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"The 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw: Implications for the Alliance and the Eastern Europe"

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Mesdames et Messieurs, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be with you today. From my perspective as Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, addressing the outcomes of the Warsaw Summit and its implications for the Alliance is tremendously important, so I will gladly share some insights with you.

I am deeply convinced that Warsaw was a historical summit for the Alliance, but to put it in perspective, it is important to understand what has changed in the strategic environment. If we look at the Alliance's history, we can identify 4 major phases:

- From 1949 to 1991, the Alliance was entirely focused on collective defence during the Cold War.
- From 1991 to 2001, after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the Alliance welcomed new member states from the former Soviet bloc, and developed partnerships and cooperative security – including a closer relationship with Russia.
- From 9/11 2001 to 2014, after the terrorist attacks in the US, the Alliance focused primarily on crisis management and on expeditionary operations, sometimes at the expense of some essential skills for the collective defence mission
- Finally, I believe we have entered a new phase since 2014 with the crisis in Ukraine and the development of terrorist groups posing as state actors, and I will expand briefly on what I think defines our strategic environment today: the interrelation of crises.

Today, the Alliance is confronted with an arc of insecurity and instability along its periphery and beyond. The Alliance faces security challenges and threats, from the East, from the South, and from the North, by state and non-state actors. Regional conflicts have generated humanitarian disasters, with indiscriminate violence on civilians leading to massive migrations, but also threatening or disrupting critical infrastructures and, in some cases, even threatening stable and reliable energy supply.

Consequently, threats and opportunities have also become more diverse, comprised of physical, virtual and psychological dimensions in multiple domains. Crises have become interrelated, we cannot imagine a crisis in one region not impacting the actions of the same actors in another region.

In this context, the allies, in Warsaw, have agreed that the Strategic Concept of 2010 is still valid. This concept describes the three core tasks the Alliance must be ready to fulfil:

- Collective defence
- Crisis management
- Cooperative security

Although the Warsaw Summit declaration states that these three core tasks remain relevant today, they are now more interrelated than ever before.

This interrelation is directly linked to the complexity of our strategic environment. Consequently, we need to view crises globally and avoid a regional approach. Following this reasoning, the deterrence and defence component of NATO's mission should not be viewed separately from its responsibilities in projecting stability.

In order to meet the challenges of this strategic environment and fulfil the core tasks I have mentioned, the Alliance has decided to adapt its defence and deterrence posture. The posture can be defined as the appropriate mix of conventional, nuclear and missile defence forces and capabilities, at the appropriate readiness and responsiveness level. The adaptation of the Alliance's posture is one of the key overarching outcomes of Warsaw, because it integrates several of the decisions taken during the summit.

One of these decisions is about resilience. We have shifted from a "complicated" world to a "complex" world. "Complicated" meant dealing with numerous parameters, these were parameters that we could analyse and process in order to design a response to a particular situation. "Complex" means that we know we won't be able to forecast everything, and consequently, we must assume that we may face a strategic surprise, or even strategic shock. At the political level, it means that the nations must be able to rely on resilient structures to ensure continuity of their institutions and the protection of their populations. At the military level, it means that our command and control architectures and forces must be prepared collectively to withstand setbacks.

The majority of the other decisions made in Warsaw regarded readiness and responsiveness, which can be considered as a course correction after several years focusing on expeditionary operations. This evolution did not start in Warsaw. In 2014, the Wales summit already acknowledged the resurgence of state actors as potential threats to the Alliance's security.

This was a first step to reset our focus to responsiveness and collective defence, with measures to strengthen the NATO Response Force and to implement the Readiness Action Plan, but it was only a first step.

Warsaw built on these foundations, and in spite of very different perceptions of the security environment among nations, it emphasized the unity of the allies. This is a significant, yet often overlooked achievement. In this regard, Warsaw was a resounding success.

This brings me to the concrete implications of the Summit for the Alliance. The measures decided to reinforce NATO's posture, especially in the East, are anything but symbolic.

