategic Concept also deals with cyber, space and EDT challenges. The Concept paints a stark picture: ‘Cyberspace is contested at all times’ by ‘malign actors seek[ing] to degrade [Allied] critical infrastructure’ as well as disrupt Allied governments and militaries by cyber espionage and attacks. A key concern, they note, is technological exploitation to disrupt Allies’ ability to operate freely in space, which in turn would have an outsized impact on all sectors of Allied societies. Finally, they note the increasing strategic importance of EDTs as they become ‘key areas of global competition’.

34. Allies also voice strong concern about the decline of strategic stability resulting from the erosion of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation frameworks, particularly due to Russia’s ‘selective implementation’ of its obligations, but also due to Iran and North Korea’s continued development of their nuclear and missile programmes, and China’s rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal and delivery systems ‘without increasing transparency or engaging in good faith in arms control or risk reduction’.

35. Finally, Allies make a clear and foreboding statement about the urgency of climate change action: ‘Climate change is a defining challenge of our time, with a profound impact on Allied security’. In addition, Allies also note a concern about how climate change ‘affects the way our armed forces operate’.

III- FROM WALES TO MADRID: LARGE-SCALE ADAPTATION TO ALLIED COLLECTIVE DEFENCE AND IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO RUSSIA’S WAR

36. Ukrainians are quick to note they have been at war with Russia for over eight years, only the months since the full invasion of 24 February have been the most intense. In fact, in reaction to Russia’s early 2014 illegal annexation of Crimea and subsequent financial and military support to armed formations in eastern Ukraine, NATO set about the biggest adaptation and reinforcement of its collective defence posture since the end of the Cold War. Every Summit since 2014 has announced new efforts and initiatives.⁴ While Russia’s 2014 aggression in Ukraine sparked defence posture adaptation efforts, the measures taken move beyond NATO’s eastern flank and strengthen

⁴ The Defence and Security Committee has reported on major adaptations since 2014 and included elements of NATO’s adaptation on parliamentary visits, in meetings, and at Assembly Sessions.

Allied collective defence capabilities – in what has been termed a 360-degree approach to security – to deal with the complex array of challenges facing the Alliance.

37. Allies made several hundred decisions to reinforce, adapt, and strengthen their defence and deterrence posture after 2014 and before the 2022 Madrid Summit. These initiatives have covered all domains: air, land, sea, cyber, and space. The key outcomes were a tripwire deterrence posture along NATO's eastern flank with strengthened reinforcement capabilities; stronger defences across all domains; increased domain situational awareness; and heightened readiness to deal with symmetrical, asymmetrical, and hybrid threats. The following highlights some of the most significant and visible steps taken.

A. EASTERN FLANK REINFORCEMENTS AND ADAPTATION, AND A FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOUTH

38. The *Readiness Action Plan* (RAP) announced at the 2014 Wales Summit was a clear indication that Allied perceptions of the Euro-Atlantic security environment had changed. The RAP includes assurance measures⁵ for Central and Eastern European Allies and substantial adaptation measures to command structure and force readiness. Most significantly, at the time, the RAP tripled the *NATO Response Force* (NRF) to 40,000 and established the *Very High Readiness Joint Task Force* (VJTF) as a spearhead force within it for rapid reaction to sudden security environment changes. Operational since 2016, the VJTF is led by France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Turkey, and the UK on a yearly rotational basis – with France leading in 2022 – and currently has a core strength of 5,000 troops, and is scalable to 20,000 with additional air, maritime, and special forces units made available.⁶

39. Two years later, Allies announced the establishment of the *Enhanced Forward Presence* (eFP) at the 2016 Warsaw Summit. Currently, and since 2016, a total of 23 countries contribute to it. It is divided into four multinational battlegroups in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, led respectively by the United States, Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom as framework nations (NATO, 2022g).⁷

40. At the Warsaw Summit, Allies also approved a parallel initiative to bolster security on the south-eastern flank in Bulgaria, Romania, and the Black Sea. The *Tailored Forward Presence* (tFP) is anchored by the Multinational Division Southeast (MND-SE) in Bucharest, with a multinational brigade headquartered in Craiova, Romania. The MND-SE is tasked with facilitating regional contingency reinforcement, as well as the provision of enhanced training and exercises.

41. In Warsaw, Allies also stressed that the RAP 'responds to the risks and threats emanating from our southern neighbourhood, the Middle East, and North Africa' (NATO, 2016). The Framework for the South sought to coordinate situational awareness, strategic anticipation, and project stability via partnership cooperation and capacity-building. A year later, the Alliance operationalised the *Hub for*

⁵ Assurance measures include a series of land, sea, and air activities in, on and around the eastern part of Alliance territory, which are reinforced by exercises focused on collective defence and crisis management.

