



## News Brief Update 34

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Contact: Dr. Ian Davis  
Email: [idavis@natowatch.org](mailto:idavis@natowatch.org)  
[www.natowatch.org](http://www.natowatch.org)

### Russia's war with Ukraine

Ukrainian forces [recaptured](#) the southern city of Kherson, just north of Crimea, after Russia [confirmed](#) its withdrawal from the city on 11 November. A Ukrainian defence ministry spokesperson [told](#) the BBC that Ukraine's forces are almost in full control of Kherson, while President Volodymyr Zelensky [declared](#) the city to be "ours" and that it was a "historic" day for the country. The city's change of control followed a rapid Ukrainian counter-offensive in recent months, in which Zelensky [said](#) involved the recapture of 60 settlements in the Kherson region—one of four regions in Ukraine that Moscow recently claimed to have annexed. The city was the largest urban area under Russian occupation and the only regional capital Moscow had captured since the invasion began. President Zelensky also [said](#) that Russian forces had destroyed all of Kherson's critical infrastructure before they retreated, including communications and water, heat and electricity supplies.

Russia [said](#) more than 30,000 troops had been withdrawn to the eastern bank of the Dnieper River. The Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu had [ordered](#) troops to leave the city on 9 November. General Sergei Surovikin, in overall command of the war, called it a "very difficult decision". "Kherson cannot be fully supplied and function," Surovikin [said](#). "The decision to defend on the left bank of the Dnipro is not easy, at the same time we will save the lives of our military". Russia had been [preparing](#) its exit for the last month, moving command and control across the river. The Russian Defence Ministry said that its evacuation had been completed by 5am Moscow time on 11 November, adding that

there was no military hardware or soldiers left on the western side of the river. However, reports emerged of some Russian troops being left behind and Ukraine's Ministry of Defence [urged](#) them to surrender. The Antonivskiy Bridge, the only nearby road crossing from the city of Kherson to the Russian-controlled eastern bank of the Dnieper River, was [blown up](#) by the retreating Russian forces, and there was also significant new damage to the nearby major Nova Kakhovka dam after the withdrawal, US satellite imagery company Maxar [said](#). Ukraine [accused](#) Russian troops of looting homes during its withdrawal from the city.

According to the [UK Ministry of Defence](#), Russia's loss of Kherson's west bank will likely prevent its forces from achieving their strategic aspiration of a land bridge reaching Odesa. The ministry also [said](#) Russia was preparing new fortified lines deep inside territory it controls "to forestall any rapid Ukrainian advances in the event of breakthroughs". This involved [installing](#) concrete barriers known as "dragon's teeth" to stop tanks, including near Mariupol in the south to help safeguard Russia's land bridge to occupied Crimea even if Moscow loses other territory. The NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [said](#) Russia's retreat was "part of an overall pattern" demonstrating that Moscow "has absolutely lost the momentum". "But we should not underestimate Russia, they still have capabilities," he told Sky News. "We have seen the drones, we have seen the missile attacks. It shows that Russia can still inflict a lot of damage".

## ***Continuing attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure***

In recent weeks, millions of Ukrainians have intermittently been left without electricity and water as Russian airstrikes target vital infrastructure. President Zelensky [said](#) in his address on 8 November that about 4 million people were without power in 14 regions plus the capital, Kyiv, but on a stabilisation rather than an emergency basis. Russian missile and drone attacks have targeted Ukraine's energy infrastructure for weeks as winter approaches when temperatures can drop as low as -20C. Russian attacks on electricity facilities are having a disproportionate effect on civilians in Ukraine, having an indiscriminate impact on critical functions such as healthcare and heating, [according](#) to the UK Ministry of Defence. Kyiv's mayor Vitali Klitschko [urged](#) residents to prepare for a worst-case scenario by making emergency plans to leave the city and stay with friends or family. "If you have extended family or friends outside Kyiv, where there is autonomous water supply, an oven, heating, please keep in mind the possibility of staying there for a certain amount of time", he said on Ukrainian television on 6 November.

