

= 2006 Riga summit =

The 2006 Riga summit or the 19th NATO Summit was a NATO summit held in the Olympic Sports Centre , Riga , Latvia from 28 to 29 November 2006 . The most important topics discussed were the War in Afghanistan and the future role and borders of the alliance . Further , the summit focused on the alliance 's continued transformation , taking stock of what has been accomplished since the 2002 Prague Summit . NATO also committed itself to extend further membership invitations in the upcoming 2008 Bucharest Summit . This summit was the first NATO summit held on territory of a former USSR republic .

= = Security measures = =

The summit was held in the Olympic Sports Centre , Riga . Roads in the center of Riga were closed down and parking was not allowed at the airport or at several roads , out of fear for car bombs . About 9000 Latvian police officers and soldiers took care of the Summit 's security , while more than 450 other airmen from seven European NATO countries were called upon to ensure a no @-@ fly zone above the summit in an operation called Operation Peaceful Summit . This enhanced ongoing Baltic Air Policing activities with additional aircraft , communications and maintenance support .

= = Summit = =

All agreements were not actually made in the North Atlantic Council meeting , but in fact it was made in Istanbul Summit , 2003 , except for the signing of the missile defense contract which happened on 28 November . The Council meeting was held on 29 November .

= = = Main topics = = =

While the tensions between NATO members from the build @-@ up to the invasion of Iraq had dissipated , the NATO summit , and the months preceding the summit , were marked by divisions between the United States and the United Kingdom on the one side and France , Germany , Italy and Spain on the other . Two rifts existed , one about the military contributions to the war in Afghanistan , and the other concerning whether or not NATO should assume a more global role .

= = = = War in Afghanistan = = = =

Before and during the summit US president George W. Bush , British prime minister Tony Blair , Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper and Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende made a plea to European NATO members to make more troops available for deployment in Afghanistan , remove the national caveats (i.e. national restrictions on how , when and where forces can be used) and start sending its troops into the conflict @-@ ridden south of the country . According to Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General James L. Jones it was not the lack of combat troops and the caveats were the problem , but the lack of adequate helicopters and military intelligence to support airlift and on @-@ the @-@ ground operations .

While the NATO countries in question refused to participate in the fighting in the south , they agreed to remove some of these national caveats , and in an emergency situation all national caveats should cease to exist , meaning that every ally should come to the aid of the forces that require assistance . A number of NATO member states also pledged to provide additional assets , including fighters , helicopters , infantry companies as well as training teams that will mentor the Afghan National Army . NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said that the removal of some of the caveats meant that some 20 @,@ 000 of the 32 @,@ 000 NATO troops in ISAF are made " more usable " for combat duties and that 90 % of the formal mission requirements were now filled . Military sources however told reporters at the summit that these caveats never existed in emergency situations , adding that it would be a strange alliance where one country 's soldiers refused to

support their allies in an emergency . NATO leaders also backed a French proposal to set up a " contact group " to coordinate action concerning Afghanistan , but the United States had reservations about France 's proposal to include Iran , which has considerable influence over the west of Afghanistan , in the proposed contact group due to the dispute over Iran 's nuclear programme . The group was modelled on the one set up for the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s .

Political scientist Joseph Nye commented that " while the Riga summit relaxed some of these caveats to allow assistance to allies in dire circumstances , Britain , Canada , the Netherlands , and the US are doing most of the fighting in southern Afghanistan , while French , German , and Italian troops are deployed in the quieter north . It is difficult to see how NATO can succeed in stabilizing Afghanistan unless it is willing to commit more troops and give commanders more flexibility . " The controversy surrounding the differences in contributions to Afghanistan indeed remained after the summit . For instance , during March 2007 British commanders accused the NATO members that refused to fight in the conflict @-@ ridden south (in non @-@ emergency situations) as causing " huge resentment " and a sense of betrayal , and undermined the credibility of the alliance . They added that despite the earlier pleas for reinforcements or to have " operational caveats " removed , some countries , notably France and Germany , were still not heeding their requests .

Besides the above discussion about contributions and caveats , the summit was noticed to paint an optimistic picture of the war in Afghanistan and Afghanistan 's future . For instance , NATO Secretary @-@ General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said that " real progress " had been made in Afghanistan and that this was the main highlight of the summit . He strongly disagreed with visions of " doom and gloom , " and added that five years after the defeat of the Taliban regime , Afghanistan had become a democratic society that is " no longer a threat to the world . " He also believed that the defeat of the insurgency was only a matter of time , stating that the war in Afghanistan " is winnable , it is being won , but it is not yet won because , of course , we have many challenges in Afghanistan . " In his opinion , these challenges included besides military engagement mainly reconstruction and development work .

