

A Citizens Declaration of Alliance Security

Heads of State are expected to issue A Declaration on Alliance Security at the NATO 60th Anniversary Strasbourg/Kehl Summit. This Citizens Declaration outlines the **basic principles for equipping NATO to meet the different and diverse challenges of this 21st century**. It was prepared by NATO Watch and revised in the light of discussions and comments received during a Shadow NATO Summit in Brussels on 31 March – April 2009. It is being used to kick-start a NATO-wide, civil society-led public consultation on a new Strategic Concept to be negotiated in 2009-10. An accompanying Framing Paper provides further background and justification for the principles.

The Citizens Declaration of Alliance Security (and Framing Paper) is to be circulated widely throughout NATO Member States, Partnership and Contact Countries. Support for the Declaration and further feedback is being actively courted via the NATO Watch web site www.natowatch.org. Towards the end of 2009 a similar process will be initiated to launch a Citizens Strategic Concept.

Section I: Creating a New Vision and Mission for NATO

1. Promoting moral, muscular multilateralism

Effective multilateralism means supporting a range of international treaties, norms and institutions, even when it presents difficulties for short-term national or collective NATO interests. It also means moving beyond 'à la carte multilateralism' to a new era of cooperation within the Alliance and by developing a wider and more inclusive network of partners as part of a broader, more comprehensive approach.

2. Synthesising non-offensive collective defence and human security

The new Strategic Concept should explore the principles of Non-Offensive Defence and human security in shaping a revised collective defence posture for the Alliance. The human security dimension involves the protection of all civilians, and gender equality is an integral part of all stages in NATO operations.

3. Reconnecting with citizens

In order to deepen and extend the shared values-base within the Alliance, NATO needs to become closer to its citizens and civil society. This means an updated, more open, transparent and accountable Alliance, appropriate to 21st century expectations. Parliamentary accountability within NATO requires clear and adequate mechanisms, and a relaxation of secrecy rules.

Section II: Putting the mission into action - practical implications

4. Decisions over use of force

NATO is morally and legally obliged to exhaust all other means possible before taking up arms, and force should only be used in accordance with the UN Charter. This either means authorised by the UN Security Council or in self-defence (when there is a real, imminent and severe danger and the UN Security Council is unable to act in time).

5. Upholding humanitarian and international laws of war

NATO must uphold the highest standards of international law, including humanitarian law, when choosing to threaten or use force, and in the application of force.

6. Responsibility to Protect – Part I: preventing genocide and mass atrocities

Preventing genocide and mass atrocities should be a priority for NATO and not merely an idealistic add-on to the core collective defence agenda. It is a moral and strategic imperative for the Alliance to implement the UN Responsibility to Protect (R2P) agenda and resources should be directed towards the development of a comprehensive approach to genocide prevention.

7. Responsibility to Protect – Part II: civilians during conflict

NATO must move towards a human security approach, contributing to the protection of every individual human being and not focus merely on the defence of territorial borders. This means prohibiting military activities that indiscriminately impact on civilians, safeguarding the economic and social infrastructures of civilian life and accurately accounting for civilian casualties arising from NATO operations.

8. Responsibility to Protect – Part III: NATO service personnel

The Alliance should prioritise better equipment, pay and conditions for service personnel as part of a renewed compact between the military and wider society.

Section III: Challenges for the mission

9. Moving beyond war-fighting (in Afghanistan and beyond)

There will be no stability in Afghanistan without a comprehensive peace process including all relevant internal actors and neighbours. There is an urgent need to pursue a process that is capable of forging a new and inclusive Afghan national consensus, rather than persisting in the current fight to try to defeat those outside the consensus

10. Bringing Russia in from the cold

A real partnership needs to be developed between NATO and Russia where both parties work together to resolve the multitude of modern security problems. NATO should avoid needlessly provocative deployments.

11. Civilian-led counter-terrorism

NATO counter-terrorism policy should focus on international cooperation to improve the intelligence base, strengthen civilian law enforcement capabilities, restrict terrorist access to funds and weapons, and reduce the root causes driving people to radical violence.

12. Preventive diplomacy

The Alliance needs to identify the conditions required to create stability and how it can contribute to good governance, prior to intervention. To this end, NATO should seek to counter inequality and discrimination and promote peaceful resolution of conflict.

13. Disaster relief and reconstruction

NATO should consider how it could improve its capabilities to respond to the growing number of natural, complex humanitarian and human disasters, while upholding the MCDA and Oslo guidelines.

14. Arms control and disarmament

The Alliance and Member States should review the contribution that an active Arms Control policy can make to collective security. NATO should support universalisation and strengthening of multilateral arms control agreements. Alliance weapons collection and destruction activities are an important contribution to collective security and should be expanded.

15. Achieving security without Weapons of Mass Destruction

NATO's nuclear posture as outlined in the Strategic Concept needs to be consistent both with its Member States' efforts to secure stronger global non-proliferation rules and enforcement, and with moves towards a world free of nuclear weapons. It needs to evolve in this way over time towards a non-nuclear posture. The primary counter and non-proliferation goal of Alliance policy in the current era should be preventing the acquisition and use of nuclear weapons by terrorist groups.

16. Achieving security at lower levels of armaments (and at lower cost)

The Alliance and Member States need to undertake a fundamental reassessment of spending priorities, with the aim of achieving effective 'moral, muscular multilateral' responses proportional to the overall threat posed. Defence spending is ultimately about making full, productive use of precious human skills that NATO Member States can ill-afford to waste.