

TOPIC 2: Reevaluating NATO's collective defense response to warfare by the Russian Federation

EVOLUTION OF NATO-RUSSIA RELATIONS

NATO-Russia relations began after the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, when Russia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1991). Practical cooperation began when Russia joined the Partnership for Peace in 1994 and contributed peacekeepers to NATO-led peace-support operations in the Western Balkans in the late 1990s.

In 1997 forum for dialogue was succeeded by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, which gathers Allies and partner nations from across the Euro-Atlantic region. Furthermore in 1997, the NATO-Russia Founding Act established the formal basis for bilateral relations, including the creation of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) as a place of consultation and cooperation.

In the 1999 Kosovo crisis, Russia suspended relations with NATO because of differences but later restarted cooperation activities, such as; participating in the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) and PJC meetings once NATO's air campaign in Kosovo was over.

To support regular cooperation and contacts, NATO and Russia set up political and military communication channels. NATO opened an Information Office in Moscow (NIO) in 2001 and a Military Liaison Mission (MLM) in 2002. The NIO gave information about NATO in Russia, helping the Russian public's understanding of the evolving relationship between the Russian Federation and NATO. The NIO shared official NATO information through print and digital channels, supported communications projects by Russian NGOs, and provided details on NATO's educational and scientific programmes. It also organised visits for Russians to NATO Headquarters in Brussels and other sites, as well as visits for NATO representatives to Russia.

The MLM granted an open channel of communication between NATO's Military Committee in Brussels and the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation to increase predictability and reduce the risk of misunderstandings that could lead to conflicts.

In 2002 the Rome Declaration replaced the PJC with the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) to serve as a place for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision-making and joint action. In the NRC, NATO countries and Russia work equally on many security concerns of common interest.

Meetings and cooperation of the NRC was temporarily paused in 2008 after Russia's military in Georgia until spring 2009. All practical and military cooperation with Russia was suspended in 2014 after Russia's military intervention in Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea.

In October 2021, Russia suspended its mission to NATO and closed the NATO Information Office and Military Liaison Mission in Moscow. NATO remains committed to using existing

military communication channels to increase predictability, transparency, and reduce risks, and urges Russia to do the same.¹

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 the relationship between NATO and Russia have declined, as they only maintain military-to-military conversations when it is essential. This has caused NATO allies to strengthen their defence and plans. In 2022 Russia became NATO's biggest threat to security. Russia is expanding a range of hybrid tactics creating a bigger disagreement and trying to weaken the Alliance. At the 2024 Washington Summit, Allied leaders agreed to develop recommendations on NATO's strategic approach to Russia.²

Russian aggression timeline

September/October 2006 - Georgia Western Ambitions: The Georgian parliament votes unanimously for a bill to integrate Georgia into NATO. This deteriorates relations with Russia who imposes sanctions and deports hundreds of Georgians who are now deemed illegal immigrants. Georgia also arrests four Russian army officers for spying.

August 2007 - Russia's arctic expansion: Russia attempts to expand its territorial claim by exploring the Arctic with Mir-1 and Mir 2 submarines and planting a one-meter high titanium flag on the seabed at the North Pole, staking a potential claim to billions of dollars of oil and gas in the Arctic Ocean which Russia believes to be a part of its continental shelf.

November 2007 - Russia withdraws from arms treaty: President Putin withdraws Russia's participation in the 1990 Conventional Armed Forces in Europe treaty which limited the deployment of heavy military equipment across Europe. President Putin claims it is a response to US deployment that violated its terms.

January 2008 - Russia increases its military activity: Russia begins Atlantic navy exercises in a demonstration of resurgent force not seen since the Soviet era. It is perceived as a response to the U.S. missile defence program and an eastward expansion of NATO. Four warships, seven vessels, 47 planes and ten helicopters were assembled in the Mediterranean. Exercises were also performed near the U.S. Coast.

April 2008 - Trouble in Georgia: The Kremlin supports the separatist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia to disqualify Georgia from NATO and to stymie its western ambitions. Russian Defence Minister Ivanov declared that Georgia would automatically become an adversary to Russia if it joined NATO. On April 20, a Russian jet shot down a Georgian reconnaissance drone flying over Abkhazia.

August 2008 - The Russo-Georgian war: Conflict emerges as Russia deploys tanks into South Ossetia and expels Georgian forces from Tskhinvali. Russia later conducts air strikes on military targets in Georgia claiming it is to keep the peace.