## ***Russia's troop mobilisation***

President Vladimir Putin [said](#) on 7 November that 50,000 Russian soldiers called up as part of his mobilisation drive were now fighting with combat units in Ukraine. Putin said 80,000 were "in the zone of the special military operation" – the term Russia uses for its war in Ukraine – and the rest of the almost 320,000 draftees were at training camps in Russia. However, some Russian conscripts reportedly [criticised](#) the chaotic nature of the mobilisation saying hundreds were killed in an attack. Moscow's willingness to seemingly throw hundreds of ill-prepared conscripts on to the frontline in Ukraine's east is likely to add to growing anger in Russia as the number of casualties continues to rise (see below). On 4 November, Putin boasted that Russia had mobilised 318,000 people into its armed forces, citing a high number of "volunteers".

## ***An opening for diplomacy?***

The Russian annexations have greatly complicated the search for an eventual peace settlement, as Ukraine and Western nations will not accept or recognize them. President Zelensky, from once saying that he was accepting neutrality for Ukraine, has recently called for fast-tracking a NATO application for Ukraine. There have been some negotiations on key issues so far, such as the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, getting grain out of Ukraine and in organising prisoner swaps. But there have been no negotiations since March on the big issues. In the latest prisoner exchange with Russia, 45 Ukrainian soldiers were freed and the bodies of two killed Ukrainian soldiers were also repatriated, the head of the Ukrainian presidential office [said](#) on 11 November.

US officials [reportedly](#) warned the Ukrainian Government in private that it needs to signal an openness to negotiations with Russia. Officials in Washington warned that "Ukraine fatigue" among allies could worsen if Kyiv continued to be closed to negotiations, the Washington Post reported. US officials told the paper that Ukraine's position on negotiations with Russia was wearing thin among allies worried about the economic effects of a protracted war. However, Mykhailo Podolyak, a senior adviser to Ukraine's president, [said](#) on 7 November that Kyiv had never refused to negotiate with Moscow and that it was ready for talks with Russia's future leader, but not with Vladimir Putin. "Ukraine has never refused to negotiate. Our negotiating position is known and open", Podolyak [wrote on Twitter](#), saying that Russia should first withdraw its troops from Ukraine. "Is Putin ready? Obviously not. Therefore, we are constructive in our assessment: we will talk with the next leader".

On 8 November the messaging from Ukraine changed with Zelensky's [announcement](#) that he is now open to diplomacy with Putin and called on the international community to "force Russia into real peace talks". Zelensky insisted that his [preconditions](#) for talks are "restoration of (Ukraine's) territorial integrity

... compensation for all war damage, punishment for every war criminal and guarantees that it will not happen again". According to a [readout](#) of a meeting between the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, and the Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Dmytro Kuleba, at the ASEAN summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 12 November, Ukraine would decide on the timing and contents of any negotiation framework with Russia. Although the Russian and Ukrainian positions remain far apart, the expected slowdown in fighting after Ukraine's recapture of Kherson may be an opportunity to restart talks.

For options of what a possible settlement for Ukraine might look like, see Cambridge University's [Ukraine Peace Settlement Project](#).

### ***The Ukraine war and COP27***

In a video [address](#) at the [COP27](#) UN climate summit in Egypt on 8 November, President Zelensky told world leaders they will not be able to tackle the climate crisis unless Russia's invasion of his country ends. "There can be no effective climate policy without the peace," he said. According to [analysis](#) by the Climate Action Tracker (an independent research consortium that has been tracking climate action since 2009), the global dash for gas amid the Ukraine war will accelerate climate breakdown and could send temperatures soaring far beyond the 1.5C limit of safety. If all of the new gas projects announced in response to the global gas supply crunch are fulfilled, the resulting greenhouse gas emissions would add up to about 10% of the total amount of carbon dioxide that can safely be emitted by 2050. The NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, took part in a virtual event co-hosted by NATO, the German Federal Foreign Office and the Munich Security Conference at the COP27 summit. Stoltenberg [said](#) Russia's weaponisation of food and energy as part of its illegal war in Ukraine underlined the need to increase resilience, diversify energy supplies and sources, and accelerate the transition to cleaner, greener economies.

### ***Military and financial assistance to Ukraine and Russia***

Ukraine continues to rely heavily on international military and financial support from Western states. Most of the military assistance has come in the form of bilateral arms transfers, training and other support, which is being coordinated by the US-led Ukraine Defence Contact Group, which meets on an ad hoc basis and involves Ministers of Defence and senior military officials from Western-aligned states from around the world. The most recent meeting took place on 12 October (see [Update 32](#)). Ukraine received more air defence systems from western allies, Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov [announced](#) on 7 November. Included in the military aid were national advanced surface-to-air missile System (NASAMS) and Italian aspid air defences. "These weapons will significantly strengthen the Ukrainian army and will make our skies safer," Reznikov said. "Thank you to our partners – Norway, Spain and the US", he added.

