

ENHANCING THE PROTECTION OF ALLIED CRITICAL MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE

RESOLUTION 488*

The Assembly,

1. **Recognising** that the protection of critical maritime infrastructure, such as undersea communication and energy cables as well as offshore wind farms, drilling rigs and pipelines, is essential to ensure the uninterrupted flow of goods, energy and information;
2. **Recollecting** that this protection of critical infrastructure on Allied territory is first and foremost the national responsibility of states;
3. **Recalling** that this infrastructure is not only indispensable for the essential functioning of our states and economies, but also for the security of NATO member states and the Alliance;
4. **Concerned** about the vulnerability of critical maritime infrastructure, noting that Russia has been actively mapping this infrastructure;
5. **Welcoming** the NATO decision to increase the number of ships patrolling the North, Baltic and Mediterranean Seas and strengthen its presence around key undersea infrastructure;
6. **Acknowledging** the challenges associated with protecting vast maritime areas, the depths at which operations must be conducted, and the technological complexities involved;
7. **Aware** that detection of attacks is difficult given the advanced capabilities of malicious state and non-state actors and the significant role played by private actors in the operation of most maritime infrastructure;
8. **Recognising** the dual nature of technological advancements, and **underlining** the need for effective cooperation between public and private entities in protecting critical maritime infrastructure;
9. **Emphasising** the role of technology, including sensors and autonomous systems, in protecting such infrastructure, including by facilitating threat identification, surveillance and monitoring, as well as situational awareness;
10. **Welcoming** national efforts of Allies to protect critical maritime infrastructure through initiatives such as the procurement of multi-role surveillance vessels, the development of autonomous and remotely piloted drones, and investment in other uncrewed systems;
11. **Supporting** NATO initiatives, including *Operation Sea Guardian* and the establishment of the Critical Undersea Infrastructure Coordination Cell (CUICC) and the Maritime Centre for the Security of Critical Undersea Infrastructure within MARCOM to facilitate industry engagement and to encourage the use of innovative technologies that enhance defensive capabilities;

* Presented by the Science and Technology Committee and adopted by the Plenary Assembly on Monday 9 October 2023 in Copenhagen, Denmark

12. **Emphasising** the important role of the NATO Science and Technology Organization (STO) in promoting and coordinating innovative solutions for maritime security challenges, in particular through the Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (CMRE), which, despite limited financial resources, conducts valuable research that addresses persistent gaps in Allies' maritime capabilities;
13. **Applauding** NATO efforts to strengthen capabilities for the monitoring and protection of critical undersea infrastructure, such as the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic's (DIANA) challenge on *Sensing the Coastal Undersea Environment* and the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) activities focusing on maritime situational awareness;
14. **Welcoming** the establishment of the NATO-EU Task Force on Resilience of Critical Infrastructure and the collaboration between NATO and partner countries like Japan to enhance maritime capabilities through increased interoperability and preparedness;
15. **Commending** EU's efforts to enhance protection of undersea infrastructure, and **highlighting** the valuable NATO-EU cooperation on maritime-related issues, especially initiatives engaging the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) in Lisbon;
16. **Noting** that NATO's Strategic Concept recognises the need to identify and mitigate strategic dependencies and vulnerabilities with respect to Allies' critical infrastructure;
17. **URGES** member governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance:
 - a. to raise awareness about the need both to enhance the resilience of critical maritime infrastructure and to prioritise action to protect it;
 - b. to redouble NATO and Allies' national efforts aiming to protect critical maritime infrastructure by encouraging the establishment of national strategic doctrines;
 - c. to decrease Allied dependence on high-risk providers by promoting more secure alternatives and deepening collaboration with partners, including the EU;
 - d. to strengthen collaboration among Allies by fostering the sharing of data, intelligence, national risk assessments, incident reports, and best practices through platforms such as the CUICC while improving the interoperability of crucial sensor technology;
 - e. to improve Allied intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities for enabling vehicle tracking, threat detection, communication, and strategic planning;
 - f. to increase investments in the STO, and specifically the CMRE, both to leverage its potential in identifying risks and vulnerabilities related to emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs), and to develop defensive capabilities like sensors and autonomous systems;
 - g. to provide much-needed support for the CUICC and for MARCOM's Maritime Centre for the Security of Critical Undersea Infrastructure in order to institutionalise and strengthen a dialogue with industry as a basis for public-private partnerships that facilitate the development of defensive capabilities and improve the resilience of critical maritime infrastructure;
 - h. to enforce stringent evaluation processes for military systems and critical maritime infrastructure by conducting rigorous assessments and audits to ensure that all hardware and software components meet established security standards.