¹ <https://www.nato.int/en/what-we-do/partnerships-and-cooperation/relations-with-russia>

² <https://www.nato-pa.int/document/2025-013-dsc-25-e-natos-future-russia-strategy-patterson-report>

January 2009 - Russia halts gas to Ukraine: Russian controlled Gazprom cuts off gas supplies to Ukraine after payment disputes. Southeastern Europe is cut off for 13 days which results in turmoil. Gazprom faces \$1.5 billion in lost revenue with Ukraine suffering economic losses as well.

July 2009 - A new start: On his first official visit to Moscow, Barack Obama and President Medvedev reach an agreement to reduce nuclear weapons stockpiles which is a move to replace the 1991 Start 1 treaty.

October 4, 2011 - Russia and China veto the resolution on Syria: Russia, along with China, veto a UN Security Council Resolution which would demand an end to the violence in Syria, accountability for the Assad regime and place economic sanctions on Syria.

September 9, 2013 - Russia responds to US threats: Seeking to avoid a US military intervention in Syria, Russia issues a proposal for placing the Syrian government's chemical weapons under international control with the purported goal of destroying the weapons.

February/May 2014 - Russia invades Ukraine: The Ukrainian Revolution takes place with violent protests and the ousting of pro-Moscow president Viktor Yanukovych who refused to sign an agreement to establish closer ties to the EU, instead choosing to secure economic support from Russia. President Putin responds by sending Russian forces in columns to take over Crimea, which subsequently votes to join Russia in a referendum. This initiates the greatest East-West impasse since the Cold War, with the US and its allies imposing sanctions on Russia.

July 2014 - MH 17 is shot down over Ukraine: Malaysian Airlines 17 scheduled to fly from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur on July 17, 2014 is shot down while flying over eastern Ukraine in a suspected missile strike which kills all 283 passengers and 15 crew members on board. Russia comes under criticism for its recent interventions in Ukraine and for supplying the separatist rebels with heavy armaments.

September 2015 - Russia bombs anti-Assad rebels in Syria: Russia intervenes in Syria and commences aerial strikes in the North. President Putin justifies the bombing as an attempt to weaken the Islamic State militants, but the Western powers and Syrian opposition claim that the raids target anti-Assad rebels, some of whom are backed by the CIA.

NATO's deterrence and defence posture

At the Lisbon Summit, the Heads of State and Government of NATO countries mandated a review of NATO's overall posture in deterrence and defence against the full range of threats to the Alliance. Over the past year, NATO has carried out a detailed analysis of its posture on this. NATO has decided that it does not view any country as an enemy, but it is completely determined to protect the security of its members if they are threatened.

The modern security environment contains a broad and evolving set of opportunities and challenges to the security of NATO territory and their populations. Certain modern changes are becoming very concerning such as globalisation, cyber attacks and environmental and resource problems. The economic environment is also changing which has caused certain reductions of countries' budgets.

The Contribution of Nuclear Forces

Nuclear weapons are an important part of NATO's defence, along with regular and missile forces. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance, but the chances of using them are very remote. NATO's security mainly relies on its nuclear forces from the United States, UK and France. Allies recognize the importance of the security assurances given by these countries. Nuclear weapons will not be used against countries without them, as long as they follow the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Contribution of Conventional Forces

NATO's conventional forces are strengthened by the Allies and therefore make them an important contribution to the defence and deterrence. They are flexible and useful to respond if there is an unexpected threat.

NATO's forces must be quickly deployable, able to work with other countries and organisations, and flexible to handle unexpected situations. They should help meet future threats like cyber attacks, terrorism, supply disruptions, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The Contribution of Missile Defence

The proliferation of ballistic missiles is a growing concern for the Alliance and constitutes an increasing threat to Alliance security. NATO's ballistic missile defence capacity will be an important addition to the Alliance's capabilities for deterrence and defence.

Missile defence can complement the role of nuclear weapons in deterrence; it cannot substitute for them. This capability is purely defensive and is being established in the light of threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic area.

NATO missile defence is not oriented against Russia nor does it have the capability to undermine Russia's strategic deterrent. The Alliance, in a spirit of reciprocity, maximum transparency and mutual confidence, will actively seek cooperation on missile defence with Russia and, in accordance with NATO's policy of engagement with third states on ballistic missile defence, engage with other relevant states, to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The Contribution of Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-proliferation

Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation play an important role in the achievement of the Alliance's security objectives. Both the success and failure of these efforts can have a direct impact on the threat environment of NATO and therefore affect NATO's deterrence and defence posture.