= = = = Role of NATO = = = =

The second , more fundamental rift , concerned a discussion about whether NATO should form close relationships with countries far beyond NATO 's borders , in particular Australia , Japan and South Korea . The United States and some other NATO members pressed for a closer relationship with these countries . R. Nicholas Burns , Under Secretary for Political Affairs explained the US proposal : " We seek a partnership with them so that we can train more intensively (...) and grow closer to them because we are deployed with them . Australia , South Korea and Japan are in Afghanistan . They have all been in Iraq (...) [and] in the Balkans . " It was however not clear how far this plan would have gone in practice , but the US insisted they were not seeking to turn NATO into a global alliance : membership would not be offered to the prospective new partners . The idea of a " global " NATO however was strongly opposed by France , which considers NATO a regional defence alliance that should not spread its wings too far over the globe . The French Defence Minister Michele Alliot @-@ Marie summarized the position of France as follows : " The development of a global partnership could ... dilute the natural solidarity between Europeans and North Americans in a fuzzy entity [and it would] send a bad political message , that of a campaign launched by the West against those who don 't share their ideas . What a pretext we would offer to those who promote the idea of a clash of civilisations . " The summit did not reach a satisfying consensus on the future role of NATO and it was considered an exercise in " papering over cracks " , much more than it was ever a serious effort to decide on the future borders and core purposes . As a consequence the debate continued after the summit .

= = = Other topics = = =

= = = = Kosovo = = = =

At the Riga summit , NATO members confirmed the role of NATO @-@ led KFOR in the ensuring of a stable security environment there . This is perceived to be a reference to the possible United Nations decision in favour of independence . Because Serbia strongly opposes the break @-@ away of Kosovo , the resulting tensions between Serbia and Kosovo could create instability in the region .

= = = Enhanced cooperation with non @-@ members = = =

Enhanced cooperation with non @-@ member states closer at home was less controversial and two offers were made : an extension of Partnership for Peace membership , and a training initiative .

Partnership for Peace (PfP) membership was offered to Bosnia and Herzegovina , Montenegro and Serbia . NATO hoped that this would bring these countries more into the Euro @-@ Atlantic community as the PfP is a programme of practical bilateral cooperation between individual Partner countries and NATO , thereby allowing Partner countries to choose their own priorities for cooperation . It is expected that PfP membership is for these three countries the first step towards NATO membership . As a result , the PfP offer sparked the anger of the UN tribunal trying suspected war criminals from the Balkans .

NATO launched a Training Cooperation Initiative offering to share NATO training expertise with its Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) countries (Mauritania , Morocco , Algeria , Tunisia , Egypt , Israel and Jordan) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) countries . The initial phase included expanding those countries ' participation in relevant existing NATO training and education programmes , and the establishment of a Middle East faculty at the NATO Defense College in Rome . As a second phase , NATO would consider supporting the establishment of a Security Cooperation Centre in the region , to be owned by the MD and ICI countries , with regional funding and NATO assistance . Senior NATO staff have tended to highlight this project as evidence of NATO 's forward thinking and its desire to avoid becoming party to a " clash of civilizations " .

= = = Comprehensive Political Guidance = = =

Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) , a policy document that had been agreed by Defence Ministers in June 2006 and an addition to the 1999 Strategic Concept document , was formally endorsed during the summit . The CPG intends to provide a framework and political direction for NATO 's continuing transformation in the coming 10 to 15 years . More specifically , the document expresses the belief that the principal threats to the Alliance in the coming decades are terrorism , proliferation , failing states , regional crises , misuse of new technologies , and disruption of the flow of vital resources . According to this document , the Alliance should adapt to these new threats and sets out the Alliance vis @-@ a @-@ vis capability issues , planning disciplines and intelligence for the next 10 to 15 years , including among others the need for joint expeditionary forces and the capability to deploy and sustain them over long periods of time . The document further underlined that NATO 's forces should be able to conduct a variety of missions , from high to low intensity , and emphasized the likelihood that NATO will need to carry out a greater number and range of smaller operations . The CPG also confirmed the principle that 40 % of the member states ' military forces must be redeployable , and 8 % must constantly be on operations abroad . This principle makes it , among other things , possible to effectively compare the contributions made by various states , irrespective of the size of their populations .

The CPG policy document is regarded as self @-@ contradictory for at least two reasons . Firstly , it identified the two greatest threats to NATO as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) , whilst simultaneously reaffirming the 1999 Strategic Concept as " remaining valid " despite the fact that it barely mentioned these threats . Secondly , the document states that collective defence remains the core purpose of NATO , but at the same time emphasizes potential NATO contributions to conflict prevention and crisis management , and the potential planning and

management of missions like that in Afghanistan . The Riga Declaration even described the capability for such missions as NATO 's " top priority " . Additionally , Jaap de Hoop Scheffer wanted and expected a new Strategic Concept to be debated and agreed upon by 2008 , reinforcing already existing views that the CPG will most likely last much less than the 10 to 15 years as the guiding policy document .

