

# [***NATO Extends Jens Stoltenberg s Term As Chief As Allies Remain Divided Over Successor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68MF-BM41-DXVP-50H7-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Robert Hart, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** It marks the fourth time Stoltenberg s term as NATO secretary general has been extended and he has led the alliance for nearly a decade.

**Body**

**Topline**

Jens Stoltenberg will lead NATO for another year after member states agreed to extend his term for the fourth time, according to astatementon the alliance s website, giving leaders time to rally around a successor and offering stability at a key and testing time for the alliance.

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NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg will now complete his term in 2024.

AFP via Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

Stoltenberg, who had been due to step down at the end of September, will now stay on as NATO secretary general until October 1, 2024.

Leaders of the 31 NATO states will endorse the decision when they meet at the alliance s annual summit in Vilnius next week, NATO s statementsaid.

The extension means the former Norwegian prime minister will have served a decade at the alliance s helm by the time of his departure.

In astatementon Twitter, Stoltenberg said he is honored by Nato allies' decision to extend my term.

The transatlantic bond between Europe and North America has safeguarded freedom and security for nearly 75 years, Stoltenberg said, adding that in a more dangerous world, our Alliance is more important than ever.

**Key Background**

The fourth extension of Stoltenberg s term can be viewed as both commentary on NATO s politically sensitive position and the intractable divisions between members over who should replace him. All members of the alliance must endorse its leader and Stoltenberg, a veteran in European ***politics***, enjoys strong support as a cool and level headed leader. His first mandate wasextendedowing to strong support from key powers like Washington, London, Berlin and Paris and it wasextendedagain in 2019 and2022 when he already had a job lined up at Norway s central bank to preserve stability in light of Russia s increasing assertiveness and, subsequently, its invasion of Ukraine. Some members, including the U.S., reportedly lobbied to have Stoltenberg stay on as efforts to find a successor floundered. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and U.K. Defense Secretary Ben Wallace were reportedly among leading contenders for the post Frederiksen would have been the first woman to head the alliance but were seemingly unable to secure the necessary backing.

**What To Watch For**

The decision comes ahead of the annual NATO summit in Vilnius next week and at a critical time for the alliance and European security. Ukraine will top the agenda and be closely watched around the world, particularly how the alliance and its members will continue to support it in its war with Russia and outlining the nature of its relationship with the alliance going forward, notably how and when it might join. Another closely watched matter will be how the alliance approaches Moscow given growing domestic instabilities in Russia and the potential threats to Vladimir Putin s rule. The threat posed by China is also likely to be a prominent point of discussion during the meeting, and there will likely be significant diplomatic pressure put on Hungary and Turkey to finally approve Sweden s accession having greenlit Finland s months ago.

**Further Reading**

NATO Chief Stoltenberg Says Russia s War In Ukraine Could Last Years(Forbes)

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