Both the enhanced Forward Presence in Poland and the Baltic States, and the tailored Forward Presence in the Black Sea region, constitute what we can call a "first wall of forces" contributing to deter a potential aggression. This deterrent aspect of enhanced Forward Presence and tailored Forward Presence has to be enabled by credible, combat-ready forces, obviously. But the reasoning goes beyond the sole presence of battalions and has deeper implications for the evolution of the Alliance.

The first implication is that this "first wall of forces" would have to be reinforced and sustained in the event of a worsening crisis, taking into account the situation, the moment, and many other factors. The second implication is the return of Canadian and U.S. forces in Europe, which is a very strong signal from our transatlantic allies and gives credibility to these measures. The design and implementation of these measures has caused the Alliance to reflect on its own command and control architecture.

The permanent NATO Command Structure is a formidable and unique asset – no other international organization can rely on such a permanent command and control structure – but it must match the adaptation measures decided in Warsaw. For this reason, the nations have decided to conduct a Functional Analysis to evaluate whether the current NATO Command Structure is able to fulfil the expected tasks. This Functional Analysis is not about manning, national contributions, footprints or resources: it aims at identifying what the requirements of a robust command structure would be, and what functions it has to fulfil. It is still too early to provide reliable information on the results of this analysis and the actual impact it will have on the NATO Command Structure. However, the overall objective remains the same: reinforce and enhance the posture of the Alliance to meet the security challenges that our nations face in the present, and will face in the future.

After Warsaw, the implementation of enhanced Forward Presence and tailored Forward Presence also raised questions on logistics and sustainability. NATO has to revisit its plans for the timely efficient deployment and for the ongoing sustainment of forces across the Atlantic – especially if we consider the necessary reinforcements of our "first wall of forces." This topic is not purely technical, as it involves a whole-of-government approach for host nations.

The Allies also acknowledged the increased necessity to operate with partners, either nations or international organizations.

The joint declaration issued by NATO and the EU in Warsaw is one of the main efforts to enhance this network, because 22 Allies are members of both organizations, and because increasing our cooperation is critical to avoid the duplication of efforts.

In addition, our partnerships extend far beyond the borders of the Alliance: Jordan, Australia and Japan, to name but a few, share interests, values, and interoperability procedures with NATO at a time where the Alliance must be able to reach out across the globe in the current strategic environment.

To ensure the readiness of our forces, NATO must rely on a realistic and efficient training and exercise programme. Under constrained resources, we consider the possible ways we could connect national exercises together. Beyond the cost-efficiency, it would also send a strong message of the Alliance's unity, further supporting the reassurance measures in Europe.

And finally, NATO has to maintain its edge in technology through an appropriate capability development process, in order to cover the whole spectrum, including high-intensity warfare assets. To achieve this, the Alliance federates the efforts of the nations through the NATO Defence Planning Process, ensuring a fair share of the collective burden.

All these actions are direct consequences of the decisions taken in Warsaw, and we try to implement them with the other significant measures agreed upon, such as the definition of cyber as a warfighting domain in itself. We also need to ensure that these actions are in line with our Strategic Military Perspectives, the principles that must drive NATO's long term adaptation as described in the Framework for Future Alliance Operations.

These principles are: operational agility, security networking, shared resilience, strategic awareness and strategic communications.

Considering the decisions taken in Warsaw and these principles, I believe that our Alliance has to become increasingly federated – connecting nation-owned capabilities and assets – rather than integrated. A federated approach is the only way NATO can keep its military edge and remain credible in its deterrence and defence posture, by drawing on the full power of our nations.

The question of credibility leads me to my last point: NATO is by essence a defensive Alliance which aims at deterring any potential adversary. But to be credible in this messaging, NATO must appear strong – and military strength cannot be faked.

This defensive nature of the Alliance is its key feature: if you read the North Atlantic Treaty, and I encourage you to do so if you haven't, you'd find that this is as close to perfection as an alliance treaty can get. If we were to re-write it today, we probably would not change a single word. NATO was founded on its deterrence and defence posture, and since 1949 it has successfully protected our nations and populations. We will continue to adapt it to ensure its enduring relevance.

Thank you for your attention.