



Alliance remains open to new members, but consensus on entry for aspirant nations remains elusive:

A Review of the Foreign Ministers Meetings in Brussels, 24-25 June 2014

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Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs

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Key decisions taken:

- NATO's 'open door' policy affirmed.
- No Membership Action Plan for Georgia, but 'package' of measures promised to bring the country closer to the Alliance.
- A membership invitation to Montenegro expected by the end of 2015, subject to successful "intensified and focused talks".
- Endorsement for two key decisions announced at the [NATO Defence Ministers Meeting](#) earlier in June: the development of a Readiness Action Plan and a package of support measures to strengthen Ukraine's armed forces.
- No return to business as usual with Russia.
- Cooperation with partners around the world to be strengthened, with quicker and more

systematic support promised for countries seeking help with security sector reform.

- Endorsement of a detailed operational plan for NATO's new mission, Resolute Support, to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces from the start of 2015 (and the details are expected to be discussed at a Force Generation Conference in July).
- Assurances given to Turkey over Iraq concerns.

Day 1: Working dinner keeps NATO's door open, but no MAP for Georgia

Summary of the Day



This was a short working day, with the first meeting taking place at 17:00: a bilateral session between Anders Fogh Rasmussen and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Maia Panjikidze (see picture left). No details of the discussion were made public.

The day concluded with a working dinner for the Foreign Ministers, which mainly [discussed](#) NATO's Open Door policy and the progress made by the four countries that aspire to join the Alliance: Georgia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Secretary General confirmed the following day that "NATO's door remains open. And no third country has a veto over NATO enlargement".

The question of whether to grant Georgia a NATO MAP has been highly controversial since it divided the Alliance at the 2008 Bucharest Summit. While [the Ministers agreed](#) in principle to develop a substantive package for Georgia that will help it come closer to NATO, there will be no MAP for the foreseeable future. Elements of the package will be worked out in the coming weeks. On Montenegro, the Alliance will open "intensified and focused talks" and assess at the latest by the end of 2015 whether to invite Montenegro to join the Alliance.

Day 2: The Summit in Wales - A Readiness Action Plan and Support for Ukraine and Afghanistan

Summary of the Day

After an initial [door step statement](#) by the NATO Secretary General the North Atlantic Council (NAC) met in a closed session at the level of Foreign Ministers for approximately two-and-a-half hours. The principal agenda was to finalise plans for the NATO Summit in Wales. This included reviewing measures for strengthening NATO's collective defence and external partnerships.

The Foreign Ministers endorsed plans (announced at the NATO Defence Ministerial at the beginning of June) to develop a Readiness

Action Plan for the NATO Summit in September and a package of support measure to strengthen Ukraine's ability to defend itself.

The Ministers also discussed ways to strengthen cooperation with partners around the world and especially those that need help in defence and security sector reforms. The Secretary General said: "we agreed that the Alliance will provide such support more systematically and more swiftly. We will work on ways to create a pool of military and civilian experts who are ready to deploy when needed and to strengthen coordination with other international actors".

After the conclusion of the NAC meeting, the logo for the NATO Summit in Wales was unveiled—[described by the Secretary General](#) as a "vibrant tapestry that presents strong symbols of Wales in a modern way"—and the Foreign Ministers assembled for the traditional 'family photo'.



At 11.30am the NATO-Ukraine Commission met at the level of Foreign Affairs Ministers for just over an hour. In his [opening remarks](#), the NATO Secretary General declared NATO's support for "Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the

right of the Ukrainian people to determine their destiny free from outside interference".

[The meeting discussed](#) newly elected President Poroshenko's efforts to stabilise the country and NATO's proposed contribution to defence reforms. The Secretary General confirmed that "NATO and individual Allies have already provided advice, as well as technical and material support" and that NATO has "endorsed a package of additional measure", including new trust funds to support defence capacity building in key areas such as command and control, and helping retired military personnel to adapt to civilian life.

The Secretary General also called on "Russia to complete the withdrawal of its troops on the border with Ukraine, stop the flow of weapons and fighters across the border, and exercise its

influence among armed separatists to lay down their weapons and renounce violence".

Ministers agreed to maintain the suspension of practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia. *"There will be no business as usual with Russia until Russia comes back into line with its international obligations,"* Rasmussen said.

After the meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, separate press conferences were held by the NATO Secretary General (see below) and the Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin.

After a two-hour working lunch (no coverage), the NAC met again at 15.30 with non-NATO ISAF Contributing Nations at the level of Foreign Affairs Ministers. In his [opening remarks](#), the NATO Secretary General described the conclusion of the presidential elections in Afghanistan as "another important milestone", adding "we remain focused on completing our ISAF mission".