⁶ The size of the VJTF and the scale of its potential reinforcement will change over the course of 2022-2023, as Allies adjust their baseline for deterrence and defence according to the political guidance given at the June Summit in Madrid.

⁷ NATO commands the four battlegroups via the Multinational Corps Northeast Headquarters in Szczecin, Poland. Two division-level headquarters coordinate training and preparation activities; the Multinational Division Northeast Headquarters (Elblag, Poland) with the battlegroups in Poland and Lithuania, and the Multinational Division North Headquarters cooperates closely with the battlegroups in Estonia and Latvia. Its forward elements are in Ādaži, Latvia, while it is headquartered in Karup, Denmark.

the South (NATO Strategic Direction-South Hub) within Joint Force Command Naples. The Hub focuses on enhancing understanding, awareness, and information-sharing on a range of topics key to security challenges along NATO's southern flank, such as terrorism, radicalisation, migration, and the environment (NATO, 2017).

B. WHOLE-OF-ALLIANCE READINESS AND REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITY ADAPTIONS

42. Given Russia's rapidly modernising and substantial forward defensive posture along its borders with NATO, Allies decided at the 2018 Brussels Summit to launch the *Readiness Initiative*, which adds significant reinforcement capabilities to the RAP adaptations. In what is sometimes referred to as the 'Four Thirties' initiative, Allies committed to deploying 30 battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 naval combat vessels on 30 days' notice for reinforcement, high-intensity warfighting, or crisis intervention. Due to concerns about evolving threats from many different directions, not exclusively along the eastern flank, and across multiple domains – air, land, sea, space, and cyber – Allies stressed the readiness initiative was part of its 360-degree approach to its security challenges.

43. In parallel, Allies took steps to adapt their command structures to facilitate a potential surge in Allied reinforcement forces to deal with any future contingency. To wit, Allies announced two new commands: an Atlantic command in Norfolk, Virginia,⁸ to assist with transatlantic reinforcement efforts, and a support and logistics command in Ulm, Germany, to facilitate the flow of reinforcements to the eastern flank.

44. Allies also took additional measures to ensure the ability to move and sustain a forward deployment. In cooperation with the EU, Allies worked to reduce the bureaucratic friction to moving air, land, and sea forces across Allies' European territories. With the EU, Allies have worked to enact legislation and procedures, as well as invested in the infrastructure necessary to move forces across borders quickly. An element of this was tested during the COVID-19 pandemic. In October 2019, in cooperation with EUROCONTROL, Allies established the Rapid Air Mobility (RAM) mechanism. RAM was critical to Allies' early COVID-19 pandemic response. From its first flights in March 2020, the plan enabled the flow of key medical supplies and personnel to Allies and partners in critical need. Allies' RAM capabilities are essential to Allied resilience in a time of crisis. The RAM plan was declared fully operational at the 2021 Brussels Summit.

C. NEW ALLIED MILITARY STRATEGY CONCEPTS

45. In May 2019, Allied Chiefs of Defence endorsed a new Military Strategy, formalising the de facto reality underway with the post-2014 adaptations to collective defence (NATO, 2019). The strategy recognises strategic competition and widespread, persistent instability as the principal characteristics of the international security environment; Russia and terrorism being the main symmetrical and asymmetrical threats respectively. Shifting away from a focus on crisis response, the strategy underscores the necessity of readiness for strategic competition and proactive whole-of-Alliance steady-state deterrence.

46. The strategy's implementation can be seen in the approval of two new key military concepts: the Concept for Deterrence and Defence in the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA) and the NATO Warfighting

⁸ Along with commands in Brunssum, Netherlands, and Naples, Italy, the Atlantic command in Norfolk is one of three regionally focused joint, operational-level commands reporting directly to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). It is the only operational NATO command based in North America.

Capstone Concept (NWCC). Allies note the DDA serves as a single 'framework' through which Allies can defend and deter against the range of complex threats facing them today (NATO, 2021). It describes an operating environment in which Allies must demonstrate their collective ability to control and defend across multiple warfare domains simultaneously (Tigner, 2021).

47. The NWCC calls for long-term, structural changes in NATO's conception of the use of force in deterrence and in the defence of the Euro-Atlantic area. It lays out a 20-year over-the-horizon plan for NATO to maintain and develop its decisive military edge.⁹ The NWCC identifies five warfare development imperatives: cognitive superiority, cross-domain command, influence and power projection, integrated multi-domain defence, and layered resilience (HCSS, 2020).