===== Energy security =====

The Riga summit was the first NATO summit which underscored the need for energy security , following the Russia @-@ Ukraine gas dispute . The " Riga Summit Declaration " (par . 45) stated that " Alliance security interests can also be affected by the disruption of the flow of vital resources " and that it supported " a coordinated , international effort to assess risks to energy infrastructures and to promote energy infrastructure security . " It further states that NATO leaders " direct the Council in Permanent Session to consult on the most immediate risks in the field of energy security , in order to define those areas where NATO may add value to safeguard the security interests of the Allies and , upon request , assist national and international efforts . " Radio Free Europe reports that an unnamed diplomatic source told that several NATO leaders , including Latvian president Vaira Vike @-@ Freiberga , had tried to make arrangements for bilateral talks concerning this topic with Russian president Vladimir Putin during the summit , but Putin instead attended the CIS energy summit in Minsk , Belarus on 28 November 2006 . In contrast , The Independent reported that the summit was marred by a diplomat fracas over an invitation to President Vladimir Putin and that he was eventually not invited , and that Putin as a result threatened that he would visit Latvia for the first time since independence during the summit in order to upstage the summit . It was even proposed that Putin could honour French president Jacques Chirac , who was at the summit and whose 74th birthday coincided with the summit , by visiting Latvia . He later made clear that this would not go ahead .

===== 2008 membership invitations =====

The NATO Heads of State and Government congratulated the efforts of the three Balkan states currently in NATO 's Membership Action Plan : Albania , Croatia and Macedonia , and declared that the Alliance intends to extend further invitations to these countries during the 2008 Bucharest Summit , on condition that these countries meet NATO standards . The Alliance also affirmed that NATO remained open to new European members under Article X of the North Atlantic Treaty , but remained largely silent on the prospects of Georgia and Ukraine , two countries that had declared membership as a goal , as the summit limited itself to noting the efforts of both countries to conduct an " intensified dialogue " with NATO . Nevertheless , Estonian Prime Minister Andrus Ansip said after the summit that he had discussed Georgia 's membership with US president Bush on 28 November . He further added that in his view Georgia had " very good chances " to join NATO if the planned reforms would continue and that a Membership Action Plan , the next necessary step on Georgia 's way towards membership , was only " a small step away " . Preceding the summit , it was expected that Ukraine was on a fast track to membership : it was believed that Ukraine would have received an invitation to a Membership Action Plan during the summit , followed by an invitation to join in 2008 and membership in 2010 . According to political scientist Taras Kuzio the summit showed that Georgia rapidly moved ahead of Ukraine in its drive to join NATO , even though it joined the Intensified Dialogue program a year later than Ukraine , because president of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko failed to support a pro @-@ Western Orange revolution coalition following the Ukraine 's parliamentary elections of March 2006 . In other words , Ukraine showed more ambivalence in its desire to join NATO , whereas in Georgia the pro @-@ Western Rose Revolution coalition remained united .

===== NATO Response Force =====

NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer announced that the NATO Response Force was finally fully operational since all capabilities necessary were in place . The force is believed to be capable of performing missions worldwide across the whole spectrum of operations (such as evacuations , disaster management , counterterrorism , and acting as " an initial entry force ") and can number up to 25 @, @ 000 troops and should be able to start to deploy after five days ' notice and sustain itself for operations lasting 30 days or longer if resupplied . The heads of state and government also agreed to share the costs of airlift for the short notice deployments of the Response Force .

= = = = 2010 Theatre Missile Defence = = = =

In September 2006 , NATO selected an international consortium led by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) to build an Integration Test Bed for the Alliance 's future Active Layered Theatre Missile Defence (ALTBMD) capability . After two months of negotiations , ALTBMD Programme Manager , General (Ret) Billard , and SAIC contracting Officer , Mr. Robert Larrick , signed the contract on the first day of NATO 's Riga Summit . This decision was based on an unpublished report agreed upon earlier by NATO ministers following a study into the feasibility of theatre missile defences .

This programme is one of three programmes that NATO is pursuing in the area of missile defence . The contract puts the Alliance on track for having , by 2010 , a system to protect troops on missions against ballistic missiles . The contract is worth approximately 75 million EUR for work that would be conducted over a period of six years . The theatre missile defence would be a multi @-@ layered system of systems , comprising early warning system sensors , radar and various interceptors . While NATO member countries would provide the sensors and weapon systems , NATO itself would develop a commonly funded NATO architecture to integrate all of these elements . The development of the ALTBMD system was agreed by NATO members in large part because it is limited . NATO members are deeply divided about the multi @-@ tiered BMD architecture promoted by the US Missile Defense Agency (MDA) .

= = Views on the summit = =

For the three former USSR republics Latvia , Estonia and Lithuania such a high @-@ level event was held for the first time in the region . As a consequence it held a symbolic meaning . It is perceived to have increased the visibility of these three Baltic states as NATO members .