[The meeting reviewed](#) progress in planning NATO's proposed new mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan forces after 2014 and their future financial sustainability. While Ministers endorsed the detailed operational plan for that new mission, called Resolute Support, its implementation still requires the Afghan government to sign a new security agreement with the Alliance.

The day concluded with three press conferences by the NATO Secretary General, the US Secretary of State John Kerry (see both below) and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan Ershad Ahmad.

Finally, according to [reports in the Turkish media](#), assurances were given to the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu during the course of the meeting that the Alliance would not hesitate to defend its ally from the widening conflict in Iraq. "We will not hesitate to take the necessary steps to ensure such effective defence protection of Turkey," Rasmussen said.

It is unclear whether the Ministers found the time to consider [the proposal by NATO's former Supreme Allied Commander James Stavridis](#) for the Alliance to get involved in Syria and Iraq, possibly even putting limited Special Forces troops on the ground.

Secretary General Rasmussen's [Press Conference](#) following the meeting of the North Atlantic Council and the meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission (edited)

The Wales Summit comes at a time when security challenges are multiplying beyond our borders. They arise in our immediate neighbourhood, to the East and to the South. And they come in different forms. We stressed the importance of our collective defence and agreed to develop a robust Readiness Action Plan for the Summit.



We endorsed a package of additional measures to strengthen Ukraine's ability to defend itself. This includes the establishment of new trust funds to support defence capacity building in critical areas such as logistics, command and control, and cyber defence. We call on Russia to do four

things:

1. Take genuine and effective measures to stop destabilising Ukraine;
2. Create conditions for the peace plan to be implemented;
3. End its support for armed separatist groups; and
4. Stop the flow of weapons and fighters across its borders.

We also discussed cooperation in capacity building together with our partners. This is an investment not just in responding to current challenges, but tackling future ones. And it can help us project stability without always deploying large forces.

Today we agreed that the Alliance will provide such support more systematically, and more swiftly. We will work on ways to create a pool of

military and civilian experts who are ready to deploy when needed. We also agreed to develop a package of measures to enhance the close relationship we have built with partner countries over the past two decades of challenging operations.

Russia publicly presents NATO as a threat. While in fact, it is Russia's illegal actions in Ukraine which pose a threat to the international order. So we have no option but to maintain the suspension of practical civilian and military cooperation. There will be no business as usual with Russia until Russia comes back into line with its international obligations.

There follows an edited Q&A session

Q1. Georgian Public Broadcaster First Channel:

This morning you said that NATO will develop a substantive package for Georgia. What elements will be included? Joint exercises and the strengthening of the NATO Office in Georgia, for example? Will it be enough to prepare the country for future membership? Does this mean that there is no consensus on a MAP?

A1. Secretary General: The Summit in Wales will not be about a Membership Action Plan but about more support to bring Georgia closer to NATO. I regret to say that I'm not able to outline the specific elements of that package at this stage.

Q2. Georgian TV Company Maestro: You mentioned that Russia broke the rules. How might Russia react on hearing there is no MAP for Georgia? And what should be the NATO's response be if their aggression continues?

A2. Secretary General: Everybody should respect Georgia's sovereign choice and Georgia's sovereign decisions on whom, with whom Georgia wants to cooperate.

Q3. TV of Montenegro: You said this morning that NATO is going to open intensive and focussed talks with Montenegro. Can you tell us more concretely what this means?

A3. Secretary General: We will open what we call "focussed and intensified talks" with Montenegro which in practical terms means that we will also

intensify our assistance to Montenegro as regards the implementation of necessary reforms. Within the current Membership Action Plan, we have identified certain areas where Montenegro needs to do more to fulfil the necessary criteria. By the end of 2015, foreign ministers will assess the progress and make decisions on whether time is ripe to invite Montenegro to join the Alliance.

Supplementary Q3. Does it mean that we can expect invitations as soon as we are ready and we don't have to wait for another summit? NATO Ministers can decide to invite us to join once we fulfil our obligations?

Supplementary A3. Yes, I think it's an important point to stress that it's not necessarily a summit decision to extend an invitation. Ministers can take that decision.

Q4. Jonathan Marcus, BBC: You have stressed the need to keep NATO's door open and that no third country has any veto over other countries joining NATO. Clearly though, some of the countries with which NATO is stepping up its ties have problems that could lead them into direct confrontation with Russia. Do you envisage a situation where a country could still have outstanding territorial problems with Russia and it could still become a member of the Alliance? Because if you don't, then Russia does effectively have a veto over some countries joining NATO.