The US will send \$400 million more in military aid to Ukraine, Department of Defense officials [announced](#) on 10 November. According to the Pentagon, the aid package will contain large amounts of ammunition and, for the first time, four highly mobile Avenger air defence systems. "This increased air defence will be critical for Ukraine as Russia continues to use cruise missiles and Iranian-made drones to attack critical civilian infrastructure," national security adviser Jake Sullivan said. The US will also buy 100,000 rounds of howitzer artillery from South Korean manufacturers to provide to Ukraine, an official added. However, the US will not give Ukraine advanced drones in order to avoid an escalation with Russia the Wall Street Journal reported on 9 November (paywall). The Biden administration's decision reflects the limit of the kinds of weaponry Washington is willing to provide for Ukraine's defence, the WSJ noted.

In addition, NATO agreed at its June [Madrid Summit](#) to strengthen a 2016 [Comprehensive Assistance Package](#) for Ukraine. The additional elements to the package include both short-

term assistance (ranging from fuel, protective equipment to portable anti-drone systems and secure communications) and longer-term support (to help modernize the Ukrainian armed forces to NATO interoperability standards and strengthen its defence and security institutions). German chancellor Olaf Scholz [said](#) on 11 November that Germany's priority in its aid to Ukraine should be to help it defend itself from Russian air raids on its cities and to help it rebuild its infrastructure.

President Zelenskiy made a pitch for closer security ties with Israel on 7 November, [saying](#) both countries faced similar threats. "I think it is clear to everyone what Ukraine emphasises and the security emphasis of Israel," he said in his nightly address after a conversation with Benjamin Netanyahu, the winner in last week's Israeli election. "I believe we can significantly strengthen our states, especially since the threats we have are related".

External military support to Russia so far has been limited to a handful of states, principally [Iran](#) and [North Korea](#). An internal [rift](#) opened in Iran over the supply of drones to Russia for use in Ukraine, with a prominent conservative cleric and newspaper editor saying Russia is the clear aggressor in the war and the supply should stop. Iran has denied it sold drones to Russia despite their use to [target](#) power stations and civilian infrastructure, but recently [said](#) it had supplied a small number of drones before the war started, an explanation that has been rejected by the US and Ukraine. President Putin spoke to his Iranian counterpart, Ebrahim Raisi, by phone and both leaders placed emphasis on deepening political, trade and economic cooperation, Russia [said](#) in a statement on 12 November.

North Korea [said](#) it has never had arms dealings with Russia and has no plans to do so, its state media reported, after the US claimed it appeared to be supplying Russia with artillery shells. A North Korean defence ministry official called the allegations a rumour and said Pyongyang has "never had 'arms dealings' with Russia" and has "no plan to do so in the future," according to a Reuters report.

For further details on arms transfers to Ukraine, see, the [Forum on the Arms Trade](#). And for a timeline of every US arms shipment to Ukraine that has been announced since the war began, see [here](#).

### ***Humanitarian consequences of the war***

Exact figures for the number of war fatalities, both military and civilian, are difficult to verify and confirm. [Undercounting and manipulation](#) of the data is common in war. America's most senior general and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mark Milley, [estimates](#) that Russia's military had seen more than 100,000 of its soldiers killed and wounded in Ukraine, adding Kyiv's armed forces have "probably" suffered a similar level of casualties in the war. These remarks offer the highest US estimate of casualties to date in the nearly nine-month-old conflict. Milley also suggested that around 40,000 civilians had died after being caught up in the conflict. In September Russia [acknowledged](#) nearly 6,000 war dead, while Ukraine [claims](#) to have killed more than 80,000 Russian soldiers in the war to date. Gen. Valeriy Zaluzhny, commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed forces, [said](#) on 22 August at a public forum that nearly 9,000 Ukrainian military personnel have been killed in the war. This was the first time Ukraine has revealed the scale of its military losses since the war began, previously protected as a tightly guarded secret - although in early June, a senior Ukrainian presidential aide [told](#) BBC News 100-200 Ukrainian soldiers were dying in the Donbas region every day. In April, Russia [said](#) it had killed about 23,000 Ukrainian troops.