NATO helps coordinate and gives place for consultations and exchange of information, including with partners, on disarmament and non-proliferation. Allies want to build trust with Russia in the NATO-Russia Council, especially about nuclear weapons in Europe. NATO is willing to reduce its nuclear weapons if Russia does the same, considering that Russia has more of these weapons.

CASE STUDY

A key example of Russia's Military behaviour was during the 2014 Annexation of Crimea, demonstrating its use of hybrid tactics, rapid deployment and coordinated information operations. This Crisis began in February 2014, when Ukraine's president, Viktor Yanukovich, was removed from power. Russia misinterpreted this act by thinking it was a threat to its strategic interest, especially the Black Sea Fleet port based in Sevastopol. Following this misinterpretation, they quickly moved to secure the peninsula.

The military attack from Russia to Crimea was mostly recognised and relied heavily by the use of unmarked soldiers, who were later found out to be Russia special forces, who were known as "little green men". These highly trained well-equipped soldiers were given the specific target of seizing key infrastructure, including airports, government buildings, communication centres and military bases. These soldiers did not wear any official uniform, so it allowed Russia to deny any involvement in the early stages which complicated national responses. This approach was a tactic intended to give Russia time to consolidate power without triggering immediate military response.

The operation combined conventional military capabilities with psychological and information warfare. Russia's media outlets put out false information on how the Ukrainian president and government was illegitimate and unstable while depicting its own intervention as necessary to protect Russians in Crimea. This perspective helped shape the narrative of the sequence of events and portrayed Russia's actions as a humanitarian act rather than aggression. At the same time, cyberattacks were targeting the Ukrainian government systems so they couldn't coordinate a response to the attack.

A key aspect of Russia's military behaviour in the Annexation of Crimea was the emphasis on speed and efficiency. In a very short period of time, Russian forces had surrounded most Ukrainian military units positioned on the peninsula. Local pro-Russian militias were mobilised as additional forces, adding further complexity and reinforcing the illusion of a grassroots uprising. This coordinated strategy minimized casualties and prevented the situation from escalating into full-scale warfare.

On political terms, this military operation was tightly integrated with diplomatic and legal measures. After having control over the territory, Russia organised a quick referendum that showed strong support for integration for Russia. Shortly following, Crimea was officially part of the Russian Federation. The military operation effectively allowed for a rapid political takeover, demonstrating close coordination between Russia's armed forces, intelligence agencies and governmental structures.

This case study shows how Russian military strategy integrates covert operations, traditional armed force, locally recruited groups, information control and political manoeuvring to accomplish objectives while avoiding large-scale combat. The effectiveness of this approach strengthened Russia's reliance on hybrid warfare and shaped its tactics in subsequent conflicts, such as those in eastern Ukraine and Syria. The Crimean operation is still regarded as one of the clearest and most successful demonstrations of Russian military strategy since the collapse of the Soviet Union

https://ijsshr.in/v8i6/81.php?utm_

NATO's RELATIONSHIP WITH COUNTRIES OUTSIDE THE ALLIANCE

NATO is strengthening dialogue and cooperation with four main partners in the Indo-Pacific region; Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and New Zealand. NATO is starting to start this relationships because of the complexity of security issues in today's world, its partners in the region also share similar values. The Indo-Pacific region matters to NATO because events there can directly impact security in Europe and the Atlantic.

NATO has stepped up cooperation with its partners in the Indo-Pacific region in the past few years, including with the first-ever participation of the Heads of State and Government of these partners in a NATO summit, at the 2022 Madrid Summit.

Later on in July 2023, the Leaders of NATO's partners in the Indo-Pacific participated in their second NATO summit, in Vilnius. In July 2024, they participated in their third NATO summit in Washington, D.C., where practical cooperation was further enhanced, including through the launch of new flagship projects in the areas of support to Ukraine on military healthcare as well as cyber defence, countering disinformation, and technology such as artificial intelligence.

Over the past few years, NATO has held many meetings with partners from the Indo-Pacific. This includes the participation of their Foreign Ministers in several NATO Foreign Ministerial meetings since 2020, regular North Atlantic Council meetings and meetings in military format, such as meetings of the NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence session. In October 2024, partners from the Indo-Pacific participated for the first time in a NATO Defence Ministerial meeting.