D. NEW INTEGRATED AIR AND MISSILE DEFENCE AND AIR POLICING

48. NATO also enhanced its Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD)¹⁰ mission to address air and missile threats emanating from state and non-state actors and ranging from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to hypersonic missiles. In 2021, Allies committed to improving NATO IAMD capabilities, including sensors, interceptors, and command and control via the NATO Defence Planning Process. Allies are also investing more in their five regional air-policing missions: over the Baltic States, the Eastern Adriatic and Western Balkans, Iceland, and the Benelux. As part of NATO's 2014 Assurance Measures, a second Baltic air-policing presence was established out of Ämari Air Base in Estonia, and additional assets were added across the southern missions.

E. STRENGTHENING NATO'S DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE POSTURE ALONG THE EASTERN FLANK IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF RUSSIA'S INVASION

49. Amidst the intensifying tensions in January 2022, many Allies¹¹ put troops on stand-by or on high alert for the NRF and moved fixed and rotary-wing aircraft and maritime assets east to enhance the eFP. For example, the UK committed to doubling its troops in Estonia and put 1,000 troops on stand-by in the event of a humanitarian crisis, and the US sent an additional 1,000 troops to Romania, 5,500 troops to Poland and put 8,500 troops on high alert for the NRF (BBC, 2022).

50. Immediately following Russia's invasion, NATO's 40,000-strong NRF was activated for the first time (NATO, 2022a). In addition, elements of the VJTF¹² were deployed to the eastern flank. At the March 24 NATO Extraordinary Summit, NATO Allies agreed to establish an additional four multinational battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, bringing the total to eight battlegroups along the eastern flank from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Forces comprising the eFP surged from approximately 5,000 in early February to over 20,000 (including the 6,100 in the new battlegroups) by early April. In parallel, the United States had surged its force level in Europe to just over 100,000, a level not seen since 2005 (O'Brien, 2022; Vandiver, 2022). France deployed a joint

⁹ The concept outlines indispensable and mutually reinforcing "outs" (out-fight, out-think, out-pace, out-last, out-excel, out-partner) in order to identify game-changing concepts and capabilities, enabling the Alliance to get ahead of, rather than just react to the threats it faces.

¹⁰ NATO IAMD is under the authority of NATO's SACEUR and implemented through the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS), a network of interconnected national and NATO systems comprised of sensors, command and control assets, and weapons systems.

¹¹ Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

¹² Since 2014, the VJTF has been integrated into the overall NRF structure, increasing the size of the NRF to 40,000 and providing NATO with a highly capable and flexible air, land, maritime and special forces package capable of deploying at short notice when tasked, between two to seven days. Non-allied countries such as Finland and Sweden also contribute to the NRF.

battlegroup of 500 troops to Romania, as well as 200 men and women and four additional Mirage fighter jets to Estonia. On 7 June, Germany decided to add another 500 troops to its forces in Lithuania and announced it would also earmark an additional high-readiness combat-ready brigade of 3,000 soldiers capable of rapid reinforcement of NATO's positions in Lithuania, if necessary. As German Chancellor Olaf Scholz noted during his visit to Vilnius at the time: "We will defend every centimetre of NATO's territory"; he continued by affirming that Germany was "ready to strengthen [its] engagement and develop it towards a robust combat brigade" (Rinke & Sytas, 2022). There was a broader consensus developing across the Alliance in the run-up to the Summit about the augmentation of NATO's eFP multinational battalions to brigade-sized forces where possible and necessary.

51. Allies also enhanced their military exercising across Europe, put an additional 130 fighter aircraft on high alert, and deployed more than 200 ships, including five carrier strike groups from the High North to the Mediterranean (NATO, 2022b). Allies also moved quickly to increase their readiness to deal with elevated CBRN threats due to Russia's reckless actions and rhetoric in and surrounding Ukraine by activating the Joint CBRN Defence Task Force (NATO, 2022b).

52. If Vladimir Putin's principal strategic goal had been to weaken NATO, drive a wedge in the transatlantic relationship, freeze NATO enlargement, and redirect Ukraine's future strategic direction East, the response from Allies and partners to his war in Ukraine resulted in the exact opposite. Russia's unprovoked invasion has consolidated Ukrainian identity and confirmed their desire to look West for their future. NATO Allies and their partners have closed ranks to support Ukraine's defensive efforts and punish Russia's aggression. Domestic debates in traditionally neutral countries, such as Finland and Sweden, shifted radically and, after cross-societal and parliamentary debates, soon turned to significant majorities in favour of joining NATO – both countries submitted their membership bids simultaneously on 18 May 2022, Allied leaders agreed to these bids at the June Summit in Madrid, and both nations signed the accession protocols on 5 July 2022 in Brussels, marking the start of the ratification process (currently underway). Russia's shattering of European post-Cold War security assumptions has also driven profound reassessments upwards of almost all Allies' defence budgets.