According to [data](#) collected by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), as at 7 November, 6,490 civilians have died since Russia invaded Ukraine in February, including 404 children. The actual figures are likely to be considerably higher, as the receipt of information from some locations where intense hostilities have been going on has been delayed and many reports are still pending corroboration. According to [Action on Armed Violence](#) (AOAV) the number of civilian casualties from explosive violence in the

Ukrainian conflict reached 9,042 people by 11 November. From this number, 3,361 were killed and 5,681 were injured. Ninety-five per cent (8,590) of civilian casualties have occurred in populated areas.

As of 1 November, there were 7,824,440 [refugees](#) from Ukraine recorded across Europe, 4,699,333 of whom were registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes in Europe. This gives them the right to live and work in any EU country and benefit from housing and schooling assistance.

### ***Continuing concerns about nuclear facilities***

The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine is in Russian hands but operated by Ukrainian workers. It is Europe's largest and was shut down in September due to fighting in and around it over the previous two months. This raised concerns about the potential for a [nuclear accident](#). A 14-member IAEA [expert mission](#) carried out an inspection of the plant in early September. For further details see NATO Watch updates [23](#) through to [27](#). Meanwhile, the IAEA said on 11 November that an investigation of a nuclear research plant in the city of Kharkiv found it was badly damaged, but there were no signs of a radiological release or diversion of nuclear material.

### **Further reading:**

#### **On outcomes and consequences of the war**

Connor Echols, [Diplomacy Watch: Could US-Russia nuke negotiations help set the stage for talks?](#) Responsible Statecraft, 11 November 2022

Martin Chulov, [Iran and Russia find common ground through Syrian and Ukraine wars](#), The Guardian, 11 November 2022

Ted Snider, [Will a Russian Kherson exit create the right 'facts on the ground'?](#) Responsible Statecraft, 10 November 2022

[Italy is 'fully committed' to Ukraine support, Meloni tells NATO chief](#), EuroNews, 10 November 2022

[Toward a Common Set of Signals from the G20 about Russia's War in Ukraine](#), International Crisis Group, 10 November 2022

Phyllis Bennis, [It's time for a ceasefire in Ukraine](#), Foreign Policy in Focus, 9 November 2022

Dan Drollette Jr, [Introduction—Russia: What to expect next?](#) Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 9 November 2022

[NATO's Stoltenberg hails Ukraine's 'encouraging' liberation of more territory](#), Reuters, 9 November 2022

Frank Ledwidge, [Russia's war is now focused and defensive. Ukraine must prepare for a tough winter](#), The Guardian, 8 November 2022

Aaron Reich, [How are NATO, Russia's airstrike policies different? – explainer](#), Jerusalem Post, 8 November 2022

[Ukraine frets about US midterms](#), Politico, 8 November 2022

[Russian troops slam generals over 'incomprehensible battle' that reportedly killed 300 in Donetsk](#), CNN, 8 November 2022

Larry Attree, [Russia's Mobilisation and the Ghosts of 1914](#), Rethinking Security, 7 November 2022

Connor Echols, [New White House reports suggest diplomacy isn't a four-letter word after all](#), Responsible Statecraft, 7 November 2022

Justin Bronk, Nick Reynolds and Jack Watling, [The Russian Air War and Ukrainian Requirements for Air Defence](#), RUSI Report, 7 November 2022

W. James Antle III, [Are Republicans really poised to put brakes on Ukraine aid?](#) Responsible Statecraft, 7 November 2022

Bernardo Mariani, [Sino-European relations amid the war in Ukraine](#) (PeaceRep Report: Global Transitions Series). PeaceRep: The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform, University of Edinburgh, 2022

#### **On the risk of nuclear war**

There have been growing concerns for several weeks that the war in Ukraine might be approaching "a moment of [maximum danger](#)". In particular, there are worries that a cornered, desperate Vladimir Putin may resort to nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. The

US national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, held [secretive talks](#) with top Russian officials in hopes of reducing the risk of nuclear conflict, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (paywall) reported on 7 November. It cited US and allied officials as saying that Sullivan held previously undisclosed conversations in recent months with the Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov and the Russian security council secretary Nikolai Patrushev, Sullivan's counterpart. The White House declined to comment on the report. Meanwhile, the US and Russia will soon hold [talks](#) on resuming suspended nuclear arms control inspections that were put on hold during the Covid-19 pandemic and languished after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the US State Department spokesman Ned Price said. Negotiations on the inspections would take place "in the near future" under the terms of the New Start treaty and are unlikely to include any discussion of the conflict in Ukraine.