A4. Secretary General: For this very reason we won't identify specific areas that will be taken into account when we make a decision on possible membership for a specific country. It will be an overall political assessment that will lead to the final decision to invite a country to join our Alliance.

Q5. Teri Schultz, CBS News: Turkey, has at its border more instability, more fear that fighting will be reaching NATO's own border. I understand that the issue of Iraq has come up in discussions around the table. Is NATO thinking of sending any trainers? How concerned are you that one of Turkey's other borders is now at the edge of such huge turmoil?

A5. Secretary General: The situation in Iraq has been raised during our discussions, having been raised by our Turkish friends. We are focussed on

providing effective defensive protection of all our Allies and this is the reason why we have deployed Patriot missiles to Turkey. Our training mission in Iraq taught us how important it is to train and educate local security forces appropriately.

US Secretary of State Kerry's [Press Conference](#) following the meeting of the Council with non-NATO ISAF Contributing nations

Today we had a chance to take stock of the strong measures that have been taken in order to provide reassurance to our eastern allies on the land, on sea, and air, and we've taken measures that demonstrate that our Article 5 commitment is absolutely rock solid. We also affirmed NATO's open door policy as well as the vital importance of having strong, capable partners.

We spent a significant amount of time in our discussions focused on our allies' sustained support for Ukraine's sovereignty and the right of its people to determine their own future. We believe it is critical for President Putin to prove that he is indeed fully committed to peace. Until Russia fully makes that kind of commitment to the peace process and to the stability of Ukraine, the United States and Europe are compelled to continue to prepare greater costs, including tough economic sanctions.

As our economies begin to grow again, a strong NATO requires defence spending by all. President Obama has asked Congress for an additional \$1 billion for defence spending in Europe. As we head to the Wales summit, every ally spending less than 2 percent of their GDP needs to dig deeper and make a concrete commitment to do more. And all you have to do is look at a map in order to understand why – Ukraine, Iraq, Syria – all threats to peace and to security, and they surround the region.



I briefed my fellow foreign ministers on the conversations that I had with Iraq leaders. Iraq is obviously facing an extraordinary security challenge and a set of political challenges and choices. The United States is also working to support Iraq in its fight against ISIL. NATO allies in the entire international community must remain focused on combating the growth of extremism. With the Wales summit in September, our alliance has the chance to become far more adaptable in how we meet emerging threats and far more capable in how we build the capacity of our countries to be able to not only respond to them but, more importantly, to pre-empt them.

One of the first tests of NATO's ability to forge stronger, more capable partners will be Resolute Support – NATO's post-2014 mission for Afghanistan. And today we discussed our coordinated efforts to wind down our combat presence in Afghanistan while continuing our commitment to combating terrorism and preserving the gains made by the people of Afghanistan. At the Wales Summit, I am confident that NATO will demonstrate strength at home in its unity and in meeting, in new ways, many of the 21st century challenges that we face today.

There follows an edited Q&A session

Q1. Anne Gearan, Washington Post: President Putin did call this week for the rescinding of the invasion powers for Ukraine, and that was acted on today. Is that enough to at least start the conversation about what the West might do in response? Is there anything really practical that you want to see Putin do in the next couple of days before the EU meets on Friday to continue that conversation?

A1. Secretary Kerry: We are delighted that President Putin put to the Duma the retraction of that law which empowered Russia to take action in Ukraine. But it could be reversed in 10 minutes. The greatest difference will be made by

President Putin publicly calling for the separatists to lay down their arms and by engaging his diplomatic service actively in the effort to help convene the meetings to negotiate and to move forward. There are concrete actions – moving forces out, not allowing tanks and rocket launchers to cross the border. We are prepared to work very closely with Russia to implement those steps.

Q2. Erik Eenlo, Baltic News Service: Is the Readiness Action Plan that NATO is preparing something that addresses the Russian arms build-up and increasing number of military provocations in the Baltic Sea region?

A2. Secretary Kerry: That is part of it. But it's also much broader than that. It's an effort to recognize that we're living in a different world. I think we're seeing with ISIL crossing from Syria and moving rapidly into Iraq a hybrid effort which is going to require people to think through strategically intelligence gathering, preparations, response, response times, nature of response. A lot of today's discussion focused on this need for permanent vigilance and permanent capacity to be ahead of the curve, something that we will focus on at the Wales Summit.



Iran being engaged in Iraq, with perhaps even some Syrian activities therein.