IV- NATO'S 2022 DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE SURGE: ALLIES REACT TO RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE

53. The 28 June NATO Summit in Madrid came at a critical juncture in NATO's post-Cold War history. Allies had a two-fold objective: first, to demonstrate a strong and unified response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine and immediate threats to broader Euro-Atlantic security; and second, to adopt a Strategic Concept that would serve as a clear roadmap and strong political mandate in support of Allied adaptation and modernisation over the coming decade. Allies proposed a major revision of its deterrence and defence posture, opting for a form of modern forward defence. The second objective will involve a significant whole-of-Alliance effort to modernise the Alliance across all domains, underwritten by a vast increase in inter-Allied technology investment, revised command and control structures, and a whole-of-alliance effort to review and implement a broad range of resilience efforts.

54. Three principal elements drive NATO's new pledged deterrence and defence posture: larger forward combat formations; significantly increased high-readiness forces for reinforcement; and more stocks of prepositioned equipment for combat enablement. Taken in turn, these decisions entail the following:

- a. **Larger Combat Formations:** As noted above, Allies agreed to double the number of multinational battlegroups along the eastern flank just prior to the Summit, bringing the number to eight. These run along the eastern flank from Estonia in the north to Bulgaria in the south. Allies also agreed to upgrade these existing battalions to brigades ‘when and where required’ (NATO, 2022i). Allies welcomed cooperation between NATO eFP Framework Nations and their Baltic hosts to establish division-level command structures. (See *US bi-lateral initiatives below for additional actions to secure larger forward-based combat-capable formations; see also Annex 1 on NATO’s Post-Madrid East Deterrence*)
- b. **Increased High-Readiness Reinforcements:** Representing a significant shift in thinking about force readiness, Allies adopted the **New Force Model**, increasing their current NATO Response Force level of 40,000 to 300,000 troops available within 15 days, and making an additional 200,000 ready within 6 months (NATO, 2022k). The New Force Model will comprise three tiers: 100,000 (or more) forces within 10-day readiness to deploy; 200,000 within 30 days; and an additional 300,000 (or more) to follow within 30-180 days. As NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg noted, for the first time since the Cold War NATO will have “forces pre-assigned to defend specific Allies” to hone contingency planning and acquire advanced terrain knowledge to increase their defensive capacities (NATO, 2022l). Allies indicated that the details of the New NATO Force Model would be developed over the coming year, with the transition completed by the next NATO Summit in Vilnius in 2023 (NATO, 2022k).
- c. **More Stocks of Pre-positioned Equipment for Combat Enablement:** underwriting the credibility of the forward-deployed forces and their high-readiness reinforcements will be increased pre-positioned equipment, stockpiles, and new military facilities across eastern flank nations.

55. At the Summit, individual Allies also announced planned actions to contribute to the broader Alliance-wide efforts to strengthen NATO’s deterrence and defence, particularly to shore up European security. The United States and Canada announced a series of significant steps to demonstrate their understanding of the transatlantic bond’s indispensable role in Allied security. Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, announced Ottawa’s intention to “bolster [its] military deployment in Latvia and work with other Allies to be able to rapidly augment [its] current strength to our combat capable brigade when required” (AP, 2022). At the start of the Summit, the United States announced it had deployed or extended over 20,000 additional forces to add to the 100,000 already in Europe. Further, the White House announced the following actions:

- a. **Eastern Flank:**
 - i. The establishment of a permanent V Corps Headquarters Forward Command Post in Poland to improve US-NATO interoperability across the Alliance’s eastern flank;
 - ii. The maintenance of an additional rotational Brigade Combat Team, based in Romania, but capable of deploying subordinate elements for training and exercises;
 - iii. Enhanced rotational deployments across the Baltics region, to include armoured, aviation, air defence, and special operations forces on a persistent, ‘heel-to-toe’ basis to allow for faster reinforcement and combat-credible defence; as well as an increased exercise programme with Baltic Allies throughout the year.

b. ***Broader European Theatre:***

- i. Cooperation with Spain to increase the number of US destroyers stationed at Rota port from four to six;
- ii. Deployment of two F-35 squadrons to the United Kingdom; and,
- iii. The stationing of additional air defence and other enablers in Germany and Italy.