Julian Borger, [Fresh effort to ban the bomb as new generation bids for nuclear-free world](#), The Guardian, 10 November 2022

### **On investigations of war crimes in Ukraine**

International fact-finding missions and investigations have identified clear patterns of violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in Ukraine since the Russian invasion in February 2022. The violations are wide-ranging, including the conduct of fighting as well as treatment of prisoners of war, forced abductions, torture, restriction of civil and human rights, and denial of essential services. The United Nations, the International Court of Justice, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Court of Human Rights, the International Criminal Court (ICC) and Ukrainian national courts have all been active in attempting to hold criminals accountable. The ICC, for example, opened an [investigation](#) into possible war crimes in Ukraine just days after Moscow's forces invaded and it dispatched dozens of investigators to the country to gather evidence. A substantial ICC investigative team [appears](#) to be working in Ukraine on a near permanent basis. Similarly, within the OSCE the Moscow Mechanism was

activated to establish two expert missions to investigate violations and abuses committed in the war (see the subsequent [April](#) and [June](#) reports). On 14 July, 45 countries [agreed](#) at a conference in the Hague to coordinate investigations into suspected war crimes in Ukraine. Finally, in October, a [report](#) published by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine found reasonable grounds to conclude that an array of war crimes, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law have been committed in Ukraine. Russian armed forces are responsible for the vast majority of the violations identified.

### **On sanctions against Russia and post-war reconstruction in Ukraine**

Russia's invasion of Ukraine galvanized the US, UK and EU, and a handful of other Western-aligned countries, to unleash a series of [sanctions](#) meant to punish Vladimir Putin's government and pressure him to pull his forces back. While the sanctions lists are sometimes difficult to interpret, the EU has [sanctioned](#) 1,236 individuals and 115 entities—an approximate doubling of its entire sanctions portfolio across the dozens of sanctions regimes it implements; the UK Government has [frozen](#) more than £18bn of assets belonging to oligarchs and other Russians and UK [sanctions](#) have been imposed on 1,271 people according to [the annual review](#) of the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI), published on 10 November;; and the US has [sanctioned](#) more than 1,000 individuals or organizations since the invasion. The numbers, and the pace of the rollout, dwarf the sanctions lists for the likes of Iran, North Korea, Libya, the thematic counterterrorism lists, and all others. However, rather than dissuading the Kremlin as intended, the penalties appear instead to be exacerbating inflation, worsening food insecurity and punishing ordinary Russians more than Putin or his allies. Moreover, Russia has claimed (see NATO Watch [Update 17](#) and [Update 18](#)) that it is getting more revenue from its fossil fuel sales now than before its invasion of Ukraine, despite (or partly because of) Western sanctions.

## **On international food security and Ukrainian grain exports**

On 8 November President Zelensky [called](#) for an extension to the Black Sea grain export deal that expires on 19 November and looked in jeopardy in October when Russia briefly suspended its participation before rejoining (see [Update 33](#)). Ukraine also wanted the grain export deal [expanded](#) to include more ports and goods, and hoped a decision to renew the pact for at least a year would be taken next week, the deputy infrastructure minister said in a Reuters interview. Senior UN officials held [talks](#) with Russian officials in Geneva on 11 November to discuss extending the Ukraine grain deal – at the time of writing no extension to the deal had been [agreed](#).

The [grain deal](#) between Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and the UN was agreed on 22 July and is considered to be crucial for Ukraine's economy as well as global food security (on international food security and Ukrainian grain exports, see NATO Watch [Update 17](#), [Update 18](#), [Update 20](#) and [Update 21](#)). The grain exports are being overseen by a Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) in Istanbul where Russian, Ukrainian, Turkish and UN personnel are working. It had allowed Ukraine to transport more than 9 million tonnes of grain and oilseed commodities, while Russia was allowed to export food and fertiliser, [helping to bring down food prices](#) by 15% from their March peak after the war made the route treacherous.

## **On energy security in Europe**

Europe is striving to diversify its energy supply sources in order to curb its dependence on Russia. Gas shortages are occurring across Europe, raising the prospect of energy rationing as governments push to develop alternative supplies. The West accuses Russia of restricting energy supplies to boost prices in retaliation for sanctions imposed after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Russia denies it is to blame, and instead attributes responsibility to Western sanctions and various technical problems. President Putin has also [threatened](#) to cut off all deliveries of

gas, oil, and coal to Europe if they imposed a price cap on Russian energy imports.

