

TOWARDS NATO'S CHICAGO SUMMIT

SPEECH BY NATO SECRETARY GENERAL ANDERS FOGH RASMUSSEN AT
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Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning.

... I was particularly happy to accept the European Policy Centre's invitation to speak to you today. Because it gives me an early chance to set out my vision of the Alliance's future. And to look ahead with you to the NATO Summit, in Chicago, next May.

As I said NATO is busier than ever. And it's for all the right reasons. Just over six months ago, the United Nations' Security Council passed a historic resolution to protect civilians in Libya. It called on the international community to use all necessary means to enforce the responsibility to protect.

I am proud that NATO answered that call. And that we enforced that mandate successfully. We made sure that the United Nations' Resolution was turned quickly into reality.

Our operation saved countless lives. We protected the Libyan people from attacks. And helped them take their destiny into their own hands - and out of Qadhafi's grip. The people of Libya have reminded us of a basic truth. The desire for freedom can sometimes be repressed. But it can never be extinguished.

Although the mission is not yet complete, it has already shown that NATO can make a difference. For many in Libya, NATO has literally made the difference between life and death. Operation Unified Protector has shown that when the cause is just -- when the legal base is strong -- and when the regional support is clear, NATO is the indispensable alliance.

We must make sure that it remains the indispensable Alliance. Especially at a time when nothing can be taken for granted.

The backdrop to our NATO summit in Chicago is the global economic crisis. And there is no contradiction between being concerned about the economy and being concerned about security. Because economy and security are interlinked. Huge deficits and growing debt make nations vulnerable. Therefore, sound fiscal policies are also sound security policies. Both require that we get the most out of every euro, pound and dollar that we spend on defence and security.

Security is not an optional extra - even in times of austerity. It's not a luxury - it's a vital necessity. Because security problems don't wait while we come to terms with our economic difficulties. And they certainly don't solve themselves.

We may not be able to spend more, but we certainly can spend smarter by spending together - and that is what we must do. In the current economic climate, the need for cooperation is clearer than ever. The need for solidarity is stronger than ever. And the argument for transatlantic commitment is more compelling than ever.

So in Chicago, I am confident that you will see a NATO Alliance demonstrating its strong solidarity even in difficult economic times. An Alliance that is committed - capable - and connected.

We are an Alliance committed to the enduring values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law. And we will remain committed to defending these values. Whenever, and wherever, it is required.

We are an Alliance committed to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter - and operating under a United Nations mandate on three continents: in Libya, in Kosovo, and in Afghanistan. And we will continue to assist the United Nations to uphold its responsibility to preserve peace, promote stability, and protect civilians.



We are an Alliance committed to transatlantic solidarity and cooperation. And to forging strong consensus through

consultation and debate. I want to see all Allies bearing a fair share of the burden of implementing that consensus. And paying a fair share of the price.

Critics have pointed to our Libya operation and suggested that not all 28 Allies share this commitment. And that not all are pulling their weight. Let me address this head-on.

In fact, the Libya operation shows the strength and the solidarity of our Alliance even in the middle of an economic crisis. When the United Nations called for support to protect the people of Libya, all Allies agreed it was the right thing to do. They agreed that NATO should act.

NATO acted within 6 days -- faster than ever before. And we acted successfully. All Allies took part, directly or indirectly, through our common command structure and common funding.

In Libya, European Allies and Canada took the lead. In Afghanistan, the United States has been the leading nation from the start. And in Kosovo, Germany is currently playing the leading role.

These are all demanding operations. NATO's operational flexibility allows each and every Ally to play to its particular strengths. And to contribute where they can have greatest effect. The Alliance framework combines all these individual contributions. And it multiplies their impact.

It is this operational flexibility that allows the Alliance to carry out several different operations at the same time. And to do so effectively.

But effective operations do not only depend on commitment. They also depend on having the right capabilities. That is why I want to see an Alliance that is capable - as well as committed.

In Libya, European Allies and Canada provided most of the assets. But the success of that operation depended on unique and essential capabilities which only the United States could offer. Capabilities such as drones, surveillance and intelligence assets.

I want to see an Alliance where all Allies know they can rely on each other. Where all Allies are also able to make meaningful contributions to joint operations. And where all Allies demonstrate the political solidarity to develop, to deploy and to sustain those contributions.

