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General Abrial shared his thoughts on Smart Defence and the future of multinational cooperation during a dinner at the Hilton Chicago Hotel in Chicago, Illinois, on March 28th, kicking off the International Conference for the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

"Chicago will be the first US city outside the District of Columbia Beltway ever to host a NATO Summit... As the main metropolis in the Heartland, it highlights the relevance of the Alliance not just to European security, but to that of the populations of its North American members.", General Abrial stressed in his introduction. The conference entitled "Smart Defense: Can a Lean NATO Meet the Challenges of the 21" ran from March 28th-30th and included over 40 high-level delegates from Europe, the United States, and Canada. SACT expressed his "gratitude for the hospitality that this great city is already displaying", and thanked the Chicago Council on Global Affairs "for their leading role in seizing this opportunity to promote quality discussion of NATO affairs." In their comments attendees expressed appreciation for SACT's participation and highlighted ACT's overall contributions in the run up to the NATO summit. The Chicago Council has partnered with the Chicago G8 NATO Host Committee and [think tanks](#) from several NATO member countries to attract some of the best academics, policy practitioners, and experts in advance of the upcoming NATO Summit in Chicago in May.