56. Taken together, the Madrid Summit defence and deterrence initiatives can be seen as revolutionary, but also evolutionary. Allies announced a paradigm shift in their deterrence and defence posture at the 2016 Warsaw Summit with the deployment of the eFP and tFP along the eastern flank, which, as noted above, is premised on the dual concept of ‘trip wire’ forward-deployed forces and rapid reinforcement. It was clear, however, as NATO-Russian relations continued to deteriorate, that NATO’s posture was in an evolutionary phase to adapt to the evolving Russian threat, as well as a suite of ever more complex threats and challenges in the Euro-Atlantic security environment. As the Strategic Concept states, Allies “cannot discount the possibility of an attack against [their] sovereignty and territorial integrity”; as such, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine pushed Allies to move to a modern forward deterrence and defence posture to “defend every inch of Allied territory” (NATO, 2022h).

57. The Strategic Concept also highlights emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs) as keys to 21st-century power and, therefore, essential to modern deterrence and defence. As such, Allies pledge to ‘expedite’ NATO’s ‘digital transformation’ via ‘stronger cyber defence, networks, and infrastructure’. NATO will invest in EDTs to ‘retain [Allies’] interoperability and military edge’. The adoption and integration of new technologies are a priority, particularly via closer cooperation with the private sector. A key Summit initiative is the launch of the Innovation Fund to complement the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA), which debuted in April to support the development and adaptation of dual-use technologies to critical security and defence challenges. Allies note the Innovation Fund will act as the ‘world’s first multi-sovereign venture capital fund’ by investing in start-ups and venture funds developing dual-use EDTs deemed a priority by NATO. These include artificial intelligence, big-data processing, quantum-enabled technologies, autonomous systems, biotechnology and human enhancement, novel materials, energy, propulsion and space. Allies have seeded the Innovation Fund with an initial EUR 1 billion investment.

58. Allies also stress that the “secure use of and unfettered access to space and cyberspace are key to effective deterrence and defence” (NATO, 2022h). As such, Allies pledge to enhance their ability to operate in both domains. They also state that: “A single or cumulative set of malicious cyber activities; or hostile operations to, from, or within space” could trigger an Article 5 response (NATO, 2022h). Further, to align behavioural norms in each domain, Allies recognise the ‘applicability’ of international law in space and cyberspace.

59. Over recent years, Allies have repeated their nuclear deterrence policy position that “NATO is committed to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, but as long as nuclear weapons exist, it will remain a nuclear alliance” (NATO, 2022m). Allies clearly understand that, rather than lessening, global nuclear proliferation challenges are actually increasing. They note their concern that ‘authoritarian actors’ are still “investing in sophisticated conventional, nuclear and missile capabilities, with little transparency or regard for international norms and commitments” (NATO, 2022h). More specifically, Allies state that Russia is ‘modernising its nuclear forces and expanding its novel and disruptive dual-capable delivery systems, while employing coercive nuclear signalling’ (NATO, 2022h). In such an environment, the Strategic Concept notes that: “The fundamental purpose of NATO’s nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression” and that the “strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance...are the supreme guarantee of the security of the Alliance” (NATO, 2022h). Thus, Allies pledge to ‘take all necessary steps to ensure the credibility,

effectiveness, safety and security of the nuclear deterrent mission' (NATO, 2022h). Allies stress they will continue to invest in their abilities to defend against CBRN threats via enhanced policies, training and exercises. In parallel, Allies state that "strategic stability, delivered through effective deterrence and defence, arms control and disarmament, and meaningful and reciprocal dialogue remains essential to [Allied] security" (NATO, 2022h). Allies therefore commit to "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" (NATO, 2022h).

60. Allies also pledge to continue to 'counter, defend and respond' to terrorism threats via a 'combination of prevention, protection and denial measures', and to increase cooperation with the international community, particularly the EU and UN, to 'tackle the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism' (NATO, 2022h).

V- DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE IMPERATIVES OF THE NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT PRIOR TO RUSSIA'S INVASION: ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOMES

61. In November 2021, NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg announced five themes around which the new Strategic Concept could be constructed: 1) protecting NATO's values; 2) reinforcing military power; 3) strengthening Allied societies; 4) a global outlook; and 5) strengthening NATO as the institutional link between Europe and North America. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly was engaged throughout the consultation process during the development of the Strategic Concept, and submitted a concept paper outlining 21 specific recommendations, adopted by the Assembly's Standing Committee on 22 February. Protecting NATO's values was a long-standing issue at the centre of the Assembly's agenda, and has driven the agenda of the Assembly's current president, Gerald Connolly (United States). Under President Connolly's leadership, the Assembly has been pushing for Allies to seize the opportunity of a new Strategic Concept to recommit to the democratic values underpinning the Alliance. In addition, the Assembly advocated for a [Center for Democratic Resilience](#) within NATO to support Allies' continuing commitment to democratic values.

