

Departamento de Seguridad Internacional y Defensa

NATO

Declaration by NATO Defence Ministers following their meetings in Brussels on 10 and 11 June 2010

We, the Defence Ministers of the Alliance, pay tribute, together with our ISAF and KFOR partners, to the professionalism and dedication of the men and women from Allied and other nations who are serving in NATO's missions and operations. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families and loved ones of the fallen and the injured.

We remain fully committed to Afghanistan, which remains the Alliance's key priority, to ensure that it will never again be a safe haven for terrorism and to contribute to a better future for the Afghan people, together with our partners in our UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation.

Operations across Afghanistan are making measured progress in extending the reach of the Afghan Government, changing the political conditions, and marginalising the insurgency, including through particular efforts in central Helmand and Kandahar. Significant challenges remain, and success is not yet assured, but we are encouraged by recent results.

All ISAF nations share with the Afghan Government the determination to create the conditions for Afghanistan to assume responsibility for its own security. We welcomed the significant improvement in the capability of the Afghan National Security Forces, and are committed to providing the trainers needed to support that steady progress. Transition to Afghan lead is a crucial part of all our activities including our counter-insurgency efforts and will herald an incremental shift in focus towards long-term training, partnering and capacity-building. Our commitment will therefore be an enduring one. In our meeting, we highlighted the importance of our partners and their contributions to our joint efforts in Afghanistan.

We welcome the Afghan Government's efforts to advance the prospects of national reconciliation and reintegration and look forward to the results of the Kabul Conference, at which the Government of Afghanistan will take further steps to deliver on its commitments especially with respect to governance and anti-corruption.

We discussed the situation in the Western Balkans and particularly in Kosovo with our KFOR partners. Despite occasional security incidents, the overall security situation in Kosovo remains generally stable. The response to the recent unrest in Mitrovica demonstrated both the need for continued vigilance and the growing capabilities of the Kosovo Police. We welcomed the successful handover of lead security responsibility for the first of the patrimonial sites from KFOR to the Kosovo Police, and fully support further transfers where and when conditions permit. We have discussed the way forward towards a timely decision on the next step in KFOR's conditions-based transition to a smaller, more mobile deterrent posture. We will together maintain KFOR's capability to carry out its mission throughout the transition process.

Our partners have also joined us in affirming our continued commitment to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, by endorsing its ongoing implementation in NATO-led operations and missions.

The financial crisis has a serious impact on the defence spending of many Allies and makes it more important than ever that our taxpayers' resources are spent as efficiently as possible. We remain fully committed to maintaining the ability to fulfil the Alliance's core purpose and to carrying out the entire range of its missions, now and in the future. We will meet these challenges through continuing transformation, comprehensive reforms, setting clear priorities, identifying savings where possible, strengthening and modernising financial governance, and providing the necessary resources.

With a new reform impetus coming from our last meeting in Istanbul, we have considered a number of proposals which address reform in the NATO Command Structure, within NATO's agencies and here at the Headquarters. The aim is to ensure that our structures are as efficient and effective as possible, so they can flexibly respond to the challenges and the evolving security demands placed upon the Alliance, guided by the new Strategic Concept to be adopted by our Heads of State and Government at the Lisbon Summit. These proposals will now be further developed in time for consideration at our next meeting in October.

Against the background of these reform efforts, we agreed that we will continue to transform our forces and capabilities to make them more deployable, sustainable, and interoperable to prepare for present and future challenges, aided by the new NATO Defence Planning Process. In this context, we noted proposals for focusing our efforts on those capabilities which deal with the Alliance's most pressing needs. We will continue to demonstrate the Alliance's capability to provide a visible assurance of NATO's commitment to collective defence. We are determined that our national decisions on defence programmes and budgets will take into account what we need as an Alliance. We will continue to explore opportunities for multinational cooperation and to make investments that can help meet urgent operational needs in the most efficient way possible. We have placed particular emphasis on our efforts to counter road-side bombs, increase the availability of helicopters able to operate in demanding environments, improve the delivery of medical services to our deployed forces, and improve the Alliance's ability to deliver stabilisation and reconstruction effects. In this context, we tasked preparation of political guidance on ways to improve NATO's involvement in stabilisation and reconstruction for our review in October. We are also intent on increasing our interaction with the European Union in the field of capabilities in accordance with the agreed framework of cooperation between the two organisations.

We discussed the possibility of expanding the role of NATO's Theatre Missile Defence programme beyond the protection of NATO deployed forces to include territorial missile defence. Should Allies decide at the Lisbon Summit to develop a missile defence capability for NATO which would provide protection to European Allied populations and territory against the increasing threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles, an expanded Theatre Missile Defence programme could form the command, control and communications backbone of such a system. The United States' Phased Adaptive Approach would provide a valuable national contribution to this capability. This would be consistent with NATO's core mission of collective defence. We also underlined the potential for cooperation with partners, including Russia, on missile defence.

We also met with our Ukrainian and Georgian counterparts. In the NATO-Georgia Commission, we exchanged views on the security situation in the South Caucasus and Georgia's defence reform accomplishments, and we recognised Georgia's significant contribution to ISAF. In the NATO-Ukraine Commission, we exchanged views with the new

Ukrainian Defence Minister, including on ways to strengthen our defence cooperation, and recognised Ukraine's continued contribution to most of our operations.