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NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

# Speech

by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the event: NATO's outlook towards 2030 and beyond

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(As delivered)



Minister Rinkēvičs,  
Dear Edgars,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is really great to be back in Riga, back in Latvia, for many reasons.

You are a staunch Ally,  
You contribute to NATO missions and operations in many ways.

And you meet the 2% guideline.

And you **This website uses cookies to ensure we can provide you with the best browsing experience. X**

it is really good to be here.

Not least because we have some real snow.

There are many nice things to say about Brussels but they don't have the same kind of high-quality snow as we find here in Latvia.

So that's a good thing.

And let me also thank the organisers of this event today.

The Institute of International Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for hosting us and organising this event.

I am looking forward to delivering my speech because this gives me an opportunity to share with you some ideas on how to develop the next Strategic Concept of NATO.

Next to the Washington Treaty, the Strategic Concept is NATO's most important guiding document.

The last one dates back to 2010.

Since then our security has changed beyond recognition.

Today we live in an age of systemic competition.

Russia and China are undermining the rules based international order.

The balance of power is shifting

Democracy and freedom is under heavy pressure.

The next strategic concept is an opportunity to set out how NATO will deal with this new reality.

Five elements are critical.

Protecting our values.

Reinforcing our military power.

Strengthening our societies.

Taking a global outlook.

And building NATO as the institutional link between Europe and North America.

Let me go through each of these in more detail.

First, we must protect the values that underpin our Alliance.

NATO was created to defend democracy, freedom, and the rule of law.

These values define who we are.

They are not optional.

And they must continue to guide us in a more complex world.

These values are under pressure.

Both from outside our Alliance and from within our own nations.

Authoritarian regimes are pushing back on the international rules-based order,

They promote alternative models of governance.

They use propaganda and disinformation to undermine our societies.

And malicious cyber tools to interfere in our elections. **This website uses cookies to ensure we can provide you with the best browsing experience. X**

At the same time, there are extremists and political groups within our own countries that do not respect our democratic values.

We saw a stark example of this on 6 January when US Congress was attacked with the aim to impede a peaceful transition of power.

Worldwide democracy is in decline.

And there is less trust in democratic institutions.

So more than ever, we need to demonstrate the strength of our democratic model.

And protect our values.

Abroad and at home.

Second, we must reinforce our military power.

The 2010 Strategic Concept stated that “the Euro-Atlantic area is at peace”.

But today, we can no longer take our peace and security for granted.

The Russian regime is aggressive abroad and oppressive at home.

Its military build-up on Ukraine's borders is of concern.

Meanwhile, the Chinese Communist Party is using its economic and military might to coerce other countries and control its own people.

Expanding its global footprint from Africa to the Arctic, in space and in cyber-space.

In addition, cyber-attacks are becoming more frequent and sophisticated.

Terrorist threats persist.

Nuclear weapons are proliferating.

And climate change is driving instability and fuelling crises.

To keep our people safe in today's unpredictable world we must continue to strengthen and modernise our deterrence and defence.

We need to ensure our militaries are ready and prepared for any threat.

With the right equipment.

The right training.

And the right skills.

But to ensure our security it is not enough to have strong militaries.

We also need strong societies.

And this brings me to my third point.

Societal disruption can be quick and easy.

It only takes a click of a button to shut down our networks.

A social media message to disinform citizens.

And a pandemic to paralyse our societies.

In today's interconnected and digital world,  
our nations may be more prosperous.

But they are also more interdependent and more vulnerable.

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Our competitors or potential adversaries are exploiting this.

They are investing heavily in our critical infrastructure as a way to interfere in our societies. And using our dependence on essential supplies to further their interests.

In Europe, we need the gas to flow from Russia to keep warm.

And prevent an energy crisis.

And we need the rare earth supplies from China to use our smartphones and computers.

To make our societies stronger,

our people and our institutions must be able to better resist and bounce back from attacks.

Our infrastructure must be more resilient.

And our supply chains more diverse and secure.

This must be a collective effort.

All Allies have a part to play.

Because we are only as strong as our weakest link.

Fourth, a global outlook.

NATO is, and will remain, an alliance of Europe and North America.

But our region faces global security challenges.

They require global awareness and global reach.

We cannot confine security to specific regions.

What happens far away, matters for us right here.

In fact, many of today's threats are not restrained by geography, or lines on a map.

Cyber and terrorist attacks,

aggressive actions in space,

the use of hypersonic glide vehicles and

intercontinental ballistic missiles,

and climate change,

are truly global challenges.

Dealing with them requires working closely with like-minded partner countries around the world.

This is not just 'nice to do'.

It is an absolute necessity.

We should intensify our cooperation with NATO's partners in the Asia-Pacific.

Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

We should engage more also with other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin-America.

And we should further strengthen our cooperation with the European Union.

And all our partners in Europe.

We cannot ensure our security without working with others.

But together, we can shape the strategic landscape for the better.

Compete in a more competitive world.

And defend the principles based on that that works, and ensure it. **This website uses cookies to ensure we can provide you with the best browsing experience.** [X](#)

Fifth, we need to build NATO as a strong institution.

NATO is a powerful idea.

Nations across Europe and North America coming together to defend one another.

And ensure our freedom and security.

'One for all, all for one'.

But NATO is more than an idea.

It is an idea nested in a strong institution.

This creates patterns of cooperation.

Cultural and personal links.

Integration on a scale that is hard to undo.

It has kept us all safe for over seven decades.

Never have so many people been so secure and so prosperous for so long.

We cannot predict the future, but we will learn the lessons from the past;

A strong alliance between Europe and North America is indispensable to our security, freedom and prosperity.

So we must continue to invest in NATO.

Politically, militarily, and financially.

To make it even stronger.

So it can continue to withstand any crisis, and any changes in political weather.

Today, I look forward to also hearing your ideas for the next Strategic Concept.

And what you think should be NATO's priorities going forward.

Thank you so much for your attention.