That is why I encourage all Allies, especially in Europe, to focus investment in these vital capability areas. I am not naïve. I know that in an age of austerity, we cannot spend more. But neither should we spend less. So the answer is to spend better. And to get better value for money. To help nations to preserve capabilities and to deliver new ones. This means we must prioritise. We must specialise. And we must seek multinational solutions. Taken together, this is what I call Smart Defence.

Missile defence is a case in point. **By pooling their contributions, and by sharing the costs**, Allies will be able to protect their own territory and citizens against missile attacks. And by cooperating with Russia, we can build two different missile defence systems with the same purpose: to tackle new threats and old suspicions at the same time. And to extend protection against ballistic missiles across the entire Euro-Atlantic area.

That brings me to the final element of my vision for NATO - an Alliance that is even better connected to its partner nations and the rest of the international community.

Libya has been another demonstration of the importance of NATO's network of partnerships. At the start of the Libya crisis, many said we had an image problem in the Arab world. But our operation proves the contrary. We protected the people of Libya with political support from the region. And with operational support from many of our partners in the region. NATO offers a tried-and-tested framework, which our partners know and trust.

Our security is best assured through a wide network of partnerships with countries and organisations around the globe. They build trust. They break down misunderstanding. And they broaden cooperation.

We aim to deepen political dialogue and practical cooperation with the United Nations. The European Union is another unique and essential partner for NATO. And we will continue to promote the Euro-Atlantic integration of countries in the Western Balkans and to our East.

The Alliance should also have a genuine, strategic partnership with Russia. We have already started to develop this. Russia and NATO are working together on many issues where we have shared concerns, such as Afghanistan, fighting terrorism and drug trafficking. And I look to a future where we cooperate even more.

Finally, building on the success of our Libya operation, the Alliance should also be much better connected with its southern neighbors - across the Mediterranean and into the Middle East and Gulf regions. We have many shared concerns - from fighting extremism, through security sector reform, to maritime security. I want us to tackle these concerns together. If we do, we all have so much to gain.

That is my vision for NATO. An Alliance that is committed, capable, and connected. And in Chicago next May, we can help transform that vision into reality. I see four specific goals for our Summit.

First - Afghanistan. We are on track to complete the transition of lead security responsibility to the Afghans by the end of 2014. But our commitment to the Afghan people will not end there. So my first goal for Chicago is to lay out the detail of that commitment, by agreeing a strategic plan for our engagement throughout the transition period, and beyond.

Second - capabilities. To fulfill its essential purpose of safeguarding our security, the Alliance needs the appropriate mix of capabilities: conventional, nuclear and missile defence. We are currently reviewing that mix for approval at Chicago.

We are also preparing a package of specific military capabilities that Smart Defence can help us to deliver. At Chicago, my goal is for NATO Heads of State and Government to endorse this package. And to make a smart commitment to deliver the capability improvements we all need.

Third - missile defence. Poland, Romania and Turkey have already agreed to host key elements of this system. And my goal for Chicago is that we declare an interim operational capability for NATO's territorial missile defence. We will then be able to receive early warning of missile launches directed against us. A big step towards the full capability that we need.

That's the NATO track. But I would also like to make progress on the NATO-Russia track. Cooperation on missile defence makes sense militarily -- because it renders both our systems more effective. And it makes sense politically -- because it demonstrates that our missile defence is not directed against Russia.

Finally - partnerships. I would like **the summit to reaffirm our commitment to the Euro-Atlantic integration** of our partners here on this continent. But also to send a strong signal to countries across the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. That we continue to share an interest in the stability and security of their region. And I hope that by the time of our Chicago summit, a new, democratic Libya will be among our partners in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our Libya operation showed once again the value of our Alliance. And it was not a one-off. NATO has a strong record of success that goes back over six decades.

My goals for Chicago are clear and concrete. They are ambitious. But achievable. **They will strengthen the transatlantic relationship.** And they will help to ensure that the Alliance's record of success continues through this economic crisis, and well into the future. Because they will deliver an Alliance that is even more Committed. More Capable. And more Connected.

That's my vision for NATO. At Chicago we have an opportunity to make it happen. And I am confident we will. Thank you