



Promoting a more
transparent and
accountable NATO

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NATO is
undertaking
an expensive
nuclear
escalation by
default

NATO Watch Media Briefing

Croatia joins NATO's nuclear-sharing club

The ATOMOL agreement

President Obama sent a revised text of the 'Agreement Between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty for Cooperation Regarding Atomic Information' (ATOMAL Agreement) to Congress on 19 September 2013. In effect, Croatia was being formally embraced as the newest addition to NATO's nuclear sharing arrangement.

The ATOMAL Agreement between the United States and the other NATO members entered into force on 12 March 1965. As new members joined NATO, primarily after the disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, they were progressively added to the ATOMAL roster.

NATO Member States Party to ATOMAL receive technical and security information which enables them to participate in "the political and strategic consensus upon which the collective military capacity of the Alliance depends. This agreement permits only the transfer of atomic information, not weapons, nuclear material, or equipment".

The secret technical annex of the ATAMOL Agreement was declassified by NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC) on 10 May 2000 following on from the declassification of the confidential security annex on 6 March 1998. It can be viewed on the website of the [Federation of American Scientists](#). NATO Member States party to ATOMAL are required to:

- be prepared to "meet the contingencies of atomic warfare";
- enter into reciprocal exchanges of nuclear information with the US;
- provide delivery systems (i.e. planes) to carry nuclear weapons;
- train personnel in the employment of and defence against atomic weapons;
- establish security programmes for NATO facilities on their territory; and
- accept that it will remain in force until "terminated by unanimous agreement".

The document includes all the signatures from 18 June 1964 to 16 April 2010 when [Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović](#) signed on behalf of Croatia. She currently serves as the Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy at NATO and lived in the United States for part of her childhood and graduated from Los Alamos High School in Los Alamos, New Mexico.

The collected signatures on the ATOMAL Agreement further bind Allies into the [Strategic Concept](#) which states that NATO is, and will remain, a nuclear alliance "as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world". NATO's Secretary General, on behalf of the NAC, is responsible for the security programme which controls and limits access to nuclear information made available to Member States under the ATOMAL Agreement.

Where absolute secrecy prevails - absolutely

The NATO Nuclear Planning Group met on 22 October during the NATO Defence Ministers' gathering in Brussels but there was no report of what was discussed, and there were no questions from journalists on this subject at the subsequent press conference.

Perhaps our elected representatives discussed US plans to re-manufacture the existing variants of the B61 bombs into a newer version - the B61-12 - which will be more accurate. The Dutch and the Italians plan to replace their current nuclear capable F-16 jets with the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. Germany has no plans to replace its nuclear-capable Tornado jets when they leave service. The US also has B61s based in Belgium and Turkey but have withdrawn them from Greece and the UK – allegedly. (For further details see [NATO Watch Briefing Paper No.38](#), 15 November 2013).

Suggested future questions for the NATO Secretary General

1. How does continuing to make preparations for fighting a nuclear war in Europe improve security?
2. Is the reciprocal exchange of technical and security information about nuclear weapons, the training of personnel and pilots and the transfer of nuclear-capable planes, contrary to the terms and objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty?
3. Is the basing of US nuclear weapons on European territory and the modernisation programme for the B61-12s an act of proliferation?
4. Is the basing of nuclear weapons on national territory compatible with also being a Non-Nuclear Weapon State signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty?
5. Is the secrecy surrounding NATO's nuclear sharing agreement contrary to the norm of information circulation and open debate in a functioning democracy?
6. Is it right and proper for certain Member States to block discussion on removing nuclear weapons from other Member States' territory unless, and until, such a proposition is agreed unanimously?