62. Several key recommendations focused on advancing NATO's defence and deterrence adaptation. This was principally to reassert NATO's core focus on collective deterrence and defence; clarify nuclear deterrence as the ultimate guarantee of Allied security, while stating NATO's continued commitment to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, taking into account the prevailing security environment; seek a transatlantic China policy based on engagement, competition and deterrence; defend against terrorism; and elevate the Alliance focus on resilience.

63. The preliminary draft of this report supported these recommendations, but also noted the imperatives of the long-term implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, advocating for much stronger, forward-leaning language to signal that the Alliance is fit for purpose for the challenges it faces today and recognises how to meet those over the horizon. It signalled that Russia's invasion of Ukraine had so fundamentally changed the European security environment that Allies would have to go back to the drawing board on several key elements of the new Strategic Concept, most notably their views on Allied defence and deterrence in this new era of dynamic confrontation and strategic competition. At its Spring Session in Vilnius, the Assembly issued a declaration, *Confronting Russia's Threat*, which echoed these stronger positions.

64. Two pillars guided the Assembly's collective priorities: a strong reaffirmation of Allies' shared values as essential to both transatlantic unity and NATO's approach to the threats and challenges it

faces; and a fundamental shift in the approach to Allies' deterrence and defence posture. Fortunately, as is clear from the above, the Strategic Concept aligned well with the Assembly and this report's broader visions in content and spirit. The ability to fund and sustain the initiatives for a new baseline deterrence and defence posture, as well as the ambitious pledges for over-the-horizon adaptation, is the next logical focus for Allied governments, parliaments and populations alike.

VI- THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF CONTINUED ALLIED DEFENCE INVESTMENTS

65. To meet the adaptation requirements and fund the modern forces capable of delivering NATO's modern forward deterrence and defence posture, Allies must continue to increase their investments in their defence institutions. At the Extraordinary NATO Summit in March 2022, Allies recommitted to the Defence Investment Pledge. Those Allies who had not already done so submitted additional plans on how to increase defence investments to meet the pledge at the Madrid Summit in June (NATO, 2022b). Understanding the need for an 'equitable' distribution of responsibilities, Allies state in the Strategic Concept that they "will ensure [their] nations meet the commitments under the Defence Investment Pledge, in its entirety, to provide the full range of required capabilities" (NATO, 2022h). Such a statement is in line with Allies' defence investment commitments since 2014.

66. The Defence Investment Pledge, adopted by NATO Leaders at the 2014 Wales Summit, called for all Allies to reverse defence budget declines and meet the NATO-agreed guideline of spending at least 2% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defence within a decade. Allies also agreed to move toward spending at least 20% of annual defence expenditure on major new equipment, including related research and development as part of the same initiative. In parallel, Allies committed to guaranteeing their land, air and naval forces meet NATO standards (including doctrines) for deployability and sustainability and to ensuring their armed forces can interoperate effectively. Significantly, Allies recognised the need to address the transatlantic gap in defence spending and, in parallel, the defence investment gap between Western and Eastern European Allies. Increased investments across the Alliance since the 2014 defence spending pledge have indeed produced positive results. As a result, Allies have taken great strides toward fairer burden-sharing.

67. NATO's published figures demonstrate that 2021 marked the seventh consecutive year of increased defence spending by European and Canadian Allies. Since 2014, Allies have made considerable progress in increasing defence spending and investing in major equipment, taking steps toward fairer burden-sharing, which contributed a cumulative extra of USD 190 billion since 2014 (NATO, 2022f). In addition to increased investments, Allies have also demonstrated improved readiness, deployability, sustainability and interoperability of their forces in the eight years since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, which has become the clear critical juncture at which Allies recognised the shift in the Euro-Atlantic security environment and began their significant steps to adapt the Alliance. As NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said at the Madrid Summit: "Nine Allies now reach – or exceed – the 2% target; 19 Allies have clear plans to reach it by 2024...2% is increasingly considered a floor, not a ceiling" (NATO, 2022).