This ongoing dialogue ensures that NATO and its partners can enhance their mutual situational awareness of security developments in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions, including Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

In 2022, NATO strengthened its cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners through two major documents.

First, in April 2022, they agreed on the Agenda for Tackling Shared Security Challenges, which aims to deepen cooperation in areas like cyber defence, new technologies, hybrid threats, maritime security, and the security effects of climate change.

Second, at the Madrid Summit in June 2022, NATO leaders approved the 2022 Strategic Concept. It highlights the importance of the Indo-Pacific, stating that developments in that region can directly affect Euro-Atlantic security. It also says that NATO will increase dialogue and cooperation with partners in the region to address shared challenges and interests.

Each of the four partners in the Indo-Pacific maintains bilateral relations with NATO, guided by the Individual Tailored Partnership Programme. A jointly agreed partnership framework document identifying areas of mutual interest for cooperation.³

COUNTRY PROFILES

Albania: Country located in Southeastern Europe on the Balkan Peninsula. They joined NATO on April 1, 2009 but had been in alliance with certain NATO countries prior to this. Currently, Albania is focusing on military modernization, such as expanding rapid response capabilities, purchasing advanced drones and military vehicles and increasing their defense budget significantly, in order to balance its military power with neighbouring countries, such as Greece. Albania has faced issues with countries such as Iran, Serbia and Russia and is partly the reason why they align strongly with NATO policies and try to reach them all.

<https://www.tiranatimes.com/albania-boosts-defense-spending-to-align-with-nato-goals/>

Belgium: Country located in Northwestern Europe, surrounded by France, Luxembourg, Germany and Netherlands, all countries that Belgium has good, stable relations with. They were a founding member of NATO and joined when it was signed on April 4, 1949. Belgium aim to shift from a light, expeditionary force to a combat-ready military capable one, therefore have goals to increase their military investment massively. Although Belgium has issues with Russia, these threats are minor due to them being in strong alliance with NATO and currently being fully aligned with its policies.

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Belgium>

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2025/07/21/belgium-to-add-f-35s-spend-billion-s-on-anti-air-in-defense-catch-up/>

Bulgaria: Country located in Southeastern Europe on the Balkan Peninsula. They joined NATO on March 29, 2004 to gain economic, military and political benefits and began its shift towards Euro-Atlantic integration. Bulgaria is focused on modernizing its defence capabilities and has started doing so by increasing its defence spending 5% in 2023, showing that it is fully aligned with NATO policies. Bulgaria prioritizes security in Eastern Europe and Black Sea to try and protect themselves against Russia.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulgaria>

Canada: Country located in the northern part of North America and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. Canada is focused on increasing self-sufficiency and diversification from the US and is slowly increasing its military spending to align with the 2% policy NATO has. In order to combat some major rivals, such as China, Russia, Iran and North Korea, Canada is aligned with NATO's policies on a political and operational level but still needs to increase its spending and modernize itself more to provide more strategic support.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/departmental-plans/departmental-plan-2025-26.html>

Croatia: Country located in Southeast Europe and borders Hungary, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. They joined NATO on April 1, 2009, and are currently aiming to support its domestic defence industry and strengthen its military and is managing to do this by spending a 2,5% of its GDP on it. Croatia has no major problems with other countries, apart from tensions with a few neighbouring countries such as Serbia, Bosnia and Russia. Croatia mainly align with all NATO's policies but lack modernization and military capacity but show dedication to reach these targets.

https://www.croatiaweek.com/croatia-launches-commission-to-strengthen-national-security/#google_vignette

<https://www.trend.az/balkans/4120365.html>

Czech Republic: Country located in Central Europe, bordered by Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Austria, and joined NATO in its second expansion on March 12, 1999. Currently, the Czech Republic is undergoing the most extensive modernization of its armed forces in history and aims to increase military spending to 3% by 2030. Czech has no other clear threats but

has tensions with Russia and China. Overall, they are considered to be a very reliable NATO member that mostly aligns with its policies.

Denmark: Country located in Northern Europe, bordered by Norway, Sweden and Germany, and joined NATO as one of its founding members on April 4, 1949. Denmark aims to strengthen their national security defense and increase their defense spending to 3% in 2025. Denmark's biggest external problem is Russia and they are strongly committed to NATO's policies and are meeting most of them.

