

GS Paper 2

International Relations

NATO

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Recent Context

- The war in Ukraine has brought the spotlight on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
- **June 2022**----NATO Summit in Madrid (Spain).
- **April 5, 2023**---- NATO foreign ministers.

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- **April 18, 2023—**

- ✓ New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins said that he would attend the upcoming NATO summit in July, while Australia's leader said he was still considering whether to travel.
- ✓ New Zealand would seek to advance a trade agreement with the European Union while at the NATO summit.
- ✓ Australia and New Zealand both attended last year's summit in Madrid as non-member participants.

- **April 2023--** Finland has joined the now 31 member alliance in a historic policy shift, while neighbour Sweden has applied to do so.

- **11-12 July 2023 ---**NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania.

What is NATO

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of April, 1949, by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.
- There are currently 31 member states.
- Finland is the latest country to join NATO.
- Sweden have shown interest to join NATO.
- Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium.

What are the Objectives of NATO?

To safeguard the freedom and security of all its members through both political and military means.

- **Political objectives:**

- ✓ Promotion of democratic values and
- ✓ enabling members to consult and cooperate on defence and security-related issues.
- ✓ Trust building and in the long run, preventing conflict.

- **Military Objectives:** Aims for peaceful resolution of disputes. Only if diplomatic efforts fails, it take recourse to military power for crisis-management operations.

These are carried out under the collective defence clause of NATO's founding treaty.

What is collective defence?

Members of NATO are committed to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party. Collective defence lies at the very heart of NATO, “a unique and enduring principle that binds its members together, committing them to protect each other and setting a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance”.

This is laid out in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, the founding treaty of NATO.

Article 5 reads: “The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.”

NATO has only once invoked Article 5, on September 12, 2001 following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre in the US.

Ques/-Why was NATO not dissolved after the disintegration of the USSR?

OR

Despite being a cold war construct, why NATO still continue holding importance?

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Ques/-What is NATO's stand in the current Russia-Ukraine conflict?



Note: This graphic shows forces focused on the defense of member states in NATO's east along with US Army troops in the same countries; it excludes military capabilities of individual member states. Troop numbers are approximate, latest available as of February 9, 2022. The US Army has small numbers of liaisons and advisors in Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, and Hungary.

Ques/-Should NATO be dissolved?

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India and NATO

- India held its first political dialogue with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Brussels on December 12, 2019, with the aim to assess cooperation on regional and global issues of mutual interest. The talk was primarily political in Character.
- **June 2023---India's External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar, clarified that India has no intention of joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), led by Western countries.** He stated that the military alliance is not suitable for India. India's stance comes in response to recent recommendations from a powerful Congressional Committee in the United States to strengthen NATO Plus by including India.

The proposal aimed to enable seamless intelligence sharing among these countries, allowing India to access advanced military technology without significant delays. However, **India rejected the suggestion stating that the “NATO template does not apply to India”.**

Issue regarding NATO Plus and India

What is NATO Plus?

- The idea refers to a security arrangement of NATO and the five treaty allies of the U.S., viz. Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Israel, and South Korea as members.
- Chief aim is to enhance “global defence cooperation” and win the “strategic competition with the Chinese Communist Party”.
- The term ‘NATO Plus’ is not an officially recognised or established concept within NATO itself, but has been used in discussions and debates regarding the potential expansion of the alliance.
- The inclusion of these countries as members would require a complex process of negotiation and assessment of their compatibility with NATO’s principles, obligations, and defence commitments.
- While NATO’s earlier target was the Soviet Union and now Russia, the focus of NATO Plus is clearly on containing China. Therefore, considering its disputes with China, India remains a missing link in the framework.

Practice Question:

Ques/-India refusal to America's 'NATO Plus' bait is guided by strategic realism and geopolitical necessity. Comment.

OR

Why India refused to join NATO?

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Previous Year Questions:

Ques/- The expansion and strengthening of NATO and a stronger US-Europe strategic partnership works well in India.’ What is your opinion about this statement? Give reasons and examples to support your answer. (2023)

Ques/- “What introduces friction into the ties between India and the United States is that Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India’s national self- esteem and ambitions” Explain with suitable examples.(UPSC 2019, 200 WORDS, 10 MARKS)

NATO Summit 2023 Vilnius (Lithuania), 10th July 2023

Important Highlights

- The Vilnius communique, while emphasising NATO's support for Ukraine, gave no clear timetable on when the country might be able to join the alliance, in a major disappointment for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy who took part in the summit. "Ukraine's future is in NATO", the leaders said in the joint statement. It was said that Ukraine will not become a NATO member while the Russo- Ukraine remains ongoing.
- The statement also touched on the Asia Pacific, with the leaders of Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea all attending as NATO allies.
- NATO put forward the view that China is a challenge to NATO's interests, security and values with its "ambitions and coercive policies". It also accused Beijing and Moscow of "mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order".

- Finland entered as the newest member of the Alliance.
- NATO reaffirmed its commitment to its open door policy and to Article 10 of the Washington Treaty. It welcomed Sweden as a full member of the Alliance.
- Defence spending: As per under Article 3 of the Washington Treaty, NATO decided to make an enduring commitment to invest at least 2% of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annually on defence.

NATO's next Summit will take place in Washington, D.C. in 2024, marking seventy-five years since the Alliance's founding.