The Surge in Allied Pledged Defence Investments Post-Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

68. What Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine demonstrates in abundant clarity is that security challenges to the Euro-Atlantic area are a clear and pressing threat, requiring far greater attention to a range of defence investments. In the wake of Russia's aggression, many NATO member states (Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and the UK) and partner countries (Austria, Finland, Sweden) have pledged, or are debating the implementation of, significant defence spending increases.

69. The European Commission estimates its Member States have announced plans for an additional EUR 200 billion in the coming years (Taylor, 2022b). Much of this spending will go to replenish depleted stocks after European states sent significant amounts of weaponry and other military equipment to Ukraine. In addition, the EU announced it would both support the European defence industry and reinforce its integration via a common procurement regulatory instrument, a first in its history (Foy, 2022). The EU planned to commit an initial EUR 500 million to the instrument to assist with EU reimbursement of 10-15% of the cost of new weapons if bought from an EU defence company in the two years following 24 February (Foy, 2022).

70. Germany might be the most prominent case of trend reversal across the Alliance. On 27 February, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced a seismic shift in German defence spending: Germany would immediately meet NATO's 2% GDP target (up from 1.5% in 2021) and establish a EUR 100 billion fund for the armed forces (placing it in the constitution to protect it from budget amendments) (The Economist, 2022a). Two weeks later, Germany announced it would procure 35 F-35 joint strike fighters to replace its ageing Tornados, and 15 Eurofighters to conduct electronic warfare (The Economist, 2022a).

VII- SUPPORTING NATO'S POST-MADRID DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE IMPERATIVES

71. A key reason Putin gave at the outset for his ordered invasion of Ukraine was to keep Ukraine out of NATO, thereby keeping the Alliance at bay of what he considers to be a Russian sphere of influence. He may instead be creating the Alliance he fears most (Serhan, 2022; Taylor, 2022; Schake, 2022). Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine has united Allies in their common cause to not only support Ukraine's legitimate right to self-defence, but to ensure the defence of their own territories, despite the economic and diplomatic costs of further isolating Russia from any form of transactional relationship.

72. The Alliance now finds itself in an era of active and continuous confrontation with Russia, most acutely along the eastern flank from the Arctic to the Black and Mediterranean Seas. China's rising military, economic, and political power is a global challenge increasingly treading upon Allied interests. The Chinese-Russian partnership, shockingly reaffirmed even after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, demonstrates that they are each not only increasingly authoritarian and aggressive, but also actively collaborating to undermine the international rules-based order. Allies have worked to strengthen this order in the post-Cold War era as they believe it not only serves their interests, but also the broader dynamics of global peace and security, as well as shared opportunities for prosperity.

73. The outcomes of the Madrid Summit make it clear that Allies understand the severity of the threats and challenges facing them. As they note succinctly in their first sentence describing the strategic environment they face today: “The Euro-Atlantic area is not at peace” (NATO, 2022h). Russia’s full-scale illegal brutal attack of Ukraine on 24 February changed the dynamic of the Euro-Atlantic security environment for the foreseeable future, as Russia blatantly violated “the norms and principles that contributed to a safe and predictable European Security order” (NATO, 2022h).

74. As a whole, the new Strategic Concept and range of Summit initiatives outline a coherent and strong political mandate and roadmap for Allies to ensure Euro-Atlantic security in response to Russia’s aggression, but also to develop the policies and partnerships necessary to adapt to a more challenging future. This entails a significant range of actions that must be taken today and over the horizon. Allies must seize upon the strong political mandate that the new Strategic Concept presents to project renewed strength through an uncompromising commitment to collective defence of their **territory, populations, interests, and values**.

75. To do so, Allies must work urgently to:

- i. Ensure the prompt and effective implementation of the new decisions taken at the Madrid Summit to reinforce NATO’s new baseline deterrence and defence posture, which represents a **fundamental transformation of the European security environment** after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine;
- ii. Execute promptly and fully NATO’s new force model to modernise the NATO Force Structure and augment the Alliance’s eastern flank presence, while maintaining a 360-degree approach to their security;
- iii. Continue and build upon the political and practical support to Ukraine as it defends its sovereignty and territorial integrity, including, but not solely, via the enhanced Comprehensive Assistance Package;
- iv. Implement national plans, in line with Article 3 of the Washington Treaty and seeking maximum synergy with the EU, to increase national and collective resilience, especially to guarantee the security of critical energy and cyber networks, essential supply chains, and government and civil services;
- v. Increase the resilience of the space and cyber capabilities upon which Allied collective defence and security depends;

76. Faced with the erosion of **strategic stability** in an increasingly complex security environment, Allies must continue to **take all necessary steps to ensure the credibility, effectiveness, safety and security of NATO’s nuclear mission**. Further, Allies must fully support the commitments made in the 2022 CBRN Defence Policy and remain vigilant to the CBRN threat posed by Russia, and other state or non-state actors. In parallel, however, the pursuit of strategic risk reduction through dialogue must remain a priority.