Estonia: Country located in Northern Europe, bordered by Russia and Latvia, and joined NATO on March 29, 2004. Estonia aims to strengthen national defense by developing technologies and is currently doing so by designating 3.4% of their GDP to military spending and aims to increase this to 5%. Estonia's main external problem is Russia, due to the fact that it is bordering that country, and aligns with most of NATO's policies.

Finland: Country located in Northern Europe, bordered by Sweden, Norway and Russia, and joined NATO on April 4, 2023, mainly due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Finland aim to modernise its entire land defense in response to threats, such as Russia, using real world examples like the ongoing war in Ukraine. In 2024, Finland spent 2.3% of its GDP on defense and is strongly aligned with NATO and its policies but has a bit too much national discretion.

France: Country located in Western Europe bordered by Spain, Andorra, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, and joined NATO as one of its founding members on April 4, 1949. France aims to maintain independent and credible nuclear deterrence to maintain peace throughout Europe. Currently, France allocates 2% of its GDP on military and defense and has few issues with the country but the main ones are West Africa and Algeria. France is a strong and committed NATO member.

Germany: Country located in central and western Europe that, as a whole singular country, joined NATO on October 3, 1990. Germany has made a plan to become Europe's strongest conventional army by 2035 and aims to do this by mainly modernising and expanding the military and defense systems. In 2024, Germany allocated 1.9% of GDP to defense. Germany has significant tensions with Russia and China and continues to mainly align with NATO's policies, although it doesn't act in a "NATO-first" way all the time.

Greece: Country located in Southeastern Europe and at the end of the Balkan Peninsula that joined NATO on February 18, 1952. Greece aims to, mainly, shift from traditional defense to high-tech modern defense and is doing so by maintaining a high portion, 3.1%, of its GDP allocated to defense. Greece doesn't have any major problems with countries, just a few minor issues with countries such as Turkey, Libya and North Macedonia. Greece is extremely committed to NATO and meets most, if not all, of its requirements and policies.

Hungary: Country located in Central Europe that joined NATO in March 1999. Hungary has implemented a new program aimed for 2026 that is the most extensive military transformation in Central Europe. Mainly they aim to upgrade its armed forces by increasing the GDP spent on defense per year where in 2023 it was 1.9%. Hungary has tension with Ukraine, Russia and China but aims to overcome these issues and is very committed to NATO and meeting all the targets it sets.

Iceland: Country located in the North Atlantic Ocean between Greenland and Norway and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. Although Iceland does not have its own standing military, it has strengthened its defence cooperation with many NATO countries and focuses on safeguarding maritime infrastructure. Iceland does not have any tensions with countries and it only has a 0.14% GDP expenditure on defense and military, though it is still deeply integrated in NATO in a non-traditional way by having a vital surveillance role.

Italy: Country in Southern Europe and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. Italy's primary focus is on modernization, which include next-generation tanks and comprehensive ground forces upgrades. Italy spends 1.57% of its GDP on defense and military although it aims to meet the 2% by the end of 2025. Italy has no direct tensions but has issues surrounding the Russia Ukraine war and with Libya. Italy is generally committed to NATO, but advances at a slower pace at meeting goals than other countries.

Latvia: Country located in Northern Europe in the Baltic region and joined NATO on March 29, 2004. Latvia focuses on enhancing rapid response to safeguard territorial sovereignty. In 2025, Latvia allocated 3.45% of its GDP to its defense and military system. Latvia's main geopolitical concern is Russia but, even though it's a grave threat to them, remain very committed to NATO.

Lithuania: Country located in northeastern Europe and joined NATO on March 29, 2004. Lithuania focuses on military modernization and infrastructure investment by enhancing operational readiness and logistics across multiple regions. Currently Lithuania is doubling the NATO standard and is spending 4% on defense and military. Lithuania's biggest issues centre on Russia and Belarus but the country still remains very committed to NATO.

Luxembourg: Country located in Western Europe and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. Luxembourg mainly focuses on modernizing and capacity-building despite its small size and lack of traditional military force. In 2023, Luxembourg only spent 0.6% of its GDP on defense and military. Luxembourg's main geopolitical risk is Russia, and even though they can't defend themselves against them, for that reason they remain very committed to NATO but have a specialized contribution.