## **On developments within NATO**

The next meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government will take place in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 11-12 July 2023. On 9 November, representatives from over 30 Partner Nations [attended](#) informal workshops at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, to discuss areas of common interest, including crisis prevention and management, cooperative security, counter-terrorism and human security. This Bi-annual Meeting with Partners was part of NATO's ongoing work on interpreting the alliance's new Strategic Concept.

[NATO JSEC \(Joint Support and Enabling Command\) expands and intensifies its reinforcement and sustainment network at Fall Conference 2022 in Ulm](#), Joint Forces, 11 November 2022

[NATO actively supports Bosnia and Herzegovina in its Reform Process](#), Sarajevo Times, 11 November 2022

[Azerbaijani servicemen taking part in NATO training program](#), Azer News, 11 November 2022

[NATO Secretary General warns of growing cyber threat](#), NATO News Release, 11 November 2022

[Q&A with Mart Noorma, the new director of NATO's cyber brain trust](#), Defense News, 11 November 2022

[NATO Environmental Protection Working Group celebrates its 25th meeting](#), NATO News Release, 10 November 2022

[Partners discuss strengthened cooperation in light of new Strategic Concept](#), NATO News Release, 9 November 2022

[Secretary General Stoltenberg praises U.K. for support to Ukraine, key role in NATO](#), NATO News Release, 9 November 2022

[NATO chief 'confident' UK will 'lead by example' on defense amid spending squeeze](#), Politico, 9 November 2022

[NATO Secretary General announces dates for 2023 Vilnius Summit](#), NATO News Release, 9 November 2022

# North Atlantic Treaty Organization



[High-Level Discussion on Climate Security](#) with the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), NATO News Release, 9 November 2022

[NATO Secretary General at COP27 virtual event](#), NATO News Release, 8 November 2022

[Allied Warfighter Talks Look to NATO's Future](#), US Department of Defense, 8 November 2022

[Greek, Turkish, Italian And U.S. Combat Aircraft Take Part In NATO Exercise PODA 22](#), The Aviationist, 8 November 2022

[NATO urges Serbia, Kosovo to refrain from actions that would increase tensions](#), Anadolu Agency, 8 November 2022

[Exercise Iron Wolf tests NATO troops in Lithuania](#), NATO News Release, 7 November 2022

[Japan Joins Key NATO Cyber Agency](#), Info-security Magazine, 7 November 2022

[Summit prepares ground for 'NATOisation of Europe' and continues collision course with China and high levels of military spending](#), NATO Watch Briefing No.96, 6 July 2022

## On Finland and Sweden joining NATO

Finland and Sweden were invited to join NATO, after a [trilateral memorandum](#) with Turkey agreed on the eve of the NATO Madrid Summit assuaged Ankara's previous objections. The two Nordic countries will become NATO members after the Accession Protocol is ratified by all 30 member states. The invitation to Finland and Sweden represents a major geopolitical shift in Europe as the two countries move away from neutrality. To date, 28 NATO member states have ratified the decision. Hungary and Turkey are the two member states where parliaments have not yet been asked to vote on the issue. While Hungary is expected to ratify by mid-December at the latest, the assumption is that Turkey is likely to wait until after a general election in June 2023. But ratification by Turkey is still by no means certain.

[Sweden to spurn nuclear weapons as NATO member, foreign minister says](#), Reuters, 11 November 2022

['Perhaps Erdogan just wants to drag out the decision on Sweden's Nato bid'](#), The Local, 11 November 2022

[Hungary: Finland and Sweden 'can count on us' in NATO bid](#), Reuters, 9 November 2022

[Sweden's leader vows to counter terror threats to Turkey](#), Associated Press, 8 November 2022

[Turkey demands Sweden take concrete steps prior to NATO approval](#), Al Jazeera, 8 November 2022

[Swedish PM tries to win Turkey over on its NATO membership](#), France 24, 8 November 2022

[Swedish PM to visit Türkiye to persuade the Nordic country's NATO bid](#), Hurriyet Daily News, 7 November 2022

For further details see:

[Murky trilateral agreement results in Turkey lifting objections to Finland and Sweden's NATO application](#), NATO Watch News Brief, 29 June 2022

[Should Finland and Sweden hold a referendum on NATO membership?](#) NATO Watch Briefing no. 93, 6 May 2022

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