Secretary General Rasmussen's [Press Conference](#) following the meeting of the Council with non-NATO ISAF Contributing nations

Q3. James Rosen, Fox News: Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki made comments about a “national salvation government” being a coup against constitutional processes in Iraq and one in which he declared his refusal to participate. Do you regard those comments as helpful or not to the task of government formation in Iraq? Is it still the professed position of the United States Government that the Obama Administration is utterly disinterested in the question of whether al-Maliki stays or goes? Has the disclosure that Iran has been secretly flying drones over Iraq – from an airfield in Baghdad, no less – and has been secretly shipping tons of military equipment to the central government in Baghdad served to complicate the United States’ own evolving military operations and diplomatic mission in

Iraq? Does this represent a widening of the war there?

A3. Secretary Kerry: The Prime Minister has committed to completing the electoral process. He has committed to meeting on the 1st of July and having the Council of Representatives come together and he has committed to moving forward with the constitutional processes of government formation. The United States is not disinterested in what happens in a future leadership, but the United States is not going to engage in the process of suggesting to Iraqis who that ought to be. You should direct that question on Iran to the Government of Iraq. We have made it clear to everyone in the region that we don't need anything to take place that might exacerbate the sectarian divisions that are already at a heightened level of tension. The war has been widened in the last days with the reports of IRGC personnel, of some people from

Today, we endorsed the detailed operational plan for our post-2014 mission in Afghanistan - Resolute Support. The necessary security agreements must be signed soon. Otherwise, we will not be able to keep any troops in Afghanistan from next year. We reconfirmed our commitment to providing funding to sustain them. The Afghan authorities must also live up to their commitment to tackle corruption and to contribute an increasing amount to the funding of their own forces.

There follows an edited Q&A session

Q1. 1TV Afghanistan: Is it still only the Americans who have announced the amount of the money that they're going to give and the number of the soldiers that will stay post-2014 in Afghanistan? What are the commitments of the other Allied countries inside NATO to fund the security forces

in Afghanistan? Are there any exact numbers from other countries on soldiers staying in Afghanistan or not?

A1. Secretary General: We didn't discuss or decide on exact figures but we did hear concrete announcements from a number of Allies. There will be a force generation conference at the beginning of July which will be the occasion to announce the final exact figures.

Q2. Radio Free Europe: How critical is a peaceful democratic transition of power in Afghanistan for NATO?

A2. Secretary General: It's crucial. When it comes to providing troops and financial assistance to Afghanistan, it is crucial that our publics and political leaders have trust and confidence in the Afghan political leadership and in the Afghan government. So a credible political transition is of utmost importance.

Q3. TV Company Rustavi 2 Georgia: You called on Russia to fulfil four things in relation to Ukraine. Do you have a deadline? If Russia does not fulfil your requirements, what will be your next step? Can you specify what you mean by not continuing to do business as usual with Russia?

A3. Secretary General: No, we haven't set any deadline. I can't put it in any other way than request immediate positive steps from the Russian Federation to de-escalate the situation and engage in a constructive political process. Now, when we use the term that we cannot return to business as usual, it reflects our decision to continue suspension of our practical cooperation with Russia. We have also decided to keep channels open for a diplomatic and political dialogue. So at this stage, the NATO-Russia Council will continue to be a framework for such consultations.

Q4. Polish Radio. In Afghanistan we had a problem with the electoral process because one of the candidates is accusing the other of fraud. If the Afghan President has not been chosen in some specific time, NATO Members may not be able to lay down their proposals at the table at the Wales Summit. Should they agree a deadline?

A4. Secretary General: You're right. Time is of the essence. The latest information I have received gives me hope that despite challenges, the electoral and legal processes will be concluded in due time before our Summit in Wales.

Q5. Sally Tahriq (?), Iran's News Network: Mister Kerry said just a few minutes ago that more funding needs to be given to the defence sector. He said: "We only need to look at the map to realize why, with Ukraine, Iraq and Syria." What concrete measures can be taken to counter the actions of militants when they come back to Europe? Are you going to bar these people from coming back to their home countries?

A5. Secretary General: I agree very much with Senator Kerry that we need more investment in our security sector and in that part of the security sector that NATO represents, namely our armed forces. I hope we will see at the Summit a common commitment to increase investments in defence. Fighters that return to their homeland in Europe are, of course, a matter of concern. I can tell you that it is an issue that has been discussed within our Alliance. It's not primarily a NATO issue. It's for security agencies more broadly. I think one of the efficient measures to counter this risk is strengthened intelligence cooperation.

Q5. Seito (?), Japanese TV: You invited some Heads of States who co-operated with ISAF to the Chicago Summit. Have Ministers agreed to invite partners to Wales?

A5. Secretary General: I'm not in a position today to tell you exactly the format of meetings but I can confirm that our partnerships will be a focal point at the Summit.