77. The persistence of the **terrorism threat**, ‘in all its forms and manifestations’, remains the most significant asymmetrical threat to Allied and partner security and stability. As such, Allies must continue to counter, deter, defend and respond to threats and challenges posed by terrorist groups, including by enhancing cooperation with NATO’s unique and essential partner, the EU, as well as other partners, particularly in the Middle East, across the Sahel, and in the Horn of Africa, to fight terrorism and respond to shared threats and challenges.

78. **Defence investments** must focus on creating a fundamentally new Allied military capability **projecting strength along the vectors of modern, innovative military power**:

- i. Allies need to invest in the air, land, and sea forces necessary to meet today's local, regional, and global challenges. These forces must be enabled by the most modern technologies to ensure manoeuvrability, precision strikes and interoperability with other domain assets. Enabling these capabilities requires a modern and secure communications infrastructure on the ground, in the air, and in space.
- ii. This includes investing far more capital into Alliance-wide innovation efforts to maintain the Alliance's technological edge, especially as EDTs further disrupt the dynamics of modern military power. The Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) must be infused with the financial, political, and diplomatic capital to encourage the kind of breakthroughs necessary to be at the vanguard of 21st-century power. As such, Allies must resource and sustain the newly launched Innovation Fund.
- iii. NATO must also infuse itself with the tools necessary to confront the dynamics of great power competition in the 21st century. As discussed above, present challenges are complex and diffuse over a wide array of domains and power dynamics, and often working below the level necessary for military response. Allies must then find a way to infuse their political, diplomatic, and economic power into their modern defence posture, not only to shore it up, but to project the strength needed to defend their interests when they are threatened below the threshold for direct military action.

79. **China's rise as an economic, military, and political superpower is a defining long-term challenge for Allies.** Allies should continue to strive to find ways to engage and dialogue with China on issues of overlapping strategic interest if and when possible. China's increasingly aggressive policies, stated ambitions, and continued cooperation with Russia, however, make it clear that there may only be a limited number of areas in which Beijing is willing to cooperate with Allies. As such, Allies must continue to explore the best ways and means available to them to safeguard their interests when challenged by China.

- i. Internally, this means **strengthening the resilience of supply chains in critical areas**, such as defence industries and infrastructure supporting essential economic and social functions.
- ii. Externally, this means focusing on **expanding the breadth and depth of cooperation with China's democratic neighbours** in the broader region. Further enhancing engagement with Australia, Japan, and South Korea should be a starting point.
- iii. Both internal resilience and stronger external partnerships will help Allies in their attempts to counter the Chinese activities that could threaten to undermine Allied security across all elements of national power, which in turn will help with resilience across the five military domains.

80. **In the cyber realm, Russia and China have benefited from their increasing disregard for international norms and law, as well as, at least in the case of Russia, clear offensive cyber doctrines.** Allies' inability to increase the costs of these infractions and disruptive practices has only further encouraged malign behaviour. Allies therefore need to get serious about defining mutually-understood rules regarding networks, and combine their efforts to impose meaningful penalties for cyber infractions driven by state-led or -sponsored adversaries.

81. **A stronger partnership network is essential in the kind of systemic challenge facing Allies today.** Allies must be sure to make the absolute, as well as relative, value proposition of continued close partnership with the Alliance clear to all partners. NATO should project and embody the strengths that can be inherited by working together in defence of Allies' core values. A key means of doing this is via a stronger strategic partnership with the European Union. Given NATO and the EU's shared values and significant number of shared members, both organisations can find ways and means to deepen their cooperation to the significant benefit of international peace and security.

82. The acute nature of Russia's challenge to Euro-Atlantic security should be considered an escalating pattern. Allies have reacted strongly, demonstrating North America and Europe's collective desire to counter Russia's efforts to shatter the foundations of international peace and security. Allies must seize this moment of unprecedented unity and common cause to put their full political and necessary financial support behind the pledged new, stronger deterrence and defence posture in the face of a sea change in the Euro-Atlantic security environment. There is no going back to the status quo ante – the *post-post-Cold War* era is here, and it will require all Allies to work together to rise to the complexity of its challenges.

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Annex 1 – NATO Post-Madrid East Deterrence