Montenegro: Country located in Southeastern Europe and joined NATO on June 5, 2017. Montenegro has a small military focused on collective defense, maritime sovereignty and

domestic security. In 2022 it allocated 1.61% of its GDP on military and defense. Montenegro's biggest security worries come from Russia and they are committed to NATO.

Netherlands: Country located in northwestern Europe and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. The Netherlands is currently allocating 1.53% of its GDP on military and defense, specifically for enhanced deterrence and reliability as a NATO ally. The Netherlands has some geopolitical tension with Russia, Israel and Syria but continues to be generally aligned with NATO policies while also its own foreign policy values.

North Macedonia: Country located in Southeastern Europe and joined NATO on March 27, 2020. North Macedonia is currently trying to align its armed forces with modern warfare needs by allocating 2% of its GDP to military and defense. North Macedonia, although it has issues with Bulgaria, is fully aligned with NATO's policies but is also working to balance it with national issues.

Norway: Country in Northern Europe that joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. Norway is undergoing a historic military modernization, specified in enhancing air defense. Currently they are allocating 2.16% of their total GDP on defense and military, which is one of the reasons it is considered to be aligning with most of NATO's policies. Its main rivalry is Russia.

Poland: Country located in Central Europe and joined NATO on March 12, 1999. Poland is undergoing a military modernization program and is doing this by spending 3.8% of GDP on military and defense. Poland's main security risks come from countries such as Russia and Belarus. This country is strongly aligned with NATO and its policies.

Portugal: Country located in Southern Europe and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. Portugal is undergoing an extensive military modernization and is currently allocating just under 2% of the GDP to military and defence. Portugal's main risks come from hybrids and Russia but they remain strongly committed to NATO, its alliance with other countries and its policies.

Romania: Country located in Eastern Europe and joined NATO on March 29, 2004. Romania is focusing on modernising its equipment, so transitioning from Soviet-era equipment to advanced NATO-compatible systems and equipment. Currently it allocates 2.24% of its GDP to this and remains very committed to NATO. Romania's main security risks come from Russia and hybrids.

Slovakia: Country in Central Europe and joined NATO on March 29, 2004. Slovakia is focusing on modernising its equipment, such as transitioning from Soviet-era equipment to advanced NATO-compatible systems and equipment. In 2024 it allocated 2.2% of its GDP to military and defense and remains relatively committed to NATO although the new prime

minister has doubts about some parts of the system. Slovakia's main threats are Russia, and hybrid threats.

Slovenia: Country located in Southern Central Europe and joined NATO on March 29, 2004. Slovenia is steadily accelerating the modernization of its armed forces with a gradual increase in defense spending with a current defense expenditure of about 1.53% of GDP. Slovenia is strongly aligned to NATO and poses threats from countries such as Russia, but they are minor threats.

Spain: Country is located in southwestern Europe and joined NATO on May 30, 1982. Spain aims to modernise the military by advancing technologies and enhancing interoperability. In 2024 they allocated 1.28% of their GDP to military and defense. Spain's main threats include China and Russia but they still align with NATO although they don't reach some of their policies such as spending.

Sweden: Country located on the Scandinavian Peninsula in Northern Europe and joined NATO on March 7, 2024. Sweden is significantly increasing its defense spending and military modernization in 2025, driven by Russia's war in Ukraine, and allocating 2.8% of its GDP to military and defense. Sweden's biggest risks are Russia and China and currently do not fully align with NATO's policies because they were integrated recently, but show promising results.

Türkiye: Country located in Southeastern Europe and Southwestern Asia and joined NATO on February 18, 1952. Turkey is undergoing a military modernization by modernising drones and missiles among many more. Türkiye currently allocates 1.9% of its GDP to military and defense and mainly align with NATO policies but sometimes only comply with their regional policies. They have tension with Russia and minor tensions with Syria, Iraq, Libya.

United Kingdom: Country located off the northwestern coast of mainland Europe and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. The UK is focusing on marking a shift focused on achieving “warfighting readiness” and technological superiority and is allocating 2.3% of its GDP to defense and military. The UK's main threats are Russia and China, but they still strongly align with NATO and its policies.

United States: Country located in North America and joined NATO as one of the founding members on April 4, 1949. The United States is undergoing a major military modernization centered around the “Army Transformation and Acquisition Reform” initiative and is currently allocating 3.4% of its GDP to military and defense. The US has conflicts with Russia, China, North Korea and Iran but still fully aligns with NATO and its policies.

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